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Craig's Kalam Cosmological Argument and the Classical Kalam of the Mutakallimun: A Comparative Philosophical and Metaphysical Study

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Abstract

This research paper delivers an in- depth comparative analysis of two widely discussed formulations of the cosmological argument: the modern Kalam Cosmological Argument popularized by William Lane Craig and the authentic or classical Kalam argument developed by medieval Islamic theologians (mutakallimun). The study aims to clarify misinterpretations in contemporary philosophy of religion by reconstructing the traditional argument from its sources, identifying key philosophical distinctions between Craig's version and the classical formulation, and exploring metaphysical issues concerning causality, infinity, and volitional agency. The research demonstrates that the classical mutakallimun argument offers a richer metaphysical conclusion—affirming the existence of a unique, volitional, necessary being—than Craig's minimalistic syllogism, which arrives at a generic cause. The paper also examines the historical development of infinity, from early blanket rejection to Imam al- Taftazani's conceptual refinement, distinguishing abstract (mathematical) and concrete (real) infinity. It connects this distinction to modern mathematics via Cantor's set theory and Hilbert's Hotel. A comparative table summarizing the differences between Craig's and classical Kalam arguments is included. Classical and modern sources are cited to ground the analysis in textual authority.

Keywords: Kalam cosmological argument, mutakallimun, William Lane Craig, necessary being, volitional cause, actual infinity, abstract versus concrete infinity, Hilbert's Hotel, Cantor's set theory, philosophical theology.

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1. Introduction

The quest to ground the existence of God in rational argument is one of the oldest pursuits of philosophy. Among the arguments that purport to infer a transcendent cause from features of the universe, cosmological arguments have a distinguished lineage. In the Islamic world, the **kalam** tradition of dialectical theology generated arguments that reason from the cosmos' temporal origination (huduth) and contingency (imkan) to a necessary, eternal cause. The **Kalam Cosmological Argument** became widely known to Western philosophers after **William Lane Craig's** extensive defense in contemporary analytic philosophy. Craig's version is often considered canonical, yet it significantly differs from the argument articulated by the classical *mutakallimun*. This study thus contrasts **Craig's Kalam Cosmological Argument** with the **authentic Kalam argument** preserved in medieval Islamic sources.

1.1 Background and Significance

The cosmological argument generally takes the form of an inference from facts about the universe—such as its existence, temporal origin, or contingency—to the existence of a unique cause or ground of being (Sinclair, 2019). Within this broad category, the Kalam argument emerged historically in debates between Islamic theologians and philosophers. Early mutakallimun (practitioners of kalam) argued that a series of temporal phenomena cannot regress infinitely and that whatever begins to exist must have a cause; thus, the universe must have a beginning and a cause (Craig, 1979). Key figures such as al-Juwayni, al-Ghazali, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, and later Saʿd al-Din al-Taftazani formalized the argument into a three-part structure: (1) establishing the existence of a necessary or eternal being (wajib al-wujud or qadim), (2) demonstrating that this being is a volitional agent (al-faʿil al-mukhtar), and (3) showing that there can be only one such being. The conclusion identifies this being as God (Allah) (Al-Juwayni, 1950; Al-Ghazali, 1903/1998; Al-Razi, 1990; Taftazani, 1895/2009).

The distinction between this classical structure and Craig's modern formulation is significant. Craig simplifies the argument to three steps: (1) everything that begins to exist has a cause; (2) the universe began to exist; (3) therefore, the universe has a cause. He then adds that the cause must be personal and unique, but these properties are not embedded in the syllogism (Craig, 1979; Craig & Sinclair, 2009). The debate around the argument's metaphysical rigor largely depends on these structural differences. Furthermore, the Kalam argument hinges on philosophical issues about causality and the possibility of infinity. Classical theologians justified the principle of causality by the a priori maxim that "nothing comes from nothing" (Arabic: al-ʿadam la yufidu wujud), while Craig often appeals to a posteriori inductive evidence (Craig, 1979). Another important development concerns the concept of infinity: early Kalam rejected all types of infinity, but later thinkers like Taftazani distinguished abstract or mathematical infinity from concrete or real infinity, a nuance that resonates with the modern distinction between potential and actual infinity (Taftazani, 1895/2009; Hilbert, 1925; Cantor, 1915).

