



The Evolution of Gods: The Scientific Origin of Divinity And Religions

Ajay Kansal

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Did gods create humanity or did humans create gods?

Human interest in the origin of humankind has been documented throughout the recorded history. Did some divine power create the first couple? Religious scriptures the world over aver that one or the other god gave birth to humans, but science has not yet identified any supernatural power that created and governed human beings. Did primeval humans come up with the idea of gods to help them cope with their fears? Could it be that they attributed natural phenomena — unfathomable and frightening to them — to the working of invisible gods?

The Evolution of Gods uses modern science to explain why, when and how religions and gods became the desirable explanations of the inexplicable events. It describes anthropological and historical facts about the evolution of religions and gods, in a simple and straightforward manner, to assert that human imagination created gods, and not the other way around.

The book begins with the epoch when the human race came into being, between 400,000 and 200,000 years ago. Around 100,000 years ago, humans invented language and began to discuss and analyze each happening around them. Whatever they could not comprehend, their priest attributed to some unseen power. At one point in time, we do not know exactly when it happened, humankind began an activity called worship. Humans began to worship each seen or unseen power, which was beyond their control, but could either harm or help them. They believed that worship protected them and sought the blessings of that power. Priests all over the world invented almost identical methods of worship, such as folding their hands, bowing, kneeling, flowers offering, prayers and sacrifices.

For example, anthropologists have drawn that ancient humans had largely inadequate protection against cold; their survival largely depended upon available sunlight—something beyond their control. In that scenario, solar worship was a logical outcome. In a similar manner, the humans found thunder and lightning inexplicable and frightening. Gradually, they began to worship the sky as god. There is enough historical evidence to assert that the ancestors of Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Christians and Muslims, before their religions came into practice, worshipped the sun and the sky. Thus, history demonstrates that whenever humankind faced a new challenge, priests invented a more useful deity and consigned the older one to oblivion.

For example, around three thousand years ago, cultivation provided several facilities to humans that paved the way for a population explosion. At the same time, farming exposed people to pests, rodents, mosquitoes, houseflies and parasites. All these factors together gave rise to altogether new diseases such as cholera, tuberculosis, typhoid and plague. Apart from these diseases, population explosion also gave rise to social diseases such as poverty, inequality, injustice, crime and exploitation. All these together forced people to lead a miserable life no better than hell.

Around this time, a few geniuses such as the Buddha, Moses and Jesus discovered the causes and remedies of human sufferings. For example, Moses suggested ten morals, sacrifices and prayers to protect people from their miseries. The contemporary priests transcribed prayers, rituals, myths, allegories and morals preached by these prophets after their death. The Holy Scriptures, such as the Vedas and the Bible were the compilations of such writings. These books advised worship, sacrifices, magic or morals to eradicate human miseries. The suffering masses had no option but to follow those advices. These scriptures fashioned the organized religions of today.

Let us think for a moment why there are many religions and there is only one science on the Earth. There is one concrete reason behind this irony; about one thing or concept there is only one truth but there can be many lies. This book is an effort to light a candle in the darkest corner of human consciousness.

The Evolution of Gods: The Scientific Origin of Divinity And Religions Details

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From Reader Review The Evolution of Gods: The Scientific Origin of Divinity And Religions for online ebook

Sanchit Bhandari says

This review and many more can be found on my blog Musings of Immortals

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" And the Lord said, "If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you. (Luke 17:5)

The Evolution of Gods: The Scientific Origin of Divinity And Religions is a book for atheists to sharpen their weapons and also a one for believers to enrich their faith in the Almighty. Dr Kansal, an ardent proponent of atheism who challenges the very existence of God and denies rationality of religions has brought out the best in me to consolidate my faith in Lord RAMA. Prior to this I never reflected back upon my religion with such a critical mindset, but the stir this book has created in my mind has led me to find scientific basis of my beliefs. The result is my faith now stands on concrete pillars which I guess wouldn't be swayed by the strongest of the torpedoes.

