

THE CONTRIBUTORY ROLE OF EMOTION IN THE FORMATION  
OF MONOTHEISM AND ANIMISM AMONG  
PRELITERATE PEOPLES

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School  
of the University of San Carlos, Cebu City

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts in Philosophy

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by  
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APPROVAL SHEET

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Philosophy, this Thesis entitled: "THE CONTRIBUTORY ROLE OF EMOTION IN THE FORMATION OF MONOTHEISM AND ANIMISM AMONG PRELITERATE PEOPLES", has been prepared and submitted by Mr. Baldomero C. Falcone who is hereby recommended for Oral Examination.

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ROLE OF EMOTION IN THE FORMATION OF MONOTHEISM AND ANIMISM  
AMONG PRELITERATE PEOPLES in partial fulfillment of the  
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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

There are two aspects of preliterate life that have not escaped the notice of anthropologists. This is animism, which Edward Burnett Tylor, due to the evolutionary influences he imbibed, posited as more primitive to, and foundational of, monotheism; and monotheism which the more methodological Wilhelm Schmidt has posited and proven to be older than animism.

Statement of the Problem. What engendered the genesis of monotheism and the birth of animism? What was the objective situation and the subjective status of preliterate man which worked towards the appearance of monotheism and animism? What made preliterate monotheism compatible to human freedom and animism inhibitive of it? Did the preliterate men consciously restrict their freedom? If monotheism is more original than animism, can a continuity be shown to exist between them? These are the problems we intend to address to ourselves and answer.

Review of Literature. To the majority opinion that the idea of God originated from causal thinking, there have been some objections. For example, in the book, Myth and Cult Among Primitive Peoples, Adolf E. Jensen, the



author, opines that if causal thinking was the sole factor responsible for the appearance of monotheism, the objection can be presented that as belief in one God is a complicated idea, it must have involved causal thinking starting from scratch "uncounted millenia" before it could have attained the heights of monotheism.<sup>1</sup> However, the preliterate tribe that does not believe in God is yet to be found.<sup>2</sup> Adolf E. Jensen finally bares his partiality to the view that man possessed an innate idea of God, ". . . there is no good reason why man should not at all times have possessed an idea of the divine."<sup>3</sup>

Primitive Man and His World by Wilhelm Koppers, cognizant of the fact that monotheism is found among the most primitive representatives of the human race while being absent among peoples of highly developed intellectual life, concludes that some factor besides causal thinking must be looked for to settle the problem of the genesis of monotheism.<sup>4</sup> He pegs this factor on "some kind of self-

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<sup>1</sup>Adolf E. Jensen, Myth and Cult Among Primitive Peoples (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 269.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 271.

<sup>4</sup>Wilhelm Koppers, Primitive Man and His World Picture (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1952), p. 182.

revelation on the part of the Deity."<sup>5</sup>

Paul Radin in his book Primitive Man as Philosopher hints that belief in one God originated from a combination of thinking and emotion.<sup>6</sup>

Wilhelm Schmidt in his book Origin and Growth of Religion is partisan to the common view that monotheism resulted from man's desire to find a cause<sup>7</sup> but he gives allowance to the possibility that another factor might have been contributory.<sup>8</sup>

Rudolf Otto's The Idea of the Holy taught that religion originated from an irrational emotion of man occasioned by the appearance of the sacred.<sup>9</sup> According to Rudolf Otto, these irrational beginnings of religion were clarified later into monotheism by thought operative only in the higher cultures.

Edward B. Tylor is the popularizer of the rationalistic explanation of animism. He looked at sleep, dreams

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Paul Radin, Primitive Man as Philosopher (New York: Dover Publications, 1957), p. 250.

<sup>7</sup>Wilhelm Schmidt, Origin and Growth of Religion (London: Methuen and Company, 1938), p. 155.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 200.

<sup>9</sup>Rudolf Otto, The Idea of the Holy (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), pp. 123-124.