Synkrētic Nº5 (Jul. 2024), 46-67

Animism*

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Are there, or have there been, tribes of men so low in culture as to have no religious conceptions whatever? This is practically the question of the universality of religion, which for so many centuries has been affirmed and denied, with a confidence in striking contrast to the imperfect evidence on which both affirmation and denial have been based. Ethnographers, if looking to a theory of development to explain civilisation, and regarding its successive stages as arising one from another, would receive with peculiar interest accounts of tribes devoid of all religion. Here, they would naturally say, are men who have no religion because their forefathers had none, men who represent a pre-religious condition of the human race, out of which in the course of time religious conditions have arisen. It does not, however, seem advisable to start from this ground in an investigation of religious development. Though the theoretical niche is ready and convenient, the actual statue to fill it is not forthcoming. The case is in some degree similar to that of the tribes asserted to exist

* This is an extract from chapter XI ('Animism'), volume 1 of Edward Burnett Tylor's *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom*, 6e (London: John Murray, 1920). This work is in the public domain and available on archive.org. It is reproduced here with minor edits to modernise or standardise the orthography. No edits have been made where these could be seen to alter the historical or intellectual character of the text. The endnotes are the author's, except where indicated.

† Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917) was an English anthropologist whose ideas were typical of the theories of cultural evolutionism which dominated 19th century social thought.

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without language or without the use of fire; nothing in the nature of things seems to forbid the possibility of such existence, but as a matter of fact the tribes are not found. Thus the assertion that rude non-religious tribes have been known in actual existence, though in theory possible, and perhaps in fact true, does not at present rest on that sufficient proof which, for an exceptional state of things, we are entitled to demand.

It is not unusual for the very writer who declares in general terms the absence of religious phenomena among some savage people, himself to give evidence that shows his expressions to be misleading. Thus Dr Lang not only declares that the aborigines of Australia have no idea of a supreme divinity, creator, and judge, no object of worship, no idol, temple, or sacrifice, but that 'in short, they have nothing whatever of the character of religion, or of religious observance, to distinguish them from the beasts that perish.' More than one writer has since made use of this telling statement, but without referring to certain details which occur in the very same book. From these it appears that a disease like smallpox, which sometimes attacks the natives, is ascribed by them 'to the influence of Budyah, an evil spirit who delights in mischief'; that when the natives rob a wild bees' hive, they generally leave a little of the honey for Buddai; that at certain biennial gatherings of the Queensland tribes, young girls are slain in sacrifice to propitiate some evil divinity; and that, lastly, according to the evidence of the Rev. W. Ridley, 'whenever he has conversed with the aborigines, he found them to have definite traditions concerning supernatural beings — Baiame, whose voice they hear in thunder, and who made all things, Turramullum the chief of demons, who is the author of disease, mischief, and wisdom, and appears in the form of a serpent at their great assemblies, etc.'[1] By the concurring testimony of a crowd of observers, it is known that the natives of Australia were at their discovery, and have since remained, a race with minds saturated with the most vivid belief in souls, demons, and deities. In Africa, Mr Moffat's declaration as to the Bechuanas is scarcely less surprising — that 'man's immortality was never heard of among that people,' he having remarked in the sentence next before, that the

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word for the shades or manes of the dead 'liriti.'[2] In South America, again, Don Felix de Azara comments on the positive falsity of the ecclesiastics' assertion that the native tribes have a religion. He simply declares that they have none; nevertheless in the course of his work he mentions such facts as that the Payaguas bury arms and clothing with their dead and have some notions of a future life, and that the Guanas believe in a Being who rewards good and punishes evil. In fact, this author's reckless denial of religion and law to the lower races of this region justifies D'Orbigny's sharp criticism, that, 'this is indeed what he says of all the nations he describes, while actually proving the contrary of his thesis by the very facts he alleges in its support.'[3]

Such cases show how deceptive are judgments to which breadth and generality are given by the use of wide words in narrow senses. Lang, Moffat, and Azara are authors to whom ethnography owes much valuable knowledge of the tribes they visited, but they seem hardly to have recognised anything short of the organised and established theology of the higher races as being religion at all. They attribute irreligion to tribes whose doctrines are unlike theirs, in much the same manner as theologians have so often attributed atheism to those whose deities differed from their own, from thee time when the ancient invading Aryans described the aboriginal tribes of India as *adeva*, *i.e.*, 'godless,' and the Greeks fixed the corresponding term ἀθεοι on the early Christians as unbelievers in the classic gods, to the comparatively modern ages when disbelievers in witchcraft and apostolical succession were denounced as atheists; and down to our own day, when controversialists are apt to infer, as in past centuries, that naturalists who support a theory of development of species therefore necessarily hold atheistic opinions.[4] These are in fact but examples of a general perversion of judgment in theological matters, among the results of which is a popular misconception of the religions of the lower races, simply amazing to students who have reached a higher point of view. Some missionaries, no doubt, thoroughly understand the minds of the savages they have to deal with, and indeed it is from men like Cranz, Dobrizhoffer, Charlevoix, Ellis, Hardy, Callaway, J. L. Wilson, T. Williams, that

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we have obtained our best knowledge of the lower phases of religious belief. But for the most part the 'religious world' is so occupied in hating and despising the beliefs of the heathen whose vast regions of the globe are painted black on the missionary maps, that they have little time or capacity left to understand them. It cannot be so with those who fairly seek to comprehend the nature and meaning of the lower phases of religion. These, while fully alive to the absurdities believed and the horrors perpetrated in its name, will yet regard with kindly interest all record of men's earnest seeking after truth with such light as they could find. Such students will look for meaning, however crude and childish, at the root of doctrines often most dark to the believers who accept them most zealously; they will search for the reasonable thought which once gave life to observances now become in seeming or reality the most abject and superstitious folly. The reward of these enquirers will be a more rational comprehension of the faiths in whose midst they dwell, for no more can he who understands but one religion understand even that religion, than the man who knows but one language can understand that language. No religion of mankind lies in utter isolation from the rest, and the thoughts and principles of modern Christianity are attached to intellectual clues which run back through far pre-Christian ages to the very origin of human civilisation, perhaps even of human existence.