What was good

The author takes little more than 200 pages to deny thousands of years of wisdom and skillfully dismembers God to a mere fragment of Human imagination.

'Man could perceive some unseen, unheard, untouchable, non-aromatic divine power only after the evolution of his imagination.'

The book written in a chronological fashion searches the history and existence of Gods through the scientific evolution of humans. It suggests that gods were created so that humans could explain the existence of things that were beyond their grasp like the lightning and rain, the day and night, the sun and the wind. Sometimes these uncontrollable powers were heralded as a boon and sometimes they were a bane. Hence they started to call them gods and prayers were started to appease them and to be on their good sides.

At some point in time—we do not know exactly when this happened—people in various far-flung parts of the world developed an instinct. Whenever people encountered some power beyond their control that could harm or help them, they began to worship that power.

The narrative skills of Dr kansal is quite strong, similar to his research. he keeps you spell bound and at every juncture he etches a clear picture of the facts with lucidity and argues his way that newer Gods were created to meet the newer challenges of mankind.

history demonstrates that whenever humankind faced a new challenge, priests invented a more useful deity and consigned the older one to oblivion.

The language of the book is very simple and the logic is quite undeniable. all can understand and relate to the perspectives of the author. The real beauty of the book is underlain in the fact that even though the author has argued the existence of God and given his explanations of the various myths he doesn't try to burden the reader with his philosophy.

This book is an effort to light a candle in the darkest corner of Human consciousness.

The book contain 3 separate chapters on Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity explaining the way these religions came into being and how they developed throughout the history. These chapters are quite resourceful and informative about the different aspects of religion and beliefs. And I thoroughly enjoyed looking at different aspects of God as a whole. It is during these chapters author explains the existence of moral codes and various religious texts. Also during these chapters author has made a feeble attempt of comparing these religions and giving his opinion about their truth and existence. he tells how we have deviated from the original basics of these religion teachings.

The core teaching of jesus said : 'Love all do not kill even animals'. His last words for the people crucifying him read : 'Father for they know not what the do'. Thus basic teaching of Jesus was non violence and forgiveness Many of his followers fought countless wars just to establish their dominance.

The author also describes how the presence of religions brought the scientific advancements to stagnancy. He launches an offence against the priests and their teachings, for the Dark Ages.

"The greatest obstacle to discovery was not ignorance, it was the illusion of knowledge",

Priests and the holy books delayed scientific progress for almost two millennia'

the target audience is very skill fully chosen- the younger generation, the ones who are not extremists and is ready to have an open mind towards different points. The main aim of this book seems to be to achieve a state of religious harmony and respect, to avoid the conflicts on religious grounds and to train the next gen towards a better future. The ill practices still going on in the name of religion are well highlighted and depicted in an unbiased way.

"The knowledge about the evolution of gods may vaccinate youths against the disease of religious extremism."

What went wrong

The book is too ambitious, it's written in a one track perspective i.e. for a given myth or practice he gives only a single explanation. Needlessly to say that this explanation is ruthlessly aimed to prove his point. his opinions inadvertently changes to judgments and I believe that a few might hurt the sentiments of a not so atheist reader.

Almost all ancient people of the world developed many funny religious concepts: Yajna was one of the funniest concepts humanity could fathom and continue too

These kind of comments on one's religion and belief are just undeniably over the top, Yajna is one of the most auspicious thing in Hinduism and the author just refers to it as a bane of the society.

Though mostly the author has been cynical about Hinduism he doesn't spare the other religions when he writes..

'God did nothing to save His son Jesus from the painful death, but shook the earth and the sky later.'

