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(126) SECULARISATION AND AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

Scott Everett Couper

Introduction

The acceptance of faith by the Ethiopian eunuch demonstrates Christianity's origins have roots in Africa. The writings of Augustine of Hippo and others demonstrate Africa to be a fount of Christian theology. Yet, Christianity's later seventeenth-century introduction to sub-Saharan Africa by western 'historic mainline' mission agencies and European colonisation rendered African Christianity greatly diminished due to the West's pejorative views of African culture. Modernisation, pluralism, urbanisation and formal education and the West's imposed divorce of African culture and orthodox Christian theology and the resulting emasculation of traditional African spirituality has rendered mainline African Christianity particularly susceptible to the threat of secularisation in the post-modern world. The author surveys Southern African history and highlights the thought of Steve Biko in arguing that African Indigenous Churches (AICs) have, since the turn of the twentieth century, best resisted white supremacy by countering the estrangement of African Christianity from indigenous culture. The flawed manner in which the West introduced Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa renders mainline African Christianity vulnerable to bureaucratisation and institutionalisation, and thus increasingly irrelevant to Africans. Furthermore, Pentecostalism in Africa harbours the seeds of secularisation with its western Protestant emphasis on a temporal and realised soteriology (health, wealth and individualism). The author argues that, for mainline African Christianity to halt its decline and resist secularisation, it must learn from the AICs' resistance to white supremacy and better graft itself onto an African consciousness, thus becoming more relevant, and must challenge and contest Pentecostal terrestrial soteriology.

Definitions and Parameters

'Secularism' has been understood by Christian polemicists to be any 'spirit' opposed to Christianity, regardless of its source or content; such an understanding is 'so broad to be useless'.¹ Hence, for the purposes of this chapter, a definition and parameters of 'secularisation' must be articulated. The word 'secularisation' derives from the Latin word *saeculum*, meaning 'the age' or 'the world'.² 'Secularisation' is a symptom of the modern world (the term not having been used before the nineteenth century) and post-modern world (the term being widely used only in the twentieth century). Generically, it is the *process* of

¹ Jerald Brauer, 'Secularism', in *A Handbook of Christian Theology: Definition Essays on Concepts and Movements of Thought in Contemporary Protestantism* (New York: Meridian Books, 1958), 339. For example, Benno van den Toren arguably uses a polemic lens to define 'secularisation' (24-30). While, van den Toren eruditely qualifies and specifically defines secularisation and accurately articulates that which it is *not* (5), the *Zeitgeist* of his paper, and especially the abstract, blurs all the lines so carefully articulated. The paper alludes to the 'so broad to be useless' definition of secularisation by including as examples: declining church membership (4), the use of traditional healers (3) and religious convictions circumscribed to the private sphere (3). By failing to distinguish between advocating for living-out Christian values in the public realm and the public realm adopting and enforcing Christian values, van den Toren almost advocates for theocracy (22 and 28); Benno van den Toren, 'Secularisation in Africa: A Challenge for the Churches', *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology* Vol. 22, no. 1, (2003): 3-30.

² Karen Armstrong, *Fields of Blood: Religion and the History of Violence* (London: The Bodley Head, 2014), 2-3. Armstrong cites: Wilfred Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind* (New York, 1962), 33.

becoming more ‘of the world’ and less ‘religious, sacred or spiritual’, and thus it is the process of becoming less ‘subject or bound by religious rules’.³ Arguably, the forces fomenting secularisation in the world, and thus in African Christianity, are, primarily, modernisation and pluralism, and, secondarily, rural to urban migration and formal (modern) education.⁴

When using the term ‘secularisation’ in this chapter as related to African Christianity, a key differentiation must be made between the secularisation of individuals (private) and social institutions (public).⁵ Prominent Egyptian scholar Abdelwahab Elmessiri (1938-2008) made this distinction using the terms ‘comprehensive’ and ‘partial’ secularisation.⁶ ‘Comprehensive secularisation’ is the process whereby:

...the utmost efforts [are made] to restrict religion, absolute values and metaphysics from *all walks of life* ...[because] a rationalistic/materialistic viewpoint sees... the universe... devoid of any sanctity or mystery (Couper’s emphasis).⁷

‘Partial secularisation’ confines itself to the realms of politics and perhaps economics’ – that is, it expresses a ‘separation of church and state’.⁸ While modernisation, pluralism, urbanisation and formal education inevitably and irreversibly foster ‘partial secularisation’, they do not necessarily foster ‘comprehensive secularisation’.

