



Eclipse of God in Scientific Discourse: A Study of Secular Epistemology

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Abstract

This study examines the dominant faith in God among major religious communities—Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam—and explores how scientific inquiry challenges this faith across diverse cultural contexts. It explores the evolution of belief systems from historical origins to the present transitional phase characterized by the rise of secular epistemology. The research further examines the conflicting perspectives between theist and atheist groups, assessing the extent to which these worldviews have shaped societal norms and individual livelihoods. Ultimately, the study concludes by contrasting theological conceptions of God with empirical, fact-based understandings, highlighting the implications of this epistemological shift on contemporary society.

Keywords: Secular Epistemology, Religious Belief, Cultural Transition, Science and Religion, Epistemological Shift

Introduction

The question of whether God exists has long been a subject of debate across cultures and epochs. Various religious traditions assert the existence of God in distinct ways. However, this study approaches the issue from a perspective grounded in scientific inquiry, which finds no empirical evidence to support the existence of God. This discourse analyzes the contrasting concepts of theism and atheism and concludes that, from a scientific standpoint, there is no verifiable existence or influence of God.

Some individuals maintain a belief in God as a fundamental force influencing the world. Roy D. Morrison II, a professor of philosophical theology and Black philosophy of culture and religion, defines God as “a cluster of values, symbols, myths, rituals, and commitments through which humans nurture their sense of mystery, awe, and transcendence, explain the meaning of their lives in the scheme of things, establish the foundations of morality, and provide grounds for hope in the future” (Morrison 256). This concept has been deeply rooted in human societies and passed down through generations via oracles, priests, prophets, and elders. Moreover,

sacred texts of various religions emphasize and preserve these beliefs. For example, Hinduism venerates numerous deities such as Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Krishna, Lakshmi, Saraswati, and Devi. In Islam, Muhammad is regarded as the principal prophet, and the Quran is the sacred text, with Allah considered the sole God. Christianity centers its faith on Jesus Christ, regarded as the Son of God, distinguishing itself by not worshiping idols or sacred books but focusing on Christ alone. Buddhism, founded by Gautama Buddha, is based on his teachings and principles, emphasizing philosophical paths to enlightenment without caste distinctions. Despite differences in deities and rituals, many religions share core values such as nonviolence, truth, happiness, humanity, freedom, and compassion toward all beings.

This study examines whether God exists and explores the dominance of faith over empirical influence. It considers atheistic perspectives as more consistent with rational inquiry than mere belief. We argue that there is no physical existence or demonstrable influence of God on the world. None of the world's religions provides verifiable proof of God's existence; rather, their claims rest on ancient scriptures and traditions that hold less weight in the modern, scientifically informed era. To support this claim, this paper draws on scientific perspectives and references thinkers such as Stephen Hawking and Friedrich Nietzsche, whose views align with the secular epistemological approach. Additionally, insights from Hugo Adam Bedau, David Bohm, Kelly Singh, Fritjof Capra, James John, and Roy D. Morrison are incorporated.

Through this analysis, the paper asserts that God does not exist when examined through the lens of scientific discourse. While theism remains a dominant worldview globally, the foundation of faith weakens under rigorous scientific scrutiny. Without empirical evidence, belief in God remains a human construct rather than an observable reality. Science, relying on evidence and experimentation, cannot verify God's existence, thereby undermining the claim from a secular epistemological perspective.

The human belief system and religious practices vary across traditions and have evolved. Religions emerged at different historical moments, and as the number of followers grew, distinct religions were formalized. Morrison further asserts that in the context of science and religion, "God does not exist but the theological significance of mind" (Morrison 331). Notably, thinkers like Stephen Hawking and Friedrich Nietzsche have expressed critical views on the existence of God, reinforcing the scientific standpoint that God does not exist in any empirical sense.

Problem Statement

In the modern era dominated by scientific rationalism, the existence of God and the authority of religious belief systems face growing skepticism. Scientific discoveries, from Darwin's theory of evolution to quantum physics, have questioned the metaphysical foundations upon which traditional theologies are built. Yet, despite such advancements, the belief in God persists deeply within societies, transmitted through culture, education, rituals, and inherited faith. This study addresses the core problem of how and why belief in God continues to thrive in secular societies, and whether such beliefs can be epistemologically justified within a scientific framework. It also investigates the limitations of scientific discourse

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in completely displacing religious narratives and seeks to uncover the cultural, psychological, and sociological mechanisms that sustain divine belief systems.

Research Questions

1. How does secular epistemology challenge the existence of God and the foundations of religious belief systems?
2. Why does belief in God persist in modern societies despite increasing scientific evidence and rational critique?
3. Can religious beliefs be reinterpreted or reconciled within the framework of scientific discourse, or are they fundamentally incompatible?

Research Objectives

1. To critically examine how secular epistemology and scientific rationalism address or negate the concept of God.
2. To investigate the resilience of religious belief in the face of modern scientific advancements.
3. To explore whether scientific discourse can accommodate or reconstruct spiritual or theological worldviews.

Hypothesis

The advancement of secular epistemology and scientific rationalism significantly challenges and contributes to the decline of belief in God, though cultural and psychological mechanisms moderate this decline.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on an interdisciplinary theoretical framework that incorporates secular epistemology, scientific rationalism, post-Enlightenment critique, and discourse theory. These frameworks collectively guide the analysis of religious belief systems and their interaction with scientific worldviews within a modern, secular setting. Secular epistemology highlights empirical, evidence-based knowledge and questions metaphysical assumptions that cannot be tested or observed. Scientific rationalism, as championed by thinkers like Stephen Hawking, Charles Darwin, and Richard Dawkins, asserts that truth must be founded on logic, observation, and falsifiability. Post-Enlightenment critique from philosophers such as Friedrich Nietzsche challenges divine morality, absolute truths, and religious dominance, advocating instead for human autonomy and reason. Discourse and cultural theory help analyze how religious language and practices influence social identities and power dynamics. Comparative religion and constructivism aid in examining how religious concepts like God, morality, and salvation are culturally constructed and vary across traditions. This framework allows for a deconstruction of theistic ideologies and fosters a rational, critical understanding of divine belief in contemporary society.

