# LANG ANDREW

# MAGIC AND RELIGION

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# Содержание

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## PREFACE

Recent years have brought rich additions to the materials for the study of early religion, ritual, magic, and myth. In proportion to the abundance of information has been the growth of theory and hypothesis. The first essay in this collection, 'Science and Superstition,' points out the danger of allowing too ingenious and imaginative hypotheses to lead captive our science.

As, like others, I have not long since advanced a provisional theory of my own, the second and third essays are designed to strengthen my position. The theory is that perhaps the earliest traceable form of religion was relatively high, and that it was inevitably lowered in tone during the process of social evolution. Obviously this opinion may be attacked from two sides. It may be said that the loftier religious ideas of the lowest savages are borrowed from Christianity or Islam. This I understand to be the theory of Mr. E. B. Tylor. It is with much diffidence that I venture, at present, to disagree with so eminent and sagacious an authority, while awaiting the publication of Mr. Tylor's Aberdeen Gifford Lectures. My reply to his hypothesis, so far as it has been published by him, will be found in the second essay, 'The Theory of Loan-Gods.' Secondly, my position may be attacked by disabling the evidence for the existence of the higher elements in the religion of low savages. Mr. Frazer, in the second edition of his 'Golden Bough,' has advanced an hypothesis of the origin of religion, wherein the evidence for the higher factors is not taken into account. Probably he may consider the subject in a later work, to which he alludes in his Preface. 'Should I live to complete the works for which I have collected and am collecting materials, I dare to think that they will clear me of any suspicion of treating the early history of religion from a single narrow point of view.'[1]

Meanwhile, however, Mr. Frazer has advanced a theory of the origin of religion wherein evidence which I think deserving of attention receives no recognition. I hope, therefore, that it is not premature to state the evidence, or some of it, which I do in the third essay, 'Magic and Religion.'

Fourth comes a long criticism of Mr. Frazer's many hypotheses, which are combined into his theory of the origin, or partial origin, of the belief in the divine character of Christ. This argument demands very minute, and, I fear, tedious examination. I fear still more that my labour has not, after all, been sufficiently minute and accurate. It seems to be almost impossible to understand clearly and represent fairly ideas with which one does not agree. If I have failed in these respects it is unconsciously, and I shall gratefully accept criticism enabling me to recognise and correct errors.

Fifthly, I examine, in 'The Ghastly Priest,' Mr. Frazer's theory of the Golden Bough of Virgil as connected with the fugitive slave who was 'King of the Wood' near Aricia. I offer a conjecture as to the origin of his curious position, which seems to me simpler, and not less probable, than Mr. Frazer's hypothesis that this outcast 'lived and died as an incarnation of the supreme Aryan god, whose life was in the mistletoe or golden bough.' But my conjecture is only a guess at a problem which, I think, we have not the means of solving.

There follow an essay, 'South African Religion,' and another on the old puzzle of the 'Cup and Ring' marks on rocks and cists and other objects all over the world.

Next I consider the subject of 'Taboos,' with especial reference to the theory of Mr. F. B. Jevons. An essay follows on the singular rite of the Fire Walk, with the alleged immunity of the performers. This curious topic I have treated before, but now add fresh evidence.

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[1] *Golden Bough*, i. xvii, 1900.

Of these essays the second, in part, appeared in the 'Nineteenth Century,' and most of 'The Ghastly Priest' was published in 'The Fortnightly Review,' while 'Cup and Ring' first saw the light in 'The Contemporary Review.' My thanks are due to the Editors of those periodicals for permission to republish. The essay on the 'Fire Walk' was in the 'Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research,' though the topic does not appear to be 'psychical.' All the other papers are new, and three Appendices on points of detail are added.

The design on the cover is drawn by Mr. Donnelly, the discoverer of the Dunbuie and Dumbuck sites and relics, from an Australian design, in Messrs. Spencer and Gillen's 'Native Tribes of Central Australia.'

For permission to reproduce this drawing I have to thank the kindness of Messrs. Macmillan & Co. The designs of feet, on the back of the volume (a subject found in Australia), and the 'Jew's harp' ornament (common to Scotland and Hindustan), are also by Mr. Donnelly, from Scottish rock carvings.

# I
# *SCIENCE AND SUPERSTITION*

We all know what we mean by science; science is 'organised common sense.' Her aim is the acquisition of reasoned and orderly knowledge. Presented with a collection of verified facts, it is the part of science to reduce them to order, and to account for their existence in accordance with her recognised theory of things. If the facts cannot be fitted into the theory, it must be expanded or altered; for we must admit that, if the facts are verified, there is need for change and expansion in the theory. The 'colligation' of facts demands hypotheses, and these may not, at the moment of their construction, be verifiable. The deflections of a planet from its apparently normal course may be accounted for by the hypothesis of the attraction of another heavenly body not yet discovered. The hypothesis is legitimate, for such bodies are known to exist, and to produce such effects. When the body is discovered, the hypothesis becomes a certainty. On the other hand, the hypothesis that some capricious and conscious agency pushed the planet into deflections would be illegitimate, for the existence of such a freakish agency is not demonstrated. Our hypotheses then must be consistent with our actual knowledge of nature and of human nature, and our conjectured causes must be adequate to the production of the effects. Thus, science gradually acquires and organises new regions of knowledge.

Superstition is a word of much less definite meaning. When we call a man 'superstitious,' we usually mean that evidence which satisfies him does not satisfy us. We see examples daily of the dependence of belief on bias. One man believes a story about cruelties committed by our adversaries; another, disbelieving the tale, credits a narrative about the misconduct of our own party. Probably the evidence in neither case would satisfy the historian, or be accepted by a jury. A man in a tavern tells another how the Boers, retreating from a position, buried their own wounded. 'I don't believe that,' says the other. 'Then you are a pro-Boer.'

The sceptic reasoned from his general knowledge of human nature. The believer reasoned from his own prejudiced and mythopoeic conception of people whom he disliked. If the question had been one of religion the believer might be called superstitious; the sceptic might be called scientific, if he was ready to yield his doubts to the evidence of capable observers of the alleged fact.

Superstition, like science, has her hypotheses, and, like science, she reasons from experience. But her experience is usually fantastic, unreal, or if real capable of explanation by causes other than those alleged by superstition. A man comes in at night, and says he has seen a ghost in white. That is merely his hypothesis; the existence of ghosts in white is not demonstrated. You accompany him to the scene of the experience, and prove to him that he has seen a post, not a ghost. His experience was real, but was misinterpreted by dint of an hypothesis resting on no demonstrated fact of knowledge.

The hypotheses of superstition are familiar. Thus, an event has happened: say you have lost your button-hook. You presently hear of a death in your family. Ever afterwards you go anxiously about when you have lost a button-hook. You are confusing a casual sequence of facts with a causal connection of facts. Sequence in time is mistaken for sequence of what we commonly style cause and effect. In the same way, superstition cherishes the hypothesis that like affects like. Thus, the sun is round, and a ball of clay is round. Therefore, if an Australian native wishes to delay the course of the round sun in the heavens, he fixes a round ball of clay on the bough of a tree; or so books on anthropology tell us. Acting on the hypothesis that like affects like, a man makes a clay or waxen image of an enemy, and sticks it full of pins or thorns. He expects his enemy to suffer agony in consequence, and so powerful is 'suggestion' that, if the enemy knows about the image, he sometimes falls ill and dies. This experience corroborates the superstitious hypothesis, and so the experiment with the image is of world-wide diffusion. Everything is done, or attempted, on these lines by superstition.

Men imitate the killing of foes or game, and expect, as a result, to kill them in war or in the chase. They mimic the gathering of clouds and the fall of rain, and expect rain to fall in consequence. They imitate the evolution of an edible grub from the larva, and expect grubs to multiply; and so on.

All this is quite rational, if you grant the hypotheses of superstition. Her practices are magic. We are later to discuss a theory that men had magic before they had religion, and only invented gods because they found that magic did not work. Still later they invented science, which is only magic with a legitimate hypothesis, using real, not fanciful, experience. In the long run magic and religion are to die out, perhaps, and science is to have the whole field to herself.

This may be a glorious though a remote prospect. But surely it is above all things needful that our science should be scientific. She must not blink facts, merely because they do not fit into her scheme or hypothesis of the nature of things, or of religion. She really must give as much prominence to the evidence which contradicts as to that which supports her theory in each instance. Not only must she not shut her eyes to this evidence, but she must diligently search for it, must seek for what Bacon calls *instantice contradictorim*, since, if these exist, the theory which ignores them is useless. If she advances an hypothesis, it must not be contradictory of the whole mass of human experience. If science finds that her hypothesis contradicts experience, she must seek for an hypothesis which is in accordance with experience, and, if that cannot be found, she must wait till it is found. Again, science must not pile one unverified hypothesis upon another unverified hypothesis till her edifice rivals the Tower of Babel. She must not make a conjecture on p. 35, and on p. 210 treat the conjecture as a fact. Because, if one story in the card-castle is destroyed by being proved impossible, all the other stories will 'come tumbling after.' It seems hardly necessary, but it is not superfluous, to add that, in her castle of hypotheses, one must not contradict, and therefore destroy, another. We must not be asked to believe that an event occurred at one date, and also that it occurred at another; or that an institution was both borrowed by a people at one period, and was also possessed, unborrowed, by the same people, at an earlier period. We cannot permit science to assure us that a certain fact was well known, and that the knowledge produced important consequences; while we are no less solemnly told that the fact was wholly unknown, whence it would seem that the results alleged to spring from the knowledge could not be produced.

This kind of reasoning, with its inferring of inferences from other inferences, themselves inferred from conjectures as to the existence of facts of which no proof is adduced, must be called superstitious rather than scientific. The results may be interesting, but they are the reverse of science.

It is perhaps chiefly in the nascent science of the anthropological study of institutions, and above all of religion, that this kind of reasoning prevails. The topic attracts ingenious and curious minds. System after system has been constructed, unstinted in material, elegant in aspect, has been launched, and has been wrecked, or been drifted by the careless winds to the forlorn shore where Bryant's ark, with all its crew, divine or human, lies in decay. No mortal student believes in the arkite system of Bryant, though his ark, on the match-boxes of Messrs. Bryant and May, perhaps denotes loyalty to the ancestral idea.

The world of modern readers has watched sun myths, and dawn myths, and storm myths, and wind myths come in and go out: *autant en emporte le vent.* Totems and taboos succeeded, and we are bewildered by the contending theories of the origins of taboos and totems. Deities of vegetation now are all in all, and may it be far from us to say that any one from Ouranos to Pan, from the Persian King to the horses of Virbius, is not a spirit of vegetable life. Yet perhaps the deity has higher aspects and nobler functions than the pursuit of his 'vapid vegetable loves;' and these deserve occasional attention.

The result, however, of scurrying hypotheses and hasty generalisations is that the nascent science of religious origins is received with distrust. We may review the brief history of the modern science.

Some twenty years ago, when the 'Principles of Sociology,' by Mr. Herbert Spencer, was first published, the book was reviewed, in 'Mind,' by the author of 'Primitive Culture.' That work, again,

was published in 1871. In 1890 appeared the 'Golden Bough,' by Mr. J. G. Frazer, and the second edition of the book, with changes and much new matter, was given to the world in 1900.

Here, then, we have a whole generation, a space of thirty years, during which English philosophers or scholars have been studying the science of the Origins of Religion. In the latest edition of the 'Golden Bough,' Mr. Frazer has even penetrated into the remote region where man neither had, nor wanted, any religion at all. We naturally ask ourselves to what point we have arrived after the labours of a generation. Twenty years ago, when reviewing Mr. Spencer, Mr. Tylor said that a time of great public excitement as to these topics was at hand. The clamour and contest aroused by Mr. Darwin's theory of the Origin of Species and the Descent of Man would be outdone by the coming war over the question of the Evolution of Religion. But there has been no general excitement; there has been little display of public interest in these questions. They have been left to 'the curious' and 'the learned,' classes not absolutely identical. Mr. Frazer, indeed, assures us that the comparative study of human beliefs and institutions is 'fitted to be much more than a means of satisfying an enlightened curiosity, and of furnishing materials for the researches of the learned.'[2]

But enlightened curiosity seems to be easily satisfied, and only very few of the learned concern themselves with these researches, which Mr. Tylor expected to be so generally exciting.

A member of the University of Oxford informed me that the study of beliefs, and of anthropology in general, is almost entirely neglected by the undergraduates, and when I asked him 'Why?' he replied 'There is no money in it.' Another said that anthropology 'had no evidence.' In the language of the economists there is no supply provided at Oxford because there is no demand. Classics, philology, history, physical science, and even literature, are studied, because 'there is money in them,' not much money indeed, but a competence, if the student is successful. For the study of the evolution of beliefs there is no demand, or very little. Yet, says Mr. Frazer, 'well handled, it may become a powerful instrument to expedite progress, if it lays bare certain weak spots in the foundations on which modern society is built.' We all desire progress (in the right direction), we all pine to lay bare weak spots, and yet we do not seem to be concerned about the services which might be done for progress by the study of the evolution of religion. 'It is indeed a melancholy and, in some respects, thankless task,' says Mr. Frazer, 'to strike at the foundations of beliefs in which, as in a strong tower, the hopes and aspirations of humanity through long ages have sought a refuge from the storm and stress of life.' 'Thankless,' indeed, these operations are. 'Yet sooner or later,' Mr. Frazer adds, 'it is inevitable that the battery of the comparative method should-breach these venerable walls, mantled over with the ivy and mosses and wild flowers of a thousand tender and sacred associations. At present we are only dragging the guns into position; they have hardly yet begun to speak.'

Mr. Frazer is too modest: he has dragged into position a work of immense learning and eloquent style in three siege guns, we may say, three volumes of the largest calibre, and they have spoken about 500,000 words. No man, to continue the metaphor, is better supplied than he with the ammunition of learning, with the knowledge of facts of every kind. Yet the venerable walls, – with their pleasing growth of ivy, mosses, wild flowers, and other mural vegetation, do not, to myself, seem in the least degree impaired by the artillery, and I try to show cause for my opinion.

Why is this, and why is the portion of the public which lives within or without the venerable walls mainly indifferent?

Several sufficient reasons might be given. In the first place many people have, or think they have, so many other grounds for disbelief, that additional grounds, provided by the comparative method, are regarded rather as a luxury than as supplying a felt want. Again, but very few persons have leisure, or inclination, or power of mind enough to follow an elaborate argument through fifteen hundred pages, not to speak of other works on the same theme. Once more, only a minute minority

[2] *Golden Bough*, i. xxi., 1900.

are capable of testing and weighing the evidence, and criticising the tangled hypotheses on which the argument rests, or in which it is involved.

But there is another and perhaps a sounder argument for indifference. The learned are aware that the evidence for all these speculations is not of the nature to which they are accustomed, either in historical or scientific studies. More and more the age insists on strictness in appreciating evidence, and on economy in conjecture. But the study of the evolution of myth and belief has always been, and still is, marked by an extraordinary use, or abuse, of conjecture. The 'perhapses,' the 'we may supposes,' the 'we must infers' are countless.