While observers who have had fair opportunities of studying the religion of savages have thus sometimes done scant justice to the facts before their eyes, the hasty denials of others who have judged without even facts can carry no great weight. A 16th century traveller gave an account of the natives of Florida which is typical of such: 'Touching the religion of this people, which wee have found, for want of their language wee could not understand neither by signs nor gesture that they had any religion or lawe at all. ... We suppose that they have no religion at all, and that they live at their own libertie.'[5] Better knowledge of these Floridans nevertheless showed that they had a religion, and better knowledge has reversed many another hasty assertion to the same effect; as when writers used to declare that the natives of Madagascar had no idea of a future state,

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and no word for soul or spirit;[6] or when Dampier enquired after the religion of the natives of Timor, and was told that they had none;[7] or when Sir Thomas Roe landed in Saldanha Bay on his way to the court of the Great Mogul, and remarked of the Hottentots[8] that 'they have left off their custom of stealing, but know no God or religion.'[9] Among the numerous accounts collected by Lord Avebury as evidence bearing on the absence or low development of religion among low races,[10] some may be selected as lying open to criticism from this point of view. Thus the statement that the Samoan Islanders had no religion cannot stand, in face of the elaborate description by the Rev. G. Turner of the Samoan religion itself; and the assertion that the Tupinambas of Brazil had no religion is one not to be received on merely negative evidence, for the religious doctrines and practices of the Tupi race have been recorded by Lery, De Laet, and other writers. Even with much time and care and knowledge of language, it is not always easy to elicit from savages the details of their theology. They try to hide from the prying and contemptuous foreigner their worship of gods who seem to shrink, like their worshippers, before the white man and his mightier Deity. Mr Sproat's experience in Vancouver's Island is an apt example of this state of things. He says: 'I was two years among the Ahts,[11] with my mind constantly directed towards the subject of their religious beliefs, before I could discover that they possessed any ideas as to an overruling power or a future state of existence. The traders on the coast, and other persons well acquainted with the people, told me that they had no such ideas, and this opinion was confirmed by conversation with many of the less intelligent savages; but at last I succeeded in getting a satisfactory clue.'[12] It then appeared that the Ahts had all the time been hiding a whole characteristic system of religious doctrines as to souls and their migrations, the spirits who do good and ill to men, and the great gods above all. Thus, even where no positive proof of religious ideas among any particular tribe has reached us, we should distrust its denial by observers whose acquaintance with the tribe in question has not been intimate as well as kindly. It is said of the Andaman Islanders that they have not the rudest elements of a religious faith; yet it appears that the

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natives did not even display to the foreigners the rude music which they actually possessed, so that they could scarcely have been expected to be communicative as to their theology, if they had any.[13] In our time the most striking negation of the religion of savage tribes is that published by Sir Samuel Baker, in a paper read in 1866 before the Ethnological Society of London, as follows: 'The most northern tribes of the White Nile are the Dinkas, Shillooks, Nuehr, Kytch, Bohr, Aliab, and Shir. A general description will suffice for the whole, excepting the Kytch. Without any exception, they are without a belief in a Supreme Being, neither have they any form of worship or idolatry; nor is the darkness of their minds enlightened by even a ray of superstition.' Had this distinguished explorer spoken only of the Latukas, or of other tribes hardly known to ethnographers except through his own intercourse with them, his denial of any religious consciousness to them would have been at least entitled to stand as the best procurable account, until more intimate communication should prove or disprove it. But in speaking thus of comparatively well known tribes such as the Dinkas, Shilluks and Nuehr, Sir S. Baker ignores the existence of published evidence, such as describes the sacrifices of the Dinkas, their belief in good and evil spirits (*adjok* and *djyok*), their good deity and heaven-dwelling creator, *Dendid*, as likewise *Néar* the Deity of the Nuehr, and the Shilluk's creator, who is described as visiting, like other spirits, a sacred wood or tree. Kaufmann, Brun-Rollet, Lejean, and other observers, had thus placed on record details of the religion of these White Nile tribes, years before Sir S. Baker's rash denial that they had any religion at all.[14]

The first requisite in a systematic study of the religions of the lower races, is to lay down a rudimentary definition of religion. By requiring in this definition the belief in a supreme deity or of judgment after death, the adoration of idols or the practice of sacrifice, or other partially diffused doctrines or rites, no doubt many tribes may be excluded from the category of religious. But such narrow definition has the fault of identifying religion rather with particular developments than with the deeper motive which underlies them. It seems best to fall back at once on this essential source, and simply

