

Evolutionary Adaptive Consciousness-Drive As A Factor in Megalithic Stone Monument: Origins of Stone Worship: Massebot Bible Stones, Twelve Pillars of Moses, Warren Fields, Stonehenge, Newgrange, Gobekli Tepe, Nabta Playa, Stone Circles, Cromlechs, Dolmens, Menhirs, Logan Stones, Pillar Stones, "Oracle" Stones, Passage Tombs, Burial Mounds, Kurgans, Cairns Or Galgals, Guardian Stones

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Abstract

I have been writing about “social consciousness” for a long time. Moitreyee’s comment dates back to a 2022 discussion of social consciousness in academia.edu. Moitreyee Raju, an Indian poet, artist, and “story teller” commented on my essay on social consciousness. She observed, “Charlie Peck: Yes the one thing that really strikes me in this write is the mentioning of the fact that religion is a way of life. And is not something that has to be performed at certain times or in certain places. I believe in this and support this whole heartedly. My religion lives in my work. ♀. Thank you once again for sharing.” Charlie Peck

That is in spite of the fact that there is no established theory of social consciousness in western academia, Wikipedia has only three references to social consciousness, the most salient being to Karl Marx who besides creating Marxism, also set in motion the sociology of knowledge as power and control (Foucault, Gramsci).

Geertz’s 1965 “Universally Accepted” Map-Definition of Religion left out: 1. Community – Groups 2. Teachings of Religion 3. Identity 4. Spirit - Spirituality 5. Selective Attention. All these factors are rather self-evident – even obvious. It is unbelievable that a very influential academic leader in anthropology could leave out a blatantly obvious characteristic of religions. What is more shocking is that until recently, anthropologists leaving out community-groups was not uncommon.

In spite of the fact that stone megalith monuments require communal effort - in their study of Indian stone megaliths, Maria Wunderlich (et al) observes that: “Although comparisons with recent examples of megalithic construction have been made (e.g. [1–3]), explicitly comparative studies on the social implications of this specific phenomenon are still rare.” From my research that is correct. Recent studies

of Stonehenge argue that stone henge had a second “unifying” function. A study of the prehistoric Brusselstown Ring “brings new evidence of the social complexity of early human cultures”. “The scale of megalithic tomb construction in Ireland during the Neolithic is clear evidence that important sets of social relations” were a major factor in megalithic monument construction.

As Brian Josephson, a Welsh Nobel prize winning quantum physicist observes, academics are often fixated on the “factuality” [of the supernatural as opposed to the “fruitfulness” of religion. David A. Barrowclough, in his article on Maltese Megaliths states, “I must therefore offer a working definition, recognizing that it will inevitably prove to be less than perfect: religion can be understood as the formalized recognition of some higher, unseen, divine power as having over human destiny, and as a consequence is worthy of reverence, obedience and organized worship. The “supernatural” by definition (Miriam-Webster, Dictionary) is outside the scope of scientific inquiry and so scientifically worthless artificial abstractions.

An Evolutionary Adaptive Consciousness-Drive

A pivotal question is how could dolmens – which involve major communal effort - appear in so many diverse geographical regions separated by huge distances. Megalithic dolmens are found across Europe, Asia, and Africa, appearing in over 30 countries. While estimates suggest roughly 55,000 to 60,000 exist globally, the vast majority—roughly 40% (approx. 26,000–40,000)—are concentrated in the Korean Peninsula. the megalithic monuments took a huge amount of work and effort. Megalithic stone monuments included stones which varied greatly in size and weight, ranging from several tons to over 1,000 tons. 60-ton stones were not uncommon in dolmens

In light of the pervasive world-wide nature of stone megalith monuments, it would seem an inescapable conclusion that an underlying evolutionary adaptive drive would be a factor. It is readily apparent that humanity developed – evolved – in stages: Paleolithic Age (c. 3.3 million to 12,000 years ago which accounts for 99% of human technological prehistory); Neolithic Revolution (10,000–5,000 years ago); Bronze & Iron Ages (5,000–2,000 years ago); Industrial & Information Ages (The last 200 years) Furthermore, in that religions have created and formed groups for thousands of years it would stand to reason that group formation is a function of religion.

Spirituality is about people not Artificial Abstractions; Religion without people is absurd!

Spiritual-Religious Beliefs as Social Moral Order:

Part A. “Social Implications” of Megaliths are “Rare”!

Preamble: Geertz’s 1965 “Universally Accepted” Map-Definition of Religion left out: 1. Community – Groups 2. Teachings of Religion 3. Identity 4. Spirit - Spirituality 5. Selective Attention. All these factors are rather self-evident – even obvious.

Ira Chernus states “One of the most influential figures in this social-scientific approach to religion is the anthropologist, Clifford Geertz. In an essay titled “Religion as a Cultural System” (1965), he [Geertz] spelled out a definition of religion that many others have borrowed, adapted, and employed in studying religion.”¹

It is unbelievable that a very influential academic leader in anthropology could leave out a blatantly obvious characteristic of religions. What is more shocking is that until recently, anthropologists leaving out community-groups was not uncommon.

Point of order: Iain McGilchrist observes that the materialist “rigid adherence to arbitrary quantification” “limits and restricts” possible analyses². Rene Guenon took McGilchrist’s analysis up one level: Guenon

states that “Materialism is the denial of everything supraindividual”³. From my research, that appears to be historically correct. Symbolism, Social Consciousness and Spirituality appear to have been sidelined and marginalized! The anthropologist exclusion of community-groups including the icon Clifford Geertz would appear to support Guenon’s argument.

Anthropologists weren’t the only ones to exclude community-social consciousness. “Social” Psychology was as bad or worse.

Allport’s 1927 taboo: “There is no psychology of groups”⁴. The Social Psychology Handbook of Basic Principles states that currently, “psychologists who study groups approach the idea of a group as an entity only very cautiously. The field, or members of the field, apparently still feel the sting of Allport’s (1927) rebuke to those who were attracted to McDougall’s idea of ‘groupthink [social-collective consciousness].” I have been writing about social consciousness (which doesn’t exist in the social sciences) for years. On academia.edu, I had a discussion on social consciousness in 2022.

When I brought it up in a FB Neil de Grasse Tyson group, the moderator told me that consciousness is confined to the brain because “neurons fire in the brain”. It does not follow that there is no social consciousness because neurons fire in the brain. I ended up getting thrown out of the FB group. Materialist Ideology is a mindset and ideology – not science or philosophy.

In their book, Transcendent Mind, Mossbridge and Barušs briefly talk about the materialist understanding of consciousness as a “byproduct of the neurology and biochemistry of the brain”⁵ (p. 24) and how modern science has actually produced dogma, generally lacking in objectivity, which is “impervious to mere evidence.”⁶ (p. 24) Lastly, I would add the question: How could society exist or even come into being without social consciousness?

