

WHO CREATED GOD?
An Attempt to Deconstruct the Age-Old Question

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the current literature's conceptual, philosophical, and analytical elements of theism. It aims to deconstruct the atheist paradigm and provide a thorough examination of the answer to the age-old question, 'If God created the world, who created God?' This article examines the perspectives of modern scholars on God's 'createdness' and argues that current theists may benefit from a philosophical perspective to provide a logical and rational response to the age-old question.

Keywords: *God, Deconstruction, Creation, Atheism, Theism, Infinite regression*

INTRODUCTION

For a long time, people have asked, "Who created God?" For adherents of many religions, this is a contentious as well as a troubling question. This article will attempt to answer the age-old question of who created God if God created the universe. New ideas from the works of modern scholars will be used to discuss this question.

Although many individuals are oblivious of their faith, very individual is born into a certain religion, heritage or culture. On the other hand, some people discover new concerns about their religion while they are young or at school or during a mid-life crisis or because of some traumatic event. Uncertainties about the notion of an all-loving God may develop at such moments and a believer may adopt an agnostic perspective by submitting his doubts to the test of rationality. People learn the truth by combining

revelatory (scriptural) information with acquired knowledge. Theism places a greater emphasis on scripture or revealed knowledge, whereas atheism emphasizes learned knowledge.

Atheism is the belief in the non-existence of God or the complete abandonment of the construct of theism. Philosophical schools of thought like naturalism, humanism, existentialism, empiricism, and structuralism may all be used to infer basic preconceptions of atheism. Given the absence of proof for God's existence, atheism is no longer regarded as belief in the non-existence of God but rather as skepticism regarding God's existence. Atheism has gradually evolved into a sociopolitical force championed by atheist intellectuals such as Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, Christopher Hitchens, and Daniel Dennett. According to orthodox theology, God is an uncreated, necessary, and everlasting being. In ancient times, there was a much discussion regarding God's 'createdness.' The existence of God has been a hotly contested issue since the Enlightenment.

Belief in God is a human decision rather than a question of opinion. There are two types of people that are perplexed about God's existence. The first group consists of individuals who simply renounce the concept of God. The second group consists of those individuals who see a connection between spirituality and atheism. This position is known as *faithism*. *Faithism* is the quest for common ground between atheism, religious conviction, humanity and religion's ideals.¹ The purpose of this article is to demonstrate that atheism is the outcome of a superficial comprehension of religion. Intellectual inquiry and the practice of religion together, on the other hand, makes it possible to live a life of faith. I will develop my argument by focusing on an important question raised by atheists: "Who created God?"

¹. Stedman, C. (2012), *Faithist: How an atheist found common ground with the religious*, Beacon Press, pp. 8-9.

My research adopts a deconstructive methodology, presenting a conceptual analysis of modern theists and atheists premised on a study of historical and philosophical literature and followed by a discussion of the literature's history and current use. To arrive at my conclusions, I shall employ the continental philosophical approach of deconstruction. The research question of God's "createdness" will be deconstructed by examining existing literature on theism and atheism to understand the relevance of the age-old question. As this issue has always been contentious, this deconstructive approach will enable the reader to acquire greater understanding. Arguments for atheism and for theism will be addressed from the perspective of contemporary philosophers. The deconstruction approach will reveal underlying inconsistencies in these arguments and allow me to uncover the truth conceptually.

The process tracing method is also applied to this research. This type of method tries to connect the "possible causes and observed outcomes."² Process tracing also develops new variables and hypotheses for case studies on cause-and-effect relationships.³ This study will make use of dependent variables in developing arguments about the existence of God. The study's scope, on the other hand, is one of its limitations.

This research is based on an examination of the philosophical and argumentative literature on atheism and the responses from theist thinkers. The writings that follow all address the age-old question, "Who Created God?" Zacharias & Geisler (2003) explores challenging questions regarding God in their book *Who Made God? And Answers to Over 100 Other Tough Questions of Faith*. This source helps scholars answer critical questions concerning the presence and creation of God, which are two essential components of faith. In their book *There Is a God: How the World's Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind*, Flew and Varghese (2007)

² George, A. L. & Bennett, A. (2007), *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, p. 55.

