

Original Paper

Monotheism as an Acquired Feature or a Built-in Human Instinct

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Abstract

In this era we, human beings upon earth, revolve around religious war, be it open or covert, in which every sect claims to own God. These symptoms of ownership have found expression in the past three thousand years, with the creation of the three major religions.

Is the phenomena of Monotheism new or archaic? And what is unique in “Druze” Monotheism in this context and in the context of their values and behavior?

Is Monotheism embedded in human nature and is a part of us or is it a need for or a mechanism to cope with the metaphysical, unexplained natural forces?

Thus, arose the choice to probe the phenomena throughout history and among cultures, and to seek context within population research and background.

Kristach describes the fear of death as the first mother of all idols, upon which the pleading of people for salvation, compassion and prayer is based to keep disasters away (Tahtah, 2009). Is Monotheism a given feature exogenous to humans or an acquired one as part of an evolving process that accompanies humans?

Keywords

Hyksos, Zoroastrianism, Armada, The Mandaean, Bahaman, Zeus, Amen Mope, Akhenaton, Amenhotep, Papyrus, The Pyramid Tables

1. Discussion

These questions and others will be examined in this article along with comparisons between cultures and peoples. Who pioneered the notion of Monotheism and how was it guided? What are the similarities and differences among the numerous types of Monotheists through various historical periods? First, I will delve deeply into the phenomenon in its historical epochs and various cultural aspects. In order to create a homogeneous comparative foundation on how God is perceived and

articulated, I will initially define the concept of Monotheism as it is widely accepted today, though there are various perceptions among religions and faiths. To illustrate this, I point out that Judaism attributed to God human characteristics, and conversely attached to humans features of God, maintaining in the Bible that God created man after His own image (Bible, Genesis a', verses 26-27). A conception that was maintained until Isaiah the second in his publications elaborated that God is the first creator of the world, the guide, the propelling power of all events as opposed to and unlike flesh and blood Emperors (Yeshiaho, 1990). In Christianity however opinions are diverse, where some attach to Jesus attributes of God and some attach to him human attributes, and yet others believe that he was the son of God (Tahtah, 2009). In Islam the main idea is that God is the one and only one, having no partner, not being born or giving birth, bears no similarity to any creature on earth and exists beyond any human conception, who can neither imagine how He looks, nor how He behaves (Quran, sorat Alekhlas 4, 1. Sotat Ansa, 36. Sort Almaida, 73. Abu Elhasan, 2003). This is true for all religions and schools of thought that came after Islam and pursued Monotheism, like "Al-Mowahedoon Al-Druze", Fatimide, Ismailia, Sufim and the Twelver.

I assert that although the religion/school of Unitarian "Druze" was positively inclined towards Islam and at some point abandoned it, it was also influenced by other religions that preceded Islam, and some believe that this ancient Druze faith preceded the great Abrahamic religions as well (Makram, 1966, p. 81). At any rate, whether the Druze faith is an ancient religion or emanated from Islam, this religion believes in one single God, supreme, world creator, that man is unable to contain Him or comprehend His almighty power; this very religion is Monotheistic in its essence and in semantics, and calls itself the Unitarians—"Al-Mowahedoon". Therefore, Monotheism is a conscious perception based on knowledge and rationality that seeks pure truth, wisdom, spirituality and intuition. Monotheism is an utter faith in one single God from whom life has sprung, and by him humans, earth and all organisms were created; no one is similar or identical to him, no one can compete with him, he cannot be described or even measured (Quran, sorat Elbarka, verses 115). Some perceive the sect of Unitarianism as detached from what is observable and delving into the depth of oneself to find happiness. Others see the followers of Monotheism as ones who preach to depart from all idols except God, avoid sin, obey God's will, and embrace the obligation to tell truths, acknowledge His infinite abilities and to have faith in His eternal existence without hesitation (Zahereldin, 2008, pp. 15-20).

Now, I will go back through the tunnel of time and history and examine the existence of one God according to the Abrahamic religions. First, I will refer to Abraham the father of all prophets who was born and raised in Babylon- southern Iraq; a descendant of Aramaic forefathers and a speaker of the Aramaic language. The Arameans were a group of nomadic tribes referred to by some researchers as Hyksos (Drwzt, 1960, p. 148). However, Hyksos were people of Aramaic, Canaanite and Amorite (Drwzt, 1960, p. 61) origin; sort of Bedouin soldiers of fortune that were called in Heliographic Egyptian Amaleq. Although they did not believe in a single God and practiced paganism, they were fortunate enough to have a messenger among their people (Quran, sorat Elbaraka, verses 152. Sorat