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to claim, as a minimum definition of Religion, the belief in Spiritual Beings. If this standard be applied to the descriptions of low races as to religion, the following results will appear. It cannot be positively asserted that every existing tribe recognises the belief in spiritual beings, for the native condition of a considerable number is obscure in this respect, and from the rapid change or extinction they are undergoing, may ever remain so. It would be yet more unwarranted to set down every tribe mentioned in history, or known to us by the discovery of antiquarian relics, as necessarily having passed the defined minimum of religion. Greater still would be the unwisdom of declaring such a rudimentary belief natural or instinctive in all human tribes of all times; for no evidence justifies the opinion that man, known to be capable of so vast an intellectual development, cannot have emerged from a non-religious condition, previous to that religious condition in which he happens at present to come with sufficient clearness within our range of knowledge. It is desirable, however, to take our basis of enquiry in observation rather than from speculation. Here, so far as I can judge from the immense mass of accessible evidence, we have to admit that the belief in spiritual beings appears among all low races with whom we have attained to thoroughly intimate acquaintance; whereas the assertion of absence of such belief, must apply either to ancient tribes, or to more or less imperfectly described modern ones. The exact bearing of this state of things on the problem of the origin of religion may be thus briefly stated. Were it distinctly proved that non-religious savages exist or have existed, these might be at least plausibly claimed as representatives of the condition of Man before he arrived at the religious state of culture. It is not desirable, however, that this argument should be put forward, for the asserted existence of the non-religious tribes in question rests, as we have seen, on evidence often mistaken and never conclusive. The argument for the natural evolution of religious ideas among mankind is not invalidated by the rejection of an ally too weak at present to give effectual help. Non-religious tribes may not exist in our day, but the fact bears no more decisively on the development of religion, than the impossibility of finding a modern English village without scis-

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sors or books or lucifer matches bears on the fact that there was a time when no such things existed in the land.

I propose here, under the name of Animism, to investigate the deep-lying doctrine of Spiritual Beings, which embodies the very essence of Spiritualistic as opposed to Materialistic philosophy. Animism is not a new technical term, though now seldom used.[15] From its special relation to the doctrine of the soul, it will be seen to have a peculiar appropriateness to the view here taken of the mode in which theological ideas have been developed among mankind. The word Spiritualism, though it may be, and sometimes is, used in a general sense, has this obvious defect to us, that it has become the designation of a particular modern sect, who indeed hold extreme spiritualistic views, but cannot be taken as typical representatives of these views in the world at large. The sense of Spiritualism in its wider acceptation, the general belief in spiritual beings, is here given to Animism.

Animism characterises tribes very low in the scale of humanity, and thence ascends, deeply modified in its transmission, but from first to last preserving an unbroken continuity, into the midst of high modern culture. Doctrines adverse to it, so largely held by individuals or schools, are usually due not to early lowness of civilisation, but to later changes in the intellectual course, to divergence from, or rejection of, ancestral faiths; and such newer developments do not affect the present enquiry as to the fundamental religious condition of mankind. Animism is, in fact, the groundwork of the Philosophy of Religion, from that of savages up to that of civilised men. And although it may at first sight seem to afford but a bare and meagre definition of a minimum of religion, it will be found practically sufficient; for where the root is, the branches will generally be produced. It is habitually found that the theory of Animism divides into two great dogmas, forming parts of one consistent doctrine; first, concerning souls of individual creatures, capable of continued existence after the death or destruction of the body; second, concerning other spirits, upward to the rank of powerful deities. Spiritual beings are held to affect or control the events of the material world, and man's life here and hereafter; and it being

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considered that they hold intercourse with men, and receive pleasure or displeasure from human actions, the belief in their existence leads naturally, and it might almost be said inevitably, sooner or later to active reverence and propitiation. Thus Animism in its full development includes the belief in souls and in a future state, in controlling deities and subordinate spirits, these doctrines practically resulting in some kind of active worship. One great element of religion, that moral element which among the higher nations forms its most vital part, is indeed little represented in the religion of the lower races. It is not that these races have no moral sense or no moral standard, for both are strongly marked among them, if not in formal precept, at least in that traditional consensus of society which we call public opinion, according to which certain actions are held to be good or bad, right or wrong. It is that the conjunction of ethics and Animistic philosophy, so intimate and powerful in the higher culture, seems scarcely yet to have begun in the lower. I propose here hardly to touch upon the purely moral aspects of religion, but rather to study the animism of the world so far as it constitutes, as unquestionably it does constitute, an ancient and worldwide philosophy, of which belief is the theory and worship is the practice. Endeavouring to shape the materials for an enquiry hitherto strangely undervalued and neglected, it will now be my task to bring as clearly as may be into view the fundamental animism of the lower races, and in some slight and broken outline to trace its course into higher regions of civilisation. Here let me state once for all two principal conditions under which the present research is carried on. First, as to the religious doctrines and practices examined, these are treated as belonging to theological systems devised by human reason, without supernatural aid or revelation; in other words, as being developments of Natural Religion. Second, as to the connection between similar ideas and rites in the religions of the savage and the civilised world. While dwelling at some length on doctrines and ceremonies of the lower races, and sometimes particularising for special reasons the related doctrines and ceremonies of the higher nations, it has not seemed my proper task to work out in detail the problems thus suggested among the philosophies and

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creeds of Christendom. Such applications, extending farthest from the direct scope of a work on primitive culture, are briefly stated in general terms, or touched in slight allusion, or taken for granted without remark. Educated readers possess the information required to work out their general bearing on theology, while more technical discussion is left to philosophers and theologians specially occupied with such arguments.