³ *ibid*, p. 56.

examine key arguments regarding God. This book is divided into two parts: the first examines the negation of the divine and the second explores the divine's revelation. After explaining the origins of atheism, the author attempts to discover the divine's actuality by delving into questions like "who wrote the rules of nature?" "How did life start?" and "how does something emerge from nothing?"

Tzortzis' work *The Divine Reality: God, Islam and the Mirage of Atheism* (2020) is relevant because it counters the comprehension of atheists from a rational, reasonable and Islamic point view and encompasses the Qur'anic assertion for the existence of God. In his book *God's Undertaker: Has Science Buried God?* Lennox (2009) highlights several of Richard Dawkins' points. According to book reviews, Lennox's writing has had a significant impact on readers since he employs various concepts to elucidate the origin of life and the universe in exploring the Big Bang hypothesis and Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. Finally, Sarfati's (1998) dissertation, *If God Created the Universe, Then Who Created God?* uses thermodynamic laws and metaphysical concepts to support the existence of God.

WHO COULD CREATE GOD?

The question "who created God?" presupposes that God exists. Like the question "Can God make himself disappear?" A 'created God' is in essence an illusion. This is one of the most hotly contested and, at the same time, one of the most troubling topics for believers today. Since God created this universe, God exists outside of the universe. Time and space are likewise part of the cosmos, and he must have created them. Only if there is a time limit can the idea of beginning and end be applied. As a result, God does not require a beginning and he may exist outside the universe's time-frame. Life after death, as per God, is eternal. As a result, it is possible that the time experienced by human beings may be limited. The idea of time is derived by contrasting a religious belief with Einstein's Relativity Theory, which states that time is relative. It varies from one point to the next. Only

in this limited universe is the time of a human being limited. If anything exists outside our realm, it must be eternal.

Hamza Tzortzis' book *The Divine Reality: God, Islam, and the Mirage of Atheism* (2020),⁴ explores the justifications for God's "creation." This is one of the most thorough analyses of the concept of God's existence. Tzortzis begins by posing the following query: Is it possible to create something out of nothing? In reality, what does nothing imply? The state considered as nothing is best described as a state in which there is no energy, potential, material, or causal condition. Every effect is caused by a causal condition, which might be physical or non-material. The implication is that things formed from nothing can exist without energy, potential or matter. This logic is in direct opposition to reason. Neither can similar logic to explain a world formed from nothing be accepted because nothingness is incapable of producing anything.

According to the metaphysical principle, $0+0+0$, the answer is 0, not 3. There must be some causal condition for any entity that may emerge from nothing. Nothing denotes a complete lack of all things. Someone who believes that being may arise from non-being may likewise believe that something might vanish without a cause. In this case, we should not be astonished if a house is suddenly destroyed. If things appear without a causal basis, the same rule may cause things to disappear without one. This scenario seems to be logically unacceptable. Quantum vacuum particles are believed to have created the universe but these quantum vacuum particles are considered to be nothing. In terms of physics, this is not the case. Any kind of energy or tangible object will obey physical laws.⁵

⁴ Tzortzis, H. A. (2020), *The Divine Reality: God, Islam & the Mirage of Atheism*, Hong Kong: Lion Rock Publishing, pp. 96-120.

⁵ American Physical Society, (1998), Focus: The Force of Empty Space. Available at: <http://physics.aps.org/story/v2/st28>.

A SELF-CREATED GOD AND AN UNCAUSED CAUSE

The meaning of the term "created" indicates that it did not exist before it was brought into existence. This also introduces the notion of finitude, as all created things are finite. The idea of 'self-creation' seems to indicate that something may both exist and not exist simultaneously, which is impossible. For example, is it conceivable for a female to give birth to herself? When something is made, it is understood that it was created by someone or something that did not exist before. So the notion that the universe is self-created is illogical because the universe had no ability or power before its creation. This conclusion applies to all finite entities that have been produced, including the universe.