This chapter does not accede to a [Max] Weberian (1864-1920) thesis, otherwise known today as the ‘Secularisation Thesis’, that societies (and thus Africans) are being increasingly ‘comprehensively’ (in the sense of publicly *and privately*) secularised – that is, that they believe in ‘secularism’ as an ideology. Till now, scholars have constantly argued for or against this thesis. The notable Peter Berger (b. 1929) has at different times in his career argued for, and later against, it. That Africans may leave mainline for schismatic denominations, syncretistically visit a *sangoma* (a traditional healer) while also attending church, participate in a lifestyle not historically compatible with orthodox Christianity (e.g. in polygamy or homosexuality), or leave the Christian faith altogether and practise an existential spirituality does *not* constitute ‘secularisation’. In short, individuals who change or fuse religious practices are *not* increasingly secular.

A [Émile] Durkheimian (1858-1917) thesis asserts that society can undergo ‘partial’ secularisation’ (public and state) while its constituent individuals may not (private and religion). This is also known as ‘compartmentalisation’. Societies are composed of macro-social systems and institutions (instrumentalities) that include laws (courts), economies (markets), politics (governments) and social services (hospitals and schools). This chapter affirms that while individuals may not be increasingly secularised, their instrumentalities – within modern democratic states that protect the rights of all its

³ Judy Pearsall, ed. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 10th edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 1295. A crucial distinction must be made between the words ‘secularisation’ which is a *process* and ‘secularism’ which is an *ideology*. This chapter relates primarily to secularisation as a process. Michael Horton, ‘The Secularisation Thesis’, in ‘Secularising Religion’, *Modern Reformation* Vol. 22, no.5, (2013): 26.

⁴ van den Toren, ‘Secularisation in Africa’, 3. Horton, ‘The Secularisation Thesis’, 26.

⁵ One author refers to this distinction as ‘differentiation’ of the secular sphere from the religious sphere. Technically, this ‘differentiation’ is in and of itself a manifestation of secularisation. However, for the purposes of this short chapter, this study does not examine secularisation in such a nuanced fashion. Nonetheless, differentiation, or ‘partial secularisation’ is *not* indicative of a secularist (as an ideology) threat. John Coffey, ‘Secularisation: Is It Inevitable?’ www.jubilee-centre.org/secularisation-is-it-inevitable-by-john-coffey/ (accessed 27 September 2015).

⁶ Nasir Sanaullah, ‘Arab Islamic Response to Secularism: A Case Study of Dr. Abdelwahab Elmessiri’, *Journal of Humanity & Islam* Vol. 3, no. 1, (2013): 13.

⁷ Abdelwahab Elmessiri and Aziz Al Azmah, *Secularism under the Microscope* (Beirut: Dar al Fikr, 2000), 67.

⁸ Elmessiri, ‘Secularism under the Microscope’, 120 and Abdelwahab Elmessiri, ‘The Partial Secularization and the Comprehensive Secularization’, (Cairo: Dar al Shorouk, 2002), 220.

diverse citizens, no matter their creed or lack thereof – are, or should be. Due to the advent of plural societies, Christianity should no longer control the world as it did before the Renaissance, Reformation and Enlightenment. In short, a heterogeneous religious or spiritual constituency that participates in ‘partial secularisation’ (and is thus anti-theocratic) is not synonymous with one that is undergoing ‘comprehensive secularisation’ (and thus the abandonment of public *and private* spiritual and religious values and practices). Populations are not necessarily becoming more ideologically secular as a result of ‘the collapse of religious hegemony’, though ‘partial secularisation’ has occurred.⁹ For example, advocacy supporting the abandonment of draconian punitive legislation against homosexuality in Malawi is *not* an example of ‘comprehensive secularisation’ (it is rather ‘partial secularisation’), as heterosexuals will still have strong negative spiritually-based sentiments against the practice and such disdain will govern their private behaviour, and thus they remain ‘religious’.¹⁰ This chapter, rightly or wrongly, sympathises with what John Mbiti declared the case: Africans are notoriously spiritual.¹¹ The question is: Will this always remain the case?