As in too much of the so-called 'Higher Criticism' hypothesis is piled, by many anthropologists, upon hypothesis, guess upon guess, while, if only one guess is wrong, the main argument falls to pieces. Moreover, it is the easiest thing, in certain cases, to explain the alleged facts by a counter hypothesis, not a complex hypothesis, but at least as plausible as the many combined conjectures of the castle architects, though perhaps as far from the truth, and as incapable of verification. Of these statements examples shall be given in the course of this book.

We are all, we who work at these topics, engaged in science, the science of man, or rather we are painfully labouring to lay the foundations of that science. We are all trying I to expedite progress. But our science cannot expedite progress if our science is not scientific. We must, therefore, however pedantic our process may seem, keep insisting on the rejection of all evidence which is not valid, on the sparing use of conjecture, and on the futility of piling up hypothesis upon unproved hypothesis. To me it seems, as I have already said, that a legitimate hypothesis must 'colligate the facts,' that it must do so more successfully than any counter hypothesis, and that it must, for every link in its chain, have evidence which will stand the tests of criticism.

But the chief cause of indifference is the character of our evidence. We can find anything we want to find people say – not only 'the man in the street' but the learned say – among reports of the doings of savage and barbarous races. We find what we want, and to what we do not want we are often blind. For example, nothing in savage religion is better vouched for than the belief in a being whom narrators of every sort call 'a Creator who holds all in his power.' I take the first instance of this kind that comes to hand in opening Mr. Tylor's 'Primitive Culture.' The being is he whom the natives of Canada 'call "Andouagni," without, however, having any form or method of prayer to him.' The date of this evidence is 1558. It is obvious that Andouagni (to take one case out of a multitude) was not invented in the despair of magic. Mysticism has been called the despair of philosophy, and Mr. Frazer, as we shall see, regards religion as the despair of magic. By his theory man, originally without religion, and trusting in magic, found by experience that magic could not really control the weather and the food supply. Man therefore dreamed that 'there were other beings, like himself, but far stronger,' who, unseen, controlled what his magic could not control. 'To these mighty beings … man now addressed himself … beseeching them of their mercy to furnish him with all good things…'[3]

But nobody beseeched Andouagni to do anything. The Canadians had 'no method or form of prayer to him.'[4] Therefore Andouagni was not invented because magic failed, and therefore this great power was dreamed of, and his mercy was beseeched with prayers for good things. That was not the process by which Andouagni was evolved, because nobody prayed to him in 1558, nor have we reason to believe that any one ever did.

From every part of the globe, but chiefly from among very low savage and barbaric races, the existence of beings powerful as Andouagni, but, like him, not addressed in prayer, or but seldom so addressed, is reported by travellers of many ages, races, creeds, and professions. The existence of the belief in such beings, often not approached by prayer or sacrifice, is fatal to several modern theories of the origin and evolution of religion. But these facts, resting on the best evidence which anthropology

[3] *G. B.* i. 77.

[4] Tylor, *Prim. Cult.* ii. 309, citing Thevet, *Singularitez de la France Antarctique*, Paris, 1558, ch. 77.

can offer, and corroborated by the undesigned coincidence of testimony from every quarter, are not what most students in this science want to find. Therefore these facts have been ignored or hastily slurred over, or the beliefs are ascribed to European or Islamite influence. Yet, first, Christians or Islamites, with the god they introduced would introduce prayer to him, and prayer, in many cases, there is none. Next, in the case of Andouagni, what missionary influence could exist in Canada before 1558? Thirdly, if missionaries, amateur or professional, there were in Canada before 1558 they would be Catholics, and would introduce, not a Creator never addressed in prayer, but crosses, beads, the Madonna, the Saints, and such Catholic rites as would leave material traces.

In spite of all these obvious considerations, I am unacquainted with any book on this phase of savage religion, and scarcely know any book, except Mr. Tylor's 'Primitive Culture,' in which the facts are prominently stated.

The evidence for the facts, let me repeat, is of the best character that anthropology can supply, for it rests on testimony undesignedly coincident, given from most parts of the world by men of every kind of education, creed, and bias. Contradictory evidence, the denial of the existence of the beliefs, is also abundant: to such eternal contradictions of testimony anthropology must make up her mind. We can only test and examine, in each instance, the bias of the witness, if he has a bias, and his opportunities of acquiring knowledge. If the belief does exist, it can seldom attest itself, or never, by material objects, such as idols, altars, sacrifices, and the sound of prayers, for a being like Andouagni is not prayed to or propitiated: one proof that he is not of Christian introduction. We have thus little but the reports of Europeans intimately acquainted with the peoples, savage or barbaric, and, if possible, with their language, to serve as a proof of the existence of the savage belief in a supreme being, a maker or creator of things.

This fact warns us to be cautious, but occasionally we have such evidence as is supplied by Europeans initiated into the mysteries of savage religion. Our best proof, however, of the existence of this exalted, usually neglected belief, is the coincidence of testimony, from that of the companions of Columbus, and the earliest traders visiting America, to that of Mr. A. W. Howitt, a *mystes* of the Australian Eleusinia, or of the latest travellers among the Fangs, the remote Masai, and other scarcely 'contaminated' races.[5]

If we can raise, at least, a case for consideration in favour of this non-utilitarian belief in a deity not approached with prayer or sacrifice, we also raise a presumption against the theory that gods were invented, in the despair of magic, as powers out of whom something useful could be got: powers with good things in their gift, things which men were ceasing to believe that they could obtain by their own magical machinery. The strong primal gods, unvexed by prayer, were not invented as recipients of prayer.

To ignore this chapter of early religion, to dismiss it as a tissue of borrowed ideas – though its existence is attested by the first Europeans on the spot, and its originality is vouched for by the very absence of prayer, and by observers like Mr. A. W. Howitt, Miss Kingsley, and Sir A. B. Ellis, who proposed, but withdrew, a theory of 'loan-gods' – is not scientific.

My own early readings in early religion did not bring rue acquainted with this chapter in the book of beliefs. When I first noticed an example of it, in the reports of the Benedictine Mission at Nursia, in Australia, I conceived, that some mistake had been made in 1845, by the missionary who sent in the report.[6] But later, when I began to notice the coincidence of testimony from many quarters, in many ages, then I could not conceal from myself that this chapter must be read. It is in conflict with our prevalent theories of the development of gods out of worshipped ancestral spirits: for the maker of things, not approached in prayer as a rule, is said to exist where ancestral spirits are not reported to be worshipped. But science (in other fields) specially studies exceptional cases,

[5] *Journal of Anthropological Institute*, Oct. – Dec. 1900 and N.S. II., Nos. 1, 2, p. 85.

[6] Max Müller, *Hibbert Lectures,* p. 16.

and contradictory instances, and all that seems out of accord with her theory. In this case science has glanced at what goes contrary to her theory, and has explained it by bias in the reporters, by error in the reporters, and by the theory of borrowing. But such coincidence in misreporting is a dangerous thing for anthropology to admit, as it damages her evidence in general. Again, the theory of borrowing seems to be contradicted by the early dates of many reports, made prior to the arrival of missionaries, and by the secrecy in which the beliefs are often veiled by the savages; as also by the absence of prayer to the most potent being.

We are all naturally apt to insist on and be pre-possessed in favour of an idea which has come to ourselves unexpectedly, and has appeared to be corroborated by wider research, and, perhaps, above all, which runs contrary to the current of scientific opinion. We make a pet of the relatively new idea; let it be the origin of mythology in 'a disease of language;' or the vast religious importance of totems; or our theory of the origin of totemism; or the tremendous part played in religion by gods of plants. We insist on the idea too exclusively; we find it where it is not – in fact, we are very human, very unscientific, very apt to become one-idea'd. It is even more natural that we should be regarded in this light by our brethren (*est-il embêtant avec son Etre Suprême*!), whose own systems will be imperilled if our favourite idea can be established.

I risk this interpretation when I keep maintaining – what – that the chapter of otiose or unworshipped superior beings in the 'Early History of Religion' deserves perusal. Not to cut its pages, to go on making systems as if it did not exist, is, I venture to think, less than scientific, and borders on the superstitious. For to build and defend a theory, without looking closely to whatever may imperil it, is precisely the fault of the superstitious Khond, who used to manure his field with a thumb, or a collop from the flank of a human victim, and did not try sowing a field without a collop of man's flesh, to see what the comparative crops would be. Or science of this kind is like Don Quixote, who, having cleft his helmet with one experimental sword-stroke, repaired it, but did not test it again.

Like other martyrs of science, I must expect to be thought importunate, tedious, a fellow of one idea, and that idea wrong. To resent this would show great want of humour, and a plentiful lack of knowledge of human nature. Meanwhile, I am about to permit myself to criticise some recent hypotheses in the field of religious origins, in the interests of anthropology, not of orthodoxy.

# II
# *THE THEORY OF LOAN-GODS; OR BORROWED RELIGION*

The study of the origins of religion is impeded by the impossibility of obtaining historical evidence on the subject. If we examine the religious beliefs of extant races, the lowest in material culture, the best representatives of palæolithic man, we are still a long way from the beginnings of human speculation and belief. Man must have begun to speculate about the origins of things as soon as he was a reasoning animal. If we look at the isolated and backward tribe of Central Australia, the Arunta, we have the advantage of perhaps the best and most thoroughly scientific study ever made of such a race, the book by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen.[7]

Here we watch a people so 'primitive' that they are said to be utterly ignorant of the natural results, in the way of progeny, of the union of the sexes. Yet, on the same authority, this tribe has evolved an elaborate, and, granting the premises, a scientific and adequate theory of the evolution of our species, and the nature of life. An original stock of spirits is constantly reincarnated; spiritual pedigrees are preserved by records in the shape of oval decorated stones, and it seems that a man or woman of to-day may be identified as an incarnation of a soul, whose adventures, in earlier incarnations, can be traced back to the Alcheringa, or mythical heroic age of the people. Their marriage laws are already in advance of those of their neighbours, the Urabunna, and their only magistracy, of a limited and constitutional kind, descends in the male line.

Thus the Arunta are socially in advance of the Pictish royal family in Scotland, whose crown descended in the female line, no king being succeeded by his son. Manifestly the religious or non-religious ideas of such a people, unclothed, houseless, ignorant of metals and of agriculture, and without domesticated animals though they are, must be ideas with a long history behind them. The Arunta philosophy is a peculiar philosophy, worked out by thoughtful men, and elaborated so artfully that there seems neither room for a god, nor for the idea of a future life, except the life of successive reincarnations. It is therefore impossible for us to argue that mankind in general began its speculative career with the singular and apparently godless philosophy of the Arunta. Their working science is sympathetic magic; to the Great Spirit, with a trace of belief in whom they are credited, they are not said to pray; and he seems to be either an invention of the seniors, for the purpose of keeping the juniors and women in order, or a being originally of higher character, belief in whom has died out among the adults. To him we return in another essay.

As historical information about the early or late evolution of the idea of a superior (not to say supreme) being is thus unattainable, thinkers both ancient and modern have derived the idea of God from that of ghost. The conception of a powerful spirit of a dead father, worshipped by his children, is supposed to have been gradually raised to the power of a god. Against this theory I have elsewhere urged that superior beings are found among races who do not worship ancestral spirits; and again that these superior beings are not envisaged as spirits, but rather as supernormal magnified men, of unbounded power (an idea often contradicted in savage as in Greek mythology) and of limitless duration.

The reply to me takes the form of ignoring, or disabling the evidence, or of asserting that these superior beings are 'loan-gods,' borrowed by savages from Europeans or Islamites. It is to the second theory, that these savage superior beings are disguised borrowings from missionaries, explorers, traders, or squatters, that I now address myself.[8] These beings certainly cause difficulties to the philosophy which derives gods, in the last resort, from ghosts.

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[7] *Natives of Central Australia*, London, 1899.

[8] With a case of ignoring the evidence I deal in the following essay, *Magic and Religion*.

It is probable that these difficulties have for some time been present to the mind of Mr. E. B. Tylor (one may drop academic titles in speaking of so celebrated a scholar). When Mr. Tylor publishes the Gifford Lectures which he delivered some years ago at Aberdeen, we shall know his mature mind about this problem. Meanwhile he has shown that the difficulty, the god where no god should be, is haunting his reflections. For example, his latest edition of his 'Primitive Culture' (1891) contains, as we shall show, interesting modifications of what he wrote in the second edition (1871).

There are three ways in which friends of the current theory that gods are grown-up ghosts may attempt to escape from their quandary. (1) The low races with the high gods are *degenerate*, and their deity is a survival from a loftier stage of lost culture. Mr. Tylor, however, of course, knows too much to regard the Australians, in the stone age, as degenerate. (2) The evidence is bad or (Fr. Müller) is that of prejudiced missionaries. But Mr. Tylor knows that some of the evidence is excellent, and, at its best, does not repose on missionary testimony. (3) The high gods of the low races are borrowed from missionary teaching. This is the line adopted by Mr. Tylor.

I recently pointed out, in 'The Making of Religion' (1898), the many difficulties which beset the current theory. I was therefore alarmed on rinding that Mr. Tylor had mined the soil under my own hypothesis. His theory of borrowing (which would blow mine sky-high if it exploded) is expounded by Mr. Tylor in an essay, 'The Limits of Savage Religion,' published in the 'Journal of the Anthropological Institute' (vol. xxi., 1892). I propose to examine Mr. Tylor's work, and to show that his own witnesses demonstrate the unborrowed and original character of the gods in question.

Mr. Tylor first opposes the loose popular notion that all over North America the Indians believed in a being named *Kitchi Manitou*, or 'Great Spirit,' a notion which I do not defend. He says: 'The historical evidence is that the Great Spirit belongs, not to the untutored, but to the tutored mind of the savage, and is preserved for us in the records of the tutors themselves, the Jesuit missionaries of Canada.'[9] Now as to the *word* 'Manitou' spirit, Mr. Tylor quotes Le Jeune (1633): 'By this word "Manitou," I think they understand what we call an angel, or some powerful being.'[10] Again: 'The Montagnets give the name "Manitou" to everything, whether good or bad, superior to man. Therefore, when we speak of God, they sometimes call Him "The Good Manitou," while when we speak of the Devil, they call him "The Bad Manitou."'[11] When then, ninety years later, in 1724, Père Lafitau dilates on 'The Great Spirit,' 'The Great Manitou,' we are to see that in ninety years the term which the Indians used for *our* God – their translation of *le bon dieu*– has taken root, become acclimatised, and flourished. Lafitau, according to Mr. Tylor, has also raised the Huron word for spirit, *oki*, to Okki, with a capital O, which he calls *Le Grand Esprit*. The elevation is solely due to Lafitau and other Christian teachers. If all this were granted, all this is far indeed from proving that the idea of a beneficent Creator was borrowed by the Indians from the Jesuits between 1633 and 1724. Mr. Tylor's own book, 'Primitive Culture,' enables us to correct that opinion. Here he quotes Captain Smith, from an edition of the 'History of Virginia' of 1632. Smith began to colonise Virginia in 1607. He says (edition of 1632): 'Their chief god they worship is the Devil. Him they call Okee (Okki), and serve him more of fear than love.' Mr. Tylor cites this as a statement by 'a half-educated and whole-prejudiced European' about 'savage deities, which, from his point of view, seem of a wholly diabolic nature.' 'The word oki,' Mr. Tylor goes on, 'apparently means "that which is above," and was, in fact, a general name for spirit or deity.'[12]

The chief deity of the Virginians then (in 1607, before missionaries came), with his temples and images, was a being whose name apparently meant 'that which is above.' Moreover, Father Brebeuf (1636) describes an oki in the heavens who rules the seasons, is dreaded, and sanctions treaties.