Andrew Compson, the British Humanist Association's spokesperson, argued against the existence of God. He said that self-creation is impossible but that single-celled creatures were capable of it and he was referring to the ability of single-celled creatures to self-create. However, this is a mechanism of reproduction, not of self-creation.⁶

Someone may say that if the universe is created, then what or who created the creator of this universe and so on, *ad infinitum*. This vicious cycle may indicate that there is a need for an uncreated entity since a created object cannot create the universe. Let's assume that this world is U1 and that it was formed by a cause U2 and that another cause U3 generated it and so on. Researchers could deduce that U1 did not exist in the first place since when U2 was created, U1 already existed and this will continue indefinitely.⁷ According to Dr. Jaffar Idris, an Islamic theologian, this would only lead to a succession of non-existents. Since existent objects

⁶. Tzortzis, H. A. (2020), *The Divine Reality: God, Islam & the Mirage of Atheism*, Hong Kong: Lion Rock Publishing, p. 109.

⁷. Idris, J. (2006), *Contemporary Physicists and God's Existence (part 2 of 3): A Series of Causes*, available at: <http://www.islamreligion.com/articles/491>.

surround people, the ultimate cause for these existent things must be something other than time-based causes.⁸

Similarly, if individuals believe that another God created the uncreated God, a question arises: who is that God's creator? Individuals claim that God's creation is greater than God; it creates an infinite continuity in the creator's terms, which is inconceivable. It must come to a halt at one point to represent God's existence. Who created God if God had a creator? If God had a creator, the next issue is, who will be that creator? And so forth. Infinite continuity is not feasible.

The alternative to the above is to posit a first cause or an uncreated being. The famous philosopher Al-Ghazali⁹ presented his view for the existence of an uncreated creator as follows: there must be a cause of the cause. It can either carry on indefinitely (*ad infinitum*) or end at the initial cause, which is nonsensical. Something has to be in existence forever. Since it was demonstrated earlier that the universe has a beginning and is contingent, we can deduce that the universe does not exist eternally. As a result, only God exists in eternity.

In their book *There Is a God* (2007), Flew and Varghese assume that both theists and atheists can agree on one thing: that something must exist for anything to exist. Take God or the universe as an example. Something has existed eternally in both of them.¹⁰ As a result, it is inferred that everything must have a beginning (finite and created). This demonstrates that there must be an uncaused cause. God must be an uncreated entity that has existed from the beginning. Anything that has never been created has always been and any being that has always existed is eternal. The Qur'an

8. *ibid.*

9. Goodman, L. E. (1971), Ghazali's Argument from Creation (I). *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 2(1), p. 83.

10. Flew, A. and Varghese, R. A. (2007), *There is a God: How the World's Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind*, New York: Harper One, p. 165.

refers to this as follows: "Allah is the Transcendent of all, the Protector and Far-Superior to all. He has neither begotten nor been begotten."¹¹

CREATION OR RE-CREATION?

If God is uncreated, how did he create the universe out of nothing? There must be a first cause of the existence of the universe. The Qur'an addresses this question as follows: "God is the one who created the heavens and the earth. . . ."¹² Here the word 'created' stands for 'originated' (*bada'a*). The term "originated" refers to the act of producing something from nothing. A chair, for instance, is either manufactured (*sana'a*) or created (*khalaqa*): it is made of something. A chair cannot be constructed by a tree but is made from wood taken from a tree. The term "originated" (*bada'a*) refers to something that was produced out of nothing. So out of nothing (*bada'a*), God created the heavens and the earth.

The majority of people reason that God must have a creator because everything that exists has been created by a creator. The argument advanced by atheists is that everything has a creator. A carpenter, for instance, builds a table, whereas a computer creates a smartphone. As a result, since every creation has a creator, God must have one as well. Analyzing this way of thinking, it becomes clear that the table and smartphone are not inventions. Instead, they are re-creations since the material utilized to make them already exists in the world. Humans are materialistic creators who, as a result, re-fashion things that have been created. The only natural Creator is God. From nothing, he created something. He owns the copyright to the creation because he is the original creator. If a book provides a new idea or generates an original thought, anybody who turns to the same topic or thought later may develop the author's original thinking. The first author's ideas are the original ones and

¹¹. Qur'an, 112: 2-3.

¹². Qur'an, 2: 117.

subsequent authors expand them. The copyright remains with the original author.

WHO MADE GOD?