The first branch of the subject to be considered is the doctrine of human and other Souls, an examination of which will occupy the rest of the present chapter. What the doctrine of the soul is among the lower races, may be explained in stating the animistic theory of its development. It seems as though thinking men, as yet at a low level of culture, were deeply impressed by two groups of biological problems. In the first place, what is it that makes the difference between a living body and a dead one; what causes waking, sleep, trance, disease, death? In the second place, what are those human shapes which appear in dreams and visions? Looking at these two groups of phenomena, the ancient savage philosophers probably made their first step by the obvious inference that every man has two things belonging to him, namely, a life and a phantom. These two are evidently in close connection with the body, the life as enabling it to feel and think and act, the phantom as being its image or second self; both, also, are perceived to be things separable from the body, the life as able to go away and leave it insensible or dead, the phantom as appearing to people at a distance from it. The second step would seem also easy for savages to make, seeing how extremely difficult civilised men have found it to unmake. It is merely to combine the life and the phantom. As both belong to the body, why should they not also belong to one another, and be manifestations of one and the same soul? Let them then be considered as united, and the result is that well-known conception which may be described as an apparitional-soul, a ghost-soul. This, at any rate, corresponds with the actual conception of the personal soul or spirit among the lower races, which may be defined as follows: It is a thin unsubstantial human image, in its nature a sort of vapour, film, or shadow; the cause of life and thought in the individual it

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animates; independently possessing the personal consciousness and volition of its corporeal owner, past or present; capable of leaving the body far behind, to flash swiftly from place to place; mostly impalpable and invisible, yet also manifesting physical power, and especially appearing to men waking or asleep as a phantasm separate from the body of which it bears the likeness; continuing to exist and appear to men after the death of that body; able to enter into, possess, and act in the bodies of other men, of animals, and even of things. Though this definition is by no means of universal application, it has sufficient generality to be taken as a standard, modified by more or less divergence among any particular people. Far from these worldwide opinions being arbitrary or conventional products, it is seldom even justifiable to consider their uniformity among distant races as proving communication of any sort. They are doctrines answering in the most forcible way to the plain evidence of men's senses, as interpreted by a fairly consistent and rational primitive philosophy. So well, indeed, does primitive animism account for the facts of nature, that it has held its place into the higher levels of education. Though classic and mediæval philosophy modified it much, and modern philosophy has handled it yet more unsparingly, it has so far retained the traces of its original character, that heirlooms of primitive ages may be claimed in the existing psychology of the civilised world. Out of the vast mass of evidence, collected among the most various and distant races of mankind, typical details may now be selected to display the earlier theory of the soul, the relation of the parts of this theory, and the manner in which these parts have been abandoned, modified, or kept up, along the course of culture.

To understand the popular conceptions of the human soul or spirit, it is instructive to notice the words which have been found suitable to express it. The ghost or phantasm seen by the dreamer or the visionary is an unsubstantial form, like a shadow or reflection, and thus the familiar term of the *shade* comes in to express the soul. Thus the Tasmanian word for the shadow is also that for the spirit;[16] the Algonquins describe a man's soul as *otahchuk*, 'his shadow;'[17] the Quiché language uses *natub* for 'shadow, soul;'[18] the

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Arawak *ueja* means 'shadow, soul, image;'[19] the Abipones made the one word *loákal* serve for 'shadow, soul, echo, image.'[20] The Zulus not only use the word *tunzi* for 'shadow, spirit, ghost,' but they consider that at death the shadow of a man will in some way depart from the corpse, to become an ancestral spirit.[21] The Basutos not only call the spirit remaining after death the *seriti* or 'shadow,' but they think that if a man walks on the river bank, a crocodile may seize his shadow in the water and draw him in;[22] while in Old Calabar there is found the same identification of the spirit with the *ukpon* or 'shadow,' for a man to lose which is fatal.[23] There are thus found among the lower races not only the types of those familiar classic terms, the *skia* and *umbra*, but also what seems the fundamental thought of the stories of shadowless men still current in the folklore of Europe, and familiar to modern readers in Chamisso's tale of Peter Schlemihl. Thus the dead in Purgatory knew that Dante was alive when they saw that, unlike theirs, his figure cast a shadow on the ground.[24] Other attributes are taken into notion of soul or spirit, with especial regard to its being cause of life. Thus the Caribs, connecting the pulses with spiritual beings, and especially considering that in the heart dwells man's chief soul, destined to a future heavenly life, could reasonably use the one word *iouanni* for 'soul, life, heart.'[25] The Tongans supposed the soul to exist throughout the whole extension of the body, but particularly in the heart. On one occasion, the natives were declaring to a European that a man buried months ago was nevertheless still alive. 'And one, endeavouring to make me understand what he meant, took hold of my hand, and squeezing it, said, "This will die, but the life that is within you will never die;" with his other hand pointing to my heart.'[26] So the Basutos say of a dead man that his heart is gone out, and of one recovering from sickness that his heart is coming back.[27] This corresponds to the familiar Old World view of the heart as the prime mover in life, thought, and passion. The connection of soul and blood, familiar to the Karens and Papuas, appears prominently in Jewish and Arabic philosophy.[28] To educated moderns the idea of the Macusi Indians of Guiana may seem quaint, that although the body will decay, 'the man in our eyes' will not die, but wander

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about.[29] Yet the association of personal animation with the pupil of the eye is familiar to European folklore, which not unreasonably discerned a sign of bewitchment or approaching death in the disappearance of the image, pupil, or baby, from the dim eyeballs of the sick man.[30]