Elomran verses 164). One shepherd by the name of Abraham who believed in one God attempted to convince his people to follow him, but he was rejected and was sentenced to be burnt alive. Abraham succeeded in fleeing to Houran in southern Syria, where he lived more than a half century. Only two people believed in him: his wife, Sara and his nephew, Lot. Abraham persisted with his journey to the south crossing Palestine and arriving in Egypt that was governed by the Hyksos Amaleq. I believe that Abraham's beliefs were designated only to his people and to his own social circle and not to Egyptians who were well aware of his beliefs. Abraham married Hagar who was Egyptian and grew up with Monotheism in her childhood, a point we will discuss later. Abraham was persuaded by Sara to exile Hagar and her son to the desert, and when she asked Abraham about a man that would care for them there, he said that God would. Hagar, too, said that God would not forsake them. At this point we realize that Hagar's answer was rooted in Monotheism long before the major religions even emerged. When we also examine the period of Jacob, the son of Abraham, we discover that he lived in Hebron and was sent to his people, the Aramaic and Canaanites, to bequeath unto them Monotheism. At this time Ryan, the king of Hyksos, also accepted the faith. Joseph the son of Jacob arrived in Egypt at the time it was governed by the Hyksos (Bible, Genesis, verses 37-39. Quran, surat Yosif verses 36-40), and started preaching Monotheism among prisoners in jail (Quran, surat Yosif verses 36-40).

The question raised now is how was Monotheism incorporated in different cultures and areas? I will begin with Zoroastrianism, which appeared in Kurdistan in the year 612-652 B.C. It is the religion of the prophet Zoroaster, who first appeared in history in the 7th century B.C. and called for "Ahoromada", meaning one God instead of the many idols that hitherto prevailed among his people. Mithra, Farona, and Andrea were the ones who promulgated the new belief of Unitarianism in Midian [Middle Asia, Bactria and India] Persia and Anatolia. Zoroaster succeeded in spreading his set of beliefs before "Pishtasaba" the Irish-Aramaic king of Bokhara, who adopted it and imparted it on his wife, brothers, ministers and the remainder of his own people. In the Zoroaster religion, an acceptance ceremony would take place, in which each follower makes vows using a uniform text, Peyamana Din, that reads: "I believe in one God creator of the world—Ahoramezda" that symbolizes light and wisdom (Hinnel, 2003, pp. 4-6). Some maintain that Zoroaster's beliefs had influenced some additional Monotheist religions like Judaism, Gnostic, Christianity and Islam. The origin of the religion is in Azerbaijan south of Balkh, Afghanistan and Sogdia, Kazakhstan (Hinnel, 2003, pp. 4-6); their holy book called "Afista", meaning the basis of origin—written in an ancient Persian language similar to Sanskrit. When we resume to examine their scripts, we find that they are constructed of three parts: "Yesna" 72 chapters of prayers and chants, "Visprat" 24 prayers, and "Yidiyeva" a data chapter about creation, plants and organisms (Shkaki, 2015). These books were written in gold on 12,000 pieces of cattle leather that were given to Zoroaster as a gift by the Maida king "Kalshetarser" in the year 628 BC (Kaki, 2012). The religion of Zoroaster has survived to this day and its believers are estimated to be 2.6 million scattered in India, Iran, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, USA, Europe, Australia, Canada and Singapore. (Adherents, 2013; Darwer, 1937) Another Monotheistic religion developed in Mesopotamia—The Fertile Crescent,