John Carson Lennox (2009) examines the arguments in response to the question: 'Who made God?' Lennox employs the arguments of historians and scientists to investigate this question and he contends that those who cannot accept God as the irrefutable reality will always ask the question: "Who created God?" Similarly, the question, "Who made Y?" is assumed to refer to objects already created. It is logically accurate that the chain of cause and effect must end at some point (ultimate reality) because infinite regression is inconceivable.¹³

In his explanation to the question "Who created God?" Lennox uses an analogy described by Austin Farrer. He mentions that Farrer reminds us of our early explorations of infinite regressions. Why do individuals dress in uniforms and carry guns? The reason is that they are policewomen or policemen who enforce the law. Why did they want to be police officers in the first place? They needed to work to make a livelihood. Why did they feel this way? They, like everyone else, wanted to live. Why do so many people desire to live? Here the interrogation stops. There are instances when it is necessary to refrain from using the word "why" and to reach a conclusion. Atheists and theists disagree on where to end such an interrogation. According to the atheist, the ultimate reality is the universe.

For the theist, the ultimate reality is God. In physics and philosophy, whether matter comes first or thought comes first is a contentious issue.¹⁴ Lennox makes use of assertions taken from different intellectuals and researchers to address the age-old question. He begins with Socrates, who stated that irrespective of how harmful it may be to our past ideas, it is

¹³. Lennox, J. C. (2009), *God's Undertaker: Has Science Buried God?* Lion Books, pp. 174-175.

¹⁴. *ibid.*

important to study the facts and to see where this leads us. After this, Lennox quotes Dean Kenyon who says that the more molecular biology and explorations of the beginning of life teach people about the chemical intricacies of life, the less they believe in simply naturalistic explanations. He concluded that science indicates that DNA denotes an intelligent cause. However, science is not able to identify the intelligent cause. Religion and philosophy must provide a solution to this question.¹⁵

Lennox continues his quest and quotes the scholars Wilson, Sandage, and Flew. According to E.O. Wilson, any scholar or professional who can prove the existence of intelligent design within the existing structure of science will create history and receive unending appreciation. The issue of intelligent design is a puzzle that every scientist aspires to solve but no one has come even close to doing so. Since there is no hypothesis, criterion, or proof, there is no conclusion. A famous cosmologist, Allan Sandage, argued that this universe is highly intricate and all its dimensions depend on a single cause. Another prominent philosopher and atheist, Anthony Flew, thought that DNA could only be regarded as the work of an intelligent Creator at the beginning of life.¹⁶

Zacharias and Geisler (2003) provided philosophical and logical responses to this age-old subject. First and foremost, they said that God was not created by anyone. Things that have a beginning require someone to make or create them. Since God has existed for all time, he has no creator. Almost every atheist thinks that the universe did not exist before it was created and that it has always existed. They attempt to connect their arguments to the first law of thermodynamics, which states that energy cannot be destroyed or generated; it is always constant. Taking their reasoning further, the law states that energy cannot be created or destroyed; rather, it can only be conserved.

¹⁵. *ibid.*

¹⁶. Lennox, J. C. (2009). *God's Undertaker: Has Science Buried God?* Lion Books, pp. 174-175.

Even if energy were created, the amount of energy should still remain unchanged. But these atheists claim that the universe has no beginning. In fact, traditional atheists believe that energy is uncreated, timeless, and without a creator. Hence, the question as to who made the world is meaningless. Similarly, it appears pointless to enquire about God because God has always existed. If this universe had been created, it would have required a reason for its creation but if it is eternal, no reason is necessary. Similarly, since God has no beginning, it is nonsensical to inquire as to who created God.¹⁷

Atheists such as Dawkins and other intellectuals (theists) both thought at one time or other that there must have been something that has existed eternally. How did this eternal being come into existence? The answer is that this being has always existed. One may choose between the universe and God as this eternal being. But something must have existed forever.

Human beings cannot see God but some progressive thinkers have provided a glimpse of the existence of God. Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump contend that when someone fully comprehends the divine characteristics of ultimate reality, they will acknowledge God's existence. According to the theologian Alvin Plantinga, God, who is Necessary Being, is omnipresent in all conceivable universes. Kurt Gödel, renowned mathematician and scholar, is satisfied that the universe is founded on reason and is, therefore, rational. He explained his point of view by stating that natural law and order demonstrate a supreme entity in charge of the whole universe.¹⁸

Sarfatti (1998) presents Einstein's reasoning and the Law of Thermodynamics to solve the age-old question. Atheists pose several

¹⁷. Zacharias, R., and Geisler, N. L. (2003). *Who Made God? and Answers to Over 100 Other Tough Questions of Faith*. Zondervan, pp. 30-32.