The act of breathing, so characteristic of the higher animals during life, and coinciding so closely with life in its departure, has been repeatedly and naturally identified with the life or soul itself. Laura Bridgman showed in her instructive way the analogy between the effects of restricted sense and restricted civilisation, when one day she made the gesture of taking something away from her mouth: 'I dreamed,' she explained in words, 'that God took away my breath to heaven.'[31] It is thus that West Australians used one word *waug* for 'breath, spirit, soul;'[32] that in the Netela language of California, *piuts* means 'life, breath, soul;'[33] that certain Greenlanders reckoned two souls to man, namely his shadow and his breath;[34] that the Malays say the soul of the dying man escapes through his nostrils, and in Java use the same word *ñawa* for 'breath, life, soul.'[35] How the notions of life, heart, breath, and phantom unite in the one conception of a soul or spirit, and at the same time how loose and vague such ideas are among barbaric races, is well brought into view in the answers to a religious inquest held in 1528 among the natives of Nicaragua. 'When they die, there comes out of their mouth something that resembles a person, and is called *julio* [Aztec *yuli* = to live]. This being goes to the place where the man and woman are. It is like a person, but does not die, and the body remains here.' *Question*. 'Do those who go up on high keep the same body, the same face, and the same limbs, as here below?' *Answer*. 'No; there is only the heart.' *Question*. 'But since they tear out their hearts [*i.e.*, when a captive was sacrificed], what happens then?' *Answer*. 'It is not precisely the heart, but that in them which makes them live, and that quits the body when they die.' Or, as stated in another interrogitory, 'It is not their heart that goes up above, but what makes them live, that is to say, the breath that issues from their mouth and is called *julio*.'[36] The conception of the soul as breath may be followed up through Semitic and Aryan etymology, and thus into the

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main streams of the philosophy of the world. Hebrew shows *nephesh*, 'breath,' passing into all the meanings of 'life, soul, mind, animal,' while *ruach* and *neshamah* make the like transition from 'breath' to 'spirit'; and to these the Arabic *nefs* and *ruh* correspond. The same is the history of Sanskrit *âtman* and *prâna*, of Greek *psychń* and *pneuma*, of Latin *animus*, *anima*, *spiritus*. So Slavonic *duch* has developed the meaning of 'breath' into that of soul or spirit; and the dialects of the Gypsies have this word *dūk* with the meanings of 'breath, spirit, ghost,' whether these pariahs brought the word from India as part of their inheritance of Aryan speech, or whether they adopted it in their migration across Slavonic lands.[37] German *Geist* and English *ghost*, too, may possibly have the same original sense of breath. And if any should think such expressions due to mere metaphor, they may judge the strength of the implied connection between breath and spirit by cases of most unequivocal significance. Among the Seminoles of Florida, when a woman died in childbirth, the infant was held over her face to receive her parting spirit, and thus acquire strength and knowledge for its future use. These Indians could have well understood why at the death-bed of an ancient Roman, the nearest kinsman leant over to inhale the last breath of the departing (*et excipies hanc animam ore pio*). Their state of mind is kept up to this day among Tyrolese peasants, who can still fancy a good man's soul to issue from his mouth at death like a little white cloud.[38]

It will be shown that men, in their composite and confused notions of the soul, have brought into connection a list of manifestations of life and thought even more multifarious than this. But also, seeking to avoid such perplexity of combination, they have sometimes endeavoured to define and classify more closely, especially by the theory that man has a combination of several kinds of spirit, soul, or image, to which different functions belong. Already in the barbaric world such classification has been invented or adopted. Thus the Fijians distinguished between a man's 'dark spirit' or shadow, which goes to Hades, and his 'light spirit' or reflection in water or a mirror, which stays near where he dies.[39] The Malagasy say that the *saina* or mind vanishes at death, the *aina* or life becomes

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mere air, but the *matoatoa* or ghost hovers round the tomb.[40] In North America, the duality of the soul is a strongly marked Algonquin belief; one soul goes out and sees dreams while the other remains behind; at death one of the two abides with the body, and for this the survivors leave offerings of food, while the other departs to the land of the dead. A division into three souls is also known, and the Dakotas say that man has four souls, one remaining with the corpse, one staying in the village, one going in the air, and one to the land of spirits.[41] The Karens distinguish between the 'là' or 'kelah,' the personal life-phantom, and the 'thah,' the responsible moral soul.[42] More or less under Hindu influence, the Khonds have a fourfold division, as follows: the first soul is that capable of beatification or restoration to Boora the Good Deity; the second is attached to a Khond tribe on earth and is reborn generation after generation, so that at the birth of each child the priest asks who has returned; the third goes out to hold spiritual intercourse, leaving the body in a languid state, and it is this soul which can pass for a time into a tiger, and transmigrates for punishment after death; the fourth dies on the dissolution of the body.[43] Such classifications resemble those of higher nations, as for instance the threefold division of shade, manes, and spirit:

> Bis duo sunt homini, manes, caro, spiritus, umbra:
> Quatuor ista loci bis duo suscipiunt.
> Terra tegit carnem, tumulum circumvolat umbra,
> Orcus habet manes, spiritus astra petit.
>
> [Four things are man's – flesh, spirit, ghost, and shade;
> And four their final homes: – hell claims the ghost;
> The spirit, heaven; in earth the flesh is laid;
> And, hov'ring o'er it, seeks the shade its post.][44]

Not attempting to follow up the details of such psychical division into the elaborate systems of literary nations, I shall not discuss the distinction which the ancient Egyptians seem to have made in the Ritual of the Dead between the man's *ba*, *akh*, *ka*, *khaba*, translated by Dr Birch as his 'soul,' 'mind,' 'image,' 'shade,' or the Rabbinical division into what may be roughly described as the bod-

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ily, spiritual, and celestial souls, or the distinction between the emanative and genetic souls in Hindu philosophy, or the distribution of life, apparition, ancestral spirit, among the three souls the Chinese, or the demarcations of the *nous*, *psychē*, and *pneuma*, or of the *anima* and *animus*, or the famous classic and mediæval theories of the vegetal, sensitive, and rational souls. Suffice it to point out here that such speculation dates back to the barbaric condition of our race, in a state fairly comparing as to scientific value with much that gained esteem within the precincts of higher culture. It would be a difficult task to treat such classification on a consistent logical basis. Terms corresponding with those of life, mind, soul, spirit, ghost, and so forth, are not thought as describing really separate entities, so much as the several forms and functions of one individual being. Thus the confusion which here prevails in our own thought and language, in a manner typical of the thought and language of mankind in general, is in fact due not merely to vagueness of terms, but to an ancient theory of substantial unity which underlies them. Such ambiguity of language, however, will be found to interfere little with the present enquiry, for the details given of the nature and action of spirits, souls, phantoms, will themselves define the exact sense such words are to be taken in.