which is the land between the two rivers the “Tigris” and the “Euphrates”—present day Iraq—specifically in southern Iraq in the regions of “Mandaeans-Sabbiyan”, Mandaeans, and Mandaeanism or “Mandiuata” (Aprim, 2011). This group’s name means knowledge and wisdom and can be attributed to the ancient Babylonians and Chaldeans in 539-626 B.C. (Aprim, 2011). Their tongue is called Orient Aramaic; they view in Adam their first prophet and his successor “Shatel” (Aprim, 2011). In the essence of this religion is the realization of one supreme power that has no shape but created souls, elements, atmosphere and materials from which creatures evolved into life. By His will He created the universe in dual/binary entities—light and dark, good and bad. God is eternal and He is transcendent and immanent; He is the reason for all things, not being born or giving birth and He embodies the whole existence, and He has no beginning and no end (Hamada, 1992). It is a secretive religion in which the obscure is predominant over the known, and their sacred book is not to be accessed by all, but by few religious sages. The Mandaeans live in a very close social circle, and those who marry outside the circle are excluded, and expelled from the sect (Alhosni, 1963, pp. 70-75). The Mandaean books are to be strictly written by sages, and they are not to be exposed out of fear of putting the religion in danger (Alhosni, 1963, pp. 70-75). The Mandaeans see this as a wicked thing that calls for punishment and excommunication. Also included among the many prohibitions of Mandaeans: killing is totally forbidden unless in self-defense, no drinking of alcohol, eating of pork is illegitimate and profit making is forbidden. (Alhosni, 1963, pp. 27-28). The Mandaeans’ books exceed ten in number: “Sidra Adam, Sidra Dihi, Clasta, Sidra Denshmatha” that were given to Adam—father of the human race, Diwan, Aspermloashi, Niani, Kamahathehple, Ziwa, Bagra (Aprim, 2011). Obviously, these books refer to the creation, essence of life and man and his walks of life, and things that are permissible and prohibited. One cannot delve deep into this religion and its principles; it seems that the first to research the Sabayon Mandaeans were Catholic missionaries that looked for commonality between them, therefore this was a trend to color this religion with Christian elements even if it was established long before Christianity; but the Vatican did not accept it to be similar to or to be part of Christianity. In later periods of Islam, it was mentioned in some verses of the Quran that these people should be categorized as “ahl-althemma” or people of the divine book that were recognized by Islam to be Unitarians but were supposed to pay “Jizya” taxes levied by Islamic states from non-Muslim residents. (Quran, sorat: Elbakra, verses 62. Quran, sorat, Elmaida, verses 69. Quran, sorat: Elhaj, verses 17). Like other religions, Christians, Majus and Jews, they were Monotheists in with similar beliefs but preceded them in time. The fact that Mandaeans lived close to water sources alludes to a survival element; these rivers used to be their source of living, washing daily before prayer; some researchers explain that they had practiced baptism similar to Christianity.

Now, I will move on to Ancient Greece and to Monotheism which existed within it. In an initial search one could identify a prominent document that reflects Monotheism along with polytheism—a kind of belief in many idols—which existed as well. This document is a hymn of “Zeus” that was written by Cleanthes Stoc [230-330 BC] and reflected the belief in one God—”Zeus”. This source describes the

essence of the universe as a creation of space and its rules. He who governs them creates human race and commands them. With time Monotheism spread to Ancient Greece and was bolstered by schools built on the basis of Neo-Platonism and Neo-Pythgorasism. Plato [347-427 B.C.], though he lived in a Polytheistic society, believed in “one God, above all, pure and above the material world (Ela’kad, 1970, p. 150), who is perfect, unchangeable, eternal and has no beginning and no end”. Plato’s mentor, Socrates [399-369 B.C.], also spoke about Monotheism, though his surroundings were hostile to a new belief system (Ela’kad, 1970, p. 155), in which, according to Aristotle, God is the first reason and motive of the whole universe (Ela’kad, 1970, p. 158), one complete entity, perfect, and does not rely on anyone.

Now I will relate to Ancient Indian and Chinese religions. At first glance it seems that Monotheism fits well into the Indian conception especially the holy scripts of “Brahman” (the creator of universe) and Hinduism expresses this in its Veda book (Wisdom); literally Buddhists do not believe in idolatry, but idols are human beings who are sublime and belong to the cosmos. Within the Chang dynasty [1046-1600 B.C.] there is a belief in “Shangdi”, the supreme and above all (Ross, 2015) while in the Zhou sect it is “Dynasty” himself who is the subject [256-1046 B.C.], the name of the supreme idol was changed to “Tean” the king of the universe; there are researchers who claim that Monotheism is a new version of Polytheism that came before it.

When referring to the knowledgeable ancient Egyptian civilization which interacted with other cultures as well, like the ancient Greek civilization and its Monotheism. One can identify that in the 4th century B.C. the dynasty of Pharaoh, included one distinguished guru called “Ptozeris” who believed in one God “as the first creator ... he owns goodness in his hands... and everything submits to his will...”. This theory was known in the year 350 B.C. and similar writings were revealed in his testament that was found in his grave (Asiar, 1995, pp. 24-28).