¹⁸. Flew, A., and Varghese, R. A. (2007). *There is a God: How the World's Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind*, New York: Harper One, pp. 165-167.

skeptical questions, which they say God must answer if the universe can have an explanation. One could respond by saying that anything that had a beginning, such as a universe, necessitates the existence of a cause. Time, according to Albert Einstein, is related to both space and matter since time started with both of them (space and matter). God is believed to be the creator of everything and so, according to this definition, God is also the maker of time for God exists beyond time¹⁹. As such, God does not have any cause.

Thermodynamic principles (the laws of physics) provide evidence for the origin of the cosmos. The first law deals with a constant quantity of energy, whereas the second law is founded on the notion that the amount of energy available for work diminishes with time. If the energy is constant but the working energy decreases every day, the situation can never remain the same. These laws describe the beginning of the universe. But the assumption that the universe is self-created or does not require a cause will make this argument unacceptable. The universe has no properties that justify its preferential coming into being before it did so appear. This also demonstrates that the universe needs a reason to exist.²⁰

Pal (2010) summarizes the arguments of academicians in order to find a solution to the age-old question. Scientists such as Stephen Hawking and Albert Einstein have hinted at the answer to the same age-old question. For example, Hawking's book *A Brief History of Time* includes a chapter on *the origin and fate of the universe*, which makes an attempt to answer the age-old question. He claims that the universe contains particles and raises the issue of particle genesis. He uses quantum physics to support his claim that these particles are made out of energy. The next question is about the creation of energy. When everyone considers energy to be zero in the universe, no

¹⁹. Isaiah, 57:15.

²⁰. Sarfati, J. D. (1998), "If God Created the Universe, Then Who Created God?" *Creation ex Nihilo Technical Journal*, 12 (1), pp. 20-22.

further inquiries need to be asked and infinite regressions will come to an end.

The same argument may be used for God's existence. According to common belief, God's existence is based on his essence. God is everlasting, beyond space, immortal, changeless and timeless. However, if space, change and time are all set to zero to explain God's existence, it becomes difficult to demonstrate that God is beyond space, changeless, and timeless. Distance and time are deceptive because, according to Einstein's relativity theory, light reduces infinite distance and time (the volume of the entire cosmos) to zero since it is a property of light.

God is seen as light by scientists because he possesses all of the attributes of light. This is the first evidence that he exists. According to the energy-mass equivalence, if energy is zero, then the mass is also zero. Energy and mass calculations are all-inclusive. If God exists, then God's mass and energy are both zero. According to Einstein, anything with zero mass will travel at the speed of light. If God has no mass, he is likewise light and as a result, God will be beyond space and timeless, devoid of energy and mass.²¹

Anyone who examines the question "Who created God?" will see that the word "created" denotes that something has happened in the past, in time. Does God have a past? If God is the creator of time, how could something have happened before him? God created all things in time and space. God created time, followed by space, and then everything else. If God is also created, would time be presumed to be superior to God? If God were created, this would have occurred in a process that took place in time. A lapse of time is required for a procedure. So, if God were created, time must be greater than God. The issue of *who created God* appears illogical in this

²¹. Pal, H. S. (2010), "If God Created Universe, Who Created God?" *Scientific God Journal*, 1 (8), pp. 582-584.

perspective. This is like asking the question: "Can God vanish?" because such a question is irrelevant in and of itself.

These are the questions and the arguments as far as they could be gleaned from the work of theologians, philosophers, and scientists in answering the age-old question.

CONCLUSION

This article has examined the arguments for God's 'createdness' in order to address the age-old question: "If God created the universe, who created God?" and offers some counter-arguments to the arguments presented by atheists. I have offered explanations that were philosophical, theological and logical in nature and proved that God is above time and space, the creator of the heavens and the earth. The question of God's creation seems irrational. God is the uncreated creator who brought things into existence out of nothing.

If God were created, there must be something greater than God. This leaves us with an infinite regression, which is difficult to defend. Human beings are re-creators, which suggests that they are the ones who actually create. Human experience shows that someone can design something and bring it into existence. There is much evidence of causes and their effects throughout the universe. All natural laws, however, must have been established by one original cause. ■

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