Extreme Individualism: David Hay, a Christian Theologian and scholar, coined the term “extreme individualism”⁷. There are a number of critics of “extreme individualism” in western academia such as Kenneth Gergen, Virgilio Enriquez, Iain McGilchrist, as well as Jeremiah Reyes and Reynaldo Ito who promote Filipino values of Kapwa-Loob. In “The Primordial Roots Of Being”, Edward C. P. Stewart states the problem very concisely: “many social scientists endow an individual with an absolute and independent mind”⁸ (p.94) - which is very unrealistic and unbalanced in a very complex society of sophisticated relationships.

In Wikipedia, there are only three references to social consciousness - the most salient being to Karl Marx the creator of Marxism – which set in motion the Sociology of Knowledge as Power and Control.

Part B “Social Implications” of Megaliths are “Rare”!

1, In spite of the fact that stone megalith monuments require communal effort - in their study of Indian stone megaliths, Maria Wunderlich (et al) observes that: “Although comparisons with recent examples of megalithic construction have been made (e.g. [1–3])⁹, explicitly comparative studies on the social implications of this specific phenomenon are still rare.” From my research that is correct.

2, A new study suggests that “Stonehenge might have served a similar unifying purpose beyond its well-documented astronomical uses. This breakthrough comes from the discovery reported earlier this year that the six-ton Alter Stone—the recumbent central megalith at Stonehenge—actually originated from Scotland and not Wales, as previously believed. (Popular Mechanics, by Darren Orf Published: Jan 02, 2025) ...This idea comes primarily from the fact that many of the stones used in the construction of Stonehenge hail from various locales around the United Kingdom.... [and] recent research appears to indicate larger numbers of people gatherings at get-togethers than earlier suspected.”¹⁰

3, Newgrange: Andrew B. Powell observes, “The scale of megalithic tomb construction in Ireland during the Neolithic is clear evidence that important sets of social relations, including rights of succession to symbolic and material resources, were ideologically legitimized in the context of mortuary ritual. In a competitive social environment, where economic and political power derived increasingly from the possession of ritual power, ever tighter control was exerted over the content of the passage tomb ritual discourse, the inherent ambiguity of its symbolism being exploited in order to legitimize the possession of that power.”¹¹

4, The investigation of the prehistoric Brusselstown Ring at Wicklow, Ireland - which dates back to 3700 – 800BC - brings new evidence of the social complexity of early human cultures. Dr Brandherm said the study’s discoveries “challenge previous conceptions of prehistoric settlement organization, showing a level of social complexity, community cohesion, and regional importance not fully recognized before” ... “Such new evidence considerably enriches our knowledge of how people lived and organized themselves,”¹² Dr Brandherm said.

Part C: Dynamic Social Behaviors Embedded in Daily Life!

5, Bringing people together: In their study of dolmen in Europe, Guillaume Robin concludes, “the important element of dolmens was the bringing together of people to participate in construction, with important social implications riding on the success, or failure, of construction.” The power that they [stone megaliths] materialized derived from the qualities, associations and origins of the blocks themselves.”¹³

6, “The magic of the megaliths... 'temples of eternity,' as I call them, where ritual could be enacted embracing powerful imagery extending deep into the collective, or communal, imagination.”¹⁴ The magic of the megaliths – Medium · Jan 20, 2021

7, “These stones, whether large standing ones or flat slabs, have been symbols of territorial ownership and ancestral protection... acts as markers of ancestral presence and spiritual power.”¹⁵ A Living Tradition of Indigenous People (Mundas) in Jharkhand, India

8, Naga Communities: Within the investigated Naga communities.... each and every village showed a remarkably independent translation of monumental building and feasting activities, being differentiated by nuances or clear patterns. Megalithic building itself proved to be a meaningful trajectory for the gain of social prestige and status, as well as for the integration of individuals into overarching social networks.”¹⁶

8, Sangihe Island Megalithic Monuments: The social system that developed in the megalithic culture on Sangihe Island is the value of mutual aid at the time of taking, lifting, and placing dolmens as grave covers and laying stone slabs as stone grave walls. Social stratification can be seen in the size and thickness of the dolmens used as grave covers...The structural theory of functionalism in megalithic research on Sangihe Island is closely related to society.... Sangihe people believe the relationship between the living and the deceased will never be broken for the relatives of the deceased should be treated as well as possible.”¹⁷

9, Emile Durkheim: “The forces before which the believer bows are not simple physical energies, such as are presented to the sense and the imagination; they are social forces,”¹⁸

10, Erica Hill on Arctic Hunter Gatherers – Dynamic Social Behaviors Embedded in Daily Life: “Their thoughts and actions established and maintained relationships with prey animals and may be more productively conceptualized as dynamic social behaviours embedded within the context of daily life than as privileged ritual acts.” – and the beliefs focused attention (evolutionary adaptive selective attention) of the community on the activity of hunting-gathering of animals.¹⁹

11, Ramon Reyes: “In sum, one social and moral order encompasses the living, the dead, the deities and the spirits, and the total environment.”²⁰

Commentary: Social Consciousness and Group Formation

Throughout the entire history of humanity, religions – which are groups - have formed and reformed. So, it would stand to reason – that, while religious beliefs are complex, a very salient and significant function of religions is to form groups. Furthermore, looking at religion from the “groups perspective” does highlight different aspects. Rituals from the perspective of the group in that context function to gain the submission of the individual through participation in group activities as well as “common symbolization”²¹ as E Halas emphasizes.

A Different Approach: Human Consciousness as Dynamic Force and Evolutionary Drive

Human evolution – the evolution of human consciousness clearly developed in stages. Cultural evolution began in the Stone Age with hunter-gatherer societies. The Stone Age evolved from paleolithic and Mesolithic hunter gatherers to neolithic agrarian villages – which evolved into complex Iron Age civilizations which developed technological advancements like agriculture, pottery, and metalworking, as well as the critical invention of writing for record-keeping and cultural communication across time. The Metal Ages went from copper-chalcolithic Age to the Bronze Age and eventually the Iron Age which saw emergence of sophisticated social structures and complex societies. It would stand to reason that evolutionary adaptive traits played a large role in these rather dramatic and monumental changes. The stage of stone worship does allow us to apply the ideas of religious beliefs in the context of group and community formation as well as a product of very powerful forces in terms of human consciousness as an evolutionary adaptive force.

Terrence Deacon and Tyrone Cashman observe that “The scientific investigation of the human religious predisposition has recently been augmented by considering it from an evolutionary perspective.”²²

Mustafa Emirbayer states “Finally, although these structural environments profoundly influence empirical social action, I argue that the latter is also influenced by the dynamic moment of human agency itself. I understand by agency “the engagement by social actors of their different environments, an engagement that both reproduces and transforms those structures in interactive response to the problems posed by changing historical situations”²³

Mustafa Emirbayer observes, “From the mid-1960s through much of the 1980s, Durkheim's contributions to historical comparative sociology were decidedly marginalized; the title of one of Charles Tilly's essays, “Useless Durkheim”²⁴ conveys this prevailing sensibility with perfect clarity.... [Recently] there emerged a heightened interest in cultural theory and in the systematic analysis of symbolic structures and discourses. Not content with the achievements of one-sidedly materialist (and anticultural) perspectives, researchers sought increasingly to incorporate the symbolic dimension of social life into their accounts of institutional and cultural processes.