The early animistic theory of vitality, regarding the functions of life as caused by the soul, offers to the savage mind an explanation of several bodily and mental conditions, as being effects of a departure of the soul or some of its constituent spirits. This theory holds a wide and strong position in savage biology. The South Australians express it when they say of one insensible or unconscious, that he is 'wilyamarraba,' *i.e.*, 'without soul.'[45] Among the Algonquin Indians of North America, we hear of sickness being accounted for by the patient's 'shadow' being unsettled or detached from his body, and of the convalescent being reproached for exposing himself before his shadow was safely settled down in him; where we should say that a man was ill and recovered, they would consider that he died, but came again. Another account from among the same race explains the condition of men lying in lethargy or trance; their souls have travelled to the banks of the River of Death, but have been

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driven back and return to reanimate their bodies.[46] Among the Fijians, 'when any one faints or dies, their spirit, it is said, may sometimes be brought back by calling after it; and occasionally the ludicrous scene is witnessed of a stout man lying at full length, and bawling out lustily for the return of his own soul.'[47] To the negroes of North Guinea, derangement or dotage is caused by the patient being prematurely deserted by his soul, sleep being a more temporary withdrawal.[48] Thus, in various countries, the bringing back of lost souls becomes a regular part of the sorcerer's or priest's profession. The Salish Indians of Oregon regard the spirit as distinct from the vital principle, and capable of quitting the body for a short time without the patient being conscious of its absence; but to avoid fatal consequences it must be restored as soon as possible, and accordingly the medicine-man in solemn form replaces it down through the patient's head.[49] The Turanian or Tatar races of Northern Asia strongly hold the theory of the soul's departure in disease, and among the Buddhist tribes the Lamas carry out the ceremony of soul-restoration in most elaborate form. When a man has been robbed by a demon of his rational soul, and has only his animal soul left, his senses and memory grow weak and he falls into a dismal state. Then the Lama undertakes to cure him, and with quaint rites exorcises the evil demon. But if this fails, then it is the patient's soul itself that cannot or will not find its way back. So the sick man is laid out in his best attire and surrounded with his most attractive possessions, the friends and relatives go thrice round the dwelling, affectionately calling back the soul by name, while as a further inducement the Lama reads from his book descriptions of the pains of hell, and the dangers incurred by a soul which wilfully abandons its body, and then at last the whole assembly declare with one voice that the wandering spirit has returned and the patient will recover.[50] The Karens of Burma will run about pretending to catch a sick man's wandering soul, or as they say with the Greeks and Slavs, his 'butterfly' (leip-pya), and at last drop it down upon his head. The Karen doctrine of the 'là' is indeed a perfect and well-marked vitalistic system. This là, soul, ghost, or genius, may be separated from the body it belongs to, and it is a matter of the deepest interest to

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the Karen to keep his là with him, by calling it, making offerings of food to it, and so forth. It is especially when the body is asleep, that the soul goes out and wanders; if it is detained beyond a certain time, disease ensues, and if permanently, then its owner dies. When the 'wee' or spirit-doctor is employed to call back the departed shade or life of a Karen, if he cannot recover it from the region of the dead, he will sometimes take the shade of a living man and transfer it to the dead, while its proper owner, whose soul has ventured out in a dream, sickens and dies. Or when a Karen becomes sick, languid and pining from his là having left him, his friends will perform a ceremony with a garment of the invalid's and a fowl which is cooked and offered with rice, invoking the spirit with formal prayers to come back to the patient.[51] This ceremony is perhaps ethnologically connected, though it is not easy to say by what manner of diffusion or when, with a rite still practised in China. When a Chinese is at the point of death, and his soul is supposed to be already out of his body, a relative may be seen holding up the patient's coat on a long bamboo, to which a white cock is often fastened, while a Taoist priest by incantations brings the departed spirit into the coat, in order to put it back into the sick man. If the bamboo after a time turns round slowly in the holder's hands, this shows that the spirit is inside the garment.[52]

Such temporary exit of the soul has a worldwide application to the proceedings of the sorcerer, priest, or seer himself. He professes to send forth his spirit on distant journeys, and probably often believes his soul released for a time from its bodily prison, as in the case of that remarkable dreamer and visionary Jerome Cardan, who describes himself as having the faculty of passing out of his senses as into ecstasy whenever he will, feeling when he goes into this state a sort of separation near the heart as if his soul were departing, this state beginning from his brain and passing down his spine, and he then feeling only that he is out of himself.[53] Thus the Australian native doctor is alleged to obtain his initiation by visiting the world of spirits in a trance of two or three days' duration;[54] the Khond priest authenticates his claim to office by remaining from one to fourteen days in a languid and dreamy state, caused by one of his souls being