Literature Review

This literature review critically analyzes fundamental texts and current scholarship that shape the discussion on God's existence and its significance in an increasingly scientific society. *Classical Religious Thought and Divine Authority*: Religious texts such as the Gita, Bible, and Quran depict God as a moral and cosmic authority. Morrison (1979) describes God as a system of values and rituals passed down through generations. *The Rise of Scientific Rationalism*: Darwin's theory of evolution, Dawkins' critique of religion as cultural delusion, and Hawking's rejection of divine teleology challenge traditional theistic models. *Secular Epistemology and the Critique of Faith*: Nietzsche's philosophy, especially the "death of God," along with the writings of Bedau and Drengson, highlight the shift from faith to rational inquiry. *Scientific Critique of Religious Morality*, Gentner and Bohm investigate how religious morality may provide comfort but lacks empirical support. *Cultural and Anthropological Insights*. Turner and Goodenough examine how belief systems are transmitted socially and culturally, viewing religion as a construct rather than an objective truth.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative, interdisciplinary, and analytical approach to examine the question of God's existence through the lens of secular epistemology and scientific discourse. The methodology integrates elements of religious studies, philosophy of science, sociology, and cultural anthropology to explore how traditional theistic beliefs challenge contemporary scientific reasoning.

Research Design

The research is qualitative and interpretive. It emphasizes textual and conceptual analysis rather than empirical experiments. The study is based on critical discourse analysis, which examines religious doctrines, scientific texts, and philosophical arguments to understand their epistemological foundations and implications.

Sources of Data

- 1) **Primary Sources**: Philosophical and scientific writings from key thinkers such as Stephen Hawking, Friedrich Nietzsche, Richard Dawkins, and Charles Darwin, along with excerpts from religious texts like the Gita, Quran, Bible, and Tripitaka.
- 2) **Secondary Sources**: Peer-reviewed academic articles from journals such as *Zygon: Journal of Science and Religion*, books on religion and science, and published works on cultural belief systems.

Methodological Tool

- 1) **Textual Analysis**: Close reading and interpretation of religious and scientific texts to evaluate claims about the existence or non-existence of God.
- 2) **Comparative Analysis**: Contrasting perspectives from multiple religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity) and comparing them with scientific worldviews.

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- 3) Critical Epistemological Evaluation: Examining how knowledge is constructed, validated, and challenged in religious versus scientific frameworks.
- 4) Historical Approach: Tracing the evolution of belief systems and their sociocultural transformations over time.

Analytical Framework

The analysis is guided by secular epistemology, scientific rationalism, and post-Enlightenment critique to critically assess metaphysical claims.

Scope and Limitations:

This study is theoretical and does not include field surveys or interviews. It emphasizes widely accepted intellectual sources rather than localized religious practices. Ethical Considerations: The critique focuses on epistemological frameworks, not on personal faith or cultural identity. Academic neutrality is maintained.

Results and Discussion

Belief in God

Some people in various religious societies believe in God, which is a deep-rooted concept of an almighty from history. Richard agrees and states that “moral systems are described as systems of indirect reciprocity, existing because of histories of conflicts of interest and arising as outcomes of the complexity of social interactions in groups of long-lived individuals with varying conflicts and confluences of interest and infinitely iterated social interactions” (1). The holy concept of God is believed to provide serenity and peace in the insight of the believers, whilst some develop this faith from their elders and cultural phenomena. Mostly, the older people are found to be fundamentalist on this notion rather than the young ones because “God is regarded as creating the universe (at least as this is put in many religions)” (David 124). The concept shows that the more we observe the earlier time, the stronger the belief it was. Moreover, the ancient people had blind faith in God rather than any rationality about it. An interesting thing is that the rationality of poor people is higher to be theists over the globe than the rich, according to the present context. The baseless concept is being changed as time passes to a new generation. However, the perennial notion of the divine paradigm has been dynamic to some extent because of the scientific experimentation for the facts. Nonetheless, lots of religions are followed around the world with various practices and perspectives.

Hinduism is one of the major religions that is followed by millions of people around the globe, in which most of the people have a strong faith in God. Most of the Hindu people live on the Asian continent. To be specific, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, etc., are the major countries where the majority of such religious people have been dwelling in the past. According to the status of this religion, various ethnic groups follow Hinduism. For instance, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Tharu, Sah, Yadav, Musahar, Magar, Gurung, Rai, etc., are highly influenced by these religious practices. More than fifty percent of such people are considered to follow Hindu

cultural rituals, believing in God. There are a number of Gods and Goddesses according to Hindu mythology and holy books. Some of them are Shiva, Parvati, Laxmi, Vishnu, Brahma, Ganesh, Ram, Sita, etc. In addition, several ancient holy books are being the pillar of the religious people to transfer to the coming generation. Four Vedas which are known to be the best holy scriptures of Hindu religion. They were written in Sanskrit language by the ancient sages thousands years earlier like the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Atharva Veda, and the Sam Veda. Similarly, other holy books are also highly prescribed as Hindu holy books such as the Gita, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Puran, etc. The holy book Gita mentions about the unity and harmony of all nature including all types of people in terms of castes and culture. The Gita tries to clarify how different cultural people live together with nature when read a statement cited in Tao of Physics of an Australian-American Physicist, Fritjof Capra.

All actions take place in time by the interweaving of the forces of nature, but the man lost in selfish delusion thinks that he himself is the actor. But the man who knows the relation between the forces of Nature and actions, sees how some forces of Nature work upon other forces of Nature, and becomes not their slave. (33)

Thus, the Gita seems to be one milestone of Hindu religion since it states the value of nature and truth. It is a philosophical book for human life and knowledge. Within Hindu community, some are more fundamentalist and others are a bit liberal. Vaishnav, who regard Vishnu as their main God, are more religious and follow strict rules and regulations based on the specific ancient inscriptions. Similarly, Shree Krishna Pranam, a religious Hindu community that regards Krishna as their main God. As per this notion, all Hindu Gods are the source of the knowledge that provides people inner satisfactions. Donald Ray Genter, scientist and zoologist claims through his article, The Scientific Basis of Some Concepts of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin says that "the ultimate source of these inner principles turns out to be the belief, which is eventually identified with God and people could accept this invocation of the supernatural" (473). Different people regard their main deities differently within a same religion which is seen in Hindu society. Some worship Vishnu and others worship Shiva or Krishna. Thus, the way people believe in God is different even in the same religion. A majority of Hindu believe in God anyway. Donald further states that: "Properly observed, even if only in one aspect, a phenomenon necessarily has an omnipresent value and roots by reason of the fundamental unity of the world" (475). He then applies this principle to human consciousness.