At places even certain facts were modified for e.g while talking about Buddhism Quoting Epicurus was unnecessary and uncalled for. it was only done to deviate the belief of the reader. his words are presented in wrong light, Epicurus was not an atheist nether did he denied the presence of gods, He was just one of the first to believe that mankind shall not fear God, He regularly admitted women and slaves into his school and was one of the first Greeks to break free from the god-fearing and god-worshiping tradition common at that time, even while affirming that religious activities are useful as a way to contemplate the gods and to use them as an example of the pleasant life. all this was not there in the book. The only thing present was his words that were presented in such a way that it gives an impression that Epicurus denied the religion 2400 years ago

Is He willing to prevent evil, but is not able to? Then He is impotent. Is He able to prevent evil, but is not willing to? Then He is malevolent. Is he both able to and willing? Then where did the evil come from? Is he neither able nor willing? Then why call him God.

These words of Epicurus were the starting words of his teachings that pleasure and pain are the measures of what is good and evil; death is the end of both body and soul and should therefore not be feared; the gods neither reward nor punish humans; the universe is infinite and eternal; and events in the world are ultimately based on the motions and interactions of atoms moving in empty space. These Were presented in a completely different way which I think is too ambitious. The author went a bit tad too far to prove his point, bending the teachings of a well known scholar.

Lastly I would point out that though the book was supposed to be 'The Scientific Origin of Divinity and Religions' but the Scientific aspect of religion was completely overlooked. I have limited knowledge of other religion so I would like to keep my point in Hinduism.

In his book Ramcharitramanas (Ball kand shlok 56), an Indian Epic by Tulsidas, it is mentioned about the presence of multiversity and How lord created them and recedes in each of them at the same time everyone have their existence in each of this parallel dimension but with different perspective and appearances. This concept is similar to the new emerging scientific concept of probability, Time and Multiverse

In bal kand shlok 100 Tulsidas have also explained how it was possible for Ganesha to be worshiped before his birth because time is omnipotent he lives in other time period this is in accordance with the modern concept of Time as a dimension

The Vishnu Puran explains Dashavtar First **Matsya**(Fish), **Kurma** the tortoise, **Varaha** the boar, **Narasimha** the half-man/half-beast, **Vamana** the dwarf, **Parashurama**, **Rama**, **Krishna**. If seen scientifically shows how Mankind evolved from fishes to amphibians to reptiles then mammals in mammals first beat then half beast (apes) then a dwarf after that Nomads (Parashurama), Ideal King (Rama) to a clever King (Krishna).

There's a long list of such examples which I don't want to go in.

Such facts were skillfully concealed for they would have against authors point so were never mentioned Let me end my review by quoting Vipin Behari Goyal, 'Nietzsche said, "Faith is a delusion, but then I never had faith in Nietzsche" .

I recommend this book to everyone and suggest them to come to their own conclusion after reading it

Rama says

Essays on religion and related subjects

This book lacks focus. The author has no specific objective but runs amok through the ancient history of human beings, and dwells on subjects like anthropology, religion and human evolution. But he gets lost while defining the myth of human life. Civilization grew first and spirituality came long after humans learnt to survive in this world. The author has a spiritual awakening in his life but he cannot let his attention diffuse on numerous areas of human knowledge.

In the book, "Why I am not a Christian and other essays on religion." Bertrand Russell says in his Preface that, "I am firmly convinced that religions do harm." He questions about man's place in the universe, and about morality, freedom, education, and sexual ethics in Abrahamic religions. He brings into discussion the same courage, scrupulous logic, and lofty wisdom for which his other philosophical work is famous for. There is no question that religions like Islam and Christianity distort of the origins of life in the cosmos. We think of God as merciful, just and compassionate. In fact, much of Old and New Testaments, Quran and Hadith lays out God's qualities as: jealous, petty, unforgiving, bloodthirsty, and vindictive. There is no science and reason in religious arguments. We need to focus on metaphysical reasoning and understand quantum physical reality. We need to rejoice at the wonders of creation through the Hubble Telescope and particle accelerators like Large Hadron Colliders. And how consciousness fit in all this.