Now, I will jump 5-6 centuries ahead to the era of the 27th dynasty [404-525 B.C.] which includes many testimonies by historians who demonstrated that ancient Egyptians were in fact Monotheists. There is even written evidence in the book of Herder about Egyptians being the first to worship one eternal God. In the book it was noted that, “The Egyptians were the first to know the one and only God that has no beginning and no end”. In the 10th and 11th centuries B.C. in the 21st dynasty [950- 1085 BC], there lived a man named Luckman during the period of King David, who was known in Greece as Alcman (mentioned also in the Quran) (Quran, sorats: Alekhlal, Alnass, Almaaida, Akbaraka, Ala’mran, Yosif, Alhaj) as believing deeply in one God, and was believed to have said to his son, “Do not believe in more than one God for it is a big sin...” In the 20th dynasty [1090-1200 B.C.] there lived a man named “Amen Mope”, a well-known wise priest, who from his letters and preachings we learn how strong and rooted his beliefs in God were. Among his phrases we find the following: “perfection is in the hands of God alone ... praise the Lord ... he alone knows who is guilty and who is innocent ... be content in what God gives ... he is supreme and giant and there is no God except him”. He called also to fear God and not to hurt others, not to rob and not to lie ... Amen Mope had a book in Hieroglyphic

with the title: [Instructions and Wise Preachings]. Some claim that this book was translated into Hebrew in the time of King Solomon, who was also called in Hebrew Wise Shlomo; this book was given the name the Great Book of Proverbs (Asiar, 1995, pp. 24-38). This broad belief among the public of Ancient Egypt shows how widespread Monotheism was and the prevalent moral atmosphere. Between the 14th-16th centuries [in the years 1304-1570 B.C.] the reign in Egypt was in the hands of the 18th dynasty. I will start with “Akhenaton” [1304-1370 B.C.] who was considered to be one of the great believers in God. Some view his set of beliefs as a whole religion by itself. Akhenaton believed that one should “worship God, only him ... the complete and perfect life creator ... who breathes soul into all creatures ... and keeps heaven above us...” Among his sayings is the following psalm: “The light of God rises in front of us everywhere ... in the depth of earth, in darkness... no fear for those who follow him of losing track... my Lord fills me up with wisdom and knowledge and lightens the blinded to withdraw from dark and ignorant paths ... giving them life and big sunlight ... good descends from heaven and bad rises from dark underground...”. Apparently, this chant was rewritten in David psalm number 104. This is Monotheism in every aspect and if the ruler believed in this view, his people would have followed him. Now I will move on to Akhenaton’s father “Amnhotep” 3 [1360-1397 B.C.] and provide part of the psalm that he had written to God: “God the creator has no parallel...the navigator...the infinite omnipotent that has limitless power...” (This Psalm is carved on monument located in the British Museum).

Again, the scripts originated from the ruler himself and his people followed suit. Also in the period of “Takhotemas” 3 [1436-1490 B.C.] of the 18th dynasty we identify Monotheism among ministers who used these same phrases such as “Rhmira” who used sentences like “listen you residents of the universe ... God knows all inside man’s soul and everything is revealed to him ...” and if the administration believed this, the citizens followed suit. Dynasties 15 to 17 are not originally Egyptians, but lived in the Hyksos era (during this period the prophets: Abraham, Ishmael, Jacob, Joseph, Moses... had lived in Egypt). The Hyksos ruled the land and controlled it. Their origin was probably from Bedouin nomads, or a merger of many tribes (Asiar, 1995, pp. 24-38), Barbarians from Mesopotamia, Aramaic, and Canaanites and Amorites who are not Arabs; they were “Amaleq”—Bedouin soldiers of fortune. The Hyksos ruled over Egypt with cruelty and savagery and had no faith in monotheism; while local Egyptians were believers who practiced ceremonies in the house of prayer. Furthermore, On city (the sun town), was a center of study, where many priests and sages had deepened their insights into the existence of one God, and the fear of God. Some of the students were Joseph and Moses. Monotheism also existed in the middle-ages In 1778-2134 B.C., in the era of the dynasties 11 to 13, there is even written evidence on papyrus, similar to the papyrus in which “Tashtribiti the 4th” called on his people “to accept completely the will of God and to show peace of mind and content even in times of misery and hardship”.

Now, I will relate to the 10th dynasty [2133-2052 B.C.]. Here in hieroglyphic language there is written evidence by king “Achtwa” 4 in which he wrote a will to his son “Mara Kara”: “To increase building

houses of prayer and foundations of faith that will please the Lord... one must fear God, the king of the earth that knows the obscure ... one must not forget the judgment day; he must credit God and thank God in order to be credited and saved” (Asiar, 1995, pp. 144-145).

Going back in time to the 8th dynasty [2242-2280 B.C.] in order to reference “Ana” the sage who preached and recommended to his son as follows: “Do not search the secret of God’s kingdom... he is above human perception...fear him and do not upset him ... keep and perform his rules and orders... keep his name clean and worship him, be close to him, keep his instructions and behave...” (Asiar, 1995, p. 146). In his writings there is also the need “to respect father and especially mother, to avoid drinking alcohol or commit adultery”, these things show a deep and rooted understanding of family and social moral values. A similar set of principles can be found in the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament and in the Quran, surat Alesraa.