In a 1972 address entitled ‘The Church as Seen by a Young Layman’, Steve Biko (1946-1977) addressed elderly black *abafundisi* (ministers). In it, Biko asserted:

In most cases, religion is intricately intertwined with the rest of the cultural traits of society. In a sense, this makes the religion part and parcel of the behavioural pattern of that society and makes the people bound by the limits of that religion through a strong identification with it. Where a people are subjected to a religion that is removed from their cultural make-up, then elements of disgruntlement begin to be noted, and sometimes open defiance is soon displayed. Hence, one can make the claim that most religions are specific, and where they fail to observe the requirements of specificity, then they must be sufficiently adaptable to convey relevant messages to different people in different situations.¹²

As one surveys the historical points of interface between Christianity and indigenous Africans, we observe, though certainly not without exception, a pervasive irrelevance of Christianity to its converts and adherents. Ironically, the introduction of Christianity itself initiated a process of secularisation in Africa with its distinction between the sacred and profane that previously did not exist in African Traditional Religions. Yet, this irrelevance is largely due to the manner, or brand packaging, of Christianity by those who introduced a western acculturated form of the religion and, seeing it as normative, imposed it on indigenous Africans without the required flexibility alluded to by Steve Biko. This irrelevance led to, for missionaries, disappointing conversion rates, the initiation and growth of separatist or dissenting movements (the so-called ‘Ethiopian,’ independent, or African initiated churches, AICs) and syncretistic faith practises that combine African traditional spirituality and Christianity. Therefore, the decline in numbers and influence of mainline or orthodox Christianity (inaccurately termed ‘secularisation’ by many) is actually a long-held historical pattern of Africans recognising Christianity’s irrelevance to their spiritual and cultural consciousness, and their proverbial ‘voting with their feet’ and leaving the historic mission churches. Therefore, the decreased societal influence of orthodox Christianity is *not* due to the ‘comprehensive secularisation’ of Africans *per se*, but rather due to mainline Christianity’s failure to be culturally and thus spiritually relevant to Africans.¹³ In short, African Christians are taking their ‘notorious’

⁹ Coffey, ‘Secularisation: Is it Inevitable?’ 3.

¹⁰ Faith Karimi, ‘Amnesty: Malawi Suspends Anti-gay Laws’, Cable News Network (CNN) 6 November 2012. <http://edition.cnn.com/2012/11/06/world/africa/malawi-antigay-laws/index.html> (accessed 30 September, 2015).

¹¹ John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (London: Heinemann, 1969), 1 and 262.

¹² Steve Biko, ‘The Church as Seen by a Young Layman’ in *Steve Biko: I Write What I Like* (Johannesburg: Picador Africa, 2004), 59-60.

¹³ A similar point has rightfully been made regarding theories of economic and social development in Africa. Mustapha Kurfi, ‘Secularisation and Development in Africa: A Terrific Façade’, *Global Journal of Human Social*

spirituality elsewhere. Furthermore, because of AICs' religious and cultural relevance in Africa, they are best resisting any nominal 'comprehensive secularism' that will soon, if it has not already, encroach on the African continent. If mainline Christianity desires Africans to resist 'comprehensive secularisation' (and remain within its fold), it would do well to note Biko's analysis and AICs' lessons regarding acculturation and spiritual relevance.¹⁴

Resisting Ecclesiastical White Supremacy

In his seminal text, *Introduction to African Religion*, John Mbiti rightly asserts that Christianity is indigenous to Africa.¹⁵ The narrative of Philip and the unnamed Ethiopian in Acts 8 is evidence that the Christian faith is endemic to Africa. Tradition holds that St Mark brought the faith to Egypt in AD 42. Likewise, the writings of Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Athanasius, Cyril, Tertullian, Cyprian and Augustine of Hippo demonstrate that the development of Christian systematic theology has its roots in Africa (as does, ironically, the origins of western civilisation).¹⁶ Yet, with the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck and the Dutch settlers in 1652, Christianity as it was introduced to sub-Saharan Africa had a distinct western European veneer. One of the first converts to Christianity, a Khoikhoi girl named Krotoa, and then – following her baptism – 'Eva', demonstrates the degree to which western Christianity has perhaps been irrelevant. Eva's new faith did not sufficiently help her navigate within the limited space she found herself in, and she died succumbing to prostitution and alcoholism.¹⁷

The first missionary sent to Southern Africa, George Schmidt (1709-1785), baptised Vehette Magdalena Tikhuie (d. 1800), or 'Lena', at Genadendal in 1742. But Dutch opposition caused Schmidt to abandon the Moravian mission in 1744, leaving Lena a remnant until the mission was later reconstituted. Lena's leadership of the mission by default is a rare example of indigenous Christian autonomy.