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[9] *Op. cit.* p. 284.

[10] Le Jeune, *Relations*, 1633, p. 17.

[11] *Ibid*., 1637, p. 49.

[12] *Prim. Cult.* ii. 310.

Consequently Lafitau did not, in 1724, first make oki, a spirit, into Okki, a god. That had been done in Virginia before any missionaries arrived, by the natives themselves, long before 1607. For this we have, and Mr. Tylor has cited, the evidence of Smith, before Jesuits arrived. What is yet more to the purpose, William Strachey, a successor of Smith, writing in 1611-12, tells us that Okeus (as he spells the word) was only a magisterial deputy of 'the great God (the priests tell them) who governs all the world, and makes the sun to shine, creatyng the sun and moone his companions… [him] they call Ahone. The good and peaceable God requires no such duties [as are paid to Okeus], nor needs to be sacrificed to, for he intendeth all good unto them.' He has no image.[13] Strachey remarks that the native priests vigorously resisted Christianity. They certainly borrowed neither Okeus nor Ahone, the beneficent Creator who is without sacrifice, from Jesuits who had not yet arrived.

Do we need more evidence? If so, here it is. Speaking of New England in 1622, Winslow writes about the god Kiehtan as a being of ancient credit among the natives. He 'made all the other gods; he dwells far westerly above the heavens, whither all good men go when they die.' Thus Mr. Tylor himself (*loc. cit.*) summarises Winslow, and quotes: 'They never saw Kiehtan, *but they hold it a great charge and dutie that one age teach another.* And to him they make feasts, and cry and sing for plentie, and victorie, or anything that is good.'

Thus Kiehtan, in 1622, was not only a relatively supreme god, but also a god of ancient standing. Borrowing from missionaries was therefore impossible.

Mr. Tylor then added, in 1871: 'Brinton's etymology is plausible, that this Kiehtan is simply the Great Spirit (Kittanitowit, Great Living Spirit, an Algonquin word compounded of Kitta = great, manitou = spirit, termination, wit, indicating life).'

But all this etymology Mr. Tylor omitted in his edition of 1891, probably no longer thinking it plausible.

He did, however, say in 1891 (ii. 342): 'Another famous native American name for the Supreme Deity is Oki.'

Not content with Okeus, capital O and all, before the arrival of missionaries; not content with Kiehtan, whose etymology (in 1871) 'apparently' means 'Great Spirit,' before the arrival of Jesuits in New England, Mr. Tylor, in 'Primitive Culture,' adds to these deities 'the Greenlanders' Torngarsuk, or Great Spirit (his name is an augmentative of "torngak," "spirit" [in 1891 "demon"]),' before the arrival of missionaries! For, says Mr. Tylor, 'he seems no figure derived from the religion of Scandinavian colonists, ancient or modern… He so clearly held his place as supreme deity in the native mind that, as Cranz the missionary alleges, many Greenlanders, hearing of God and His Almighty power, were apt to fall on the idea that it was their Torngarsuk who was meant.'[14]

Now, in 1891, Mr. Tylor dropped out 'he seems no figure derived from the religion of Scandinavian colonists, ancient or modern;' and he added that Torngarsuk was later identified, not with our God, but with our Devil: a foible characteristic, I may say – as Mr. Tylor said concerning Captain Smith and Oki – of 'a half-educated and whole-prejudiced European.' For the Algonquin Indians Mr. Tylor cited Father Le Jeune (1633): 'When the missionary talked to them of an almighty creator of heaven and earth, they began to say to one another Atahocan, Atahocan.' But his name had fallen into contempt and a verb, *Nitatahocan*, meant 'I tell an old fanciful story.' In 1558 Thevet credits the Canadian Indians with belief in 'a creator' Andouagni, not approached with prayers. None of these beings can have been borrowed from Europeans. It will presently be seen that between 1871 and 1892 Mr. Tylor became sceptical as to the records of a Great Spirit in America. But he retained Oki in the sense of Supreme Deity.

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[13] *Historic of Travaile into Virginia*. By William Strachey, Gent, (a companion of Captain Smith). Hakluyt Society. Date *circ.*1612-1616. See *Myth, Ritual, and Religion*, i. xx-xxxix, 1899.

[14] *Prim. Cult.* ii. p. 308.

Here, then, from Virginia to Greenland, Mr. Tylor presented in 1871 evidence for a being of supreme power, called bynames which, perhaps, mean 'Great Spirit.' In his essay of 1892 he does not refer to his earlier work and his evidence there for a Great Spirit, nor tell us why he has changed his mind. He now attributes the Great Spirit to missionary influence. We naturally ask in what respect he has found the early evidence on which he previously relied lacking in value. Mr. Tylor, in 'Primitive Culture,'[15] gives a yet earlier reference than the others for a Virginian Creator. He cites Heriot (an author of 1586). Again: 'They believe in one who made all things, but pay him no honour,' writes Père L'Allemant in 1626, in a region where 'il n'y ait point eu de religieux.'

In 1871 Mr. Tylor said: 'It has even been thought that the whole doctrine of the Great Spirit was borrowed by the savages from missionaries and colonists. But this view will not bear examination. After due allowance made for mis-rendering of savage answers and importation of white men's thoughts, it can hardly be judged that a divine being, whose characteristics are so unlike what European intercourse would have suggested, and who is heard of by such early explorers among such distant tribes, could be a deity of foreign origin.'[16] In 1891 'this view will not bear examination' is deleted – why? – and the deity, we are told, 'could *hardly* be altogether of foreign origin.' He could not be, when found by the first European discoverers, and, had the creed been borrowed, prayer to the being would have been borrowed with it.

Now, in his essay of 1892, Mr. Tylor never, I think, alludes to his own evidence of 1873, or even of 1891, in favour of a Red Indian creator, evidence earlier than the Jesuits (1558, 1586, 1612-16, 1622, and of Le Jeune, 1633). In the essay of 1892 that authentic evidence 'of such early explorers among such distant tribes' to a savage conception of the Creator is not cited. The coincidence of testimony is the strongest possible evidence to the nature and unborrowed character of the being. Such coincidence is, in fact, Mr. Tylor's own touchstone of trustworthy testimony. Yet in 1892 the Jesuits receive the whole credit of introducing the idea. It would be interesting to know why the early evidence has suddenly become untrustworthy. The essay of 1892 ought, of course, to be regarded as only a sketch. Yet we are anxious to learn the reasons which made Mr. Tylor leave his evidence out of sight, though republished by him only the year before he put forth his tractate in favour of borrowing from Jesuits. I turn to another point on which I cannot accept Mr. Tylor's arguments.

In his essay of 1892 Mr. Tylor dates the Mandan Deluge legend as not before 1700. Why? Because Catlin (in 1830-1840) found iron instruments used ritually in the native Mystery Play of the Flood. They were supposed to represent the tools employed in making the vessel wherein 'the only man' escaped drowning. But the Mandans did not get iron tools before 1700. The Indians, however, we reply, had canoes before they had iron tools, and, in modern times, might naturally employ iron instead of flint instruments (discarded) in the Mystery Play. They might do this, in spite of the marked preference for stone tools in ritual. Perhaps they had none. It must here be observed that Catlin does not use the word 'ark' (as Mr. Tylor does) for the vessel of 'the only man.' Catlin always says 'the big canoe.' Even if we admit (which we do not) that the Mandans necessarily borrowed their Deluge legend from whites, it does not follow, as Mr. Tylor argues, that because the 'Great Spirit' appears in the Deluge legend, he 'cannot claim greater antiquity' than 1700. In the first place, as, in Mr. Tylor's earlier statement, Canadians, Algonquins, Virginians, Massachusetts, and Greenlanders had a Great Spirit before Christian influences began, the Mandans may have been equally fortunate. Nor does it seem safe to argue, like Mr. Tylor, that if the Great Spirit figures in a (hypothetically) borrowed myth, therefore the conception of a Great Spirit was necessarily borrowed at the same time. That more recent myths are constantly being attached to a pre-existing god or hero is a recognised fact in mythology. Nor can mythologists argue (1) that Biblical myth is a modified survival of savage myth, and (2) that such natural and obvious savage myths as the kneading of man out of clay, the origin of

[15] *Prim. Cult.* ii. pp. 309, 310 (1873 and 1891).

[16] *Prim. Cult.* ii. p. 308.

death ('the Fall'), and the tradition of the Deluge are necessarily borrowed by savages from the Bible. This is, indeed, to argue in a vicious circle. Again, was the Australian and American myth of a race of wise birds, earlier than man, borrowed from the famous chorus in the 'Birds' of Aristophanes? Is the Arunta theory of evolution borrowed from Darwin, or their theory of reincarnation from Buddhism? Borrowing of ideas seems only to be in favour when savage ideas resemble more or less those of Christianity.

Mr. Tylor remarks that Prince Maximilian, who knew Mandanese better than Catlin, found among them no 'Great Manitou' – so called. But he did find a Creator whose name means 'Lord of Earth.' Was He borrowed from the whites? Finally, on this point, would savages who remained so utterly un-Christian as the Mandans, adopt from missionaries just one myth – the Deluge – and make that the central feature in their national ritual? Indeed this seems very improbable conduct! Nothing is more conservative than ritual: that is notorious.

We do not follow Mr. Tylor into South America. If our case is proved, by his own not repudiated authorities, for North America, that suffices us. We turn to Australia.

Let us first take the typical Australian case of Baiame, Pei-a-mei, or Baiamai, at present alleged by Mr. Howitt and others to be the moral creative being of many tribes,[17] and served, without sacrifice, in their mysteries. Mr. Tylor first finds him mentioned as a creator by Mr. Horace Hale, whose book is of 1840.[18] 'Next, in 1850, Baiame was spoken of by a native to some German Moravian missionaries as a being who, according to their 'sorcerers or doctors,' made all things, but was easy to anger, and was to be appeased by dances. Thus he was accepted by the most notoriously conservative class, the class most jealous of missionary influence, the sorcerers. Omitting for the moment a later description of Baiame as seen by a black devotee in a vision, we turn to Mr. Tylor's theory of the origin of this god. Mr. Ridley (who began his missionary career in Victoria in 1854) gives a pleasing account of Baiame as a creator, with a paradise for the good. According to Mr. Ridley, 'Baiame' is discovered by Mr. Greenway to be derived from *baia*, 'to make,' and he concludes that 'for ages unknown' the blacks have called God 'the Maker.'[19]

Mr. Tylor now asks, 'Was Baiame,' who is, he avers, 'near 1840 so prominent a divine figure among the Australians, known to them at all a few years earlier?' He decides that before 1840 Baiame was 'unknown to well-informed (white) observers.' This, of course, would not prove that Baiame was unknown to the blacks. As for the observers, who are three in number, one, Buckley the convict, in spite of his thirty-two years with the blacks, is of no real value. We cannot trust a man who lied so freely as to say that in Australia he 'speared salmon'! and often saw the fabled monster, the Bunyip.[20] Buckley could not read, and his book was made up by a Mr. Morgan out of 'rough notes and memoranda … and by conversation.' If, then, as Buckley says, 'they have no notion of a Supreme Being' (p. 57), we may discount that; Buckley's idea of such a being was probably too elevated. Moreover he never mentions the confessedly ancient native mysteries, in one of which among certain tribes the being is revealed.[21] Mr. Tylor's next well-informed observer before 1840, Mr. Backhouse, a Quaker, takes his facts straight from the third witness, Mr. Threlkeld; he admits it for some of them, and it is true, in this matter, of all of them.[22] Buckley being out of court, and Backhouse being a mere copy of Mr. Threlkeld, what has Mr. Threlkeld to say? What follows is curious. Mr. Threlkeld (1834-1857) does not name Baiame, but speaks of a big supernatural black man, called Koin, who

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[17] Howitt, *Journal of Anthropological Institute*, 1884, 1885.

[18] *United States Exploring Expedition. Ethnology and Philology* p. 110.

[19] Ridley, *Kamilaroi Vocabularies*, p. 17 (1875). Also in an earlier Grammar, 1866.

[20] *The Life and Adventures of William Buckley*, 1852, pp. 40-48.

[21] Howitt, *J. A. I.*, 1885. The Kurnai tribe.

[22] Backhouse, *Narrative of a Visit to the Australian Colonies*, 1843, p. 555. Compare Threlkeld, *An Australian Language*, 1892, p. 47. This is a reprint of Mr. Threlkeld's early works of 1831-1857.

carries wizards up to the sky, inspires sorcerers, walks about with a fire-stick, and so on.[23] To honour him boys' front teeth are knocked out in the initiatory stages.

As soon as I read this passage I perceived that Mr. Threlkeld was amalgamating such a goblin as the Kurnai call 'Brewin' with the high God of the Mysteries. In 1881, when Mr. Howitt, with Mr. Fison, wrote 'Kamilaroi and Kurnai,' he knew no higher being among that tribe than the goblin Brewin. But, being initiated later, Mr. Howitt discovered that the God of the Mysteries is Mungan-ngaur = 'Our Father' (this shows the slight value of negative evidence). Women know about Brewin, the goblin master of sorcerers, but the knowledge of Mungan-ngaur is hidden from them under awful penalties.[24] Not only I, but Mr. Horace Hale (1840), came to this opinion: that Koin is a goblin, Baiame a god, as we shall see. In the same way, where Baiame is supreme, Daramulun is sometimes a goblin or fiend.

Mr. Threlkeld very properly did not use the name of the fiend Koin as equivalent to 'God' in his translation of the Gospel of St. Luke into the native tongue (1831-1834). He there used for God Eloi, and no doubt did the same in his teaching; he also tried the word *Jeliovaka-birun.* Neither word has taken with the blacks; neither word occurs in their traditions. The word, though forced on them, has not been accepted by them. That looks ill for the theory of borrowing.