It is impossible to deny that, deep within ourselves, an 'interior' appears at the heart of beings, as it were seen through a rent. This is enough to ensure that, in one degree or another, this 'interior' should obtrude itself as existing everywhere in nature from all time. Since the stuff of the universe has an inner aspect at one point of itself, there is necessarily a double aspect to its structure, that is to say in every region of space and time, in the same way, for instance, as it is granular. (437)

Hindu theists, believing that there is some cosmic power for the cycling of human beings, creatures and plants, have been supporting the existence of God on the globe. They believe that some power is ruling the earth and the whole lives. It is called God. They even trust themselves in supernatural beliefs as well. They, however, claim that death is not an end. It will form into a new life, something new. It is believed that the soul of human beings never

dies even after their bodies are dead. James John, believers of non-existence of God, disagrees with the truth over the God because "...all human's minds are eventually colonized about religious perception into the space of theism rather than machine" (761-762). So, the majority of the universe is overwhelmingly being held by the hypothesis of God.

Nevertheless, all the Hindu people do not necessarily believe in God in this scientific world since they search for an authentic base or evidence. A smaller population does not keep their blind faith in God even in this religion. So, mostly youths, are in a dilemma because they have not obtained credible evidence to believe in God, a super power over us. Donald Ray Grater supports to his claim that "...man's will only continue to work and to research so long as he is prompted by a passionate interest. Now this interest is entirely dependent on the conviction, strictly indemonstrable to science, that the universe has a direction and that it could-indeed if we are faithful, it should-result in some sort of irreversible perfection" (440-441). Hence, every young person has made a kind of concept of science rather than religion.

Unlike Hinduism, Buddhism is a new religion because it was introduced after the birth of Gautama Buddha, also called light of Asia, since his philosophy was formed as a religion later. It is believed that he was a real prince of Mithila kingdom which was in Janakpur zone of Nepal, situated in plain land, southern part of the nation, in Madhes Province today. His father was a king of that kingdom. His name was Suddhodhan and Gautama Buddha was born to Maya Devi, wife of Shuddhodhan.

When Gautama Buddha went to a forest at the age of 29 for meditation, he lived there alone leaving his palace, a wife and a son, Rahul. He would find out the major truth of mainly three issues of life: why do people fall sick? Why do people get old? Why do people die? After having his six years long meditation, he came to find out with certain solutions to those worries of life. He started teaching his eight fold paths to remain a peaceful life. Gradually, several people followed his path and eventually, a new religion was formed keeping his main theories of life as a pivotal point.

It seems that it is not a real religion since it is much flexible, and there is not a certain ethnic community to follow Buddhist religion like others Muslim and Christianity. Any tribal people adopt the religion any time. It does not concern with religious background, culture, cast, and territory. It is a modern religion since its history is true and not so long. In the context of Nepal, India, Bhutan, Indonesia, and China, this religion is quite popular. The culmination of Buddhist thought has been reached, according to many authors, in the so-called Avatamsaka school which is based on the sutra of the same name. This sutra is regarded as the core of Mahayana Buddhism and is praised. Daisent Teitaro Suzuki, a Japanese-American Buddhist monk, philosopher, religious scholar, writer and a translator, agrees in his book *Buddhism, Zen and Sen* in the most of prolific enthusiastic words:

As to the Avatamsaka-sutra, it is really the consummation of Buddhist thought, Buddhist sentiment, and Buddhist experience. To my mind, no religious literature in the world can ever approach the grandeur of conception, the depth of feeling, and the gigantic scale of composition as attained in this sutra. It is the eternal fountain of life from which no religious mind will turn back at first or only partially satisfied. (36)

In this religion, people do not worship statues of other deities, rather keep an idol of Gautama Buddha and show their respect upon it by offering some flowers. People try to follow the lessons of the religion. Some Buddhists are more fundamentalist who wear red gowns and live in monasteries often. The eightfold paths are very much scientific to follow for a peaceful and ecstasy life. The paths include right view, right thought, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

On the other hand, Christianity is a dominating religion mostly in western countries like the UK, the USA, Canada, Australia, and many other countries. People who follow Christianity are religious since they also follow the preaching of the Bible, a holy book of the religion. Roy D. Morrison claims, "... specifically Christian idea of theism, God also is absolutely righteous and universally beneficent" (257-258). It is a theology which belongs to the mythology, supernaturalism and enchantment to the culture of the west. Within the Christianity, there are two types of communities- protestants and Catholics. They regard Jesus Christ as a God. They believe Christ had a superpower to heal the pain of others. Roy D. Morrison argues as "our aim is to achieve eternal life in another world or through miraculous transformation by worshiping and by obeying the supernatural, theistic god of the Judeo-Christian tradition" (255). He was kind enough to others. He showed the path of ecstasy of human life.

However, the Christianity does not worship idols, they are not pagan. They just pray frequently in the memory of their almighty Jesus who is believed to be superior to all human beings. They get consoled about whatever they have to face in their lives believing that these all happen due to the God, Jesus. They try to keep themselves free from unavoidable anxiety and stress. Lawrence Kohlberg and Clark power, most prominent philosophers and psychologists on science and religion, claims that "...in Judeo-Christian thought, the ultimate environment is defined as a personal God and his kingdom, which is the end point of human history" (214). But, when science seeks a certain logic and reason, the blind belief gets shaken as some thoughts about Jesus are hypothetical in reality.