The Enlightenment as a Dynamic Evolutionary Consciousness-Drive

The Enlightenment, also known as the Age of Reason, spanned the 17th and 18th centuries. The Scientific Revolution and Renaissance Humanism were critical influences. The Enlightenment was a movement and ideology, deeply connected to social-political consciousness and would seem a good example of a dynamic evolutionary drive. The Enlightenment was more than just a philosophical or academic argument; it encompasses ideas, ideals, and social, political, and cultural values such as constitutional government,

separation of church and state, and tolerance - that paved the way for political revolutions. The Enlightenment influenced the American founders and the US Constitution. The importance of reason, individual liberty, and rational individualism as a political ideal contrasting it with religious dogma and absolute monarchy emerged as pivotal ideas during the Enlightenment. Some Key Enlightenment figures include Voltaire, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Diderot, Bacon, Hobbes, Descartes, Galileo, Kepler, Leibniz, Newton, and Locke. The Enlightenment was a movement as a force of social-political consciousness that included spiritual, social, and political ideals.

Dynamic Consciousness-Drive vs a Fixed, Static Reality

Preface: It is readily apparent that religions are not a static fixed reality. A good illustration would be the development of the deity of Mitra in Indian and Persian history.

“Mitra is a relatively minor god in Hinduism. The Indian and Persian Mitra is the oldest version of him we have record of, as a god of light, order, and agreements, especially those between humans. While his worship declined in India, it grew in Persia, until, by 500 BCE, “Mithra” was one of the most important gods in one of the most powerful empires in the world.

After Alexander the Great conquered Persia in 330 BCE, Mithra worship mostly vanished, reduced to one small area on the Mediterranean, but then in 136 CE, all of a sudden, “Mithras” worship seems to have taken the Roman Empire by storm, with inscriptions and engravings and statues popping up all over. His worship died out when the Roman Empire converted to Christianity’s²⁵ (The Hindu God Family Tree August 25, 2017)

Different Approach to Spiritual-Religious Beliefs - Myths as Symbolic Maps of Social-Moral Order as Reflections of the Social-Political Reality

Moses and the Ten Commandments; Hammurabi Code: emphasis on the physical punishment of the perpetrator; Code of Ur-Nammu: compensation for the victim of the crime; Zeus: the Father and Ruler of heavens with roles, like keeper of “oaths”; Indra: Upholder of Cosmic Order, symbolized wisdom, intelligence, justice, integrity, and compassion - viewed as a benevolent deity; Gods of Mesopotamia: Shamash: god of justice and equity Marduk: god of justice, compassion, healing; Enki: god of wisdom and the patron of craftsmen; Nabu: god of wisdom and learning Inanna: goddess of sex, war, and justice; Enlil: creator and destroyer, with authority and control over fate; Anu: King of Gods. He was sometimes attributed with the creation of humans

Megalith Monuments: Elzbieta Halas: “groups exist only on the ground of common symbolization of their members...[which] create a social order

The oldest monumental megalithic site is the prehistoric site of Gobekli Tepe in Asia Minor in Turkey. for now. Gobekli Tepe, which is enormous and consists of 200 pillars in about 20 circles, was built in 9500 BC and predates any other monolithic site by thousands of years. For perspective, the Mesolithic age is generally understood to be from 10,000 BC to 8,000 BC. Stone Worship wasn’t a localized phenomenon. Stone worship is found throughout the world – in Europe, Asia, and Africa as well. Though relatively unknown, ancient stone worship in Nigeria is primarily represented by the Esie stone figurines and the Ikom monoliths (Akwanshi). It would seem an inescapable conclusion that stone worship was an evolutionary stage of development in human consciousness.

Megalithic sites such as Göbekli Tepe, Newgrange, and Stonehenge in Europe, Asia, as well as Africa are obviously very salient and significant “symbols.” The huge amount of effort and organization it took to create these sites would be a clear indication of their human importance. Elzbieta Halas states, “groups exist only on the ground of common symbolization of their members...The processes of symbolization...create a social order, express meaning and control actions. Symbols are not autonomous. They constitute tools of action, indicating and dramatizing social relations”²⁶ D. Balaganapath observes: “The basis of every culture and every identity is determined by its own established common symbolic.”²⁷

Stone Worship as an Evolutionary Stage of Humanity

From human beginnings in prehistory, unformed - unshapen stones have been revered and worshiped with the belief that these stones possess an intrinsic divine energy or force. In hunter gatherer societies the worldview of nature as a life force or life energy was nearly universal. The worship of stones and megaliths was widespread throughout the world, on every continent, including Africa, as well as Australia. Stone worship often took the form of megalith monuments – for all practical purposes, symbolic temples - from the Mesolithic period, then throughout the Neolithic, as well as the Chalcolithic period and, finally, until the age of copper.

To give you an idea of the extent of the practice of stone worship in the world, a large number of megalithic burials are found in Northeast and South Asia. Today, the Korean Peninsula has the largest number of sites, with estimates ranging from 15,000 to 1,000,000 megalithic burials & dolmens in the south. In addition to this, the Korean peninsula - contains an incredible 40% of the world's dolmens - which is a megalith created by placing a large capstone on top of two or more supporting stones thus creating a chamber - or tomb because dolmens are often used as a tomb or burial chamber. Interestingly, megalithic burials are also found in China in Liaoning, Shandong, and Zhejiang, parts of Taiwan, in Japan in Kyusu and Shikoku, and in Vietnam's Đông Nai province. In fact, some remnants of the megalithic tradition can still be found today on the islands of Sumba and Nias in Indonesia. In Europe there are between 35,000 and 50,000 stone structures of one kind or another.

Even a brief glance at the megaliths reveals the fact that a huge amount of work and effort went into constructing these megalith monuments. It would seem an inescapable conclusion that a powerful drive of one kind or another must have been involved. Plus, the fact that stone worship was worldwide in regions that are separated by large distances some kind of biological imperative must have been involved so a factor of human consciousness as an evolutionary adaptive force should be part of the stone worship model.

Functions of Religion

“The predisposition to religious belief is the most complex and powerful force in the human mind and in all probability an ineradicable part of human nature.”²⁸ E O Wilson (p.169 On Human Nature EOW) There are numerous theories on the functions of religion: Religion as an Explanation of the world and life, Fear of the unknown, Social Functionalism, Anthropomorphism, and Social Solidarity. The function of “Religion as an Explanation of the world and life” is really a subset of the theory of “Social Functionalism.” The complexity makes perfect sense in that – since human beings are incredibly complex, religion and religious beliefs would need to be equally complex. Of course, it would seem an inescapable that “group formation as a function of religion is important as well, and forming groups is distinct from Social Functionalism – especially in context of an underlying cause in the origins of Stone Worship.