Beginning with the Baptist Missionary Society (Baptist) in 1792, the London Missionary Society (Congregational) in 1795, the Church Missionary Society (Anglican) in 1799, and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Congregational) in 1810, mission societies rigidly instilled a westernised Christianity on African converts. The iconoclast Johannes van der Kemp (1747-1811) preached to Khoikhoi and black Africans. Two contemporary young mystical Xhosa prophets, Nxele-Makanna (1790-1820) and Ntsikanna (1780-1821), heard excerpts of van der Kemp's sermons and incorporated Christian theology into traditional African spirituality.¹⁸ Ntsikanna proved more orthodox, becoming arguably the first modern African theologian who contextually wrote hymns, poems and liturgy. He represented 'a genuinely new birth of Christian insight within African culture and society'.¹⁹

From the mid-1800s, indigenous Christians in Southern Africa began to exhibit greater confidence and interrogated the new faith. Rivalry within the Anglican Church erupted between Bishop William Colenso (1814-1883) and the metropolitans in Cape Town and London. Colenso's troubles began when he endeared himself to the indigenous perspectives of his protégé William Ngidi over issues of biblical scholarship and

Science: Sociology and Culture Vol. 13, no. 6, (2013): no pages indicated.

¹⁴ Justin Ukpong, 'Christology and Inculturation: A New Testament Perspective' in *Paths of African Theology*, ed. Rosino Gibellini, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1994), 40-61.

¹⁵ John Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion* (Oxford: Heinemann International Literature and Textbooks, 1975), 182-3.

¹⁶ Rosino Gibellini, ed. 'African Theologians Wonder...and Make Some Proposals' in *Paths of African Theology*, 1-2.

¹⁷ Jane McKinnon, 'Krotoa' in *A Tapestry of Lives: Cape Women of the 17th Century* (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2004), 63-82.

¹⁸ Noel Mostert, *Frontiers: The Epic Struggle of South Africa's Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People* (New York: Knoph, 1992), 424-91.

¹⁹ Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa, 1450-1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 219.

Zulu traditional customs such as polygamy.²⁰ In 1879, Colenso's domestic antagonists, the missionaries of the American Zulu Mission, adopted the 'Umsunduze Rules', banning practices such as *ukulobolisa* (bride price). These rules caused irrevocable damage to Christian relations and served as a catalyst to at least two future American Board break-away churches.

At the start of the twentieth century, many black African Christians began to exert greater initiative. Frustration with western cultural norms and white supremacy within ecclesiastic polities led many black African clergy to secede from the mission churches that had ordained them. Nehemiah Tile (d. 1891) and James Dwane (1848-1916) broke from the Methodist Church in 1884 and 1896, respectively. Mpambani Mzimba (1850-1911) broke with the Presbyterian Free Church of Scotland in 1898. Enoch Mgiijima (1858-1929) broke from the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1910. Simungu Shibe (dates unknown) and Gardiner Mvuyana (1886-1925) broke from the Congregationalists in 1898 and 1917, respectively.²¹ At the same time, 'dissenting Zionist ministers in Johannesburg were participants in a transnational sphere of evangelical practice that highly prized individual autonomy and self-determination in religious matters'.²² One mystical prophet, Isaiah Shembe (1870-1935), with Wesleyan, Baptist, Apostolic Faith Mission and secondhand Lutheran influences, initiated a new church (Nazareth Baptist Church) and faith (Shembe) in 1910 that intimately connected with the African consciousness.

Resisting 'Comprehensive Secularism'

Towards the conclusion of Steve Biko's 1972 message to his older clerical audience, he advised:

In order to be able therefore to change the churches, we have to first gain ascendance over them in that white model, then thereafter turn that model into one we cherish, we love, we understand, and one that is relevant to us.²³

In other words, Biko argued for Africans not to mimic western models of ecclesiastic governance but urged their indigenisation. Second, Biko advised in his conclusion:

The second area in which we must focus our attention is a thorough understanding of Black Theology... Christianity can never hope to remain abstract and removed from people's environmental problems. In order to be applicable to people, it must have meaning for them in their given situation. If they are an oppressed people, it must have something to say about their oppression.²⁴

Since the advent of imported Christianity through colonialism during the modern era, Africans have always countered the effects of white supremacy with secession, dissent and independence. Yet, a new

²⁰ Livingstone Ngewu, 'John William Colenso and the Enigma of Polygamy' and Jonathan Draper, 'The Trial of Bishop John William Colenso' in *The Eye of the Storm: John William Colenso and the Crisis of Biblical Inspiration*, ed. Jonathan Draper (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2003), 293-325.