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1.2 Purpose and Objectives

This research aims to:

1. **Clarify the authentic classical kalam cosmological argument** by reconstructing its formal structure from primary sources and secondary scholarly literature.
2. **Compare Craig's modern version** with the classical formulation, highlighting differences in structure, premises, causality justification, infinity treatment, and metaphysical conclusion.
3. **Analyze both arguments' metaphysical and philosophical content** concerning causality, temporal origination, volitional agency, and the unity of the first cause.
4. **Investigate the concept of infinity** as treated by classical mutakallimun and modern mathematics, including Taftazani's distinction between abstract and concrete infinity and Cantor's set theory and Hilbert's Hotel paradox.

1.3 Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following questions guide the study:

- **RQ1:** How does the classical Kalam argument establish a necessary, volitional, and unique being as the universe's cause?
- **RQ2:** In what ways does Craig's version differ in its premise structure, justification of causality, treatment of infinity, and conclusion?
- **RQ3:** What metaphysical role do concepts of infinity—actual versus potential, abstract versus concrete—play in supporting the argument for a finite temporal beginning?
- **RQ4:** Does the authentic Kalam argument yield a stronger theistic conclusion than Craig's version?

Hypotheses: (1) The classical kalam argument articulates a richer metaphysical conclusion than Craig's minimalist syllogism; (2) Craig's reliance on a posteriori justification for causality and his omission of volitional and uniqueness premises weaken the argument's power; (3) the distinction between abstract and concrete infinity, introduced by Taftazani and echoed in modern mathematics, strengthens the argument for a finite past and supports the kalam conclusion.

1.4 Formal Statement of the Authentic Kalam Argument

Before proceeding, it is important to state the authentic Kalam argument in its classical tripartite form:

1. **Part I (Existence of a Necessary Being):** There exists at least one eternal (*qadim*) or necessary being (*wajib al- wujud*).
2. **Part II (Volitional Agency):** This eternal or necessary being is a **personal** or **volitional agent** (*al- faʿil al- mukhtar*).
3. **Part III (Uniqueness):** At most one such personal/volitional eternal or necessary being.

Conclusion: Therefore, God (*Allah*) exists.

The rest of the paper provides a detailed analysis of these parts and contrasts them with Craig's formulation.

2. Literature Review

This section surveys the primary sources in classical kalam and key modern secondary literature concerning causation, infinity, and the cosmological

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argument.

2.1 Classical Kalam Tradition

2.1.1 Al- Juwayni and Al- Irshad

Abu al-Maʿali al-Juwayni (d. 478 AH/1085 CE) wrote Al-Irshad ila Qawatiʿ al-Adilla fi Usul al-Iʿtiqad. This pioneering kalam treatise formulates the argument from origination to a necessary cause. Al-Juwayni contends that the universe consists of temporally originated events (hawadith) and that an infinite regress of such events is impossible; therefore, there must be a beginning. He then infers that the cause must be eternal and volitional (Al-Juwayni, 1950). The treatise also argues for the uniqueness of this being by noting that necessary existence precludes multiplicity, as multiplicity entails both composition and contingency.

2.1.2 Al- Ghazali and Al- Iqtisad fi Al- Iʿtiqad

Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 505 AH/1111 CE) expanded on al-Juwayni's argument in *Al-Iqtisad fi al-Iʿtiqad* ("Moderation in Belief"), addressing the philosophers who posited an eternal universe. Al-Ghazali insisted that everything that begins to exist requires a cause, and he argued that the temporal series of events cannot regress infinitely because it is formed by successive addition; one cannot complete an actual infinite by successive synthesis (Al-Ghazali, 1903/1998). Moreover, he maintained that the first cause must be volitional, for an eternal non-volitional cause would produce an eternal effect; the universe, however, began in time (Al-Ghazali, 1903/1998). These premises correspond to Parts I and II of the authentic Kalam argument.