The Selective Attention Factor – Warren Fields Mesolithic Lunar-Orientation vs Stonehenge Neolithic Solar-orientation

Warren Fields Lunar timekeeper, Scotland:

1. Sidhharth S Kumaar observes, “The Oldest Calendar in the World: The calendar system introduced by the Sumerians is believed to be the first of the calendars. However, some historians believe that the Europeans had a system that could be even older. A team of researchers found 12 large pits in Aberdeenshire, Scotland. The placement of these pits mirrored the moon’s phases; they are estimated to be about 10,000 years old and maybe the oldest “calendars” globally. This discovery proves that the history of calendars is constantly changing. In Warren Field, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, a Mesolithic arrangement of twelve pits and an arc are present, which roughly dates about 10,000 years ago, appears to be associated with the lunar calendar. In 2013, it was dubbed as "world's oldest known calendar"²⁹ Chronology of calendar: Human evolution journey Sidhharth S Kumaar
2. Vince Gaffney’s team have demonstrated how the combination of this (Warren Fields) pit configuration and their landscape setting could have accurately tracked the seasons, creating what is in essence a primitive calendar that the team have dubbed a ‘time reckoner’. If they are correct, it is the earliest such device known anywhere in the world. ³⁰(Current Archeology Mesolithic Timelords: A monumental hunter-gatherer ‘calendar’ at Warren Field, Scotland September 5, 2013 6 mins read) So, as early as 8,000 BCE, the hunter gatherers of Scotland had developed a lunar-solar calendar of sorts.

Neolithic Solar Orientation

1. Stonehenge: Clive Ruggles observes that “authors such as Burl(1987) have emphasized a change from lunar symbolism to solar symbolism, and this could imply that some fundamental changes in ritual practice and tradition accompanied the transition from Stonehenge 2 to Stonehenge 3. There is certainly no compelling evidence for solar orientation during this period, yet the evidence is quite convincing when we reach Stonehenge 3, especially with regard to the ‘solar corridor’ into the sarsen circle, despite the uncertainties in much of the archaeological evidence.” ³¹ (Astronomy and Stonehenge, Clive Ruggles)
2. New Grange Passage Tomb: With “an accurate astronomical alignment = [solar] illumination of burial chamber at mid-winter” Besides the English Neolithic Stonehenge Megalith monument on the Salisbury plain which had a solar orientation, the Irish Newgrange Passage Tomb had a definite solar orientation. The same is true of the Hopi Native Americans which had an agrarian society and a solar orientation-calendar. “Among sedentary agricultural tribes, the cycle of the seasons was of great ritual importance, but the time of the beginning of the year varied. Some observed it about the time of the vernal equinox) - which is a solar orientation. The “vernal equinox” is the “two moments in the year when the Sun is exactly above the Equator and day and night are of equal length. In the Northern Hemisphere the vernal equinox falls about March 20 or 21, as the Sun crosses the celestial equator going north”³². (Britannica)

Historical Context of Stone Worship

The Old Testament has a number of references to sacred stones. Perhaps these references come from the long-lost ancient civilization of Mesopotamia, the "standing stone" or "menhir" is a very old and revered religious/spiritual tradition in the Middle East. Of course, Moses placed twelve "pillars" at the foot of

Mount Sinai. Perhaps the most famous is the stone that Jacob erected at Bethel (Gen. xxviii. 18) to mark the divine visitation in his dream where his head rested on this stone. Jacob also built a stone at Shechem (Gen. xxxiii. 20), at Gilead (Gen. xxxi. 52), and finally the stone that Jacob placed on Rachel's tomb. Joshua (including a circle of twelve at Gilgal), Samuel, and sacred stones were also found at Gibeon, Enrogel, and Michmash. Karen Armstrong says that the Palestinian Semites worshiped a fertility goddess by placing stones upright in their fields as a sign of respect for the fertility goddess.

Dolmens and menhirs have been discovered in large areas of the Middle East, from the Turkish border in northern Syria near Aleppo, south to Yemen. Generally, these stone monuments are dated to the late Chalcolithic or early Bronze Age. Dolmens and menhirs have been found in many countries in the Middle East: Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Israel, Jordan, as well as in Saudi Arabia. The largest number and highest concentration of stone monuments are found in southern Syria and along the Jordan Valley.

Massebot: Sacred Stones in the Bible and Mideast

“As among many other ancient peoples, so among the Israelites, too, sacred stones played an important cultic role. The Old Testament uses the term *maššēbâ* (literally, an erected thing) to designate such a sacred stone, usually in the form of an uninscribed stele. Sacred stones were regarded approvingly in early Old Testament texts; later they were forbidden because of their association with idolatrous Canaanite rites.

Sacred stones were used during the ceremonies of covenant ratification at Sinai (Ex 24.4). Moses erected 12 *maššebôt* as a sign of the acceptance of Yahweh's covenant by the 12 Israelite tribes. A stone became sacred also by reason of its association with a theophany. After his vision at Bethel, Jacob took the stone on which he had slept, anointed it with oil, and set it up to commemorate his vision (Gn 28.18). When Bethel later became a popular sanctuary, anointing the stone became part of the rites celebrated there (Gn 35.14).”³³(<https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/stones-sacred-bible>)

Karen Armstrong observes that the Canaanites “erected” stones in fields to get divine enhancement for fertility. The ancient Hebrews had difficulty suppressing stone worship as well as worship in high places. Christianity also had a difficult time with stone worship as well. It would stand to reason that an underlying cause would be that stone worship has roots in genetic physiology.

The Stonehenge Enigma!

The origins and meaning of Stonehenge are shrouded in the mists of time. Stonehenge, located on the Salisbury plain in England appears to be isolated and alone – but that is deceptive, historically. In the immediate vicinity of Stonehenge, there are over 350 other henges, barrows and monuments. While the beginnings of Stonehenge, roughly around 3000 BCE to 2935 BCE, began with a modest enclosure of 56 pits or “Aubrey Holes” (John Aubrey identified the holes in 1666), and a ditch. “Human cremation burials were found within and around most of the holes, as well as within the encircling ditch and bank. (Of an estimated 150–240 cremation burials at Stonehenge, 64 had been excavated by the first decade of the 21st century.) ... The area surrounding the Aubrey Holes was used as a place of burial from roughly 3000 to 2300 BCE.” “About 8000–7000 BCE, early Mesolithic hunter-gatherers dug pits and erected pine posts within 650 feet (200 meters) of Stonehenge's future location. It was unusual for prehistoric hunter-gatherers to build monuments, and there are no comparable structures from this era in northwestern Europe.”

Most stone circles in England were built between 3000 BC and 1000 BC Little is known about the design

and purpose of stone circles, but there is a consensus that the circles served as gathering places for rituals and ceremony and very important in ancient communities. Stonehenge is one of the most famous and famous stone monument sites. Extensive archaeological excavations show that Stonehenge was actually built in stages, over a very long period of time. Archaeologists have found postholes dating back to the Mesolithic period around 8000 BC. In fact, the nearby Mesolithic astronomical site 'Warren Field' in Britain is believed to be the oldest lunar calendar in the world.