There are just too many books that discusses the human desire to connect with the God Almighty. And how established religions took hold of civilizations. The author would have done better job on focusing on just one topic.

Catherine says

The objective study of religion has been pursued since the late nineteenth century by several scholars. Over the past decade a new spate of books have been written by scientists and philosophers who are approaching the topic as if they were inventing the scientific study of religion. These authors share a powerful bias against religion and a woefully inadequate knowledge of the world's spiritual traditions. All these books have one unequivocal goal to deny God and other divine powers.

This book is another attempt on religions. How could the author Ajay Kansal comprehend a world without God and religions? How is it possible to create and run trillions of animals and plants without an omnipotent power? As per author, there is no God; then, who created humans and other living being, who built the sun and the moon. Who run the stars, the planets and all the celestial objects without collision?

I have studied a brief history of the major religions; I will write a book to answers all the questions raised by the authors against God. Here are some false claims of this book in particular:

The book mentions that the great apes evolved into humans around 200,000 years ago, then why the remaining great apes are still apes. Why do not they also evolve? The truth is God created the first couple around six thousand years ago.

The book mentions that humans invented a new god whenever they faced a new challenge and consigned the old god into oblivion. It is ridiculous to say this about immortal God.

Kansal says that human diseases gave rise to new gods while the Holy book mentions that diseases were the punishments of gods.

The book asserts that humans built the moral rules for their convenience; the truth is God dictated the morals to humanity.

Jesus was son of God while this book acknowledges him as a common faith healer. Just read the mocking by author, 'God did nothing to save His son Jesus from the painful death, but shook the earth and the sky later.' Hindu regularly perform Yajna today in order to express their dedication to gods, the author says that Yajna is wastage of food materials. The book mentions, 'Almost all ancient people of the world developed many funny religious concepts: Yajna was one of the funniest concepts humanity could fathom and continue too'. The book acknowledged Hindu epics Ramayana and Mahabahrata as fictions as myths.

The book argues that human suffering denies God; the truth is human karma are behind their suffering.

The most ridiculous statement of author about the Bible (New Testament): 'Priests and the holy books delayed scientific progress for almost two millennia'. He wisely claims that NT arrested the growth of medical science!

I have no word to express my dislike for this book and such work must be refuted.

Ruchi Patel says

I just loved the book. Forst of all i like cover page the most. When i took the book in my hand, i thought it ll be full of mythological stories, but as I went through it proved me quite wtong. Its really interesting and enhancing knowledge. I can give 5/5 marks to the content of the book. Content is really good and worth reading and it shows that autjor has done much research regarding topic and shows enrich knowledge of the author. I cut down a star bcz i was expecting storyline of the book rather then full informative and research based but overall worth to go for.

Aravind Raamkumar says

This books challenges the concept of God-belief from a Scientific viewpoint. The writing style is very simple and it turned out to be a breezy read. The underlying message of the book is to force people out of ignorance and start progressing in life through intellectual discovery of external environment and also to critically analyse traditional beliefs. Overall, an excellent effort from Ajay Kansal.

Albert Dey says

An American recipe served in India

In order to make this review more valuable to the reader I would like to mention my background first. I was a Catholic who gradually became disillusioned by religions. During my early half of life, I survived on "faith" and despite my enough efforts, I could find no evidence that God existed. Richard Dawkins book was

extremely helpful and was the first book I have read on the Atheist side of the fence. Again, Dawkins did not answer why and how religions and gods came into being.