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away in the divine presence;[55] the Greenland angekok's soul goes forth from his body to fetch his familiar demon;[56] the Turanian shaman lies in lethargy while his soul departs to bring hidden wisdom from the land of spirits.[57] The literature of more progressive races supplies similar accounts. A characteristic story from old Scandinavia is that of the Norse chief Ingimund, who shut up three Finns in a hut for three nights, that they might visit Iceland and inform him of the lie of the country where he was to settle; their bodies became rigid, they sent their souls on the errand, and awakening after the three days they gave a description of the Vatnsdæl.[58] The typical classic case is the story of Hermotimos, whose prophetic soul went out from time to time to visit distant regions, till at last his wife burnt the lifeless body on the funeral pile, and when the poor soul came back, there was no longer a dwelling for it to animate.[59] A group of the legendary visits to the spirit-world, which will be described in the next chapter, belong to this class. A typical spiritualistic instance may be quoted from Jung-Stilling, who says that examples have come to his knowledge of sick persons who, longing to see absent friends, have fallen into a swoon during which they have appeared to the distant objects of their affection.[60] As an illustration from our own folklore, the well-known superstition may serve, that fasting watchers on St John's Eve may see the apparitions of those doomed to die during the year come with the clergyman to the church door and knock; these apparitions are spirits who come forth from their bodies, for the minister has been noticed to be much troubled in his sleep while his phantom was thus engaged, and when one of a party of watchers fell into a sound sleep and could not be roused, the others saw his apparition knock at the church door.[61] Modern Europe has indeed kept closely enough to the lines of early philosophy, for such ideas to have little strangeness to our own time. Language preserves record of them in such expressions as 'out of oneself,' 'beside oneself,' 'in an ecstasy,' and he who says that his spirit goes forth to meet a friend, can still realise in the phrase a meaning deeper than metaphor.

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Notes

1 J. D. Lang, 'Queensland,' pp. 340, 374, 380, 388, 444 (Buddai appears, p. 379, as causing a deluge; he is probably identical with Budyah).

2 Moffat, 'South Africa,' p. 261.

3 Azara, 'Voy. Dans l'Amérique Méridionale,' vol. ii, pp. 3, 14, 25, 51, 60, 91, 119, etc. ; D'Orbigny, 'L'Homme Américain,' vol. ii, p. 318.

4 Muir, 'Sanskrit Texts,' part ii. p. 435 ; Euseb. 'Hist. Eccl.' Iv. 15 ; Bingham, book i. ch. Ii; Vanini, 'De Admirandi Naturae Arcanis,' dial. 37; Lecky, 'Hist. of Rationalism,' vol. i. p. 126 ; Encylcop. Brit. (5th ed.) s. v. 'Superstition.'

5 J. de Verrazano in Hakluyt, vol. iiii p. 300.

6 See W. Ellis, 'Hist. of Madagascar,' vol. i p. 429; Flacourt, 'Hist. de Madagascar,' p. 59.

7 Dampier, 'Voyages,' vol. ii. part ii. p. 76.

8 *Synkrētic* - The term 'Hottentot' is a now deprecated term used in the 19th century to refer to the Khoekhoe peoples of South Africa. Use of the term in this sense today is considered offensive.

9 Roe in Pinkerton, vol. viii. p. 2

10 Lubbock, 'Prehistoric Times,' p. 564: see also 'Origin of Civilization,' p. 138.

11 *Synkrētic* - The term 'Ahts' referred to one of the indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast in Canada with traditional lands on Vancouver (formerly Quadra's and Vancouver's) Island. This people is today known as the Nuu-chah-nulth.

12 Sproat, 'Scenes and Studies of Savage Life,' p. 205.

13 Mouat, 'Andaman Islanders,' pp. 2, 279, 393. Since the above was written, the remarkable Andaman religion has been described by Mr E. H. Man, in 'Journ. Anthrop. Inst.' Vol. xii (1883), p. 156. [Note to 3rd ed.]

14 Baker, 'Races of the Nile Basin,' in Tr. Eth. Soc. Vol. v. p. 231; 'The Albert Nyanta,' vol. i. p. 246. See Kaufmann, 'Schilderungen aus Central-afrika,' p. 123; Brun-Rollet, ‚Le Nil Blanc et le Soudan,' pp. 100, 222, also pp. 164, 200, 234; G. Lejean in 'Rev. des Deux M.' April 1, 1862, p. 760; Waitz, 'Anthropologie,' vol. ii. pp. 72-6; Bastian, 'Mensch,' vol. iii. p. 298. Other recorded cases of denial of religion of savage tribes on narrow definition or inadequate evidence may be found in Meiners, 'Gesch. Der Rel.' vol. i. pp. 11-15 (Australians and Californians); Waitz, 'Anthropologie,' vol. i. p. 323 (Aru Islanders, etc.); Farrar in 'Anthrop. Rev.' Aug. 1864, p. ccxvii. (Kafirs, etc.); Martius, 'Ethnog. Amer.' vol. i. p. 58 (Manaos); J. G. Palfrey, 'Hist. of New England,' vol. i. p. 46 (New England tribes).

15 The term has been especially used to denote the doctrine of Stahl, the promulgator also of the phlogiston-theory. The Animism of Stahl is a revival and development in modern scientific shape of the classic theory identifyin vital principle and soul. See his 'Theoria Medica Vera,' Halle, 1737; and the critical dissertation on his views, Lemoine, 'Le Vitalism et l'Animisme de Stahl,' Paris, 1864.

16 Bonwick, 'Tasmanians,' p. 182.

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17 Tanner's 'Narr.' p. 281, Cree atchâk = soul.