Stone building at Stonehenge began in 2600 BC when two concentric arrays of holes were dug in the center of Stonehenge. Interestingly it is now generally accepted that the bluestones originally used were brought by the builders from a distant quarry in Pembrokeshire, Wales, 150 miles away! In the next stage of development, 30 large stones of Oligocene-Miocene sarsen were brought from a quarry about 25 miles north of Stonehenge. The development and filling of the Stonehenge circle continued. Archaeological excavations of animal teeth and bones at the site suggest that approximately, between 2600 and 2400 BC, up to 4,000 people gathered at the site for midwinter and midsummer festivals, as archaeological evidence has shown that the animals were slaughtered between nine months and 15 months after birth in the spring. Additionally, evidence suggests that some of the animals may have come from as far away as the Scottish Highlands.

Stonehenge appeared 4 to 5 thousand years after Warren fields, and was the product of an agrarian society which emerged beginning roughly around 4,000 BCE. “Stonehenge was built in six stages between 3000 and 1520 BCE, during the transition from the Neolithic Period (New Stone Age) to the Bronze Age. As a prehistoric stone circle, it is unique because of its artificially shaped sarsen stones (blocks of Cenozoic silcrete), arranged in post-and-lintel formation, and because of the remote origin of its smaller bluestones (igneous and other rocks) from 100–150 miles (160–240 km) away, in South Wales. The name of the monument probably derives from the Saxon stan-hengen, meaning “stone hanging” or “gallows.” Along with more than 350 nearby monuments and henges (ancient earthworks consisting of a circular bank and ditch), including the kindred temple complex at Avebury,” The “orientation of Stonehenge shifted from a lunar orientation to a solar orientation.

Second stage: 2640–2480 BCE Trilithons of Stonehenge

“Except for human burials, there is no evidence of activity between Stonehenge’s first and second stages of construction. About 2500 BCE the sarsen stones were brought from the Avebury area of the Marlborough Downs, about 20 miles (32 km) to the north. Outside the northeastern entrance of Stonehenge, they were dressed smooth by pounding with sarsen hammers. They were then arranged inside the circle in a horseshoe-shaped setting of five tall trilithons (paired uprights with a lintel)—the central and largest of which is known as the giant trilithon—surrounded by 30 uprights linked by curved lintels to form a circle. The stones appear to have been laid out systematically in units and subunits of the long foot; the circumference of the sarsen circle is 300 long feet. The lintels, weighing some 7 tons each, are held on top of the uprights by mortise-and-tenon (dovetail) joints, and the ends of the curved lintels of the sarsen circle fit together with tongue-and-groove joints. All the joints were created using hammer stones, presumably in imitation of woodwork. Most of the sarsen uprights weigh about 25 tons and are about 18 feet (5.5 meters) high. The uprights of the giant trilithon, however, were 29 feet (9 meters) and 32 feet (10 meters) high, weighing more than 45 tons.”³⁴

Third stage: 2470–2280 BCE

“Radiocarbon dating indicates that the side ditches and banks of a ceremonial avenue almost 2 miles (3 km) long were dug from Stonehenge to the River Avon at some time in the period between 2470 and 2280 BCE. It is possible that the avenue traces the path of the bluestones that were moved from the Aubrey Holes and Bluestonehenge to the Q and R holes during Stonehenge’s second stage of construction. The avenue varies in width from about 60 to 115 feet (18 to 35 meters) and terminates at a small henge at the riverside. This henge, measuring 100 feet (30 meters) in diameter, was built after the bluestones at its centre were removed. About the first 1,600 feet (500 meters) of the avenue from Stonehenge are aligned toward the summer solstice sunrise and the winter solstice sunset. Excavations in 2008 revealed that this stretch of the avenue’s banks was built upon preexisting natural chalk ridges coincidentally sharing this same solstitial alignment. At Durrington Walls a similar avenue about 560 feet (170 meters) long and 100 feet (30 meters) wide had been built about 2500 BCE between the Southern Circle and the River Avon and remained in use for several centuries. The Durrington avenue was aligned toward the summer solstice sunset, while the Southern Circle faced the winter solstice sunrise. This solstitial alignment raises the possibility that Stonehenge and Durrington were built as complementary halves of a single complex, articulated by the River Avon.”³⁵

Stonehenge 3 demonstrates a “solar orientation”

Clive Ruggles observes that “authors such as Burl(1987) have emphasized a change from lunar symbolism to solar symbolism, and this could imply that some fundamental changes in ritual practice and tradition accompanied the transition from Stonehenge 2 to Stonehenge 3. There is certainly no compelling evidence for solar orientation during this period, yet the evidence is quite convincing when we reach Stonehenge 3, especially with regard to the ‘solar corridor’ into the sarsen circle, despite the uncertainties in much of the archaeological evidence.”³⁶ (Astronomy and Stonehenge, Clive Ruggles)

The Ireland Newgrange Passage Tomb: With “an accurate astronomical alignment = [solar] illumination of burial chamber at mid-winter”

“The most striking characteristic of the Neolithic in Ireland was the sudden appearance and dramatic proliferation of megalithic monuments. The largest of these tombs were clearly places of religious and ceremonial importance to the Neolithic population, and were probably communal graves used over a long period. In most of the tombs that have been excavated, human remains—usually, but not always, cremated—have been found. Grave goods—pottery, arrowheads, beads, pendants, axes, etc.—have also been uncovered. These megalithic tombs, more than 1,200 of which are now known, can be divided for the most part into four broad groups, all of which would originally have been covered with earth, that in many cases has been eroded away to leave the impressive stone frameworks”³⁷ (Wikipedia)

There are four types of stone megaliths.

1. “Court cairns – These are characterized by the presence of an entrance courtyard.”³⁸
2. Passage tombs – These constitute the smallest group in terms of numbers, but they are the most impressive in terms of size and importance. They are also found in much of Europe... the biggest and most impressive of them being found in the four great Neolithic “cemeteries” of the Boyne (Brú na Bóinne), Loughcrew, Carrowkeel and Carrowmore. The most famous of them is Newgrange, one of the oldest astronomically aligned monuments in the world. It was built around 3200 BC. At the winter

solstice the first rays of the rising sun still shine through a light-box above the entrance to the tomb and illuminate the burial chamber at the centre of the monument...³⁹

3. Portal tombs – These tombs include the well-known dolmens. They consist of three or more upright stones supporting a large flat horizontal capstone (table). The Knockeen and Gaulstown Dolmens in County Waterford are exceptional examples.⁴⁰
4. Wedge tombs – The largest and most widespread of the four groups, the wedge tombs are particularly common in the west and southwest.”⁴¹ (Wikipedia)

“The material record from Neolithic and Early Bronze Age Britain and Ireland suggests that astronomical symbolism, in the form of rough alignments upon certain horizon rising and setting positions of the sun or moon, was incorporated into a range of prehistoric ritual monuments at various places and times.

