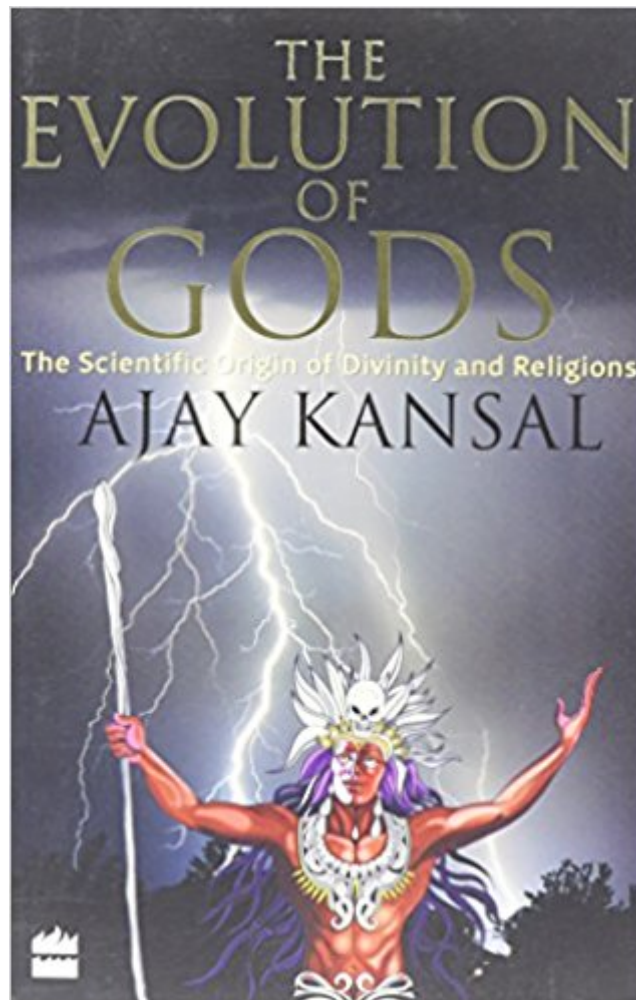




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# **The Evolution Of Gods: The Scientific Origin Of Divinity And Religions**



## Synopsis

Language: English Pages: 230 About the Book **Why, when and how did mankind begin to worship gods?** Religious scriptures the world over claim that one or the other god made man, but science has not yet identified any supernatural power that created and governed human beings. Was it man who came up with the idea of gods to help him cope with his own fears? Could it be that ancient people attributed natural phenomena-unfathomable and frightening to them-to the working of invisible gods? **What kind of suffering or bewilderment made people bow before unseen powers or gods as we call them? When were these gods created? Who invented morals and methods of worship? Who wrote the ancient scriptures such as the Bible and the Vedas? Most crucially, have gods and the scriptures shaped our responses to the world around us?** **The Evolution of Gods** seeks to answer these questions, and explains scientifically how, when and why religions and gods came into being. Ajay Kansal marshals anthropological and historical facts about the development of religions in a simple and straightforward manner to assert that it was mankind that created gods, and not the other way around. **About the Author** Dr Ajay Kansal is a professor and consultant pathologist. It was during his medical practice that he encountered human suffering in a big way that made him question the concept of gods and drove him to write this book. **Preface** Today we are all aware of the achievement of science. The population of the world i

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## Customer Reviews

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Preface

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I'm an atheist, and have been looking for a book on this subject for awhile now and was excited when I found this. HOWEVER, this book is an abysmal read. It's a conglomeration of short, poorly structured sentences which makes it appear like a high school book report. I'm not sure if it was originally written in another language and then directly translated, but it lacks the narrative a book of this subject deserves. As another reviewer states, the "Select Bibliography" lists some books but they are not referenced in the actual text with their page numbers, which makes this book useless if one is engaged in a religious debate. The author actually takes the time to express his "deep sense of gratitude" to Mr. Shantanu Ray Chaudhuri from Harper Collins publishing for "editing" this book. If anyone at Harper Collins reads this, please find Mr. Chaudhuri and dismiss him! If my suspicions are correct and this book was translated, then Dr. Ajay Kansal was done a huge disservice by his editor and publisher. On the actual subject of the book, the facts are incontrovertible, ancient man created gods to explain the unexplainable. Now that science has explained most of the mysteries of life, the only thing gods are good for today, are to comfort the loved ones of those that have died.

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...
5. Good stuff.
6. 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: The Natural Origins of Mythology and Religion" 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): A Concise Guide to the Science of Faith" by J. Anderson Thomas, "God's Problem: How the Bible Fails to Answer Our Most Important Question--Why We Suffer" by Bart D. Ehrman, "Immortality" by Stephen Cave, "Why Are You Atheists So Angry? 99 Things That Piss Off the Godless" Great Christina, "50 Reasons People Give for Believing in a God" by Guy P. Harrison, "Doubt: A History" by Jennifer Hecht, "Man Made God: A Collection of Essays" 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.

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.

I could only get about a quarter way through this book before I had to skip to the end and confirm it was not worth any more of my time. Being a Christian, I'm curious how others think and believe, have an open mind, and value seeing things from a different perspective. But the author draws such wild conclusions from what little we know about ancient civilizations and twists writings out of context so much that it was obvious his whole purpose was to make any belief in any god look like foolishness. What's more is that much of the history and foundation of Christianity as written in this book is way off base and the questions raised indicate a gross misunderstanding of their beliefs. This certainly cannot be considered a scientific argument for atheism, but simply a poorly

constructed and highly biased argument against any religion of any kind.

Very disappointed. I was really looking forward to a book that had meaty substance to back up its title and subtitle. This may very well be "The Scientific Origin of Divinity and Religions" but the reader would have no way of knowing that. Without footnotes, endnotes or other citations it reads like a long narrative - possibly the result of disciplined study. But it's equally possible it's just an alternative campfire account given by one who doesn't like the religious narratives. In many of his narratives he even credits ancient priests with specific motives and emotions as if he had been an on-site observer. The book contains an excellent bibliography but I would have wished the author had saved me the trouble of reading all those sources for myself. I'd like to accept the bulk of his content but that would only be confirmation bias on my part; author does little or nothing to substantiate his case.

After reading the book, it was evident that that author was very biased different types of religion and had the impression that for some reason he did not include Islam. The book was interesting in how it was explained about how it all started. Heaven is all around us as is God, whom the author seems to be against.

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