

The reason for creation

Pandeism, unlike theism, can give us insight into the possible reason for the creation of the universe. This is evident in the writings of John Scotus Erigena, described by Bertrand Russell in his *History of Western Philosophy* as “the most astonishing person of the ninth century”. The Catholic Encyclopedia quotes him as follows:

“So supremely perfect is the essence of the Divinity that God is incomprehensible not only to us but also to Himself. For if He knew Himself in any adequate sense He should place Himself in some category of thought, which would be to limit Himself. God is above all categories. When, therefore, we speak about Him we are safer in using the negative than the positive mode of predication. That is, we are safer in predicating what He is not than in venturing to predicate what He is.”

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05519a.htm>

Erigena concluded that as God surpassed Being, so God was not a being. “Creation is a kind of divine effort by God to understand himself, to see himself in a mirror.”

Zoltan Istvan gives a more controversial reason for creation:

“A being which achieved omnipotence would have reached the end of this path. Its desire to evolve would have no further outlet, except to destroy itself and begin again at the simplest level of matter and energy, to experience the whole of evolution from near nothingness to omnipotence all over again. If that were so, then we would be on exactly that path. The singularity we achieve might never equal other singularities or be the most powerful.” (from “Pandeism: An Anthology” by Knudson Mapson, Michael Arnhem, William Walker Atkinson, Robert G. Brown, Dan Dana, Alan Dawe, Orlando Alcántara Fernández, Richard Francks, Ismaili Gnosis, Zoltan Istvan, Bernardo Kastrup, William C. Lane, Raphael Lataster,

Poffo Ortiz, Anthony Peake, Amy Perry, Sushma Sahajpal)

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Another view of the reason for creation is given by Scott Adams in his novella *God's Debris: A Thought Experiment*. The narrator is a young man who asks questions from an old man named Avatar who seems to know everything:

““You think God would want to commit suicide?” I asked.

“I’m not saying he wants anything. I’m saying it’s the only challenge.”

“I think God would prefer to exist than to not exist.”

“That’s thinking like a human, not like a God. You have a fear of death so you assume God would share your preference. But God would have no fears. Existing would be a choice. And there would be no pain of death, nor feelings of guilt or remorse or loss. Those are human feelings, not God feelings. God could simply choose to discontinue existence.”

“There’s a logical problem here, according to your way of thinking,” I said. “If God knows the future, he already knows if he will choose to end his existence, and he knows if he will succeed at it, so there’s no challenge there, either.”

“Your thinking is getting clearer,” he said. “Yes, he will know the future of his own existence under normal conditions. But would his omnipotence include knowing what happens after he loses his omnipotence, or would his knowledge of the future end at that point?”

“That sounds like a thoroughly unanswerable question. I think you’ve hit a dead end,” I said. “Maybe. But consider this. A God who knew the answer to that question would indeed know everything and have everything. For that reason he would be unmotivated to do anything or create anything. There would be no purpose to act in any way whatsoever. But a God who had one nagging question—what happens if I cease to exist?—might be motivated to find the answer in order to complete his knowledge. And having no fear and no reason to continue existing, he might try it.”

“How would we know either way?”

“We have the answer. It is our existence. The fact that we exist is proof that God is motivated to act in some way. And since only the challenge of self-destruction could interest an omnipotent God, it stands to reason that we . . .”

I interrupted the old man in midsentence and stood straight up from the rocker. It felt as if a pulse of energy ran up my spine, compressing my lungs, electrifying my skin, bringing the hairs on the back of my neck to full alert. I moved closer to the fireplace, unable to absorb its heat. “Are you saying what I think you’re saying?” My brain was taking on too much knowledge. There was overflow and I needed to shake off the excess.

The old man looked at nothing and said, “We are God’s debris.” “Are you saying that God blew himself to bits and we’re what’s left?” (from “God’s Debris: A Thought Experiment” by Scott Adams)

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The practical application of this knowledge is that all human experiences, whether pleasant or unpleasant, may have significance in the overall scheme of things, although this may not be obvious to us at the time we have the experience.