18 Brasseur, 'Langue Quichée,' s.v.

19 Martius, 'Ethnog. Amer.' vol. i. p. 705; vol. ii. p. 310.

20 Dobrizhoffer, 'Abipones,' vol. ii p. 194.

21 Döhne, 'Zulu Dic.' s.v. 'tunzi;' Callaway, 'Rel. of Amazulu,' pp. 91, 126; 'Zulu Tales,' vol. i. p. 342.

22 Casalis, 'Basutos,' p. 245; Arbousset and Daumas, 'Voyage,' p. 12.

23 Goldie, 'Efik Dictionary,' s.v.; see Kölle, 'Afr. Native Lit.' p. 324 (anuri). Also 'Journ. Ind. Achip.' Vol. v. p. 713 (Australian).

24 Dante, 'Div. Comm. Purgatorio,' canto iii. Compare Grohmann, 'Aberglauben aus Böhmen,' p. 221. See *ante*, p. 85.

25 Rochefort, pp. 429, 516; J. G. Müller, p. 207.

26 Mariner, 'Tonga Is.' vol. ii. p. 135; S. S. Farmer, 'Tonga,' etc. p. 131.

27 Casalis, l.c. See also Mariner, ibid.

28 Bastian, 'Pyschologie,' pp. 15-23.

29 J. H. Bernau, 'Brit. Guiana,' p. 134.

30 Grimm, 'D. M.' pp. 1028, 1133. Anglo-Saxon *man-lica*.

31 Lieber, 'Laura Bridgman,' in Smithsonian Contrib. vol. ii. p. 8.

32 G. F. Moore, 'Vocab. of W. Australia,' p. 103.

33 Brinton, p. 50, see p. 235; Bastian, 'Psychologie,' p. 15.

34 Cranz, 'Grönland,' p. 257.

35 Crawfurd, 'Malay Gr. and Dic.' s.v.; Marsden, 'Sumatra,' p. 386.

36 Oviedo, 'Hist. du Nicaragua,' pp. 21-51.

37 Pott, 'Zigeuner,' vol. ii. p. 306; 'Indo-Germ. Wurzel-Wörterbuch, vol. i. p. 1073; Borrow, 'Lavengro,' vol. ii. ch. xxvi. 'write the lil of him whose *dook* gallops down that hill every night,' see vol. iii. ch. iv.

38 Brinton, 'Myths of New World,' p. 253; Comm. In Virg. Æn. iv. 684; Cic. Verr. v. 45; Wuttke, ,Volksaberglaube,' p. 210; Rochholz, 'Deutscher Glaube,' etc. vol. i. p. 111.

39 Williams, 'Fiji,' vol. i. p. 241.

40 Ellis, 'Madagascar,' vol. i. p. 393.

41 Charlevoix, 'Nouvelle France,' vol. vi. pp. 75-8 ; Schoolcraft, 'Indian Tribes,' part i. pp. 33, 83, part iv. p. 70 ; Waitz, vol. iii. p. 194 ; J. G. Müller, pp. 66, 207-8.

42 Cross in 'Journ. Amer. Oriental Soc.' Vol. iv. p. 310.

43 Macpherson, pp. 91-2. See also Klemm, 'C. G.' vol. iii. p. 71 (Lapp); St John, 'Far East,' vol. i. p. 189 (Dayaks).

44 *Synkrētic* – The English translation has been taken from John Mason Good's notes to his translation of *The Nature of Things: A Didactic Poem* by Titus Lucretius Carus. See *The Nature of Things: A Didactic Poem translated from the Latin of Titus Lucretius Carus* (London: Longman, Hurst, Reese, and Orme, 1805), vol. i, p. 37.

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45 Shürmann, 'Vocab. of Parnkalla Lang.' s.v.

46 Tanner's 'Narr.' p. 291; Keating, 'Narr. Of Long's Exp.' vol. ii p. 154.

47 Williams, 'Fiji,' vol. i. p. 242; see the converse process of catching away a man's soul, causing him to pine and die, p. 250.

48 J. L. Wilson, 'W. Afr.' p. 220.

49 Bastian, 'Mensch,' vol. ii. p. 319; also Sproat, p. 213 (Vancouver's I.).

50 Bastian, 'Pyschologie,' p. 34; Gmelin, 'Reisen durch Sibirien,' vol. ii. p. 359 (Yakuts); Ravenstein, 'Amur,' p. 351 (Tunguz).

51 Bastian, 'Oestl. Asien,' vol. i. p. 143; vol. ii. pp. 388, 418; vol. iii. p. 236. Mason, 'Karens,' l.c. p. 196, etc.; Cross, 'Karens,' in 'Journ. Amer. Oriental Soc.' vol. iv. 1854, p. 307. See also St John, 'Far East,' l.c. (Dayaks).

52 Doolittle, 'Chinese,' vol. i. p. 150.

53 Cardan, 'De Varietate Rerum,' Basel, 1556, cap. xliii.

54 Stanbridge, 'Abor. Of Victoria,' in 'Tr. Eth. Soc.' Vol. i. p. 300.

55 Macpherson, 'India,' p. 103.

56 Cranz, 'Grönland,' p. 269. See also Sproat, l.c.

57 Rühs, 'Finland,' p. 303; Castrén, 'Finn. Myth.' p. 134; Bastian, 'Mensch,' vol. ii. p. 319.

58 Vatnsdæla Saga; Baring-Gould, 'Werewolves,' p. 29.

59 Plin. vii. 53; Lucian. Hermotimus, Musc. Encoun. 7.

60 R. D. Owen, 'Footfalls on the Boundary of another World,' p. 259. See A. R. Wallace, 'Scientific Aspect of the Supernatural,' p. 43.

61 Brand, 'Pop. Ant.' vol. i. p. 331, vol. iii. p. 236. See Calmet, 'Diss. sur les Esprits;' Maury, 'Magie,' part ii. ch. iv.

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