Evidence comes from certain individual sites, most notably Newgrange with its spectacular midwinter sunrise phenomenon (O’Kelly 1982, 123-5), but most compellingly from trends observed in regional groups of small, similar Bronze Age ritual monuments such as the recumbent stone circles of north-eastern Scotland (Ruggles and Burl 1985) and the short stone rows of western Scotland (Ruggles 1988; Martlew and Ruggles 1996) and the south-west of Ireland (Ruggles 1994). ‘Once we have accepted the reality of even the simplest observations . . . the question is no longer one of acceptance or rejection, but simply of degree’ (Bradley 1984, 77)⁴². (Astronomy and Stonehenge, Clive Ruggles, British Academy, 92)

The Newgrange passage tomb in County Meath in the Republic of Ireland is, because of its scale, architecture, and decoration (O’Kelly 1982), one of the most spectacular monuments of Neolithic Europe. Its design and alignment, admitting the light of the mid-winter solstice sunrise, are evidence that its builders were not only familiar with basic astronomical cycles, but also incorporated such 'scientific' information within their ritual practices and discourse.... A number of claims have been made that evidence of Neolithic science is to be found at Newgrange. The first, that the monument incorporates an accurate astronomical alignment, can be readily demonstrated (Patrick 1974). For a few days around mid-winter, light from the rising sun enters the 'roof-box' above the entrance, shines in a narrow beam down the passage and illuminates the end recess of the chamber. There can be no doubt that this was an integral feature of the tomb's design ⁴³ (Newgrange — Science or Symbolism Published online by Cambridge University Press: 18 February 2014 Andrew B. Powell) Powell, Andrew B. "Newgrange—Science or Symbolism." In *Proceedings of the prehistoric Society*, vol. 60, no. 1, pp. 85-96. Cambridge University Press, 1994. p.94

Newgrange exhibits a number of features that have been used to characterize the concept of 'Neolithic science'. There is an accurate astronomical alignment which provided the axis for the tomb, and which involved the illumination of the burial chamber at mid-winter. There is the use of geometric forms to determine the shape of the monument, although the employment of these forms did not require Pythagorean geometry, nor the possession by Neolithic society of any sophisticated mathematical skills, but merely the use of a standard unit of length. However, explaining these features in terms of evidence for a discrete scientific discourse, implying some essential progression from a ritual or religious discourse, ignores the significance of the particular contexts within which this knowledge was used.

The scale of megalithic tomb construction in Ireland during the Neolithic is clear evidence that important sets of social relations, including rights of succession to symbolic and material resources, were ideologically legitimized in the context of mortuary ritual. The various tomb types found in Ireland — the

passage tombs, court tombs, portal tombs, Linkardstown cists, and wedge tombs, representing different domains of ritual practice and discourse — are each characterized by specific symbols and forms.

In a competitive social environment, where economic and political power derived increasingly from the possession of ritual power, ever tighter control was exerted over the content of the passage tomb ritual discourse, the inherent ambiguity of its symbolism being exploited in order to legitimize the possession of that power. On the one hand that symbolism was refined, so narrowing the range of possible meanings. On the other, it was extended by formalizing and incorporating new areas of knowledge, such as simple geometry and calendrical data, and so providing new evidence as to the legitimacy of power. The ritual symbolism expressed in the fabric and art of passage tombs like Newgrange invoked the powers of the supernatural world in order to sanction the inequalities of the social order. Its precise conjunction of a celestial cycle and a geometrical configuration implied also that this order was in harmony with the physical world of time and space. P.95

Gobekli Tepe - 9500 BC

The oldest stone worship site is Gobekli Tepe in Asia Minor in modern Turkey, dating to 9500 BC. It is earlier than all other megalithic sites. Considering its young age, the site of Gobekli Tepe is quite large and includes at least 200 pillars in about 20 circles. The stones are huge, standing up to 20 feet tall and weighing up to 10 tons each. Some of the stone pillars are decorated with relief designs of bulls, humanoid figures and predators. It is quite surprising that there seems to be a certain geometric pattern in the layout of Gobekli Tepe - namely, an equilateral triangle. The researchers concluded that the people who built Gobekli Tepe had at least a rudimentary knowledge of geometry. The enigma of Gobekli Tepe has no traces of domesticated plants or animals discovered, or habitation for that matter, and it seems difficult to imagine a hunter-gatherer society engaging in such a massive effort to build such a massive monument, it must there are others.

Gobekli Tepe: The World's First Temple? Predating Stonehenge by 6,000 years, Turkey's stunning Gobekli Tepe upends the conventional view of the rise of civilization Andrew Curry November 2008

The Stone Monuments – “Narrowly Defined Stone Worship” - from a certain perspective - may have been a by-product of a major consciousness development – evolution in human consciousness – and society “research... has shown that within 1,000 years of Gobekli Tepe's construction, settlers had corralled sheep, cattle and pigs. And.... geneticists found evidence of the world's oldest domesticated strains of wheat; radiocarbon dating indicates agriculture developed there around 10,500 years ago, or just five centuries after Gobekli Tepe's construction." Perhaps – in light of that major social development stone monuments – worship could be viewed as a "locus" of society building.

[T]he main excavation site. In the pits, standing stones, or pillars, are arranged in circles. Beyond, on the hillside, are four other rings of partially excavated pillars. Each ring has a roughly similar layout: in the center are two large stone T-shaped pillars encircled by slightly smaller stones facing inward. The tallest pillars tower 16 feet and, Schmidt says, weigh between seven and ten tons. As we walk among them, I see that some are blank, while others are elaborately carved: foxes, lions, scorpions and vultures abound, twisting and crawling on the pillars' broad sides. Schmidt points to the great stone rings, one of them 65 feet across. "This is the first human-built holy place," he says.

Schmidt, 53, asks me to imagine what the landscape would have looked like 11,000 years ago, before centuries of intensive farming and settlement turned it into the nearly featureless brown expanse it is today. Prehistoric people would have gazed upon herds of gazelle and other wild animals; gently flowing rivers,

which attracted migrating geese and ducks; fruit and nut trees; and rippling fields of wild barley and wild wheat varieties such as emmer and einkorn.

"This area was like a paradise," says Schmidt, a member of the German Archaeological Institute. And partly because Schmidt has found no evidence that people permanently resided on the summit of Gobekli Tepe itself, he believes this was a place of worship on an unprecedented scale—humanity's first "cathedral on a hill." My question is, Was the primary "reason" for building stone monuments to draw people together as opposed to the sole and entire purpose to worship God.

Peters and Schmidt say, Gobekli Tepe's builders were on the verge of a major change in how they lived, thanks to an environment that held the raw materials for farming. "They had wild sheep, wild grains that could be domesticated—and the people with the potential to do it," Schmidt says. In fact, research at other sites in the region has shown that within 1,000 years of Gobekli Tepe's construction, settlers had corralled sheep, cattle and pigs. And, at a prehistoric village just 20 miles away, geneticists found evidence of the world's oldest domesticated strains of wheat; radiocarbon dating indicates agriculture developed there around 10,500 years ago, or just five centuries after Gobekli Tepe's construction.