Here, then, of Mr. Tylor's three negative witnesses, who, before 1840, knew not Baiame, Mr. Threlkeld alone is of value. As Mr. Hale says, Mr. Threlkeld was (1826-1857) the first worker at the dialects of those Baiame-worshipping tribes, the Kamilaroi of the Wellington Valley, in Victoria. But whence did Mr. Hale get what Mr. Tylor cites, his knowledge in 1840 of Baiame? He, an American *savant* on an exploring expedition, could not well find out esoteric native secrets. I shall prove that Mr. Hale got his knowledge of Baiame from Mr. Tylor's own negative witness, Mr. Threlkeld. Mr. Hale says that 'when the missionaries first came to Wellington,' Baiame was worshipped with songs. 'There was a native famous for the composition of these songs or hymns, which, according to Mr. Threlkeld, were passed on,' &c. Mr. Hale thus declares (Mr. Tylor probably overlooked the remark) that when the missionaries first came to Wellington (where Baiame is the Creator) they found Baiame there before them![25] Then, why did Mr. Threlkeld not name Baiame? I think because Mr. Hale says that Baiame's name and sacred dance were brought in by natives from a distance, and (when he is writing) had fallen into disuse.[26] Had, then, a missionary before 1840 evolved Baiame from Kamilaroi *baia*, 'to make' (for that is Mr. Tylor's theory of the origin of the word 'Baiame'), and taught the name to distant natives as a word for his own God; and had these proselytising distant dancing natives brought Baiame's name and dance to Wellington? Are missionaries dancing masters? They would teach prayer and kneeling, or give rosaries; dances are no part of our religion. To demonstrate missionary influence here we must find a missionary, not Mr. Threlkeld, who was studying and working on the Kamilaroi tongue before 1840. There was no such missionary. Finally, Mr. Hale runs counter to Mr. Tylor's theory of borrowing from whites, though Mr. Tylor does not quote his remark. The ideas of Baiame may 'possibly' be derived from Europeans, 'though,' says Mr. Hale, 'the great unwillingness which the natives always evince to adopt any custom or opinion from them militates against such a supposition.' So strong is this reluctance to borrow ideas from the whites, that the blacks of the centre have not even borrowed the idea that children are a result of the intercourse of the sexes! Here, then, in part of the district studied by Mr. Threlkeld in 1826-1857, an American *savant* (who certainly received the facts from Mr. Threlkeld) testifies to Baiame as recently brought from a distance by natives, but as prior to the arrival of missionaries, and most unlikely to have been borrowed.

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[23] *Op. cit.* p. 47.

[24] *Journal Anthrop. Inst.*, 1885.

[25] He was supposed to live on an island, on fish which came at his call, probably a childlike answer to a tedious questioner.

[26] *Exploring Expedition of U.S.*, 1846, p. 110.

Whence, then, came Baiame? Mr. Tylor thinks the evidence 'points rather to Baiame being the missionary translation of the word "creator," used in missionary lesson books for God.' But by 1840, when Baiame is confessedly 'so prominent a divine figure,' Mr. Threlkeld's were the only translations and grammatical tracts in the Kamilaroi tongue. Now Mr. Threlkeld did not translate 'creator' (or anything else) by 'Baiame;' he used 'Eloi' and 'Jehovah-ka,' and the natives would have neither of these words. Where is Mr. Tylor's reason, then, for holding that before 1840 (for it must be prior to that date if it is going to help his argument) any missionary ever rendered creator by 'Baiame'? He has just argued that no 'observer' then knew the name Baiame, so no observer could have introduced a name Baiame which he did not know; yet there was the name; Mr. Hale found it there. Mr. Tylor's argument seems to be that Mr. Ridley in 1866, and again in 1877, printed extracts, in which occurs Baiame=God, from the 'Missionary Primers prepared for the Kamilaroi.' We might have expected Mr. Tylor at least to give the dates of the 'Missionary Primers' that, *ex hypothesi*, introduced Baiame before 1840. He gives no dates, and the primers are of 1856 and are written by Mr. Ridley, who cites them.[27] Thus they must be posterior to the Baiame of 1840, and Baiame was prior to missionaries at Wellington, at the time when Mr. Tylor first notes his appearance. Thus, by Mr. Tylor's own evidence, Baiame is not shown to be a missionary importation; the reverse.

As to Australia, it is not denied by Mr. Tylor that practically all over the continent the blacks possess religious mysteries of confessed antiquity. It is not denied that the institution of these mysteries is now, in many cases, attributed by the blacks to a moral creative being, whose home is in or above the heavens. It is not denied that his name now usually means, in different dialects, Maker (Baiame), Master (Biamban), and Father (Papang, and many other words). It is not denied that the doctrine of this being is *now* concealed from children and women, and revealed to lads at the *Bora*, or initiatory mystery.[28] But, on the other hand (as I understand Mr. Tylor), while initiatory rites are old (they certainly existed when Dampier touched at the Australian coast in 1688-1689), the names of their institutor (Father, Maker), his moral excellencies (?), and his creative attributes, are all due to missionary influence. The original founder of the Bora, in pre-missionary days, would only be a dead 'head-man' or leader, now religiously regarded.

To this we first demur. It is not shown – it is denied by Waitz, and it is not even alleged by Mr. Herbert Spencer – that the Australians 'steadily propitiate' or sacrifice at all to any ghosts of dead men. How can they? The name of the dead is tabooed, and even where there is in one instance an eponymous human patronymic of a tribe, that patronymic alters in every generation. Now, among such a ghost-worshipping people as the Zulus, the most recently dead father gets most worship. In Australia, where even the recent ghosts are unadored, is it likely that some remote ghost is remembered as founder of the ancient mysteries? This is beyond our belief, though the opinion is, or at least was, that of Mr. Howitt. The mere institution of female kin among some of these tribes (though paternity is recognised) makes against an ancient worship of a male ancestor where even now ancestors are unworshipped.

As to the aspect of this god, Baiame, Mr. Tylor presently cites a story told to Mr. Howitt by a native, of how with his father he once penetrated in the spirit to Baiame's home, and found him to be 'a very great old man with a long beard,' and with crystal pillars growing out of his shoulders which support a supernal sky. His 'people,' birds and beasts, were around him. Mr. Tylor says: 'These details are, it will have been noticed, in some respects of very native character, while in others recalling conventional Christian ideas of the Almighty.'

The 'Christian' idea is, naturally, that of the old man of Blake and Michael Angelo – Hartley Coleridge's 'old man with the beard.' Is it likely that the savages had seen any such representations? Again, is the idea of Baiame as an old man not natural to a race where respect of age is

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[27] *Gurre Kamilaroi, or Kamilaroi Sayings*. Sydney, 1856. It is a scarce little book, with illustrations and Bible stories.

[28] Howitt, *Journal Anthrop. Institute, ut supra.*

regularly inculcated in the mysteries and prevails in practice? 'Among the Kamilaroi about Bundurra, Turramulan [another name for this or a lower god] is represented [at the mysteries] by an old man learned in all the laws.'[29]…

As early as 1798 Collins found that the native word for 'father' in New South Wales was applied by the blacks as a title of reverence to the Governor of the nascent colony.[30] It is used now in many native tribes as the name of their Supreme Being, and Mr. Tylor thinks it of missionary origin. Manifestly, this idea of age and paternity in a worshipped being is congenial to the natives, is illustrated in their laws and customs, need not be borrowed, and is rather inevitable. The vision of Baiame, we may add, was narrated to Mr. Howitt by a native fellow-initiate. To lie, in such cases, is 'an unheard-of thing,' says Mr. Howitt. The vision was a result of the world-wide practice of crystal gazing. The seer's father handed to him a crystal. 'When I looked at it,' says the narrator, all manner of visions appeared, including that of Baiame.[31]

It is manifest, we think, that when the natives attach the attributes of fatherhood and antiquity to Baiame, they need not be borrowing from Christian art notions so natural, nay, so inevitable, in their own stage of society. Though in many cases reckoning kinship through women, they quite undeniably recognise paternity in fact. Thus the paternal title had no need to be borrowed as a word of reverence. It was so used before missionaries came.

Mr. Howitt, who is deeply initiated, writes: 'Beyond the vaulted sky lies the mysterious home of that great and powerful being who is Bunjil, Baiame, or Taramulan in different tribal languages, but who in all is known by a name the equivalent of the only one used by the Kurnai, which is Mangun-ngaur, Our Father.'[32]

Now, not to multiply evidence which is provided by other observers as to Central Australia (not so central as the Arunta country) and the North, Mr. Tylor is confronted with this problem: Have all the tribes who regard a powerful being, Baiame or another, as founder of their ancient mysteries, borrowed his name and attributes, since 1840 or so, from whites with whom they were constantly in hostile relations? Is it probable that, having hypothetically picked up from Christians the notion of a moral Father in heaven, their 'priests' and initiators instantly disseminated that idea over most of the continent, and introduced it into their most secret and most conservative ceremonies? Would they be likely to restrict so novel a piece of European information to the men? Mr. Dawson, in his 'Aborigines of Australia' (p. 51), writes: 'The recent custom of providing food for it (a corpse) is derided by intelligent old aborigines as "white fellows' gammon"!' Thus do they estimate novelties! Yet in Mr. Tylor's theory it is the most conservative class of all, the medicine-men and learned elders – everywhere rivals and opponents of Christian doctrine – who pick up the European idea of a good, powerful father or master, borrow a missionary name for him (we have shown that the name, Baiame, is not of missionary origin), and introduce him in precisely the secret heart of the mysteries. This knowledge is hidden, under terrible penalties, from women and children: to what purpose? Do missionaries teach only the old rams of the flock, and neglect the ewes and lambs? Obviously the women and children must know any secret of divine names and attributes imparted by missionaries. Again, it is not probable that having recently borrowed a new idea from the whites the blacks would elaborately hide it from its authors, the Europeans. So well is it hidden that, till he was formally initiated, Mr. Howitt had no suspicion of its existence.[33]

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[29] Greenway, *J. A. I.* vii. p. 243.

[30] Collins, *Account of the Colony of New South Wales*, 1798, vol. ii. p. 544.

[31] *J. A. I.*. xvi. pp. 49, 50.

[32] *Op. cit.*, 1885, p. 54.

[33] For concealment from women and children, see Howitt, *J. A. I.* xiii. p. 192.

Mr. Tylor may rest in his hypothesis of borrowing, but for the reasons assigned we think it impossible in our, and his, selected North American cases, and inconceivable as an explanation of the Australian phenomena.

Finally, Mr. Tylor candidly adduces a case in which Mr. Dawson, taking great and acknowledged trouble to collect evidence, learned from the blacks that they had believed in a benevolent being, Pirnmeheal, 'whose voice is the thunder,' 'before they knew of the existence of Europeans,' who 'have given them a dread of Pirnmeheal.'[34] We add Mr. Howitt's testimony to a supreme being ruling 'from Omeo to Shoalhaven River, from the coast to Yass Gundagai,' concerning whom 'old men strenuously maintained that it was so before the white men came,' they themselves, now aged, having only learned the secret when they were initiated 'and made men' at about the age of fourteen.[35] In the same essay of 1885[36] Mr. Howitt tells of a native whose grandfather initiated him as to an all-seeing personality, Bunjil, 'up there,' who would mark his conduct. 'This was said before the white men came to Melbourne' (1835). Bunjil, said William Beiruk, a black, was called 'our father' 'before white men came to Melbourne.'

I might give other evidence in favour of the unborrowed character of Australian belief in some such being as Baiame. Thus Mrs. Langloh Parker, the careful collector of 'Australian Legendary Tales,'[37] was herself interested in the question. She approached the subject as a disciple of Mr. Herbert Spencer, who allows hardly a germ of religion to the Australians. On hearing what she did hear, as to Baiame, from the tribesmen, she asked one of them whether the idea was not borrowed from Europeans. The old warrior answered that if it were so the young men would know most about Baiame. But they know nothing, apparently because the old rites of initiation have fallen into disuse. Nor are they much more familiar with Christian doctrine. This black man had logic in him. Mrs. Langloh Parker came, contrary to her prepossessions, to the same opinion as our best authority, Mr. Howitt, that the Australian belief is unborrowed.

This lady, who has taken very great pains in criticising and collecting her evidence, kindly sent me an essays of Mr. Manning's from 'The Journal of the Royal Society of New South Wales,' vol. xvi. p. 159, 1883. Mr. Manning was an early settler in the north border of the southern colony. About 1832 he was in Europe, and met Goethe, whose undiminished curiosity, he being then about eighty-five, induced him to bid Mr. Manning examine Australian beliefs. He did, but lost his notes, made in 1845-1848. In these notes, which he later recovered, Mr. Manning used Christian terminology, instead of making a verbatim report. Struck by the certainly singular savage idea of a son (begotten in some cases, in others a kind of 'emanation') of the superior being, he employed theological phrases. The son, in his story, sprang from a liquid like blood, which Boyma (Baiame) placed in a vessel within a crystal oven. The myth of such a birth, as Mr. Hartland remarks, is familiar to Zulus and Red Indians.[38] It is therefore not likely to be of European origin. But Mr. Manning's evidence, despite its terminology, so far agrees with Mrs. Langloh Parker's account of the extant Baiame belief as to 'make a case for further inquiry;' so Mr. Hartland concedes. I ask for no more.[39] Thus Mr. Manning has Ballima, Mrs. Langloh Parker has Bullimah, for a kind of floral paradise of souls, very beautifully described in the lady's 'More Australian Legendary Tales.'

Both authorities mention prayers for the dead; Mrs. Langloh Parker quotes what Mr. Hartland calls 'very interesting funeral rites and prayers for the dead.' He adds: 'We want to be assured whether these are usual, by means of an accurate description of the customary ceremonies, and that she does

[34] Dawson, *Aborigines of Australia*, p. 49.

[35] *J. A. I.* xiii. 1885, p. 142.

[36] *Op. cit.* p. 194.

[37] Two volumes. Nutt.

[38] *Legend of Perseus*, i. 97.

[39] *Folk Lore*, March 1899, p. 55.

not give us.' I shall make inquiry; but what does it matter whether the rites, in the overthrow of native manners, are now usual or not? Baiame is unknown to the new generation, as we have seen. Prayers to him, then, cannot be usual. The point is that Mr. Manning in 1845, and Mrs. Langloh Parker in 1898, both mention the prayers for the dead, certainly not borrowed from Protestants. There is a similar account, only that of an unnamed runaway convict who lived with the black fellows in North-Western Australia.[40] By a mythical contradiction, the soul of the hero Eerin, prayed for in Mrs. Langloh Parker's tale, now inhabits a little bird.

Another curious point needs to be considered by the advocates of the theory of borrowing. Mr. Hartland offers some deserved censures on Mr. Manning's terminology in his report of Australian religion (1845-1848). Mr. Manning says: 'They believe in the existence of a Son of God, equal with him in omniscience, and but slightly inferior to his Father in any attribute. Him they call "Grogoragally." His divine office is to watch over all the actions of mankind, and to bring to life the dead to appear before the judgment seat of his Father, who alone pronounces the awful judgment of eternal happiness in heaven (Ballima) or eternal misery in "Oorooma" (hell), which is the place of everlasting fire (gumby). The Son … acts as mediator for their souls to the great God, to whom the good and bad actions of all are known.' As Mr. Hartland truly says, 'this is not an accurate scientific account.' Even Mr. Manning's 'capital letters' are censured.

Probably the native theologian really said something like this: 'Boyma' (Baiame) big man; very budgery man. Him sit on big glass stone. Him son Grogoragally can see everything and go everywhere. See budgery man, like him; see bad man, plenty too much devil devil. Likes budgery man; no likes bad man: he growl too much. Budgery man die, Grogoragally tell Boyma; Boyma say, 'Take him Ballima way, plenty budgery place.' Bad man die; Boyma say, 'Take him Oorooma way, plenty too hot, him growl there.' Grogoragally plenty strong, him not so strong as Boyma.