In the same way, Muslim religion is a next popular and dominating practice over the globe because a significant number of the population follows this religion. Most of the gulf countries, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Thailand, Turkey, India, etc. are famous for this religion. Muslim people regard Prophet Mohamad as a spiritual messenger of super power, God. The Quran is their holy scripture. Lisa Brown, favoring with Islam religion, emphasizes:

Islamic tradition teaches that nature is teleological and orderly. There are no accidents or gaps in creation; events have identifiable causes and predictable consequences. All creatures are interdependent, with the whole of creation operating in a perfectly harmonious ecological balance. The orderliness of nature has been created and is sustained by God. Its beauty and complexity reflect the glory and sublime craftsmanship of the Creator. (452)

Almost all the Muslim people read the Quran regularly as this is their real belief. They are much stricter in their culture and practices. Even young youths also follow this religion with a great respect and belief. Siya and Sunni are the two types of Muslim people over the earth. These people also never worship to their God, instead read the Quran at a Mosque for some minutes regularly. According to the statements in the Quran, the Muslim people try to

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practice in reality. The orthodox family is believed to be stricter, more cultural, and disciplined rather than other religions. Women have less rights and freedom in this religion.

Muslim religion is of two kinds, Sunnis and Shiites. This division was formed when Muhamad passed away and a discussion occurred on who would be a successor after him. A huge majority supported one view and a small majority favored the next one. So, the former supporters are Sunnis and the latter are Shiites. We can view that there is also an obsessed perspective to define God in this religion. In reality, many factors are responsible for building a kind of concept regarding God. Environment, holy books, knowledge and wisdom can play a significant role to firm an ideology of people.

A significant majority of people have a kind of religious notion rooted in their location, culture and social environment. Certain social platforms and family environments highly influence one to follow a certain paradigm of mindset of supernatural power, like God. Although there is no existence of God indeed, a significant number of people believe that there is an almighty above them who is ruling the world systematically. Furthermore, a school environment adds ghee to a fire for this type of holy concept. School-level education is also making people blind because “teaching this religious portion of morality may legitimately be undertaken by the family, the church, and by private parochial schools” (Lawrence and Clark 205). People further claim that God is not visible, but there was the existence of a humanlike form of God in the past. For instance, some think that there were Shiva, Parvati, Brahma with multiple heads, Vishnu, Ganesh with an elephant’s head, and so on, in accordance with the Hindu religion. Thus, all these types of illusions are rooted in the mindset of most of the Hindu people because they have been reared in such an atmosphere. Moreover, in the Hindu religion, people even believe that there is a heaven and a hell after death. If people do good, they will be sent to heaven, and if their deeds are not religious, they will fall into hell. Heaven is full of facilities and happiness for people, whilst hell is a hard situation for survival. After all, there is no existence of God; this is all merely about a concept and a cultural practice because no scientists have proven it yet.

Here, the question is raised as to why people believe such baseless and unreliable concepts so deeply even today. As per our observation and research, people are stuck to such fundamental concepts just because of their cultural exposure and background, in which they have been listening to such myths from their most trustworthy parents, friends, relatives, and mentors as well. Not only these, but they also practice many rituals in their society during their lives. In addition, Nepalese, Indian, and Bhutanese people mostly follow this religion; therefore, “religion, however, is a particular expression of faith in which concerns about the ultimate environment are made explicit” (Lawrence and Clark 214). The people, who are mostly from middle and poor class families, primarily lack education, and believe in the faith of God. Such low-profile people do not generally investigate an issue; rather, they enjoy following what their forefathers did. Until they start thinking analytically about such spiritual facts for the truth, they will keep following the orthodox perspective blindly, even in the future. Such people believe that they develop blind faith because of the fear of the family and society. They do not oppose the notion that has been transformed from the past to pretend that they are loyal to them. The next reason is due to some specific persons like witch doctors, priests, and

saints of a society. They have strong faith in such orthodox beliefs and always share the same types of thoughts to others frequently. Accordingly, Wolf Hart, a famous viewer over against the God, claims, “In the traditional theological doctrine of creation, the activity of every creature is dependent upon divine cooperation, a concurs divine’s. There is no activity and no product of creative activity in the world without divine cooperation” (9-10).

People oppose those who speak against them. In some functions, such specific people get good respect in a society. Thus, people come to believe in such useless and baseless concepts although there is no comprehensive logic. Another reason for having blind fundamental thought is because of government policies of some countries. For example, in Nepal, slaughtering a cow is an illegal act. Similarly, speaking against Quran or Muhammad is against the religion of Muslim in Pakistan, etc. these types of bias policies inspire an orthodox culture which compels people to carry such superstitious belief.

The cultural belief upon God is an ancient notion which tentatively began from three thousand years back in the history of human beings. It is a bit arduous to claim a fixed date of its origination, but it is clear that the divine concept developed around three thousand years ago since the people developed their family, society and a kingdom. A cultural anthropologist, Victor Turner quotes in his article *Body, Brain and Culture* “Exciting new findings were coming from genetics, ethology, and neurology, particularly the neurobiology of the brain” (Victor 224).

Like humans, animals have also received a kind of traits and characteristics to develop and transfer to their descendants. For instance, wolves and wild dogs take meat back to members of the pack not present at the kill. Gibbons and chimpanzees with food will, in response to a gesture, share their food with other members of the group. Dolphins support other sick or injured dolphins, swimming under them for hours at a time and pushing them to the surface so they can breathe. Thus, human beings have also developed a kind of belief relevant to God and is transferred to their coming generations.

The concept of divine spirit becomes deemed when it comes with an experiment of science because science always carries out its research on the basis of factual elements and evidence. Science never believes in anything blindly and has made the peoples’ mind independent rather than servitude of God so that a Canadian philosopher Alan R Drengson believes through his writing *The Secrets and Limits of Technology* Fix to the truth existence of God as “science and technology give us the power to know anything” (Alan 262). It needs support or genuine reason for its scaffoldings.

Today, many people have been influenced by scientific innovation and research since it always supports reality and viable things over the time. Hugo claims that “religious utterances indeed have a point, a use, a function, but not truth value” (205). Again Donald Ray Genter significantly stresses that “... present-day psychology and psychiatry in all their major forms are more hostile to the inhibitory messages of traditional religious moralizing than is scientifically justified” (167). Mostly “on purely scientific grounds, the conditions for living might be regarded as better tested than the best of psychology’s and psychiatry’s speculations on how lives should be lived” (Donald 167). Majority of new generations are gradually leaving

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their orthodox norms and values because they think that they are not apt to fit today's world. The world has been highly influenced by the development of science and technology. Similarly, society has been significantly transformed into the space of science due to the advancement of communication technology, education, health, transportation, internet, computer, and many more other such amenities. All innovative technologies have eliminated the uncertain values created by religions. Alan R. Drengson supports that "technological innovation and the development of today's most powerful technology implies profound changes in human life" (265). Therefore, the religious notion upon God is also shaking because of the scientifically experimented and imagined factual information and reason.