Question: Were the Stone Monuments – beyond "Narrowly Defined Stone Worship" - from a certain perspective – could possibly have been a by-product – not the main-line goal as it were - of a major consciousness development, an evolution in human consciousness and society. After all synchronous with the erection of the temple "research... has shown that within 1,000 years of Gobekli Tepe's construction, settlers had corralled sheep, cattle and pigs. And...geneticists found evidence of the world's oldest domesticated strains of wheat" The question, then is – in light of that major social development, then stone monuments—worship could be viewed as a "locus" of "society – consciousness building." That is where the stone "temples" a byproduct of the primary drive to form societies.

As Park and Paloutzian emphasized, "religion and spirituality are more or less coherent, culturally elaborated meaning systems embedded in and acquired through social relationships and institutions situated in complex natural and built environments."⁴⁴ Paloutzian and Park (p. 12)

The Forgotten Megalith Monument: Nabta Playa,

The World's Oldest Observatory Long before the pyramids, nomads in the Sahara built a stone circle aligned with the stars. What they discovered in the sky may have shaped an entire civilization.

Nestled deep in the Nubian Desert of southern Egypt lies a prehistoric relic that has reshaped our understanding of ancient astronomy. Known as Nabta Playa, this 7,000-year-old stone circle predates Stonehenge by more than a millennium and may be the earliest known example of an astronomical observatory.

In a landmark paper published in 1998, archaeoastronomer J. McKim Malville and archaeologist Fred Wendorf revealed that this site aligned with major stars such as Sirius, Arcturus, and Alpha Centauri.

Prehistoric Skywatchers of the Sahara the builders of Nabta Playa were nomadic pastoralists who roamed a vastly different Sahara than the one we know today. Between 10,000 and 5,000 years ago, the region was lush and seasonally wet, dotted with playa lakes that filled during the annual monsoon. At the heart of Nabta Playa lies a stone circle and a series of burial mounds and radial alignments, constructed between 4800 and 3000 B.C. These structures were not merely symbolic; they were functional tools used to mark the summer solstice.

According to Malville, who had an "epiphany" while studying the site, the stones form radial lines like spokes on a wheel, aligning precisely with celestial events. The presence of fire pits and tamarisk roofing

allowed researchers to radiocarbon-date the site, affirming its antiquity.

How Ancient Stones Mapped The Sky And The Rains? The builders of Nabta Playa used their observatory to follow bright stars that dominated the summer sky. Calculations based on stellar drift revealed that Arcturus would have aligned with the stones around 4800 B.C. Other alignments matched Sirius—associated in later Egyptian tradition with rebirth and flooding—as well as Alpha Centauri and even the Orion constellation. These stellar guides were not decorative; they served navigational purposes across a vast and often featureless landscape. The nomads likely used the circular motion of stars to journey from one water source to the next—just as Polynesian sailors used the stars to navigate the Pacific.

The Culture Behind the Cosmos

Far from being primitive, the people of Nabta Playa formed a semi-nomadic culture with surprising complexity. Wendorf's excavations uncovered huts, wells, fireplaces, and storage pits suggesting permanent seasonal settlements.

More intriguingly, cattle bones and a cow-shaped megalith were found at the site's central tomb—offering a glimpse into a cattle cult that may have preceded Egyptian bull worship. The ritual significance of cattle here hints at a broader cosmological belief system, possibly tied to fertility and seasonal renewal. Researchers found charred seeds of domesticated sorghum and millet, some of the earliest in the world. These crops would later spread across Africa and into India, playing a key role in the rise of other early civilizations.

From Desert Ruins To Egypt's Dynastic Dawn Between 3000 and 2500 B.C., the once-fertile Sahara began to dry irreversibly. This climatic collapse likely drove the Nabta Playa culture north toward the Nile Valley and south into Nubia. This dispersal has led some scholars, including Malville and Wendorf, to suggest that Nabta Playa may represent a “black genesis” for Egyptian civilization. The reverence for cattle, stellar alignments, and solar worship later seen in Egyptian religious systems may trace their ideological roots to these prehistoric astronomers.

The theory remains contested, but it offers an alternative to the long-held notion that Egypt's origins lie solely in the Fertile Crescent. For many, the cow goddess Hathor—a major figure in Egyptian mythology—is a lingering clue linking Nabta Playa's cattle cult to the religious iconography of later dynasties.⁴⁵(Science - Melissa Ait Lounis Published on April 19, 2025)

Stone Worship in Ancient Greece

Pausanias, a Greek traveler and historian who lived in the 2nd century AD, wrote about how the ancient Greeks worshiped "rough" stones - which may refer to the cult of the god Hermes in connection with building stone piles in courtyards and at crossroads.

THE HERMAE (BOUNDARY STONES)

“Hermai were boundary or mile-stones, carved with the head and phallus of Hermes. They were rural markers which were also supposed to ensure the fertility of the herds and flocks and bring luck. Hermai were erected at boundaries, crossroads and in gymnasia.

Pausanias, Description of Greece 2. 3. 4: "Proceeding on the direct road to Lekhaion [the port of Korinthus] we see a bronze image of a seated Hermes. By him stands a ram, for Hermes is the god who is thought most to care for and to increase flocks, as Homer puts it in the Iliad: --‘Son was he of Phorbas, the dearest of Trojans to Hermes, rich in flocks, for the god vouchsafed him wealth in abundance.’ The story told at the mysteries of the Mother [Demeter] about Hermes and the ram I know but do not relate."

Jasperite Pebble: beginning of stone tool making and stone worship

It is possible that the beginnings of stone worship began with Homo sapiens, perhaps even 2 to 3 million years ago, in the species of Australopithecus africanus. The Jasperite 'Makapango' pebble was found in Africa in 1925 and is associated with the species Australopithecus africanus. What is unique about the Makapango pebble is that it was found relatively far from any possible natural source.

It stands to reason that the "belief" in the value of something like a rock or a pebble because of the belief in a "living" essence or force in natural things is an inherently symbolic idea or an archetype within no conscious person since the beginning of mankind - and beyond, in fact. It seems to show and display a very creative and imaginative emotional awareness and connectedness to the world and environment. We must not forget that Einstein, Sagan, Jung, Planck and other scientists extolled the virtues of imagination above rational analysis or knowledge. There are many spiritual processes here [mostly unconscious], and the Makapango Pebble is the first evidence of one of the first to emerge and evolve into human consciousness. Without this spiritual connection to the world and especially stone worship, it seems unlikely that "we" developed the stone tools upon which the human species developed and flourished.

The Stone Age and the making of stone tools

The Paleolithic age is, by far, the longest age in human history at around 2.5 million years - and in fact involves not only Homo-sapiens, but also 'pre-human' species. It represents most of human history, about 2.5 million years, and involves several human species. Only in the last 50,000 to 100,000 years has any significant evolution or technological development occurred. Caleb Strom said in the article The Stone Age: The First 99 Percent of Human History, "The Acheulian toolkit appears to have been the dominant cultural tradition in Eurasia and Africa for 1.9 million years to the present. about 200,000 years ago, when the evolutionary -advances in cognition turned the tide and began the next Paleolithic period.⁴⁶

About 400,000 years ago, early humans developed techniques that led to a diversification of tool making as well as a "standardization" that involved extensive process control. Caleb Strom argues that "the This development probably represents one _ _ _ _ yet cognitive development, because _ The such detailed method of making of those stone tools require _ _ of more skill and thought _ than those _ past tradition of making of tools In time too of the Middle Paleolithic probably produced the first stone-tipped spears.