This, or something like this, would be the actual statement of the dusky theologian. It is easily rendered into Mr. Manning's terminology; but at the same time the native, in his rude *lingua franca*, or pidgin English, could hardly do justice to his creed. It *was* his creed; Mr. Hartland himself recognises the original character of the native version of the Supernatural Birth.[41]

Here are certainly 'Biblical analogies,' as Mr. Tylor recognises, but they are as certainly unborrowed.

Now let us fancy that a traveller, not a Greek scholar, is storm-driven to a hitherto unknown island. He finds a race of heathen white men. He describes their religion. 'Despite their polytheism, they have certainly been visited by Christian missionaries, or are descended from a Christian colony. They believe in a supreme being whom they call Zeus. He has a son named Apollon or Phoebus Apollon, who is all-knowing and all-seeing. He acts as a kind of mediator between Zeus and men, to whom, as one of the native hymns says, he "delivers the counsels of the Father, and his unerring will." This Apollo is consulted through an hysterical woman, who lives in a cave. After being convulsed, like other savage mediums, she speaks in a kind of verse. Her advice is often obscure and ambiguous, but generally of a moral tendency.

'This son of Zeus is believed to be the only god who really knows the future and the will of his father. There is another son, Hermes, one of whose duties is to conduct the souls of the dead into the presence of their judge, who is not Zeus, but another god.

'There is also a son of Apollo, whom I take to be only a kind of double of that god; he sometimes appears to his worshippers as a serpent: his name is Asclepius.

'This reminds us of what Winslow writes about the Red Indians of New England. They have a supreme being, Kiehtan, whose son, Hobamok, appears in their assemblies as a serpent. Ridley has the same story about the blacks of Australia. I infer, then, that the natives of this island have inherited

[40] Ridley, *J. A. I.*, 1872, p. 282.

[41] *Folk Lore*, March 1899, pp. 52, 53.

or been taught some elements of Christianity, as in the case of Apollo, the mediator between Zeus and men; and Hermes, the Guide of Souls as they call him, *psychopompos* in their language. But they have mixed up all this with degrading superstitions.'

Of course our traveller has arrived among Greeks, and quotes the Homeric hymn to Apollo. But the Greeks, being prior to Christianity, did not borrow from it, as our traveller supposes. On the other hand, the Greek beliefs which he describes resemble Australian and American beliefs more closely than Australian and American beliefs resemble the creed taught by missionaries. Yet neither Mr. Tylor nor any other friend of the borrowing theory asserts that the Australians or Americans borrowed their tenets from Greece.

The truth seems to be that where a supreme being is regarded as too remote and impassive, he is naturally supplied with a deputy. Ahone has Oki, Kiehtan has Hobamok, Boyma has Grogoragally, Baiame has Tundun, or in places Daramulun; Nyankupon, in West Africa, has Bobowissi. Sometimes, as in the Australian Noorele's case, these active deputies are sons of the supreme being. No borrowing is needed to explain ideas so natural to early men, believing in a supreme being remote and retired, little concerned with mundane affairs, and acting through a deputy or deputies. In other cases, as of the Finnish Num, or the Zulu Unkulunkulu, or the Algonquin Atahocan, the being is quite neglected in favour of spirits who receive sacrifices of meat or grease. Human minds work on similar lines, without borrowing, which is only alleged in the case of Christianity to account for the beliefs which do not fit the 'ghost theory' of modern speculators.

The essential point of Mr. Manning's report, injured as it is by his impossible terminology, is the extreme secrecy maintained on these points by his savage informants. They used to believe that the world would perish if the women heard of their dogmas. Thus a man said to Mr. Howitt (whose competence as a witness is indisputable): 'If a woman were to hear these things, or hear what we tell the boys, I would kill her.'[42] One of Mr. Manning's witnesses slunk 'into a wooden fireplace,' whence he whispered his beliefs. He had previously examined doors and windows in search of listeners. A man who reported these creeds would, if they became divulged among the women, be obliged to kill his wife.

If the religious ideas were borrowed from missionaries, the women would know them as well as the men. They would not be reserved for initiates at the mysteries, through which Mr. Howitt derived his most esoteric knowledge of creeds, whereof, in 1881, he was absolutely ignorant.[43]

If the beliefs were of missionary origin, the young men, not the old men, would know most about Baiame. For similar beliefs in North-West Central Queensland I may cite Mr. Both.[44] The being Mulkari is described by Mr. Both as I a benevolent, omnipresent, supernatural being; anything incomprehensible.' 'Mulkari is the supernatural power who makes everything which the blacks cannot otherwise account for; he is a good, beneficent person, and never kills any one.' His home is in the skies. He was also a medicine-man, has the usual low myths about him, and invented magic. So writes Dr. Both, who knows the local Pitta Pitta language – and is not a missionary. Dr. Both is pursuing his researches, and his remarks are only cited provisionally, awaiting confirmation.

Sometimes European observers do not see the trend of their own reports. In 1845 Mr. Eyre described 'the origin of creation 'as narrated to him by Australian blacks on the Murring River. A being, Noorele, with three unbegotten sons, lives up among the clouds. He is 'all powerful and of benevolent nature. He made the earth, trees, water, &c. He receives the souls (*ladko* = shades, *umbra*) of the natives, who join him in the skies and will never die again.' Yet Mr. Eyre adds: 'A Deity, a Great First Cause, can hardly be said to be acknowledged.'[45] What is Noorele if not a 'Great First Cause'?

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[42] *J. A. I.* vol. xiv. p. 310.

[43] See his and Mr. Fison's *Kamilaroi and Kurnai*, 1881.

[44] *North-West Central Queensland Aborigines*, pp. 14, 36, 116, 153, 158, 165.

[45] Eyre, vol. ii. pp. 355-357.

Among some tribes Bunjil, merely a title of authority, meaning master, lord, headman, is a name of the superior being. Abundance of the mythology of Bunjil, often ludicrous or degrading, the being showing as a supernormal medicine-man, may be found in Mr. Brough Smyth's great collections.[46] But no evidence can be better than that of native poetry, which proves a higher aspect of Bunjil.

A Woiworung bard of old made a song which moved an aged singer to tears by 'the melancholy which the words conveyed to him.' It was an 'inspired' song, for the natives, like ourselves, would think Tennyson inspired and Tupper not so. Usually 'the spirits' inspire singers; this song was inspired by Bunjil himself, who '"rushes down" into the heart of the singer,' just as Apollo did of old. It is a dirge of the native race:

We go all!
The bones of all
Are shining white.
In this Dulur land!
The rushing noise
Of Bunjil, our Father,
Sings in my breast,
This breast of mine![47]

The missionaries do not inspire these songs. They put them down. 'The white man,' says Mr. Howitt, 'knows little or nothing of the black fellows' songs.' One of Mr. Manning's informants (1845) was angry when asked for the Hymn to Baiame (Boyma). He said that Mr. Manning knew too much already.

I have dwelt specially on Australia, because there, as the natives do not worship ancestral spirits (the names of the dead are tabooed), their superior being cannot have been evolved out of ghost worship. I have expressly avoided the evidence of missionaries, except the early Jesuits, because missionaries are believed by some writers to be biassed on this point, though, in fact, on other points they are copiously cited by anthropologists. As Mr. Tylor finds the saintly and often martyred Jesuits of 1620-1660 worth quoting, I have therefore admitted Father Le Jeune's testimony to the existence of Atahocan before their arrival in America, with Father Brebeuf's Oki, or 'un Oki,' whose anger is feared and who sanctions treaties. It is impossible to me to understand how the savages could borrow from Europeans the beliefs which the Europeans found extant when they arrived. I have not touched the case of Africa. In 'The Making of Religion' (pp. 222-228), I argued against Sir A. B. Ellis's elaborate theory of borrowing a god, in the case of the Tshi-speaking races. I did not know that this exact writer had repudiated his theory, which was also rejected by Miss Mary Kingsley.

As to Australia, in face of the evidence (which settled Mr. Howitt's doubts as to the borrowing of these ideas) can any one bring a native of age and credit who has said that Baiame, under any name, was borrowed from the whites? Mr. Palmer is 'perfectly satisfied' that 'none of these ideas were derived from the whites.' He is speaking of the tribes of the Gulf of Carpentaria, far away indeed from Victoria and New South Wales. There is no greater authority among anthropologists than Waitz, and Waitz rejects the hypothesis that the higher Australian religious beliefs were borrowed from Christians.[48]

To sum up, we have proved, by evidence of 1558, 1586, 1612-16, and 1633, that a sort of supreme creative being was known in North America before any missionary influence reached the

[46] *Aborigines of Victoria.*

[47] Arranged in lines from the literal translation, preserving the native idiom. Howitt, *J. A. I.* vol. xvi. pp. 330, 331.

[48] *Anthropologie*, vi. p. 798.

regions where he prevailed. As to the Australian god Baiame, we have shown out of the mouth of Mr. Tylor's own witness, Mr. Hale, that Baiame preceded the missionaries in the region where literary evidence of his creed first occurs. We have given Mr. Hale's opinion as to the improbability of borrowing. We have left it to Mr. Tylor to find the missionary who, before 1840, translated 'Creator' by the Kamilaroi word 'Baiame' while showing the difficulty – I think the impossibility – of discovering any Kamilaroi philologist before Mr. Threlkeld. And Mr. Threlkeld certainly did not introduce Baiame! We have proved that, contrary to Mr. Tylor's theory of what a missionary can do, Mr. Threlkeld could not introduce his own names for God, Eloi and Jehovah-ka, into Kamilaroi practice. We note the improbability that highly conservative medicine-men would unanimously thrust a European idea into their ancient mysteries. We have observed that by the nature of Mr. Tylor's theory, the hypothetically borrowed divine names and attributes must (if taken over from missionaries) have been well known to the women and children from whom they are concealed under dreadful penalties. We have demonstrated the worthlessness of negative evidence by proving that the facts were discovered, on initiation, by a student (Mr. Howitt), confessedly in the first rank, though he, during many years, had been ignorant of their existence. We show that the ideas of age and paternity, in an object of reverence, are natural and habitual to Australian natives, and stood in no need of being borrowed. We suggest that the absence of prayer to a powerful being is fatal to the theory of borrowing. We show that direct native evidence utterly denies the borrowing of divine names and attributes, and strenuously asserts that before Europeans came to Melbourne (1835) they were revealed in the secret doctrine of ancient initiatory rites. This evidence again removed the doubts which Mr. Howitt had entertained on the point, and Mr. Palmer and Mr. Dawson agree with Mr. Howitt, Mr. Kidley, Mr. Günther, and Mr. Greenway, all experts, all studying the blacks on the spot. In the study, Waitz is of the same opinion. Australian religion is unborrowed.

It is rare, in anthropological speculations, to light on a topic in which verifiable dates occur. The dates of the arrivals of missionaries and other Europeans, the dates of Mr. Hale's book, of Mr. Threlkeld's books, of Mr. Ridley's primer, are definite facts, not conjectures in the air. While this array of facts remains undemolished, science cannot logically argue that the superior beings of low savage belief are borrowed from Christian teachers and travellers. That idea is disproved also by the esoteric and hidden nature of the beliefs, and by the usual, though not universal, absence of prayer. The absence of prayer again, and of sacrifice, proves that gods not bribed or implored were not invented as powerful givers of good things, because good things were found not to be procurable by magic.

This condition of belief is not what a European, whatever his bias, expects to find. He does not import this kind of ideas. If they are all misreports, due to misunderstandings in America and Australia from 1558 to 1898, what is the value of anthropological evidence? It ought to be needless to add that when good observers like Miss Kingsley find traces of Jesuit or other missionary teaching in regions, as Africa or Canada, where Jesuits actually taught in the past, I accept their decision.[43] My arguments against the theory of borrowing apply chiefly to cases where the beliefs reported were found already extant by the first white observers, to tribes where missionaries like Mr. Threlkeld could not introduce their names for deity, and to tribes which jealously conceal their theology from the whites.

# III
# *MAGIC AND RELIGION*

'The sin of witchcraft is as the sin of rebellion.' The idea which inspires this text probably is that a person who seeks to obtain his ends by witchcraft is rebelling against the deity or deities through whom alone these ends should be sought. Witchcraft is also an insult and injury to the official priests, who regard the witch as the surgeon regards the bone-setter, or as the geologist regards the 'dowser' or water-finder who uses the divining-rod.

Magic or witchcraft falls into two main classes. The former is magic of the sort used by people who think that things accidentally like each other influence each other. You find a stone shaped like a yam, and you sow it in the yam plot You find a stone like a duck, and expect to have good duck-shooting while you carry the stone about in a bag. In the same way the part influences the whole; you burn some of a man's hair, and so he catches a fever. Imitation works in the same manner; you imitate the emergence of grubs from the larvæ, and you expect grubs to emerge.

All magic of this kind is wrought by material objects, sticks, stones, hair, and so forth, which sometimes have been 'charmed' by songs chanted over them. Among the Arunta of Central Australia, in many respects a backward people, we do hear of an 'evil spirit' influencing the material object which has been charmed.[49] We also hear of spirits which instruct men in medical magic. But, as a rule, the magic is materialistic. It really does produce effects, by suggestion: a man dies and a woman is won, if they know that magic is being worked to kill or woo.

The second sort of magic acts by spells which constrain spirits or gods to do the will of the magician. This magic involves itself in religion when the magical ceremonies are, so to speak, only symbolic prayers expressed in a kind of sign-language. But if the idea is to put constraint by spells on a god or spirit, then the intention is magical and rebellious. Though the official priest of a savage god may use magic in his appeal to that deity, he is not a wizard. It is the unofficial practitioner who is a witch, just as the unqualified medical practitioner is a quack. In the same way if a minister of the kirk was clairvoyant or second-sighted that was a proof of godliness and inspiration. But if a lay parishioner was second-sighted, he or she was in danger of the stake as a witch or wizard.

These, briefly stated, are the points of contrast and points of contact between magic and religion. The question has recently been raised by Mr. Frazer, in the new edition of his 'Golden Bough,' whether magic has not everywhere preceded religion. Have men not attempted to secure weather and everything else to their desire by magic, before they invented gods, and prayed to them for what magic, as they learned by experience, failed to provide'?

This question cannot be historically determined. If we find a race which has magic but no religion, we cannot be certain that it did not once possess a religion of which it has despaired. I once knew a man who, as a child, suffered from toothache. He prayed for relief: it did not come. He at once, about the age of eight, abandoned religion. What a child may do, in the way of despair of religion, a childlike race may do. Therefore, if we find a race with magic but without religion, we cannot scientifically say that the race has never possessed a religion. Thus the relative priority of religion or magic cannot be ascertained historically.

Again, all depends on our definition of religion, if we are to pursue a speculation rather airy and unbottomed on facts. Mr. Frazer defines religion as 'a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and of human life.'[50] I But clearly this definition does not include all that we usually mean by religion. If men believe in a potent being

[49] Spencer and Gillen, p. 549.