²¹ William Wilcox, 'The American Zulu Mission in Its Relation to the African Congregational Church' and Frederick Bridgman, 'Ethiopian Movement and Other Independent Factions Characterised by a National Spirit', in *The South African Deputation Papers: Presenting Some Aspects and Problems of the Work of the Two South African Missions of the American Board* (Printed for the American Zulu Mission, Natal and the East Central African Mission, Rhodesia, 1904), 9-12 and 29-30, respectively.

²² Joel Cabrita, 'Revisiting 'Christian Independency': Urban Moderns and the Pursuit of Self-Perfection in Early Twentieth-Century Johannesburg', unpublished draft paper (work in progress). See also: Robert Houle, *Making African Christianity: Africans Reimagining Their Faith in Colonial South Africa* (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 2011).

²³ Biko, *The Church as Seen by a Young Layman*, 63.

²⁴ Biko, *The Church as Seen by a Young Layman*, 64.

ideological hegemony possibly approaches: ‘comprehensive secularism’. If mainline African Christianity wishes to remain at the forefront of the opposition to ‘comprehensive secularism’, and therefore remain ‘notoriously spiritual’, then it must respond to ‘comprehensive secularism’ as effectively as AICs responded to white supremacy. Mainline Africans must fuse traditional polities and spiritualities into Christianity, thus making the faith more relevant to its continental constituency. If mainline African Christianity fails, its now diminishing remnant will seek further relevance in syncretistic schisms or ‘comprehensive secularism’.

Secularisation *in* African Christianity

While the majority of this chapter focuses on secularisation *and* (that is, as separate and opposed to) African Christianity, a word must be related to secularisation *within* (that is, as a component part of) African Christianity. To this, Steve Biko comments on two forms of secularisation within African Christianity – bureaucratisation and institutionalisation:

It must be noted that the Church in... Africa as everywhere else, has been spoilt by bureaucracy. No more is it just an expression of the sum total of [African's] religious feelings; it has become, in fact, highly institutionalised, not as one unit but as several powerful units, differing perhaps not so much on scriptural interpretation as in institutional aims... This bureaucracy and institutionalisation tends to make the church removed from important priorities and to concentrate on secondary and tertiary functions like structures and finances, etc. And because of this, the Church has become very irrelevant and in fact an ‘ivory tower’, as some people refer to it.²⁵

Secularisation in the form of bureaucratisation and institutionalisation is a manifestation of the manner in which the West introduced Christianity to sub-Saharan Africa. First, as mentioned earlier, the West imposed a new culture on Africans. Christianity brought ‘new styles of clothing, new customs, new forms of customs, new forms of etiquette’, the former ways ‘were described as being pagan and barbaric’.²⁶ Second, and closely related to the threat of secularisation within African Christianity from the outset, the West introduced Christian division to Africa. John Mbiti notes: ‘Another major problem facing Christianity in Africa is the large number of church divisions, denominations, groups and sects. Many of these were imported from abroad.’²⁷ The West brought a fractured and factionalised faith, separated not so much by belief but more by style (internal western Christian culture) and polity (itself highly western). The competition within areas for constituencies by Lutherans, Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Anglicans mirrored the balkanisation initiated at the Berlin Conference (1884-1885) of African geo-political areas and constituencies into colonial nation-states.

Again, the secularisation of African Christianity in the form of bureaucratisation and institutionalisation has historically been best countered by AICs who, for good or bad, do not emphasise an allegiance to western cultures of administration and formal education, nor even to autochthonous hierarchies. Rather than procedures and protocols, AICs emphasise the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the ‘cult of personality’ (perceived as a conduit of the Holy Spirit). AICs, such as the Zionists and Shembe, are therefore perceived by most Africans to be more intimate and relevant to their lives. Mainline African Christianity, unless it has allowed sufficient cultural flexibility, is thus viewed by most Africans to be alien: western, codified and rarefied.²⁸ Those Africans who remain within the historic mainline mission churches become, like western Europeans, more ‘comprehensively secularised’.

²⁵ Biko, ‘The Church as Seen by a Young Layman’, 61-2.