This is not a book for those of faith, as faith defines analysis. Nor is it a book for theologians who will find much to disagree with and argue over. For the others this is, for the most part, an interesting account of the historical development of religions: the birth of the idea of divine powers. Since India is country of devotees, I gave the title 'An American recipe served in India'

The book avers that religions began during prehistoric time; people explained several amazing events with imagination of divine powers. They began worship of those imagined powers. I would like to mention a few excellent quotes from this book:

1. At some point in time—we do not know exactly when this happened—people in various far-flung parts of the world developed an instinct. Whenever people encountered some power beyond their control that could harm or help them, they began to worship that power.
2. Thus, history demonstrates that whenever humankind faced a new challenge, priests invented a more useful deity and consigned the older one to oblivion.
3. The knowledge about the evolution of gods may vaccinate youths against the disease of religious extremism.

At last, this was a fascinating read, the author has in depth knowledge of the subject and he has excellent skill of communication as well. Readers would find this book different.

Book says

The Evolution of Gods: The Scientific Origin of Divinity and Religions by Ajay Kansal

"The Evolution of Gods" is a very ambitious and interesting book that explains the evolution of gods. It explains the when, why and how humankind invented divine powers. The book focuses on archeological and literary evidence. It also provides a brief history on Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity. Dr Kansal does a commendable job of supporting his main argument that the gods have been invented by humankind. This insightful 212-page book is composed of the following eleven chapters: 1. Life after Death, 2. Birth of Gods, 3. Learning to Survive, 4. Learning to Write, 5. Sacrifice---to Bribe Gods, 6. Gods and Demons of Diseases, 7. Hinduism, 8. Judaism, 9. Christianity, 10. Origin of Life, and 11. Why Gods Are Still Alive.

Positives:

1. Well researched and accessible book for the masses.
2. Good use of reason and sound logic. In defense of science.
3. Anthropology provided interesting information about prehistoric human groups. The impact of language, agriculture, roles of gender...
4. The earliest forms of religion. Burials, human and animal sacrifices, the emergence of the soul, etc...Good stuff.
5. The fundamental features of almost all religious ideologies.
6. Archeology provided the evidence needed to make sound conclusions about prehistoric lifestyles which included their beliefs and practices.
7. Thought-provoking statements backed by sound reasoning. "Whenever people encountered some power beyond their control that could harm or help them, they began to worship that power". Many examples provided.
8. Agriculture and the worship of female deities.
9. Provides compelling evidence in support of the main argument that the gods have been invented by humankind. A recurring theme looked at various angles and from different perspectives.

10. The impact of written language. The Rig Veda which describes the most ancient religion of the world. Sun worship.
11. An interesting look into the religious practice of sacrifice. From human to animal sacrifices. Interesting takes and a personal aha moment.
12. The correlation between diseases and the human quest for unseen gods. A look at primitive medical practices. Witchcraft. The evolution of medicine.
13. An excellent chapter on Hinduism. The rituals, the beliefs, a look at some of the most powerful gods, the evolution of the religion (the various versions), etc...A welcomed perspective indeed and one that will benefit a western readership. Kudos.
14. Judaism and the main players: Noah, Abraham, and Moses. Monotheism.
15. A look into the evolution of Christianity. The depiction of Jesus in the bible.
16. The quest for the origin of life. Evolution.
17. The importance of studying the history of religions and gods.
18. The four pillars of the building of religions today. Debunks each pillar.
19. The dangers of religion and the correlation to poverty.
20. Bibliography was provided.
21. A great Kindle value.

Negatives:

1. The prose is not as polished as I would have liked. A good editor would have smoothed out the rough edges.
2. No links to citations or notes.
3. Not enough focus on how neuroscience and beliefs relate.
4. There are more effective ways of debunking the soul.
5. Illustrations, charts, diagrams would have added value to the book.
6. Low production value but at a reduced price, why am I complaining?
7. There are better books on this subject. Please refer to my further suggestions at the end of this review.

In summary, Dr. Kansal does an effective job of supporting his main argument that the gods were invented by humans. This book is very ambitious and as a result of that I felt the author spread himself a little thin. The book also lacks polish, the prose lacked style. This is definitely a book of substance over style. That being said, Dr. Kansal provide some interesting and well argued ideas and there is a lot here to like. The chapter on Hinduism is a welcomed perspective. A lot of great and interesting ideas and this is truly a great Kindle value, I recommend it!