[50] *G. B.* i. p. 63.

who originally made or manufactured the nature of things or most things (I am warned not to use the word 'creator'), that is an idea so far religious that it satisfies, by the figment of a supernatural agent, the speculative faculty. Clearly the belief in such a being is a germ whence may spring the ideas of duty towards, and an affection for, the being. Nobody can deny that these are religious ideas, though they do not appeal in Mr. Frazer's definition. The believers in such a being, even if they never ask him for anything, cannot be called irreligious. At a period of his life when Coleridge never prayed, he would have been much and not unjustly annoyed if Mr. Frazer had called him irreligious. A man may believe in God, and yet trust him too utterly to address him in petitions for earthly goods and gear. 'Thy Will be Done' may be his only prayer; yet he does not lack religion. He only lacks it in the sense of Mr. Frazer's definition.

If that definition is granted, Mr. Frazer is prepared to produce a backward race, houseless, without agriculture, metals, domestic animals, and without religion in Mr. Frazer's sense. They have magic, but they have no religion, says Mr. Frazer, who presently informs us that 1 the first-born child of every woman was eaten by the tribe as part of a religious ceremony.'[51] So they have a religion, and a bloody religion it is.

That people is the Australian, among whom, 'while magic is universally practised, religion in the sense of a propitiation or conciliation of the higher powers seems to be nearly unknown.'[52] 'Nobody dreams of propitiating gods or spirits by prayer or sacrifice.'

We are presently to see that Mr. Frazer gives facts which contradict his own statement. But first I must cite all that he says about Australian religion. 'In the south-eastern parts of Australia, where the conditions of life in respect of climate, water, and vegetation are more favourable than elsewhere, some faint beginnings of religion appear in the shape of a slight regard for the comfort of departed friends. Thus some Victorian tribes are said to have kindled fires near the bodies of their dead in order to warm the ghost, but "the recent custom of providing food for it is derided by the intelligent old aborigines as 'white fellows' gammon."'[53] Some tribes in this south-eastern region are further reported to believe in a supreme spirit, who is regarded sometimes as a benevolent, but more frequently as a malevolent, being.[54] Brewin, the supreme being of the Kurnai, was at first identified by two intelligent members of the tribe with Jesus Christ, but on further reflection they thought he must be the devil.[55] But whether viewed as gods or devils it does not seem that these spirits were ever worshipped.[56] It is worth observing that in the same districts which thus exhibit the germs of religion, the organisation of society and the family has also made the greatest advance. The cause is probably the same in both cases – namely, a more plentiful supply of food due to the greater fertility of the soil.[57] On the other hand, in the parched and barren regions of Central Australia, where magic attains its highest importance, religion seems to be entirely wanting.[58] The traces of a higher faith in Australia, where they occur, are probably sometimes due to European influence. 'I am strongly of opinion,' says one who knew the aborigines well, 'that those who have written to show that the blacks had some knowledge of God, practised prayer, and believed in places of reward and punishment beyond the grave, have been imposed upon, and that until they had learned something of Christianity from missionaries and others the blacks had no beliefs or practices of the sort. Having heard the missionaries, however, they were not slow to invent what I may call kindred statements with aboriginal

[51] *G. B.* ii. p. 51.

[52] *G. B.* i. p. 71.

[53] J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, pp. 50, *sq*.

[54] A. W. Howitt in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiii. (1884), 191.

[55] Fison and A. W. Howitt, *Kamilaroi and Kurnai*, p. 255.

[56] See A. W. Hewitt in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xiii. (1884), p. 459.

[57] See A. W. Howitt in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, xviii. (1889), pp. 32, *sq*. Religion is not mentioned here.

[58] See Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia.*

accessories with a view to please and surprise the whites.'[59] Sometimes, too, the reported belief of the natives in a great or good spirit may rest merely on a misunderstanding. Mr. Lorimer Fison informs me (in a letter dated June 3, 1899) that a German missionary, Mr. Siebert, resident in the Dieri tribe of Central Australia, has ascertained that their Mura Mura, which Mr. Gason explained to be the Good Spirit,[60] is nothing more or less than the ancestors in the 'dream times.' There are male and female Mura Mura – husbands, wives, and children – just as among the Dieri at the present day. Mr. Fison adds: 'The more I learn about savage tribes, the more I am convinced that among them the ancestors grow into gods.'

This is all that Mr. Frazer has here to say about the religious belief of the Australians. He has found, in 'the museum of the past,' a people with abundance of magic, yet with no religion, or not enough to affect his theory that religion was everywhere second in order of time to magic. I am very content to meet him on Australian ground. There we find abundance of testimony to the existence of a belief speculative, moral, and emotional, but not practical. The beings of this belief are not propitiated by sacrifice, and very seldom by prayer, but they are makers, friends, and judges. Mr. Tylor accepts (I think) the evidence for the beliefs as at present found, but presumes many of their characteristics to be of European importation. Against that theory I have argued in the preceding essay, giving historical dates. Mr. Frazer omits and ignores the evidence for the beliefs. He denies to the Australians more than 'some faint beginnings of religion,' and puts down 'traces of a higher faith' as 'probably sometimes due' (and perhaps it sometimes is) 'to European influence.' For this theory Mr. Curr is cited: 'Having heard the missionaries, they were not slow to invent what I call kindred statements with aboriginal accessories, with a view to please and surprise the whites.'[61]

To please and surprise the whites the natives concealed their adaptations of Christian ideas in the mysteries, to which white men are very seldom, or were very seldom, admitted! Is this likely? I believe that the exclusive rule is now relaxed where the natives are practically paid to exhibit.[62] One Bora was under European patronage, and the old men and children were fed on European supplies. But when Mr. Howitt was initiated by the Kurnai, and so first learned the secret of their religion,' the old men… desired to be satisfied that I had in very deed been fully initiated by the Brajerak black fellows in their Kuringal.' He therefore retired to a lonely spot, 'far from the possibility of a woman's presence,' and exhibited the token of his previous initiation by the Murrings. Hitherto 'long as the Kurnai had known me, these special secrets of the tribe had been kept carefully from me by all but two,' one of whom was now dead. The inmost secret was the belief in Mungan-ngaur, 'the Great Father of the tribe, who was once on earth, and now lives in the sky, [he] is rather the beneficent father, and the kindly though severe headman of the whole tribe, than the malevolent wizard, such as are other of the supernatural beings believed in by the Australian blacks.'[63]

Mr. Frazer cites Mr. Howitt thus: 'Some tribes in this south-eastern region are further reported to believe in a supreme spirit, who is regarded sometimes as a benevolent but more frequently as a malevolent being.'[64] What has become of Mr. Howitt's evidence *after* initiation by the Kurnai, evidence published in 1885? How can the blacks invent beliefs to please the whites when they only reveal them to Mr. Howitt, after he has produced a bull roarer as a token of initiation? Mr. Frazer then writes: 'Brewin, the supreme being of the Kurnai, was at first identified by two intelligent members of the tribe with Jesus Christ, but on further reflection they thought he must be the devil.' This is cited from a work of 1881, Messrs. Fison and Howitt's 'Kamilaroi and Kurnai' (p. 255). It must have

[59] E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, i. 45.

[60] *Native Tribes of South Australia*, p. 260.

[61] E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race*, i. 45.

[62] Cf. Mr. Matthews and Mr. Crawley, *J. A. I.* xxiv. 413.

[63] *J. A. I.* xiv. 1885, p. 521.

[64] *G. B.* i. 72, note; *J. A. I.* xiii. p. 191 (1884).

escaped even Mr. Frazer's erudition that Mr. Howitt says: 'When I wrote of Brewin in my paper on "Some Australian Beliefs" I was not aware of the doctrines as to Mungan-ngaur. These the Kurnai carefully concealed from me until I learned them at the Jeraeil, or mysteries.'[65]

Had Mr. Frazer observed this remark of Mr. Howitt's, he could not have cited, without comment or correction, Mr. Howitt's earlier and confessedly erroneous opinion that 'Brewin' is 'the supreme being of the Kurnai.'[66] To Mr. Howitt's correction in 1885 of his mistake of 1881 Mr. Frazer, as far as I observe, makes no allusion.

Mr. Frazer must either have overlooked all the evidence for an Australian belief ruinous to his theory of the origin of religion (ruinous if Australia represents the earliest known stages of religion), or he must have reasons, not produced, for thinking all that evidence too worthless to deserve confutation or even mention. We are anxious to know his reasons, for, on other matters, he freely quotes our witnesses. Yet I cannot think Mr. Frazer consistently so severe as to Australian evidence. He has a picturesque theory that the origin of the Passover was a rite in which masked men ran about through Hebrew towns in the night, butchering all the first born of Israel.[67] No people, we exclaim, ever did such a thing! In proof of the existence of the custom Mr. Frazer adduces an Australian parallel: 'In some tribes of New South Wales the first-born child of every woman was eaten by the tribe as part of a religious ceremony.'[68] Mr. Frazer's authority is a communication by Mr. John Moore Davis, and was published in 1878, twenty-three years ago, by Mr. Brough Smyth. Here is what Mr. Davis says: 'In parts of N. S. W., such as Bathurst, Goulburn, the Lachlan, or Macquarie, it was customary *long ago* for the first-born of every lubra to be eaten by the tribe, as part of a religious ceremony, and I recollect a black fellow who had, in compliance with the custom, been thrown when an infant on the fire, but was rescued and brought up by some stock-keepers who happened accidentally to be passing at the time. The marks of the burns were distinctly visible on the man when I saw him…'

The evidence is what the Society for Psychical Research calls 'remote.' In 1878 the event was already 'long ago.' The testimony is from we know not how remote a hand. The black sufferer, as a baby at the time, could not remember the facts. The stock-keepers who were present are not named, nor do we even know whether Mr. Davis was informed by them, or heard their story at third or fourth hand. We do not know whether they correctly interpreted the alleged sacrifice, in a religious ceremony (by a people said to be almost or quite irreligious), of all the first-born children of women. Mr. Frazer has circulated inquiries as to Australian customs, and has published the results in the 'Journal of the Anthropological Institute.'[69] He does not appeal to the answers in corroboration of Mr. Davis's remarkable story.[70]

Imbued with the superstition of psychical research, I once investigated the famous Australian tale of Fisher's ghost (1826). I sent for the Court archives (the ghost led to a trial for murder), and I received these and a contemporary plan of the scene of the murder and the apparition. These documents left me doubtful about the ghost of Fisher.[71] May I not say that similar researches and good corroborative evidence are needed before we accept a settler's tale of an Australian *sacrifice*, 'long ago,' as confirming a theory of a Hebrew *yearly massacre* of all the first-born? Moreover, if Mr. Moore's evidence is good as to a sacrifice, why is the latest evidence of Mr. Howitt and all my other witnesses as to Australian religion not worth mentioning? Why is it so bad that Mr. Frazer goes

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[65] *J. A. I.*, 1885, p. 321, note 2.

[66] *G. B.* i. 72, note 1. In the first edition of *Myth, Ritual, and Religion* I quoted Mr. Howitt's evidence of 1881. In the second edition I naturally cited his later testimony.

[67] *G. B.* ii. 49, 50.

[68] *G. B.* ii. 51, citing Brough Smyth's *Aborigines of Victoria*, ii. 311.

[69] November 1894, pp. 158-198.

[70] *G. B.* ii. 51-53.

[71] For 'Fisher's Ghost' see *Blackwood's Magazine*, August 1897, p. 78 *et seq.*

back to Mr. Howitt's evidence of 1881, before he knew the secret, and is silent about Mr. Howitt's evidence of 1885?

We may quote Sir Alfred Lyall: 'One effect of the accumulation of materials has been to encourage speculative generalisations, because it has provided a repertory out of which one may make arbitrary selection of examples and precedents to suit any theory.' Has Mr. Frazer escaped this error?

I cannot think that he has escaped, and the error is fatal. He cites Mr. Howitt, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Oldfield, Mr. Dawson, and Mr. Cameron (whom I am about to quote), all of whom speak to a native religion of the kind for which I contend. Their witness is enough for him in other matters, but as to this matter these witnesses, for some reason, are absolutely ignored. I myself have omitted the affirmative evidence of Mr. Oldfield and Mr. Foelsche as to religion, because I think it contaminated, although in part corroborated. But my witnesses, all cited for other points by Mr. Frazer, are not even mentioned on the point where, if their reports be correct, they seem rather to invalidate his central theory – that religion was invented in the despair of magic.

As to that despair, it does not exist. The religions of Babylon, Greece, and Egypt lived side by side with superabundant magic. The Australians, when their magic fails, merely say that some other black fellow is working stronger counter-magic.[72]

However, that is a different question. The question at present is, Why does Mr. Frazer not cite and confute the evidence of witnesses, whom he quotes on other points, evidence fatal to his theory? Why does he ignore it? Among so many witnesses, distrustful of facts that surprise them, anxious to explain by borrowing, all cannot be biassed. If they were, why is not the testimony of witnesses with the opposite bias also discredited or ignored? Why is it welcomed? Mr. Frazer prefers the opinion of Mr. Siebert, a German missionary, that the Dieri propitiate ancestral spirits, to the opinion of Mr. Gason, that the being of their belief is a good spirit who made them. I do not know which of these gentlemen is right; possibly both views are held by different native informants. But Mr. Siebert's ancestral spirits come through Mr. Fison, who says: 'The more I learn about savage tribes, the more I am convinced that among them ancestors grow into Gods ' – so natural a process where the names of the dead are tabooed!

'Oh no, we never mention them,
Their names are never heard.'

So they grow into gods! Mr. Fison is a Spencerian; so, for all that I know, may Mr. Siebert be. If so, both have a theory and a bias, yet they are cited. It is only witnesses who hold that the Australians, certainly not, as a rule, ancestor worshippers, believe in a kind of god, who are not deemed worthy of mention on this point, though quite trustworthy on other points.

I cannot understand this method. The historian has a theory. He searches for contradictory facts. The chemist or biologist does not fail to mention facts hostile to his theory.

We are not asking Mr. Frazer to accept the testimony of Mr. Howitt, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Ridley, Mr. Greenway, Mr. Gason, Mr. Hale, Archdeacon Günther, the Benedictines of Nursia, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Eyre, Mr. Roth, Mrs. Langloh Parker; or to accept the opinion of Waitz, Mr. Howitt, and others as to unborrowed Australian religion. Their testimony may be erroneous; when it is proved erroneous I shall abandon it. But perhaps anthropologists may be allowed to be curious as to the reasons for which this and similar testimony is ignored. The reason cannot be that there is contradictory evidence, for some observers deny magic to the tribes whom they know.[73] Yet Mr. Frazer has no doubt as to the

[72] *J. A. I.* xv. 4.

