

Circular Reasoning

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In his article ‘The other side of time’ (2000) scientist Victor J. Stenger has written:

“Quantum electrodynamics is a fifty-year-old theory of the interactions of electrons and photons that has made successful predictions to accuracies as great as twelve significant figures. Fundamental to that theory is the spontaneous appearance of electron-positron (anti-electron) pairs for brief periods of time, literally out of "nothing."”

From here he has concluded that our universe may also come literally out of nothing due to quantum fluctuation in the void, and therefore we need not have to imagine that God has done this job.

But is it true that electron-positron (anti-electron) pairs are appearing spontaneously literally out of "nothing"? Are scientists absolutely certain that the so-called void is a true void indeed? Because here there is a counter-claim also: God is there, and that God is everywhere. So actually nothing is coming out of "nothing", only something is coming out of something. Here we want to examine whether scientists’ claim that the so-called void is a true void can be sustained by reason or not.

There can be basically two types of universes: (1) universe created by God, supposing that there is a God; (2) universe not created by God, supposing that there is no God. Again universe created by God can also be of three types:

(1a) Universe in which God need not have to intervene at all after its creation. This is the best type of universe that can be created by God.

(1b) Universe in which God has actually intervened from time to time, but his intervention is a bare minimum.

(1c) Universe that cannot function at all without God’s very frequent intervention. This is the worst type of universe that can be created by God.

Therefore we see that there can be four distinct types of universes, and our universe may be any one of the above four types: (1a), (1b), (1c), (2). In case of (1a), scientists will be able to give natural explanation for each and every physical event that has happened in the universe after its origin, because after its creation there is no intervention by God at any moment of its functioning. Only giving natural explanation for its coming into existence will be problematic. In case of (1b) also, most of the events will be easily explained away, without imagining that there is any hand of God behind these events. But for those events where God had actually intervened, scientists will never be able to give any natural explanation. Also explaining origin of the universe will be equally problematic. But in case of (1c), most of the events will remain unexplained, as in this case God had to intervene very frequently. This type of universe will be just like the one as envisaged by Newton: "Gravity explains the motions of the planets, but it cannot explain who set the planets in motion. God governs all things and knows all that is or can be done." So we can with confidence say that our universe is not of this type, otherwise

scientists could not have found natural explanation for most of the physical events. In case of type (2) universe, here also there will be natural explanation for each and every physical event, and there will be natural explanation for the origin of the universe also. So from the mere fact that scientists have so far been able to give natural explanation for each and every physical event, it cannot be concluded that our universe is a type (2) universe, because this can be a type (1a) universe as well. The only difference between type (1a) and type (2) universe is this: whereas in case of (1a) no natural explanation will ever be possible for the origin of the universe, it will not be so in case of (2). Therefore until and unless scientists can give a natural explanation for the origin of the universe, they cannot claim that it is a type (2) universe. And so, until and unless scientists can give this explanation, they can neither claim that the so-called void is a true void. So scientists cannot proceed to give a natural explanation for the origin of the universe with an a priori assumption that the void is a real void, because their failure or success in giving this explanation will only determine as to whether this is a real void or not.