Further suggestions: “The Invention of God” by Bill Lauritzen, “The Invention of the Jewish People” and “The Invention of the Land of Israel” by Shlomo Sand, “The Invention of Religion” by Alexander Drake, “The Evolution of God” by Robert Wright, “The Bible Unearthed” by Israel Finkelstein “Society without God” by Phil Zuckerman, ”Why We Believe in God(s)” by J. Anderson Thomas, “God’s Problem” by Bart D. Ehrman, “Immortality” by Stephen Cave, “Why Are You Atheists So Angry?” Great Christina, “50 Reasons People Give for Believing in a God” by Guy P. Harrison, “Doubt: A History” by Jennifer Hecht, “Man Made God” by Barbara G. Walker, “The Believing Brain” by Michael Shermer, ”Subliminal” by Leonard Mlodinow, “Human” Michael S. Gazzaniga, “The Belief Instinct” by Jesse Bering, “God’s Defenders” by S.T. Joshi, “The Faith Healers” by James Randi, “God and the Folly of Faith” by Victor Stenger, and “Atheist Universe” by David Mills.

David says

This was not what I was looking for. From the title, I expected a scientific, perhaps anthropological, examination of mankind's search for a supreme being. Instead what I got, from the very beginning, was a lot of speculation about how priests had consciously invented religions as a way of gaining power over the people. Even in the earliest, pre-historic chapters, the author seemed to know what had happened, as if he had been there. I will keep looking for a scientific explanation of our search for God.

Robyn says

Lacking Research and professionalism

Repetitive and biased. Little scientific evidence or foundation. Presents a general and basic theory that fails to challenge or introduce anything.

Nikita (NjKinny's World of Books & Stuff) says

Are Gods real?

Did they exist at one time on Earth or are they just a figment of our imagination?

Did God create the first couple on earth?

How did plants, animals, insects etc. come to be?

All these and more questions have been of immense interest to humans from centuries. The natural curiosity about the origin of life though documented throughout history has always featured some unexplained parts which Science has not been able to explain leaving imaginative people at liberty to spin all kinds of tales to suit their immediate needs.

"The Evolution of Gods" by Ajay Kansal is an effort to utilize Science to explain the *why, how and when* of the evolution of life and the subsequent evolution of the God phenomenon. The author, being a man of science himself, takes anthropological and historical facts to explain the evolution of life, religion and God in a simple yet very interesting way.

According to the author,

'Man could perceive some unseen, unheard, untouchable, non-aromatic divine power only after the evolution of his imagination.'

and

'Whenever people encountered some power beyond their control that could harm or help them, they began to worship that power'.

I was sent a free copy of the book by the author to read and give my honest review. So here it goes.

Firstly, I loved the cover design of the book where an artistically dressed man possibly the Priest or the Head of a tribe is shown in a "call upon" pose with lightning in the background. It brings to our minds the image of a tribe that worships the elements of nature feeling it all powerful because it is beyond its control!!

A point made several times by the author in the book when he links the origin of Gods to the power of imagination of us, humans and the fact that the power deemed as Gods was unpredictable and beyond our control.

'..they considered thunder and lightning as devastating, mysterious and frightening. Consequently, their leaders or priests imagined a divine sky god that was behind the changes occurring in the sky. Gradually, they began worshipping the sky as a god.'

Secondly, the writing is simple yet leaves us interested and hooked to each event he describes, be it the first burial instance from the Skhul Cave of Israel to Naskapi- a tribe in Canada where the Priests were consulted by the people before any venture. Ajay Kansal is able to dispel myths and shed light to some pretty exciting things which are generally unknown to people like *'..the Vedas do not assert the concept of punishment for past karma, and do not advise any meditation to liberate people from them. The Buddha was first to invent the idea of past karma, and he came several centuries after the compilation of Vedas.'*

Thirdly, a lot of research is evident and the book stimulates discussion and debate. Thought provoking statements backed by solid well researched examples are abundant.