Most of the people have been getting educated day by day owing to the socio-cultural revolution whilst some think that only education is not a weapon of social change rather the wish of divine belief engraved in the genes of human beings. For example, Donald Ray Genter highlights at a minimum, "a selective accumulation of skills, technologies, recipes, beliefs, customs, organizational structures, and the like, is retained through purely social modes of transmission rather than in the genes" (169). Moreover, education for socio-cultural transformation, radically, has become an essential subject nationally and internationally as per the demand of time. People enjoy physical wealth and advancement rather than spiritual ecstasy in comparison to the past. Due to the influence of science, primarily, the lifestyle of humans has been drastically changed. People are happier than the past straining lives as they have more facilities and no single option in every field of today's. The bitter truth is that the blind faith in God leads to people for nothing but an American-Brazilian British Scientist who has been described as one of the significant theoretical physicist of 20 century supports in his article Hidden Variables and the Impact of Order to which "we may use scientific knowledge to make an intuitive leap that is part of an unending process of exploration" (123-124). The modern people have understood the reality of life that their forefathers used to keep themselves in a hard life with the hope of God's blessings. People came to follow God by making a statue by themselves as there was no existence of God. Yet, a huge majority keeps strong belief in man-made statues of God. People go to a temple to worship. There are a number of religions in practice. According to their cultural background, people regard there is an existence of God upon us to rule over. They keep divine faith in their own way. Donald states, "Many thoughtful people feel that religion is currently in serious difficulty, although the need for it is as great as ever. It may well be that the application of the methods or doctrines of a dynamic science can transfuse new vitality into religion. Unfortunately, this will almost surely be a slow and difficult job" (441).

When the realm of scientific influence started to rise, metaphysical reconstruction began to be deemed "because the response to these ideas was so limited" (David 117), baseless and relied on no reason in reality for the truth. As time passed by, people came to think about the existence of God and its impact on lives, but there is no solid foundation of God and its influence upon others. It is just a culturally formed concept and notion prevailing over the earth. When the industrial revolution took place in the UK in 1760 to 1840 AD, the mental paradigm of human beings changed. People started to believe in labor, work and skill not on blind faith upon God. Many scientists started to invent different machines and technology that really made human's work easy, faster and convenient. People's life standards began to change. People

enjoyed their lives. The concept of heaven and hell after death has been changed completely. They came to believe in factual things and reality. Gradually, the scientific perspectives get stronger and popular all over the world. Still, this type of thought is continuously dominating over orthodox beliefs.

Globalization and international education inspire modern thoughts which has created a kind of conflict in different perspectives. New, generations are highly motivated into the thought or expectation. Ward Hunt Goodenough, an American anthropologist of linguistic, cross-culture and cognition claims in his book *Self-Maintenance as a Religious Concern*, all young generations “can expect devotions of self-maintenance to continue to take a wide variety of forms” (127). There can be two types of concepts of generation. On the one hand, the elderly people try to continue the traditional belief while the young generation wishes to see the world from the experimental lens. Thus, there is a conflict in thought between the two generations. The present situation is in a transition period. On the basis of a certain culture and religion, the mindset is variant. Muslim and Hindu fundamentalists do not want to change their traditional norms and value although there is not a clear reason. They enjoy following the ancient culture and concept as they have rooted upon it. However, the coming generation is becoming more dynamic and flexible. Therefore, the blind belief in anything is expected to change gradually in the future. Ian asks: “Can science include reference to the experience, aim, and creativity of organisms and human beings, the “inner” side of their lives? Clearly psychology must do so in the human case, unless it adopts a strict behaviorism” (87-88).

The contradiction between the two groups- theist and atheist is usual today as individual perspectives are different. Culture, environment, education, and our own curiosity make an individual believe differently, so we are not created by God but Charles Robert Darwin agrees in his book *The Origin of Species* states that “we came through a slow, natural process of evolution.” (9) And that makes the people think about the mind in terms of atheism. Most of the elderly people believe in God whereas young generations do not. Obviously, there is a conflict in belief between the two majority of groups. Furthermore, science has played a fundamental role in transforming the perspectives of people. Science started to influence from the early 19th century over the globe. Hence, today’s generation is not so much attached to traditional belief.

In comparison to the past, the current people are more conscious, aware and innovative. Moreover, according to Alan R. Drengson “God is not spiritual development or spiritualized living; it is a body of dogma shared by a group of believers, who may not be celebrants of the sacred but only partisans of an ideology” (267). They do not wish to develop a blind faith. In addition, the education system has become globalized which also assists the people to think rationally and analytically. However, not all the people are aware and educated. People who live in remote areas and who are from poor backgrounds are also found weaker in terms of mental state to think rationally. Such people are found to be following traditional thoughts and notions. Furthermore, they have strong belief in superstitious beliefs such as fortune, God, demon, heaven, hell and reincarnation. In fact, there are various religions in which the holy books and inscriptions have highlighted the traditional and divine concepts. So, who are religious fundamentalists, they are not easily likely to change their thoughts. Instead, they try

to impose their own cultural perspectives on others. The dynamic and visionary people try to oppose it indirectly as they also have to live in the same society. Friedrich Nietzsche in his *The Antichrist* makes some queries, “What is good? —Whatever augments the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself, in man. What is evil? —Whatever springs from weakness. What is happiness? —The feeling that power increases—that resistance is overcome” (8).

A society consists of various types of people who carry different ideologies according to their culture, religion and environment. Obviously, the conflict is alleviated as it passes by. In terms of Christianity, Jesus Christ is the single God who is regarded as a messenger of God. However, Nietzsche claims that there is no God. No one has seen God. No single person can solve the various problems of people at once. He claims, “Two thousand years have come and gone—and not a single new god” (38)! Hence, it is unwise to believe in God since there is no existence of it. There is a significant proportion of the population who never believe in such vague beliefs. Further Nietzsche claims “I condemn Christianity; I bring against the Christian church the most terrible of all the accusations that an accuser has ever had in his mouth” (178).

