

frequent accompaniment of wailing or chanting vocal-isations. If these submissive actions are successful, the dominant individual is appeased. Because its powers are so great, the appeasement ceremonies have to be performed at regular and frequent intervals, to prevent its anger from rising again. The dominant individual is usually, but not always, referred to as a god.

Since none of these gods exist in a tangible form, why have they been invented? To find the answer to this we have to go right back to our ancestral origins. Before we evolved into co-operative hunters, we must have lived in social groups of the type seen today in other species of apes and monkeys. There, in typical cases, each group is dominated by a single male. He is the boss, the overlord, and every member of the group has to appease him or suffer the consequences. He is also most active in protecting the group from outside hazards and in settling squabbles between lesser members. The whole life of a member of such a group revolves around the dominant animal. His all-powerful role gives him a god-like status. Turning now to our immediate ancestors, it is clear that, with the growth of the co-operative spirit so vital for successful group hunting, the application of the dominant individual's authority had to be severely limited if he was to retain the active, as opposed to passive, loyalty of the other group members. They had to want to help him instead of simply fear him. He had to become more 'one of them'. The old-style monkey tyrant had to go, and in his place there arose a more tolerant, more co-operative naked ape leader. This step was essential for the new type of 'mutual-aid' organisation that was evolving, but it gave rise to a problem. The total dominance of the Number 1 member of the group having been replaced by a qualified dominance, he could no longer command unquestioning allegiance. This change in the order of things, vital as it was to the new social system, nevertheless left a gap. From our ancient background there remained a need for an all-powerful figure who could keep the group under control, and the vacancy was filled by the invention of a god. The influence of the