Fourthly, though the book seems like it is a work of an atheist yet it does not preach against religion or our faith in the existence of Gods. Its a venture to try and explain each and every belief of ours using modern Science.

Lastly, its a well written book and keeps the reader bound, quickly turning pages till the end. All explanations to our beliefs are well backed with Scientific discoveries, dates and suitable data. Its written in a timeline fashion which I think increases its appeal as we get to see a scientific perspective to all events till date.

All positives done, its time to count the negatives.

Firstly, the sentence structure could have been made more appealing with a little more editing.

Secondly, some small footnotes or end notes could have been added to support the author's explanations and assertions.

Thirdly, I felt an addition of a few pictures and diagrams could have greatly added to the overall appeal of the book.

All in all, a fascinating read from a very promising author. Its written to the point and greatly adds to our understanding and knowledge of the origin of life, religion and evolution of Gods. I have always believed that there is a God and that everything that happens is part of a bigger plan known and devised by him. But The Evolution of Gods, without preaching against the existence of God, has made me question if all my beliefs are true or just made up tales to inspire fear and reverence to something greater than us!!

'..Humanity itself imagined all the divine powers called Gods. The concept of Gods was the projection of ancient humans' need to have something greater than themselves.'

But apart from creating queries, it is also successful in satisfying our curiosities and answering our questions without being boring and stilted. Thus, making it a very promising book with a fresh perspective to our origin history, our morals, beliefs, faith in God etc. It states hard facts without compelling the reader to take

sides. Leaving him enough freedom to come to his own conclusions.

I give "*The Evolution of Gods*" a 4 out of 5 and recommend everyone to read it.

PS: This review is also available on my blog <http://njkinnny.blogspot.in/>
Checkout the blog for more reviews. :)

Vishnu Chevli says

"The Evolution of Gods" - The Scientific origin of divinity and religions. Don't miss this book, just grab it. One of the best eye-opening book I have read in recent years. Title-subtitle combination is more than enough to capture readers attention.

We accept the theory of evolution but never thought how religions came into existence. If we want to understand the evolution of religion, we have to start with the evolution of mankind. None of the religion came into existence overnight. It took the journey of centuries for religion to conceptualize. Surprisingly if you study various religion on the earth, you will find drastic commonality. If we apply scientific thought process, we will find reasons why that commonalities exist. Everything started from nomadic people, who started worshiping environment in one form or another. Their evolution and growth with time have given birth to organized religion today. Slowly and steadily author has explained this progress with scientific proofs.

Things I liked about the book

- Cover - Just loved the artwork.
- Light and Steady Pace of the book.
- The simplicity of Writing - This book falls under factual or documentary genre, but the author has converted into a thought-provoking factual-fictional book.

Few points that I disliked or found lagging

- Few points were repeatedly mentioned again and again. I think they would have been avoided.
- Being factual non-fiction, this book should have more images.
- Though the author was neutral while narrating the history of religions. But at end of the book, I found author's criticism of Hindu religion, I personally found it too much. It may be his first-hand experience which he may not have observed closely with other religions.
- I don't want to start controversies. But the author has kept Islam untouched, I am not sure whether it was his decision or publishers', but readers would like to know about them as well.

This book is not for religious person nor it is written to doubt your faith. It just throws lights on few dark question we have about the origin of religions. It requires completely different pedagogy to explain the complex concept of religion, and I would say the author has done the commendable job.

Detailed Review Link - <http://chevusread.blogspot.in/2017/07...>

Divya Chirania says

Does God exist? This question has intrigued me for quite some time now.

No doubt I used to believe that there is some supernatural power which is guiding this earth & our lives. To my surprise, it is not science which has answers to all these questions but History has preserved enough evidence that it is mankind which has created God & not the other way.