No existence of God

There is not any existence of God when a research is carried out for science has not proven its presence over the world. Furthermore, there is no influence, justice and injustice just because of so called God. These are all about perspectives of people that are playing a dominant role. A philosopher of science and relationship between science and religion, Michel Ruse, highlights in his article *Evolutionary of Ethics: A Phoenix Arisen* “...we must begin with science, most particularly with the evolution of the human moral sense or capacity” (97). But a question is raised – why is there a significant population of people over the globe having a strong belief in it? Moreover, various sorts of individuals such as educated, uneducated, high profiled or low ranked people have a deep orthodox and a divine belief. Nonetheless, there is a certain reason behind it. Almost all such a number of people develop the divine concept and belief because of their own family and social cultural factors where they have been reared with such beliefs from the early ages. Ultimately, they cannot alter their practices, beliefs and rituals that are unlikely to go against their religion, family and society.

Science experiments are highly credible and reliable means of belief that have proven that there is no existence of God that’s why “Coming to terms with science” therefore includes a critical dimension, which concerns what science actually does understand and where its license to speak ends” (Jeffrey 49). Some people claim that Jesus Christ, Gautama Buddha, Ram, Seeta, Mohamad, etc. are Gods or messengers of God. However, they were individuals once upon a time and they did a bit extra deeds that could not be done by the contemporary people. In addition to this, they are believed as super men as they did social activities physically and mentally. In fact, it is humans who make an idols of God and worship them themselves. Almost all the idols are made by humans. Some are discovered after several years so they are claimed to be made themselves. Further, holy books are responsible to some extent for the orthodox paradigm of such thought. In most of the religions, the mindset of the people is developed according to the culture and practices they do and conceptualize. In fact, all the thoughts are falsified since they are culturally constructed. One more thing is that if there were God and its influence, all the people would have prosperous lives instead of sorrow and injustice. Beggars

would be rich; priests and worshippers would be millionaires; pope and prophet would have a successful life; honesty would win everywhere. But, these are not in reality today.

People claim that due to a kind of power, the earth revolves around the sun, spins itself and possesses oxygen, water and fertile land. Moreover, they insist that there are proofs of ancient books like the Bible, Gita, Ramayana, Mahabharata and so on. Their logic is based on the writing in such books. In fact, these books, in Hindu religion, were written by hermits in the past as they were wise and had an ascetic lifestyle. Most of the holy books were fictional in nature since the plot of the writings was imaginary with blind assumptions. "The actual progress of science works as a verification of the truth of these assumptions" (Luis and Alverdo 185). The subject matter and views are not experimental proofs with research in the books so those baseless statements are not necessarily appropriate in the current world because many things have been changed. The concept, ideology, mindset, belief, life standard, awareness, understanding and perceptions are different from that of the past. As the evolution of human civilization, people's culture, mental state, norms, thought, etc. are different. This is a natural phenomenon. Hence, the orthodox belief in God has been drastically changed and should be changed in this scientific world.

Let's observe other religions like Muslim and Christianity, people regard God according to their own perspectives. Further, they have different divine beings to regard as God. This clarifies that there is not a single God. It is different according to cultures. However, the main motto of religious belief is the same. Most of the religious groups believe in nonviolence, honesty, sacrifice, mercy, kindness, justice and the ultimate truth. Thus, most religions emphasize the welfare of human beings and their prosperity. Nonetheless, the way they practice is different.

Indeed, God does not exist in the world, but the belief is rooted in society for a long time. There is no connection between the divine perception and the origination of the earth. The earth is created as a mass naturally. Big bang theory is more reliable to understand about it. Stephen Hawking an English theoretical physicist, cosmologist and author, claims, "I am not by nature a religious man, but I know enough about Christianity to understand that 'knowing the mind of God' is at best meaningless and at worst blasphemous when seen in the context of that particular religion" (Stephen Hawking and the Mind of God 68). Hawking further says, "I am not by nature a religious man, but I know enough about Christianity to understand that 'knowing the mind of God' is at best meaningless and at worst blasphemous when seen in the context of that particular religion" (68).

The super person is believed to be God. Some believe an enlightened person is as God, such as Gautam Buddha in Buddhism, Mahabir in Jain. There are several deities in Hindu religion such as Krishna, Ram, Seeta, Bishnu, Brahma, Mahesh, Devi, and so on. Some of them must be imaginary characters since there is no believable evidence to believe them as God, like Shiva, Brahma, Bishnu. This type of belief is deeply rooted in the Hindu society because holy books contain their names with an imaginary story. If we read such books, we come to read unbelievable plots of such characters. For example, Ganesh is said to have been born by the waste product of Shiva's body. Moreover, his head is later replaced by an elephant's. No reliable proof is the origination of Brahma and Bishnu. Shiva or Mahesh could change his

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appearance like in a magic show. These all fantasies make us trust in God in Hindu religion. But there is a great population of Hindu believe in such God and deities blindly since their forefathers have followed them in the similar way. Mostly, Hindu community keeps blind faith instead of doing research in it. They are a type of pagan society as they worship idols of such deities. They claim that they get satisfaction and calmness by doing so. This is a kind of ultimate way of having relief from sorrow. Unknowingly, they enjoy having contentment by keeping their lives disciplined according to their religious culture regardless how hard life is.