Regarding Monotheism in the 6th dynasty [2280-2420 B.C.], there is a definite saying about Monotheism that was revealed by historians and archaeologists and was engraved in monuments in these words: “Dear Lord King of all, the infinite that has no limit...” (Drwzat, 1960). Continuing to the 5th dynasty [2420-2560 B.C.] a minister by the name of “Beth-hotip” announced it clearly: “In the hands of God lies the destiny of all creatures, of all mankind, and he who doubts this is a fool and ignorant, for He is the one ,the Lord loves his people”. Obviously this motif is recurring in the phrases by “Betah-hotip”, in the Quran and in the phrases of Lacman, which implies that it was the dominant atmosphere over many years, and monotheist preaching passed from one generation to another (Asiar, 1995, pp. 158-170). In the 3rd dynasty [2680-2780 B.C.] “Kagmana” a minister said, “Act with integrity, unless the fury of God will be cast on you... for God gives prosperity, birth and good living...” (Asiar, 1995, pp. 170-172). These phrases highlight deep faith in fearing and respecting God. The question is: did the same atmosphere prevail in the 1st and 2nd dynasties [3200-3870 B.C.] and even before that [3200-5000 B.C.]? Would it suffice to review the Book of the Dead (Budge, 1898, p. 3) that had been in use since 4500 B.C., in which there is a reference to the Day of Judgment—to the next world, with emphasis on balancing the deeds of a human being? Additionally, there is a chapter concerning the dead: “I have never done anything that upsets the Lord nor have I rejected his will, I have not defiled myself with his prohibitions”. This is a proof again that people who fear, respect and are aware of God are held supreme by Him. In the Stone Age [5000-6000 B.C.] there are religious scripts named the—The Pyramid Tables—that talk about Monotheism as well as other tables in later periods stating that: “The Almighty creator has no name... people cannot even think and figure his might...”; among other things God was named” the absolute master ... king of the world who has no size and is eternal...” Therefore, Monotheism is not strange to Egypt and its residents and even some historians have noted and emphasized that Ancient Egypt was one of the first to become aware of Monotheism and worship one God (Budge, 1898, p. 83).

2. Results

To sum up, Monotheism is a conscious conception, based on the accumulation of knowledge, rationalism, insightful reasoning and intuition. The notions regarding God's characters were diverse and not homogeneous in various religions. These characters vary from God being perceived as a non-human figure that has incomprehensible traits like in Islam and other religions, or a human figure, or a mix of human and God like in Christianity or even a figure that has a human-like shape in Judaism. The major conclusion of this study is that monotheistic religions as we know them today, did not invent Monotheism, because it was already popular among prophets who preceded the People of Israel's prophets such as, Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph. Moreover, in the Zoroaster religion from the 7th century B.C., which has survived to this day, the Mandaeans worshipped one supreme sublime creator; even when polytheism prevailed in Ancient Greece in the 3rd-4th centuries B.C., there were philosophers who believed in God like Plato and Socrates; and Monotheism was not strange to the Hindu and Chinese faiths as well. Therefore, some believe that Monotheism has developed gradually from idolatry, where the ancient ethical Egyptian culture traded these ideas with other civilizations. Many rulers, kings, thinkers and ministers had already owned the belief, and there are many monuments, testaments, items made of clay, writings and drawings on papyrus, all of which have been kept and maintained through Pharaoh from the 4th century B.C. until 5000 B.C.; and during the Stone Age, on pyramid tables, with unmistakably clear expressions of Monotheism. These expressions appeared again in later periods in new writings or translations of the Book of Proverbs of King Solomon "Mishli", also in rewritings of "Akhnaton" of 14th century B.C. up to David hymn number 104 and the 'Instruction and Wisdom Books of Amen Mobe from the 11th century B.C.

3. Conclusions

Monotheism is familiar to various civilizations and among numerous generations. When examined seriously and deeply from its first appearance in the history of mankind, we can clearly see scripts and descriptions of God and the way He is perceived is very similar. Sometimes these sources had gone through changes and sometimes they remained the same. Many scripts on Monotheism and many types depicting moral and ethical lives, like the Ten Commandments, or hymns of old rulers passed from one generation to another, were accurately rewritten, or somehow enhanced. Monotheism existed in ancient civilizations world-wide and in ancient Greece. Thousands of years before major monotheistic religions prevailed among rulers and citizens, rewritings concerning this belief such as, songs, hymns and testaments recurred throughout history and proved the ideas of real and well-rooted faith in one God. Having proved that this is the case, why not conclude that Monotheism is embedded in the human instinct and is part of it?

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