

## Feuerbach - the Philosopher who said Theology is just Anthropology

Feuerbach's belief

Feuerbach in his book *The Essence of Christianity* stated that "If man is to find contentment in God ... he must find himself in God."

God is only a projection of perfected human nature

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Feuerbach felt that belief in God is not about evidence or concern for truth but is a product of wishful thinking.

Supported by the fact that you alone decide what is good

What moral values you see represented by God are your moral values. What aspirations and desires you have you see God as interested in them. So God is really just man. Man is talking about himself when he talks about God, it just sounds as if he is talking about God. You cannot personify goodness and wisdom as God unless you think you know what goodness and wisdom are. You judge what good and wisdom should personify God. It is all back to you.

And it arises from man's need to believe he has the truth

If man cannot have the truth, man has to settle for believing he can and does have it. Man needs to tell himself there is a God who knows the truth. Why? Because man sense's that faith is a human and fallible creation. Man likes to be certain. So to feel certain he tells himself that his beliefs are revealed to him by God and simply cannot be wrong. That is why many religious people who have to be in wrong religions still think they have the truth and set out to hound and persecute others because they are so sure that those people are wrong.

But many believe in a God who is mean to them!

Some Christians may say that they do not teach a God who is there to serve us but a God who is there to be served and that we must do his will. They deny that Christians can be accused of making a God to suit themselves because the Christian God is stern and does very tough love. But this God was made in an age where children died young and there was little joy in life. To be credible, religion had to invent a hard God.

Why does man see himself as such a failure in front of God? You might expect that if God is a projection that God will conveniently be made out to agree with whatever a believer does by the believer.

Those who claim to believe they are useless in God's eyes certainly do not act as if they do.

If you think you are immune to the threat posed by your nasty God, could it be that you think it is others who will suffer at his hands and not you?

And if you are projecting what you want to believe onto the idea of God you cannot switch off the realisation that God is a projection unless you have a God that reasonably stands by his standards and does not change them even if he condemns you. A God who keeps agreeing with your whims is not going to be taken seriously as a God. You have a need to believe you have the truth so you cannot keep changing your view of God and what he stands for all the time.

So the objection from the unpleasantness of many ideas of God is irrelevant.

Unprovable?

It is often charged that the idea that God is really just our mirror and is about us not God is not strictly provable. But we can be sure that it is true of many religious people. It is safe to assume that the most religious people among us are engaging in projecting their needs and thoughts and imagining these needs and thoughts are God.

If it cannot be proved it cannot be disproved either. It does not release us from the fear that religious people might be following a God they create for themselves.

If we see ourselves in God that does not mean we don't learn about God

Is theology really just our psychological workings projected out into a God? Some say that it could be that God uses these processes in our mind and hearts to discern his existence and something of what he is like. It could be that God has made us like him, in his image, so in learning about ourselves we learn about what he must be like as well. This is the Christian answer to Feuerbach when he said that man merely makes God in man's image. It is inverting it to say that as we are like God this is how we learn about God.

If we are projecting then how can some believe in an evil or untrustworthy or spiteful God? How can we believe in a God who demands that we surrender doing what we want in order to worry about what he wants? Even if we do what we want we are to do it because he wants it. So the surrender is 24/7.

If for some odd reason we want to surrender self-interest for God it could be that God made us like that. It does not indicate that there is no God or that the God we adore is only in our heads.

The arguments seek to argue, "Okay if we are projecting those projections give us truth and a relationship with God." That is nonsense. A person who thinks he knows a woman he only met five minutes ago and marries her cannot say he has the truth about her and a real relationship with her. It's in his head that he does.

Particular ambivalence

What about the "particular ambivalence" that Freud talked about? A child can feel strongly negative about the father and strongly positive at the same time. So you can wish that God does not exist and equally wish that he does.

Considering that one writer declares:

"Therefore it seems just as likely that God exists as it does that he does not in Feuerbach's theory, thus leaving the argument inconclusive."

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This idea of particular ambivalence has nothing at all to do with disproving the notion that God is a projection that originates in the person's psychology. The positive and negative will rarely be equal or balanced. Most of the time one of them will be the heavier. A person who does not want to believe in God but mostly does will be a believer and engaging in a milder form of projection than the religious fanatic would.

And both God and atheism can be both projections. The person can have both at the one time.

Why it matters - hugely!

There is proof that God is a projection. No objection to it works. God has no existence except in the imagination of the believer. Even if there is a God, it does not mean that the believer reaches out to him rather than an imagined God.

That means man wants to condone the terrible things that happen by saying they are the will of God. It is man's will we are talking about and nothing else - despite appearances. In the scheme of things, a person can only experience a little of all the suffering that was and is and will be. It is easy to condone the suffering of creatures other than yourself when you are not those creatures and when you are a drop in the ocean.

If God says, "I know best", or "You don't deserve me", or "You will never have anybody as good as me", or "You are a sinner and you need me to be a better person", or "I send suffering or let it befall you because I love you", or "Do not listen to anybody who does not understand the relationship we have" God is really no better than a person who abuses their spouse or partner. He talks the talk. If God is really man what does that say about the theologians and teachers and popes and priests and clergy who have brought God to us? What does it say about them that they even go as far as to take advantage of our childhood state to indoctrinate and condition us?

Read

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Essence\\_of\\_Christianity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Essence_of_Christianity)