Unless people are dead, none will experience heaven or hell. Moreover, rebirth is a next belief engraved in people's brains in Hindu society which is absolutely false. Science has found no proof with regard to this matter. People have believed in this notion for thousands of years. The same is in Muslim culture. The belief is culturally formed on the basis of a certain social construction and science minded people according to Rodney Stark, American sociologist of Religion, believe "less strong commitment toward a certain faith or religion" (508). Coming generations follow the same faith without seeking out any relevant evidence because no one wishes to make revolt in their society. Next reason is that there is fear from the religious elderly people who condemn others who go against the traditional rituals. Most cultures show a due respect towards their elder people. On the other hand, there is no heaven and hell as well. Similarly, rebirth is not an apt logic to follow a certain religion. No one knows what happens after death. Furthermore, being religious and following a religion are two different things. Being religious is enough to change a benevolent character while following a religion is a blind faith with some orthodoxy. Every religion has certain rules and regulations. Furthermore, the practices of each religion are not identical that go differently according to their holy books and their prophets or gurus. It is arduous that every practice is meaningful for today. Some are so obsolete that they are no longer beneficial for human rights, freedom, and equality. It is sure that following certain activities and keeping one in a hard life will not lead to a celibate life. It is just practice. In addition, a significant majority of people believe in rebirth and prosperity in the next life which is absolutely baseless because science has not proven it yet, and no one has realized it yet apparently. Thus, thinking good, working good, and helping others are the main agenda to have ecstasy rather than following an obsolete discipline in the name of a God.

To quote on the basis of Dawkin's the God Delusion, religion is superstition. Religions are just human made practices and rules over a society. To exemplify, a certain ritual does not match with other's. Death procession in Hindu culture is not identical with that of Christianity and Muslim. In the same way, how Muslim prays to their God is different from the way other religions communities do. After all, God is believed to be one over the human cultures according to a majority. In the book "The God Delusion, Richard Dawkins claims about the religion that as to whether it is a symptom of a psychiatric disorder, I am inclined to follow Robert M. Pirsig, author of *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, when he said, "When one person suffers from a delusion, it is called insanity. When many people suffer from a delusion it is called Religion" (14).

Instead, evolution theory claims that human beings originated with a significant reason and development in the course of a long period of time. Charles Darwin claims in his book *Evolution of Species*, that every organism has developed its own species in the course of time.

He further stresses that every creature on the earth survives in a certain rule- survival to the fittest in which only that species survives successfully on the earth which can adjust in this earthly environment. Thus, we claim that there is no role of God for the survival of human beings. Darwin is the first man who changed the perception of human thoughts in terms of the evolution of species on the earth. Every evolution takes place with a specific reason. Without reason, nothing is developed on the earth. Time is a crucial factor that brings changes over every species. On the other hand, according to cosmology, the earth has also a certain reason to come to be this environment. Based on the theory of cosmos, the earth is a particle of the solar family. Millions of years ago, a small piece of solar particles got separated from its foundation and started to revolve around the sun due to its gravitational force. The earth was extremely scorching at that time. As time passed by, a kind of gas released from it and that caused rain over the earth for cats and dogs for several years. Eventually, the mass got cool and different species evolved as they got an apt environment for development and growth. In the same way, human beings also evolved gradually from apes like species. Some species like dinosaurs got extinct in the course of time since they could not adapt to the changeable environment of the earth. Thus, no God created the earth and the creatures.

If we ponder from the scientific lens, the earth and the species have their own theory for their existence. Hence, God does not exist because there is not any role of God in the evolution of the earth. The divine notion of God is just created by sacred people after several years of human civilization. Furthermore, let's see the animal kingdom where their behaviors have been inherited for a long time. No organism has developed extra behavior and ideology except their natural gift. Hens lay eggs from their existence and hatch naturally. Lions hunt other animals for their survival. There is no question of cruelty and deviation. Elephants are herbivorous while frogs are amphibians. This phenomenon has been the same from their existence on the earth so are their identity. But, human beings are supreme in mental state so they use their mind more than they do need according to their environment. Because of their talent, they want to keep themselves in a chain of religion and rituals for their identity. In the course of time, their behaviors and discipline are necessary to some extent in a society and kingdom, but these culturally made processes are not supreme as they realize today. They are ready to sacrifice their valuable lives for their religion and rituals. They believe that God is above them who is looking after them and their behaviors. They claim that God is a power or energy. Richard Dawkins states that religion not an energy. The Nobel Prize-winning physicist (and atheist) Steven Weinberg made the point as well as anybody, in *Dreams of a Final Theory*:

Some people have views of God that are so broad and flexible that it is inevitable that they will find God wherever they look for him. One hears it said that 'God is the ultimate' or 'God is our better nature' or 'God is the universe.' Of course, like any other word, the word 'God' can be given any meaning we like. If you want to say that 'God is energy,' then you can find God in a lump of coal. (19)

So called cultural perception is so rooted that it has darkened the reality. However, it is not so safe to disclose the reality according to our perspectives because religious people have got the opposite thought in which they are content. Several people have passed away before knowing the reality of human civilization. They do not even regret it. They naturally follow

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the tradition and dogma of what their forefathers have done. Will and curiosity plays a role in identifying reality. If people know the reality, we claim that human beings suffer less, and live more naturally on the earth. Extreme cultural belief is hazardous to themselves for their freedom and happiness.

In the same way, there are few indigenous people on the earth who do not follow a certain religion and God, but nature itself. For instance, few tribal groups live in Amazon forest who survive with their own primitive living strategy. They live on hunting wild animals. They never meet other communities because they want to be isolated and independent in the dense forest. Similarly, Raute, a marginal community living in certain areas of Nepal, have a distinct notion of survival. They never send their children to school for study. They survive by living near a river and hunting monkeys for food. They have a nomadic lifestyle. They manage their food from wild roots, yam, fruits, leaves, and grain given by nearby villagers. They worship nature and forest since they are directly close to it. Likewise, there are several such communities living with their own ideologies. One religious group is one of many in the world. So, belief and practices will not do miracles in our lives, we need awareness, wisdom, benevolence, unity, equality, freedom and rights for all. No religion is superior and inferior over the world. It is just for a certain human mentality, not for all. If there is real equality, wisdom and respect to others, violence and massacre will not take place in the name of religion and God. People come to do such inhuman activities due to their own selfishness and boldness.