In the paleolithic era when the man has just come out of ice age, it was difficult to understand the working of nature. Not to forget there was no language, no roof for shelter, no clothes to wear & constant fear of wild animals. In this chaos, it is natural to believe that someone from above is guiding this whole process.

The dearth of understanding led to the birth of new God for every new problem. You want rain, no problem "God Indra" will take care of it, you want to become rich: we have goddess Laxmi for that & so on. Diseases were seen as the wrath of God.

In this book, the author has covered complete timeline of events starting from beginning of life to the present day condition. I particularly liked the lessons on various religions. It gives to the point explanation of "How Gods like Ram, Krishna, Jesus, etc came into existence ?".

It is not wrong to follow a religion but to take advantage of the people's sufferings in the name of divine power is absolutely wrong.

Today a lot of milk & other food substances is wasted in the name of submitting it to God. If God is really our well-wisher why does he want us to waste food? Should not it be distributed to poor?

There is another myth attached of getting punished in the next life. I liked the author's argument that who is keeping a record of all happenings & where exactly? How many persons are employed to perform this task? And what about the honesty of people who are engaged to keep records?

4 stars because the starting lessons are repetitive. Arguments are supported by facts which show that an extreme research has been done. References are also of great help.

Anamika Sood says

From my adolescent days I was skeptical about gods. I have already read three books on the subject, the history and the evolution of God. Honestly speaking I could not complete these since these were reference books. The content and language was much complicated to understand. And these were talking about the Christian God only.

However, I read the evolution of gods in toto. Its language is so simple and it describes my religion i.e Hinduism as well. This book has drawn a clear cut picture in my mind how the gods and religions were created by human imagination. The sun and the sky were the first gods our ancestors worshipped. It informed me history of human inventions too. I was surprised to read that we learnt cultivation recently and this invention was done by females. And cultivation gave rise to several diseases.

I found another amazing thing, people believed that their diseases were caused by gods and demons, which continued for three millennia. The most important thing I learnt was that ancient people made the concept of sins and good deeds. No god ever ordered that he would punish the sinners. Till date I was living with the notion of karma and their punishment in the next birth. I was taking new miseries as the punishment of my

previous sins.

This book has influenced me much and changed my convictions about gods, prayers, fasts, karma, etc. Its message is believe yourself not some imaginary entity in the sky. Its an eye opener and I highly recommend this book to all those who wish to know scientific facts about gods.

Varunsp says

Did gods create mankind, or did mankind create gods ????? I have this question in my mind as long as I can remember and I guess most people do..Well in this case The Evolution of Gods has the answer to those questions.. Glad to find all related details in a single book explained with Scientific and Archeological discoveries at different times since the human existence..A great book to know about the origin of mankind, religions, culture etc.. I have 5/5 Since there is much information included.

Vibhav says

Thanks to the author and goodreads for providing this book as giveaway.

Recommended for agnostics and those who are still wondering if there is such a think as god. If you still think there might be some truth in the mythology and religion, this book is right for you.

It is a short book that can easily be read cover to cover. it will take you through the history of humankind and shows the evolution of human thought processes. It is a natural sequel and expansion of the "law of religion" chapter from the book Sapiens.

The story goes through the steps in which the idea of religion got shaped from the fear and ignorance of early humans to the organised belief system that is still deep engrained in most people. It takes a closer look at three religion groups and tries to figure out what might have shaped their beliefs.

At times it feels like the author is taking liberties at extrapolating some facts into stories. The lack of references makes it difficult to follow along. For a serious reader, I would advise browsing Wikipedia at the same time to read about related or conflicting theories.

Overall the narration is good and the story teller approach makes it very easy to keep reading.

What could have been better:

The book would have been even better with more citations and references. the bibliography should have been referenced in the text with foot notes. I often felt the need to go back to some particular mentions