²⁶ Biko, ‘The Church as Seen by a Young Layman’, 60.

²⁷ Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 184.

²⁸ Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 185.

Strongly related to Steve Biko's warning to African Christianity not to mimic western Christianity's institutional paradigms, as imported by mainline historic missions, is an extrapolated thesis derived from Max Weber which argues that rationalism and materialism (consumerism) within Protestantism (in particular, Reformed and Calvinist Protestantism) fosters secularisation *within* African Christianity. Weber explains:

Protestants especially seem to promote rationalism and materialism as a means to find prosperity. Wealth and worldly prosperity have been interpreted by Protestant groups to indicate the blessing and grace that God has bestowed upon them. This love for the material and worldly possessions that has been identified with Protestants will eventually distract attention away from religion.²⁹

The explosive exponential growth of Pentecostalism (originally derived from North America) within Africa is the greatest evidenced-based argument that 'comprehensive secularisation' is not taking hold in Africa. However, Lovemore Togarasei postulates that Pentecostalism is a Trojan horse harbouring 'comprehensive secularisation' (as its foci are on health, wealth and individualism, otherwise known as the 'prosperity gospel'). Modern Pentecostalism's soteriological concerns relate primarily to the proximate and worldly rather than the ethereal and eternal.³⁰ Togarasei highlights His People Christian Church in Johannesburg that uses secular symbols and practices that tap into values of social reconstruction and economic achievement... His People Church in Johannesburg offers secular music styles and media to engender immediate pleasure and entertainment. Togarasei cites the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa [in] Africa, the United Family International Church and the Christ Embassy as ministries that focus on healing (a very present soteriological emphasis). Pentecostal preachers in Zimbabwe, such as Uebert Angel and Emmanuel Makandiwa, preach and demonstrate a theology extolling wealth by owning luxury vehicles and offering 'modern, well-adorned institutions in architecture, furnishings and... administrations', such as at the Celebration Church.³¹ In short, a growing African Christianity is in fact emulating the trajectory of secularisation *within* Protestant Reformed Christianity through its mainline historic missions and a recently morphed version of Pentecostalism.

Conclusion

Africans are 'notoriously spiritual'. Yet, nothing is absolute, not even Africans' seemingly inherent proclivity for the sacred. To resist 'comprehensive secularism', mainline African Christianity should not be seduced to reverting back – back to some half-contrived primordial 'roots'.³² Rather, African Christianity should contest 'comprehensive secularism' with its present and future dynamic *African* consciousness. While contesting white supremacy, Congregationalist lay preacher and the first black African Nobel Peace Prize-winner Albert Luthuli warned:

This exultation of an almost obsolete way of life, tribalism, was a studied effort by [white supremacists] to gain acceptance by Africans of a reactionary policy of the [white supremacists], a 'back to tribalism', African 'policy.' It would be more correct to call [their policy] a caricature of tribalism, for *fortunately* irreparable

²⁹ Jaco Beyers, 'The Church and the Secular: The Effect of the Post-secular on Christianity', *HTS Theological Studies* 70, no.1, Art. #2605 (2014): 8.

³⁰ Lovemore Togarasei, 'Modern/Charismatic Pentecostalism as a Form of 'Religious' Secularisation in Africa', *Studia Historiae Ecclesasticae* 41, no. 1, (2015): 56-66.
van den Toren (2003) and Horton (2013) also make excellent cases that secularisation occurs *within* Christianity and African Traditional Religions.

³¹ Togarasei, 'Modern/Charismatic Pentecostalism', 60-1.

³² Van den Toren, 'Secularisation of Africa: A Challenge', 25.

damage has been done to tribalism by our two hundred years of contact with an aggressive civilisation, itself subjected to the dynamic forces of a highly scientific and technological age and a dynamic revolutionary religion, Christianity (Couper's emphasis).³³

African Christianity's future is brighter than its past. 'Comprehensive secularisation' will fail to take hold in Africa if mainline African Christianity charts a course forward rather than back and remains loyal to its dynamic African consciousness. Perhaps the best means to contest 'comprehensive secularism' is for mainline churches to partner with AICs, receiving the gifts of a Christianity fused with an African consciousness while sharing the gifts of education and administration, and to partner with Pentecostal churches so as to challenge and contest 'comprehensive secularisation' originating from a temporal and materialist western spirituality.

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³³ Albert Luthuli, 'Back to Tribalism is Unrealistic', *Golden City Post*, 18 October 1959, 7.

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