To speak and research against such divinity is a challenge of life because of possible threat from a mass of religious community. Moreover, the atheist must be strong socially and psychologically otherwise they might come to sacrifice their valuable lives just for a different perspective. Because of these reasons, a very few individuals dare to think and raise their ideal perspectives against God. Truth is one which is never deviated or twisted. Truth is not so arduous to find out with the help of research and experiment. Instead, people mostly in under developed and developing countries, follow others' ideology and concept. This is their weakness and compulsion to do so. But, in this modern time, people are more conscious and aware of such blind faith and trust which is not a trait of a wise citizen. Belief in God is relevant to the psychology of people because it is all about concept and trust. Once there was no religion, not even any practices. All religions and so called religious activities are socially developed as time passes. Dawkins clarifies that the president of a historical society in New Jersey wrote a letter that so damningly exposes the weakness of the religious mind, it is worth reading twice:

We respect your learning, Dr. Einstein; but there is one thing you do not seem to have learned: that God is a spirit and cannot be found through the telescope or microscope, no more than human thought or emotion can be found by analyzing the brain. As everyone knows, religion is based on Faith, not knowledge. Every thinking person, perhaps, is assailed at times with religious doubt. My own faith has wavered many a time. But I never told anyone of my spiritual aberrations for two reasons: (1) I feared that I might, by mere suggestion, disturb and damage the life and hopes of some fellow being; (2) because I agree with the writer who said, 'There is a mean streak in anyone who will destroy another's faith.' I hope, Dr. Einstein, that you were misquoted and that you will yet say some- thing more pleasing to the vast number of the American people who delight to do you honor. (23)

The hermits and sage people started to write something according to their thought and mental ideas in that contemporary time. The obsolete ideas imposed on this present generation are meaningless and unwise. It does not mean that people should be free from violence and chaotic actions, but they try to search for the ecstasy themselves which is within them. Following a certain religion will not bring any happiness and serenity. The socially constructed practices are just discipline to keep people in limit. If an individual is conscious about his right and wrong deeds, no social, cultural, and religious limitation is required.

To be honest, strict discipline practices have to be followed mostly in poor and middle class people due to their fragile mind set and weak determination and strength causing various obstacles. If the people are from a low economic background, their awareness and education is also low comparatively. Consequently, they come to believe in certain religious practices and God as they cannot survive without support from others in their society. Consequently, they are bound to follow such orthodox practices and grow blind faith without investigation about it deeply. Their children also come to see and follow the same thought and belief. This regular schedule makes them grow such baseless belief strongly in their mindset which becomes almost impossible later. Thus, such low profile people strongly believe in fortune rather than smart work and dynamic mindset. Let us examine in the context of Nepal, especially in the southern plain area of the country, indigenous people of the territory celebrate Dashain festival in a different way. Some of them make idols of Lord Durga, Devi, Demon, etc. in an open public or private place and worship for nine days till the day of Dashami. After ten or eleven days, the idols are disposed of into a nearby river. During those days, plenty of Hindu people visit the holy area of idols for worship. Some women are seen trembling their bodies ecstatic in front of the idols. They believe in God so strongly that they feel this is a real heaven of God. They murmur and show their unconscious behaviors for hours. The scene is normal for the local citizens, but it looks much strange for atheists or who are well known about the religion and God to some extent indeed. Who have a strong faith in such idols, they perform such activities unknowingly on the spot. The poor women start murmuring of their pain in front of such Made-Gods.

Hence, it is apparent that belief differs individual to individual. It is different according to one's mental state and thoughts. So, human beings can behave according to their environment and beliefs. Internal perception plays a more dominant role than the outer world. It is necessary to build up a genuine and real notion in this valuable life, not false and obsolete ideas in mind and behavior.

Conclusion

Science and religion are two parallel ideologies of human thought in which the former relies on nature and reality and the second is for just faith and traditional practice. Even having faced conflict between the two different norms, both subjects have strong followers till date. Some claim that both are essential for humans. In fact, the belief differs from individual to individual. How much culture, environment and education affect one really determines one's perspective and accordingly he/she behaves. It is transparent that science and its

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experimentation has dominated over the blind faith having no logic and reason. The modernization and transformation of society are just because of science, not religion and divine thought. We can see there is not any change even after worshiping God regularly. Instead, modern thought and ideas have brought a huge change in one's lifestyle and mental level. Hence, so called God becomes deem, when it is closer to the experiment of science.

Indeed, the earth evolved millions of years ago as a small piece of the sun separated like other planets. Gradually, the extreme hot mass turns cool after several years. And then, the earth becomes a suitable platform for living beings. No religion and divine beliefs were in the beginning. They are all culturally made later by so-called prophets and gurus. All the religions and divine concepts are not distinct in depth. The main motto of ecstasy is not to hurt others rather to show benevolence to others. Unity, brotherhood, equality, freedom, rights, and respect are the common necessary things for all creatures including human beings regardless of the different beliefs and practices. Obsolete thought, blind faith and unnecessary practices just limit people in their lives. All the people are free to live their own lives in their own way like other animals are living. Selfishness, boldness, violence and domination never bring the world into serenity and prosperity. Hence, what people believe is not so essential, rather how they believe and practice matters much. So, let's change how we enjoy and respect each other. It is all about mindset and its output.

Mindset and opinion is a pilot of our behavior, joy and freedom. Wisdom and conciseness is all about the value of life. Meditation and attaining nirvana is one of the best things to obtain ecstasy. Religion, ritual practices and chaining oneself unnecessarily is not the way of life. It does not mean that one should not follow any religion, rather one must live naturally following the truth. People can remain in a certain religion as they were born in a certain cultural bound. But, they should be free from orthodoxy and obsession with the divine spirit since this concept was documented several years back than the existence of human beings. We believe that being religious is not an issue in life, but following unnecessary practices of superstition is an extra burden imposed to innocent people in the name of God. To exemplify, worshiping God at a temple in Hindu culture has no certainty to prove that there is the existence of God. Many men and women go to temples with lots of wishes. They offer flowers, fruits, coins, ornaments, etc. They believe in God from the heart, but these practices are fugitive because of the absence of God. Similarly, in Christianity, praying for cure of a chronic disease is a waste of time and money. We can see some Christian people prove that they can restore eyesight and life even after death. In Muslim community, all the people including youths are bound to develop a similar type of faith in God. No one has the right to raise an issue against it otherwise they might be a victim of a society. Reading the Quran is a common phenomenon in all aged people in this culture. No religion is perfect itself. Every religion has a good aspect along with the divine perception. All religions provoke peace, kindness, love, discipline, and tolerance which are good aspects. Thus, it is our concern what to follow and what not to.

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