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The central role of stone worship tool-making in the evolution of mankind is explained by Caleb Strom, when he observed that "it was probably also during the Middle Paleolithic that humans went from scavengers to big game hunters. The tools used by early human species, such as Homo erectus, suggest that early humans were scavenged meat from carcasses left behind by carnivores. In fact, this may have been how early humans left Africa, following carnivores, such as saber-toothed cats, as they devoured those that did not carnivore slaughter ended. Middle Paleolithic weapons, such as spears, and medium-sized animal specimens found at butchery sites suggest actual hunting, possibly indicating that big game hunting began in the Middle Paleolithic.

In conclusion, Caleb Strom said "Therefore our analyzes show that the evolution of the modern human brain shape was characterized by directional and gradual changes resulting in the typical globular modern human shape established sometime after about 100,000 years and perhaps before 35,000 years before our time. That is, the "final" shape and composition of the human brain was established only in recent history "at some point 100,000 years ago. In addition, some researchers theorize that human consciousness evolved in more recent history - perhaps shown by the relatively recent evolution or development of the

ideal of compassion in the major religions over a period roughly within the scriptures from Deuteronomy, the development of compassion in the Upanishads, and then the ideal of compassion that arose in Jesus Christ, Buddha and Mohammed.⁴⁷

Prehuman Stone tool Making & Sociological Evidence of Unconscious Spiritual Symbolism

Tim Spector, in the article What Twins Reveal About the Science of Faith (Popular Science, August 8, 2013) states, "They [researchers] have estimated the heritability of spirituality at about 40 to 50 percent, which is quite high if considering how hard things like that are to measure. Other US studies using more detailed questions in larger numbers have found similar or stronger genetic influences. The This study reveals our variable but inherent sense of spirituality, which affects how we see the world, ourselves, and the universe. It is independent of our formal religious beliefs and practices and, strangely, more independent of family influence."⁴⁸ »

Furthermore, Gilbert Todd Vance, in an article, Genetics of Religiosity, states that, "Although it may seem at first glance that religiosity is not influenced by genes, studies have shown that genetic effects contribute to individual differences in a wide range of range of traits and behaviors, including social attitudes, personality, professional interests, IQ, and religiosity."⁴⁹

Genetic perspective of stone tool making – and unconscious symbolism underlying the modern crystal craze

Hannah Devlin observes, "The discovery of stone tools dating back nearly 3m years has raised questions about which hominin species was behind the ancient technology. The artefacts, found at a site in Kenya, are thought to be the oldest known example of a specific set of stone tools used for butchery and pounding plant material. The emergence of the so-called Oldowan toolkit is viewed as a milestone in human evolution and was assumed to be an innovation of our ancestors. However, the latest excavation revealed a pair of massive molars belonging to Paranthropus, a muscular-jawed hominin on a side branch of our evolutionary tree, alongside the tools."⁵⁰ Hannah Devlin Science correspondent, Discovery of 3m-year-old stone tools sparks prehistoric whodunnit, Guardian.com

Addendum: Selective Attention as an Evolutionary Adaptive Trait

Definitions

1. "Selective attention," also called "selectivity bias"—the tendency to orient oneself toward and process information from only one part of our environment to the exclusion of other parts, no matter how obvious those parts may be."⁵¹ - David DiSalvo
2. Selective Attention as an Evolutionary Adaptive Trait: "It is argued that selectivity in processing has emerged through evolution as a design feature of a complex multi-channel sensorimotor system, which generates selective phenomena of "attention"⁵². Hommel, Bernhard et al
3. Selective Attention Dovetails into the Mannheim Model Christina Maimone states "Ideology is, as Mannheim uses the term, a mode of thought that obscures the real condition of society (by filtering information) to the group holding the thought, thereby stabilizing the shared social reality of the mode of thought. Groups are simply unable to see particular facts that would undermine their conception of the world..."⁵³

Selective Attention and Spiritual Beliefs in Animal Spirits

First, I would highlight Eric Klinger's statement that one function of emotions is to direct or focus attent-

ion. In context of the “selective attention function, an example might be the hunter gatherer beliefs in animal spirits which Erica Hill describes in terms of human relations with the natural world “Their thoughts and actions established and maintained relationships with prey animals and may be more productively conceptualized as dynamic social behaviours embedded within the context of daily life than as privileged ritual acts” which is a counterpoint to the “supernatural” fixation vs functionality/fruitfulness of materialists – as Brian Josephson emphasizes.

The selective attention argument is that the beliefs in animal spirits and nature as a life force focus human attention on their source of sustenance and survival – and furthermore as William James, Kalsched, and Furlotti emphasize, spiritual symbols are associated with powerful emotions – so the end result would be the spiritual beliefs in animal spirits would be able to recruit social skills and so on in order to create a society focused on and directed to the natural-animal environment.

Complexity, Circumstances, and Pivotal Role of Emotions

That being said the human brain and human consciousness are incredibly complex and involve intricately connected and overlapping processes The Neuroscience Map-Model of Morals: “Morality is a set of complex emotional and cognitive processes that is reflected across many brain domains... Some of the emotions processed are more central to morality than others, but all emotions contribute to moral judgment given specific contextual situations.... The neural circuits of brain regions implicated in morality overlap with those that regulate other behavioral processes,”⁵⁴ (Brain Architecture of human morality, Funk and Gazzaniga Current opinion in Neurobiology 2009 19:678-681). Circumstances are critical in assessing the “actualities” of any given situation – especially it seems in spirituality.

Commentary: not all social consciousness is peaches and cream

“The roots of social belonging spring from the primordial sentiments toward ethnicity, race, language, religion, customs and traditions, and region. Self-identity, mediated by mental formations derived from social relations, is composed of thinking and values. Daily experience reveals that cultural differences produce blind spots in thinking and barriers in values-governing areas of activity, social relations, the world, and identity of being-that impedes cross-cultural understanding.”⁵⁵ (Primordial Roots of Being by Edward C. P. Stewart) These are also the primordial roots of racism and nationalist ideologies when combined with the powerful emotions that are triggered in some circumstances in conflicts with outgroups. That being said, a number so scholars point out that studies indicate that the spiritual processes are distinct from the processes involving religiosity.

Keywords: Megalithic, Sacred Stones, Standing Stones, Jasperite Pebble "Makapgo", Massebot Bible Stones, Twelve Pillars Of Moses, Warren Fields, Stonehenge, Newgrange, Gobekli Tepe, Nabta Playa, Stone Circles, Cromlechs, Dolmens, Menhirs, Logan Stones, Pillar Stones, "Oracle" Stones, Passage Tombs, Burial Mounds, Kurgans, Cairns Or Galgals, Alignmententine Stones, Guardian Stones, Omphalos Or Navel Of The Earth Stones Consciousness Factor, Ideology, Formation Of Groups

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