[73] To be true to my own principles, I note a few points in Mr. Frazer's Australian evidence, published by him in *J. A. I.*, November 1894.Mr. Gason, an excellent witness, says that the Dieri think some souls turn into old trees or rocks, or 'as breath ascend to the heavens,' to 'Purriewillpanina.' The Dieri believe the Mooramoora created them and will look after their spirits (*op. cit.* p. 175). Mr. Frazer, however, calls the Mura Mura 'remote ancestral spirits,' who would have a difficulty, one thinks, in creating the Dieri. The

prevalence of magic, though one of his witnesses, Mr. Foelsche, gives no magic, but gives religion. 'Whether viewed as gods or devils,' Mr. Frazer says of South-East Australian beings, 'it does not seem that these spirits were ever worshipped.' He has ignored the evidence that they are worshipped (if the rights of the Bora are worship), but, if they are not worshipped, so much the worse for his theory. Gods, in his theory, were invented just to be worshipped. 'To these mighty beings… man now addressed himself… beseeching them of their mercy to furnish him with all good things…'[74]

As against the correctness of my witnesses I only know the mass of evidence by white observers who have detected no religion among these savages. But I do not necessarily accept the negative evidence, because the beliefs are reported, by the affirmative witnesses, to be guarded with the utmost secrecy.[75] It is not every inquirer who has the power of eliciting beliefs which, for many reasons, are jealously guarded. Many Englishmen or Lowlanders are unable to extract legends of fairies, ghosts, and second-sight from Gaelic Highlanders. On the other hand, they are kind enough to communicate to me plenty of their folk-lore. 'The Urkus were very shy and frightened when asked about their religion,' says Mr. Pope Hennessy in his 'Notes on the Jukos and other Tribes of the Middle Benæ' (1898).[76]

Thus I prefer the affirmative evidence of Europeans who have won the confidence of the Australians, and have been initiated, to the denials of observers less fortunate. As for their theory that the religious practices, if they exist, are borrowed from Christians, I have stated my case in the preceding essay. There could be no stronger evidence than the absence of prayer that the Australian religion is not borrowed.

This argument ought especially to appeal to Mr. Frazer. His definition of religion is that of Euthyphro, in the Platonic Dialogue of that name.

> *Socrates*. Sacrificing is giving to the Gods, and piety is asking from them?
> *Euthyphro*. Yes, Socrates.
> *Socrates*. Upon this view, then, piety is a science of asking and giving?
> *Euthyphro*. You understand me capitally, Socrates.

Mr. Frazer agrees with Euthyphro. But if we find that the most backward race known to us believes in a power, yet propitiates him neither by prayer nor sacrifice, and if we find, as we do, that in many more advanced races in Africa and America it is precisely the highest power which is left impropriated, then we really cannot argue that gods were first invented as powers who could give good things, on receipt of other good things, sacrifice and prayer.

Sir Alfred Lyall here agrees with Mr. Frazer. 'The foundation of natural religion is… the principle of *Do ut des*' ('I give that you may give'), 'and the most ingenious researches into the evolution of primitive ideas will hardly take us beyond or behind it.'[77] My 'researches' do not pretend to be I ingenious.' It is a mere question of facts. Have Mr. Howitt's tribes the idea of a power, a very great power, which is interested in conduct, sanctions conduct, but is not asked for material benefits? Have,

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names of the dead may not be mentioned (p. 176).The station master at Powell's Creek denies that magic 'exists in any shape or form.' There are no religious dances, no belief in a future life (p. 180). Mr. Lindsay Crawford says 'nothing is known of the nature of souls.' For the last ten years this gentleman 'had held no communication with the natives at all, except with the rifle.' Perhaps his negative evidence is not very valuable, as he does not appear to have won the friendly confidence of the blacks. Mr. Matthews says: 'Many tribes believe future existence is regulated by due observances at burial according to the rites of the tribe' (p. 190). Mr. Foelsche, described by Dr. Stirling as 'a most intelligent and *accurate* observer, who knows the natives well,' contributes a belief in a benevolent creator, with a demiurge who made the blacks. He inhabits Teelahdlah, among the stars. 'He never dies.' He is 'a very good man,' not a 'spirit.' A subterranean being 'can read and write, and keeps a book' of men's actions. This is so manifestly due to European influence that I have not cited Mr. Foelsche's evidence. Mr. Foelsche 'knows of no magic or witchcraft being practised' (p. 197). The blacks believe that after death their souls 'go up'; they then point skywards (p. 198).

[74] *G.B.* i. 72 note i. 77.

[75] See 'The Theory of Loan Gods.'

[76] *J. A. I.* January to June, 1900, No. 31, p. 27.

[77] *Asiatic Studies*, ii. 172.

or had, all the American and African peoples whom I have cited a highest power often unconciliated? If so, why did they invent these beings? Certainly not to play with them at the game of *Do ut des*. Yet that game was the origin of religion, according to Sir Alfred and Mr. Frazer. The facts must be mentioned, must be disproved, before the theory of *Do ut des* can be established.

Even if we accepted the theory of Euthyphro and of Mr. Frazer it is beset by difficulties. Religion is the despair of magic, says the theory. Magic is found by the higher minds to be a failure. Rain is not produced, nor sunshine, nor food, as a result of magic. Consequently invisible powers, 'like himself, but far stronger,' are invented by man. They are immortal, and are asked to take man's immortal spirit home to them.[78] Yet they are mortal themselves.[79] They are so dependent on man, these beings which are far stronger, that man actually has to sacrifice his kings to them annually to keep these far stronger beings in vigour.[80] I am willing to suppose, with Mr. Frazer, a very gradual process of evolution in religious thought. Man began by thinking his own magic all powerful. He found that a failure, 'and came to rest, as in a quiet haven after a tempestuous voyage, in a new system of faith and practice… a substitute, however precarious, for that' (magical) 'sovereignty over nature which he had reluctantly abdicated.' To be sure he had not abdicated, Greek and Babylonic magic are especially notorious. But let us fancy that man at large but gradually reached the conception of powers far higher than himself. They were very limited powers at first: they helped him, but he had to help them, to the extent, sometimes, of killing his kings annually to keep them in health. This is Mr. Frazer's position.[81] But if our Australian evidence is correct, this theory is baseless. That is why our evidence cannot be neglected.

It is another difficulty that the more man ought to be finding out the fallacy of magic, the less does he find it out. Mr. Frazer chooses the Arunta of Central Australia as a people wholly without religion, but universally magicians. I have frequently read the account of Arunta magic by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, but I never found that it included a belief like this: 'A man god… draws his extraordinary power from a certain sympathy with nature.' He is defined not as an incarnation of a god 'of an order different from and superior to man,' but as only a superior sorcerer where most men are sorcerers. 'He is not merely the receptacle of a divine spirit.' We have just been told that he is not the receptacle of a divine spirit at all, and we shall take it to be so. 'His whole being, body and soul, is so attuned to the harmony of the world, that a touch of his hand or a turn of his head may send a thrill vibrating through the universal framework of things.[82]…'

But you will look in vain for this portentous belief among the Arunta, who, not having found out the fallacy of magic, have not invented beings superior to man. For this sorcerer of the very highest magic you have to go to the civilisation of Japan, or to the peoples on the Congo, much more civilised than the Arunta.[83]These peoples, by Mr. Frazer's theory, had experience and intelligence enough to find out the fallacy of magic, and had gods in great plenty. But they have carried the belief in magic, in a magician much superior to his neighbours, to a pitch infinitely beyond the Arunta. Yet the Arunta have no gods with whom to draw comparisons invidious and unfavourable to magicians; they have, it is said, no gods at all.

Just as magic thus reaches its highest power, according to Mr. Frazer, where there is most religious competition (while the reverse should be the case by his theory), so religion flourishes most in Australia, exactly where, by Mr. Frazer's theory, the circumstances are most unfavourable to religion and most favourable to magic. Magic, by the hypothesis, must prosper most, its fallacy

[78] *G. B.* i. 77.

[79] *G. B.* ii. 1.

[80] *G. B.* ii. 1-59, and *passim*, almost.

[81] *G. B.* i. 78, 79.

[82] *G. B.* i. 81.

[83] *G. B.* ii. 8; i. 232, 233.

must be latest discovered, it must latest give place to religion, where it appears to be most successful, and *vice versâ*. Yet Mr. Frazer assures us that in Australia magic flourishes alone, where every circumstance demonstrates its failure; and religion begins to blossom precisely where magic must seem to its devotees a relative success.

Before examining this apparent inconsistency, let us note Mr. Frazer's inadvertent proof that his irreligious Australians are religious. One part of the business of magic is to produce rain in season, sun in season, and consequently an abundant food supply.[84] The Dieri of Central Australia need especially excellent magic. 'In a dry season their lot is a hard one.' Having no religion, they ought, of course, to work by mere materialistic magic, like the Arunta.[85] But they, oddly enough, 'call upon the spirits of their remote ancestors, which they call Mura Mura, to grant them power to make a heavy rain,' and then men inspired by the Mura Mura work magic, or pray in sign-language, as you please.[86] Now the Mura Mura, the rain-givers, by evidence which Mr. Frazer himself has published, is 'a Good Spirit,' not a set of remote ancestral spirits. The witness is Mr. Gason, 'than whom' (says Mr. Frazer's authority, Dr. Stirling) 'no man living has been more among blacks or knows more of their ways.' If on this excellent evidence the Australian Dieri call for rain to a good spirit, then they have religion, which Mr. Frazer denies. But if Mr. Siebert, a German missionary, is right (and Mr. Frazer, as we saw, prefers his view to that of Mr. Gason), then the Mura Mura are only ancestral spirits.

Yet to demand the aid of remote ancestral spirits by prayer is religion. In fact Mr. Frazer had said of the powerful beings of the Southern Australians 'it does not seem that these spirits are ever worshipped.'[87] But prayer is worship, and the Dieri pray, whether to a good spirit or to ancestral spirits, potent over the sky, and dwelling therein. If this is not religion, by Mr. Frazer's own definition, namely 'a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man, which are believed to direct and control the course of nature,' what is religion?[88] Yet in Australia 'nobody dreams of propitiating gods or spirits by prayer and sacrifice,' says our author.[89] None the less they 'call upon the spirits of their remote ancestors, which they call Mura Mura, to grant them power to make a heavy rain.' After ceremonies magical, or more prayers in sign-language, the Mura Mura 'at once cause clouds to appear in the sky.'[90] They see the signs which their worshippers are making. Here then we have prayer to 'powers superior to man' (whether to the Good Spirit or to ancestral spirits), and that, on evidence collected by Mr. Frazer, occurs in a country where, fourteen pages earlier, he had assured us that 'nobody thinks of propitiating gods or spirits by prayer and sacrifice.' Sacrifice, happily, there is none; the Dieri have not degenerated to sacrificing human victims like the Greeks.

The scene is Central Australia, where 'the pitiless sun beats down for months together out of a blue and cloudless sky on the parched and gaping earth.' Consequently rain-making magic must perpetually prove a failure. Therefore, I presume, the Dieri have been driven into religion by discovering the fallacy of magic. This would be a logical argument, but Mr. Frazer's argument is the converse of what I suggest and contradicts his theory. He dubiously grants the existence of possible faint 'germs of religion' 'in the south-eastern parts of Australia, where the conditions of life in respect of climate, water, and vegetation are more favourable than elsewhere… It is worth observing that in the same regions which thus exhibit the germs of religion, the organisation of society and the family has also made the greatest advance. The cause is probably the same in both cases – namely, a more plentiful supply of food due to the greater fertility of the soil.'[91] Now, according to Mr. Frazer's whole

[84] *G. B.* i. 81-114.
[85] *G. B.* i. 88, 89.
[86] *G. B.* i. 86.
[87] *G. B.* i. 72, note 1.
[88] *G. B.* i. 86, 87.
[89] *G. B.* i. 72.
[90] *G. B.* i. 87.
[91] *G. B.* i. 72, note.

argument, the confessed failure of magic is the origin of religion.[92] But in Central Australia, where magic notoriously fails most conspicuously to supply water and vegetation, magic flourishes to the entire exclusion of religion, except among the Dieri. On the other hand, in South-Eastern Australia, where magic, if practised, is abundantly rewarded by more water and more vegetation, there these proofs of the success of magic are 'probably the cause' of the germs of religion. But, by Mr. Frazer's hypothesis, what must be the apparent success of magic in securing 'a more plentiful supply of food' ought to encourage the belief in magic, and prevent religion from even germinating. On the other hand, the successful result of magic (for to what else can a people of sorcerers attribute the better food supply?) has been 'probably the cause' of the first germs of religion. How can these things be?

All this time one tribe of Central Australia, the Arunta, remains resolutely godless 'in spite of all temptations to join denominations' of a religious character. For the Arunta live in the worst country, the most rainless, and therefore their magic is most manifestly a failure. Yet, unlike the natives of South-Eastern Australia (where magic is most successful), the Arunta cling to magic, and have developed no religion. If so, as of all rain-making magic theirs is about the most unsuccessful, they must be very stupid, or they would detect the failure, and fly to religion, 'a quiet haven after a tempestuous voyage.' The Arunta are very far from stupid; they have the most complete and adequate of savage metaphysics. If, then, they have not approached superior powers, in face of the failure of their magic, it may be that they have tried and discarded religion. 'Religion for the women and the children, magic for men' appears to be the Arunta motto: not so very uncivilised! This I suggest because Mr. Frazer tells us that at the initiatory rites of the Arunta 'the women and children believe that the roaring noise' of the wooden slat, tied to a string and swung about, is 'the voice of the great spirit Twanyirika.'[93] A great spirit (above all if spelled with capital letters) is rather a religious conception. 'This spirit, the women are told, lives in wild and inaccessible regions… Both uninitiated youths and women are taught to believe in the existence of Twanyirika.' So write Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, our only sources.[94]

A brief note is all that these inquirers give in their copious book to the great spirit. 'This belief,' they say, 'is fundamentally the same as that found in all Australian tribes.' Now in the tribes reported on by Mr. Howitt, the spirit whose voice is the sound of the slat or bull roarer called the *tundun*, and by other names, is the son or other deputy of Baiame, or some such powerful good being, Mungan-ngaur, Pirnmeheal, Bunjil, Noorele, or by whatever style he may be called. One of his duties is to superintend the Bora, or mysteries of the tribes. The Wiraijuri believe that their type of Twanyirika was destroyed, for misconduct, by his superior, Baiame. This sinful great spirit was called Daramulun, but in other tribes Daramulun is apparently the superior, and goes on existing. He is, says Mr. Howitt, 'the Great Master,' 'the Father,' the sky dweller, the institutor of society, the power whose voice 'calls to the rain to fall and make the grass green.' He is the moral being for whom 'the boys are made so that Daramulun likes them' – a process involving cries of *nga* ('good'), so says Mr. Howitt. His attributes and powers (where he is supreme) 'are precisely those of Baiame,' who, by Mr. Ridley and many others, is spoken of as a maker, if I may not say creator. It was in 1854, two years before publishing his 'Gurre Kamilaroi' (in which 'Baiame' was used for 'God'), that Mr. Ridley asked a Kamilaroi man, 'Do you know Baiame?' He said, *Kamil zaia zummi Baiame, zaia winuzgulda* ('I have not seen Baiame; I have heard, or perceived him. They hear him in the thunder'). Among this tribe Daramulun was not the superior; he was 'author of disease and medical skill, of mischief and wisdom also; he appears in the form of a serpent at their assemblies,' like Asclepius and the American Hobamok.[95] Though Mr. Ridley is a missionary, I venture to cite him, because his evidence goes back nearly fifty years,

[92] *G. B*. ii. 75-80. The hypothesis is offered with all due diffidence.

[93] *G. B.* iii. 424.

[94] *Natives of Central Australia*, p. 246, note 1.

[95] *J. A. I.*, 1872, pp. 268, 269. Lang's *Queensland*, pp. 444, 445. Winslow, in Arber's *Captain Smith*, p. 768.

to a time when the blacks had less contact with Europeans. Moreover, Mr. Ridley is corroborated by Mr. Howitt and other laymen, while Mr. Frazer even prefers the evidence of a German missionary to that of Mr. Gason, a lay Englishman of the greatest experience. Mr. Howitt finds, among the Kurnai, Tundun as the patron of the mysteries and the bull roarer, like Twanyirika. In Mr. Manning's tribe[96] the same *rôle* is taken by Moodgeegally, under the control of Boyma.

We have thus five or six parallels to the Twanyirika of the godless Arunta, and all are subordinate to a higher power. If then, as Messrs. Spencer and Gillen tell us, the belief in the Arunta Twanyirika, the great spirit, 'is fundamentally the same as that found in all the Australian tribes,' Twanyirika ought to have a much more powerful benevolent superior. In that case the Arunta would as Clough says. If so, as they do not propitiate him, they did not conceive him as a partner in the game of *Do ut des*. But our only witnesses, Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, are extremely reticent about Twanyirika. Nothing is said about his having a superior, and I assume that he has none. It seems to follow that he is a mere Mumbo Jumbo, or bogle, devised by the men to keep the women and children in order.

> Incline to think there is a god,
> Or something very like one,

But in South-Eastern Australia (if I may trust Mr. Howitt's evidence, to which Mr. Frazer does not here allude) the counterpart of Twanyirika is a mere servant of a much higher being, everywhere called by names meaning 'our father.' Therefore either 'our father' Baiame, Mungan-ngaur, and the rest, have been developed out of a sportive bugbear like Twanyirika, or Twanyirika (if he really has no superior) is a rudimentary survival of a belief like that in Mungan-ngaur, and his subordinate, Tundun. In the former case Twanyirika, a germ of the more advanced religion of South-Eastern Australia, was not invented as a power behind nature, who might be useful if propitiated, as in Mr. Frazer's theory. In the latter case the Arunta do not represent man prior to religion (as Mr. Frazer holds), but man who has cast off religion. But Mr. Frazer does not seem to notice this dilemma.

The evidence for what most people call 'religion' among the Australian natives is so far from scanty that one finds it when looking for other matters, as I am going to show. True, in the following report the religion does not answer to Mr. Frazer's definition, no powerful being is here said to be conciliated or propitiated: he is only said to exist and favour morality. But Mr. Frazer's definition, if pressed, produces the effect of arguing in a vicious circle. His theory asserts that powerful beings are only invented by man, in view of man's tardy discovery that his own magic is powerless. The invented beings are then propitiated, for selfish ends, and that, by the definition, is religion.

If we produce, as we do, evidence that the belief in powerful beings has been evolved, and yet that these beings are certainly not propitiated by sacrifice, and seldom if ever by prayer, that they are only won by conduct, and by rites not involving sacrifice, Mr. Frazer can reply, 'Perhaps; but by my definition that kind of belief is not religion.' Then what is it? 'What else can you call it?' Its existence, if proved, is fatal to Mr. Frazer's theory of the origin of religion in the despair of magic, because the faithful of the belief of which I speak do not usually implore the god to do for them what magic has failed to do. Their belief satisfies their speculative and moral needs: it does not exist to supply their temporal wants. Yet it is none the less, but much the more, a religion on that account, except by Mr. Frazer's definition. If religion is to be defined as he defines it, 'a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man,' and so on, religion can only have arisen as it does in his theory, setting aside a supernormal revelation. But if we do not deny the name of religion to the speculative belief in a power superior to man, and to the moral belief that he lends a supernormal sanction to conduct, and to the emotional belief that he loves his children, then the belief is religion, but something other than

[96] See 'The Theory of Loan-Gods,' *supra*.

religion as defined by Mr. Frazer. Nobody will deny the name of religion to such a belief. Mr. Frazer says: 'I would ask those who dissent from my conclusions to make sure that they mean the same thing by religion that I do; for otherwise the difference between us may be more apparent than real.'[97]

I mean by religion what Mr. Frazer means – and more. The conciliation of higher powers by prayer and sacrifice is religion, but it need not be the whole of religion. The belief in a higher power who sanctions conduct, and is a father and a loving one to mankind, is also religion; few, if any, will dispute the fact. But this belief, if unaccompanied, as in Australia, by prayer and sacrifice, cannot be accounted for on Mr. Frazer's theory: that religion was invented, for worldly ends, after the recognised failure of magic, which aimed at the same ends fruitlessly. It is only by limiting his definition of religion, as he does, that he can establish his theory of the origin of religion. It is only by omitting mention of the evidence for what nobody else can deny to be religion, that he can secure his theory.

I return to my additional evidence for Australian religion. As will be seen, it does not come within Mr. Frazer's definition, but will anybody deny that the belief is religious? The evidence is that of Mr. A. L. P. Cameron,[98] and contains a brief comparative glossary of words used by different tribes of New South Wales to indicate the same objects. Mr. Cameron had been interested in the black fellows since 1868 at least, when their numbers were much larger than at present. He had seen gatherings of from 800 to 1,000. The tribes chiefly in question dwelt along the Murrumbidgee and Murray rivers, and do not include the Kamilaroi, the Kurnai, and Coast Murring of whom Mr. Howitt speaks.

As to religion, ghosts of the dead are believed to visit the earth, and to be frequently seen. The blacks 'will often resort to peculiar devices to avoid mentioning the names of the dead,' a practice hostile to the development of ancestor worship. No ghost of a man can grow into a god if his name is tabooed and therefore forgotten. 'The people of all these tribes appear to have a belief in a Deity, and in a future state of some kind.' The Wathi Wathi call this being Tha-tha-pali; the Ta-ta-thi call him Tulong. Mr. Cameron could not obtain translations of these names, any more than we know the meaning of the names Apollo or Artemis. The being 'is regarded as a powerful spirit, or perhaps a supreme supernatural being. They say that he came from the far north, and now lives in the sky. He told each tribe what language they were to speak. He made men, women, and dogs, and the latter used to talk, but he took the power of speech from them. The Ta-ta-thi do not care to speak much of Tulong, and say that he does not often come to the earth. Although it seems that in many of the Australian tribes there is only a very dim idea as to the attributes of the Supreme Being and of a future state, yet in the Ta-ta-thi and its allied tribes there is certainly a belief not only in a future state of existence, but also in a system of rewards and punishments. My Ta-ta-thi informant stated that one of the doctors ascended long ago through the sky, and there saw a place where wicked men were roasted.'

Mr. Cameron, of course, had the strongest suspicions of a 'place' so ostensibly Christian. To this we return.[99]

These tribes practise the Bora rites or initiatory mysteries. If women witness them 'the penalty is death. The penalty for revealing the secrets is probably the same.' Mr. Cameron, unlike Mr. Howitt, has not been initiated, and does not know the full secret. The presiding being (like the Twanyirika of the Arunta) is called Thuremlin, who, I conjecture, is Daramulun in his subordinate capacity. 'Their belief in the power of Thuremlin is undoubted, whereas the Arunta adults do not appear to believe in Twanyirika, a mere bugbear of the women and children. The bull roarer is Kalari, or among the

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[97] *G. B.* i. xvii.

[98] *J. A. I.*, 1885, pp. 344-370.

[99] Parenthetically, I may remark that many beliefs as to the future state originate in, or are confirmed by, visions of 'doctors' who visit the Hades or Paradise of a tribe, and by reports of men given up for dead, who recover and narrate their experiences. The case of Montezuma's aunt is familiar to readers of Mr. Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico*. The new religion of the Sioux is based on a similar vision. Anthropologists have given slight attention to these circumstances.

Ta-ta-thi Kalk [or Kallak] – that is to say, "word."' Concerning the instruction given to the boys, and described by Mr. Howitt, Mr. Cameron, not being initiated, gives no information.

As to the future life, Mr. Cameron received his account from a tribesman named Makogo, 'an intelligent member of the Wathi Wathi tribe.' The belief was that current 'before his people came into contact with Europeans, and Makogo expressed an opinion that, whether right or wrong, they would have been better off now had their beliefs never been disturbed.' Probably Makogo was right. The beliefs were in a future state of reward or punishment. European contact does not import but destroy the native form of this creed.

The Wathi Wathi belief answers in character to the creeds expressed in the Egyptian Book of the Dead, the Fijian hymns, the famous Orphic gold talisman of Petilia, the Red Indian belief published by Kohl, and to many other examples.[100] The Way of Souls, as in these ancient or savage beliefs, is beset by dangers and temptations, to which the Egyptian Book of the Dead is a guide-book. If any one desires to maintain that this Australian idea, held before contact with Europeans, and now to some extent abandoned after that contact, is of Christian origin (we know this argument), he must suppose that the Wathi Wathi adapted the idea from our old 'Lyke Wake Dirge:'

> When Brig o' Dread is over and past,
> Every night and all,
> To Whinny Muir thou comest at last,
> And Christ receive thy saul.

A weak point there is. The soul of the Wathi Wathi, after death, is met by another soul, 'who directs him to the road for good men.'

But the natives had no roads, the opponent will reply. They have trade routes and markets, however, and barter of articles made in special localities goes on across hundreds of miles of country.[101] Let us allow that the Wathi Wathi may know a clean path or track from a dirty one.

The soul meets a dirty and a clean path. The good soul, being instructed, chooses the dirty path: the other path is kept clean by bad spirits 'in order to induce the unthinking to follow it,' as Bunyan's Mr. Ignorance unwarily chose a by-path into hell. The soul next meets a woman who tries to seduce him. He escapes her lures, and comes to two women who try to trip him by whirling a rope. One of them is blind, and the soul evades her. Next comes a deep narrow gap, in which flames rise and fall. The good soul watches the fall of the flames, and leaps across; there is no Brig o' Dread. Bed Indian souls cross by a log which nearly spans the abyss. Two old women meet the good soul, and take him 'to the Deity, Tha-Tha-Puli.' He tests the soul's strength and skill by making him throw a nulla-nulla. 'When the Wathi Wathi see a shooting star, they believe it to be the passage of such a nulla-nulla through space, and say: "Tha-Tha-Puli is trying the strength of some new spirit." The soul of a bad man, if it escapes the traps set for it, is sure to fall into the hell of fire. Many of the natives have had their beliefs modified by contact with the whites,' and I 'feel doubtful,' says Mr. Cameron, 'whether the pit of fire was not of this kind, and questioned my informant very closely on the subject, but he assured me that there was no doubt whatever that the above was the exact belief before the settlement of the country by the white men.'

It is the standing reply of believers in the borrowing theory that a native, cross-examined, will always agree with whatever the European inquirer wishes him to say. The natives examined by Mr. Cameron, Mrs. Langloh Parker, Mr. Howitt, Mr. Manning, and others were exceptions. They would not allow that their beliefs were borrowed.

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[100] See my *Modern Mythology*, and introduction to my *Homeric Hymns*.

[101] Roth, *North-West Queensland Central Aborigines*, p. 132. Spencer and Gillen, 575.

This particular form of native belief is exactly analogous to that of ancient Egypt, of Greece, of Fiji, and so on: not to the doctrine of our missionaries. The believers in borrowing must therefore say that the Wathi Wathi stole heaven, hell, and the ways thither from missionaries, and adapted them, accidentally coinciding with Egyptians, Greeks, Red Indians, Fijians, Aztecs, and the rest, as to a gulf to be crossed, and temptations on the way to the abode of the powerful being and the souls of the good. The native proverbial explanation of a shooting star establishes, as historical fact, their belief in Tha-Tha-Puli and his home for good spirits. Mr. Frazer has six pages on beliefs about shooting stars.[54] One case is to our point. The Yerrunthally of Queensland think that the souls of the dead climb to a place among the stars by a rope; when they let the rope fall, it 'appeared to people on earth as a shooting star.'[102]

Now if the evidence of Mr. Palmer, in the 'Journal of the Anthropological Institute,' is good evidence for this Australian belief, why is the evidence of Mr. Howitt and Mr. Cameron, in the same serial, to an unborrowed Australian religion (in this case with Tha-Tha-Puli and his home for good souls) unworthy even of mention?

We fall back on Sir Alfred Lyall: 'I think that one effect of the accumulation of materials has been to encourage speculative generalisation, because it has provided a repertory out of which one may make arbitrary selection of examples and precedents to suit any theory.'[103] Here I have the pleasure of agreeing with this great authority. Mr. Frazer has chosen Australia as the home of magic, as a land where magic is, but religion has not yet been evolved. As I have shown, in this and the preceding paper, there is abundance of evidence for an unborrowed Australian religion. I shall abandon the evidence so soon as it is confuted, but I cannot reject it while the witnesses are treated as good on many other points, but are unmentioned just when their testimony, if true, seems inconsistent with a theory of the priority of magic to religion.

By the concurring testimony of a crowd of observers,' writes Mr. Tylor, 'it is known that the natives of Australia were at their discovery, and have ever since remained, a race with minds saturated with the most vivid belief in souls, demons, and deities.'[104] What can a young student commencing anthropologist think, when he compares Mr. Tylor's 'concurring testimony of a crowd of observers' of Australian religion with Mr. Frazer's remark that there are 'some faint beginnings of religion' in Southern Australia, but that 'traces of a higher faith, where they occur, are probably sometimes due to European influence,' though the people, Mr. Tylor says, were in all things so 'saturated with the most vivid belief in souls, demons, and deities' – 'at their discovery'? There is no use in building a theory of the origin of religion on the case of Australia till we are at least told about the 'concurring testimony of a crowd of observers.' That Mr. Frazer has some reason for disregarding the testimonies which I have cited, that he must have grounds for doubting their validity, I feel assured. But the grounds for the doubt are not apparent, and to state them would make Mr. Frazer's abstention intelligible.

[102] *G. B.* ii. 21. E. Palmer, *J. A. I.* xiii. p. 292.

[103] *Asiatic Studies*, i. ix.

[104] *Primitive Culture*, i. 379, 1871.

# IV
# *THE ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH*

Among the many recent theories concerning the origin of religion, certainly the most impressive is Mr. Frazer's hypothesis as to the origin of the belief in the divinity of Christ. Unlike several modern speculations, Mr. Frazer's is based on an extraordinary mass of erudition. We are not put off with vague and unvouched-for statements, or with familiar facts extracted from the collections of Mr. Tylor, Lord Avebury, and Mr. Herbert Spencer. Mr. Frazer does not collect knowledge, as his Babylonian kings are supposed by him to have been sacrificed – by proxy. No writer is so erudite, and few are so exact in their references. While venturing to differ from Mr. Frazer, I must often, as it were, make use of his own ammunition in this war. Let me say sincerely that I am not pitting my knowledge or industry against his. I rather represent the student who has an interest in these subjects, and peruses 'The Golden Bough,' not as 'the general reader' does, but with some care, and with some verification of the citations and sources.

It is first necessary to state, as briefly as possible, Mr. Frazer's hypothesis as to the origin of the belief in the Divinity of our Lord, or, at least, as to what he thinks a very powerful factor in the evolution of that creed.

# Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.