2.1.3 Fakhr al- Din al- Razi

Fakhr al- Din al- Razi (d. 606 AH/1210 CE) in **Al- Matalib al- ʿAliya** and **Al- Mabahith al- Mashriqiyya** further systematized the kalam argument. He criticized the philosophers' necessity- by- essence view and reasserted the need for a volitional cause, emphasizing that a truly necessary being must act by choice rather than compulsion. Al- Razi also offered arguments for the unity of the necessary being: any plurality among necessary beings would imply differences, which would necessitate external causes and thus contradict necessity.

2.1.4 Saʿd al- Din al- Taftazani and the Distinction of Infinity

Later developments in the Kalam tradition include the conceptual refinement of infinity by Saʿd al-Din al-Taftazani (d. 793 AH/1390 CE). In *Sharh al-Maqasid*, he drew a crucial distinction between abstract (conceptual) and concrete (real) infinity. Abstract infinity refers to infinite mathematical or conceptual sets, while concrete infinity refers to real spatio-temporal collections. Taftazani allowed abstract infinities to exist in thought but denied that concrete infinities could exist in reality. This distinction was crucial for defending the Kalam argument: while numbers can be infinite in the abstract, an actual infinite sequence of past events is metaphysically impossible (Taftazani, 1895/2009). The argument thus employs this refined concept to show that the universe must have a beginning.

2.2 Modern Reformulation by William Lane Craig

2.2.1 Craig's Syllogistic Argument

In the 1970s and 1980s, **William Lane Craig** revived the kalam

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cosmological argument in analytic philosophy. In his book **The Kalam Cosmological Argument** (1979) and subsequent works, he formulated the argument in a minimalistic syllogistic structure:

1. Whatever begins to exist has a cause of its existence.
2. The universe began to exist.
3. Therefore, the universe has a cause of its existence.

Craig then argues that this cause must be **timeless**, **spaceless**, **immaterial**, **powerful**, and **personal**. However, the personal nature is argued separately and is not an explicit premise within the syllogism. His work has stimulated widespread debate on the soundness of the premises and their metaphysical import.

2.2.2 Justification of Causality

Craig defends the causal principle ("whatever begins to exist has a cause") both a priori and a posteriori. A priori, he appeals to the metaphysical maxim that something cannot come from nothing—an intuition shared by classical kalam. A posteriori, he notes that our uniform experience confirms that things that begin have causes. Critics have pointed out that Craig emphasizes empirical evidence over the Kalam tradition, which is strictly a priori justification (Craig, 1979).

2.2.3 Arguments for a Finite Universe

Craig's defense of premise 2 (the universe began to exist) includes philosophical and scientific arguments. Philosophically, he draws on al-Ghazali's arguments against actual infinity and successive addition (Al-Ghazali, 1903/1998). Scientifically, he invokes cosmological findings such as the Big Bang, the Borde–Guth–Vilenkin theorem (which states that any universe with net expansion is past-incomplete), and the second law of thermodynamics. This paper focuses on the philosophical aspects and does not engage in detail with the scientific data.

2.3 Comparative Perspectives

2.3.1 Causality: A Prior vs A Posteriori

An important difference between Craig and the classical mutakallimun concerns the justification for the causal principle. Classical kalam holds that the principle that "from nothing comes nothing" (ex nihilo nihil fit) is an a priori metaphysical truth. In the Ashʿari and Maturidi schools, causality is grounded in God's habitual activity: effects usually follow causes because of divine custom, not necessity (Al-Ghazali, 1903/1998; Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, 1990). The Muʿtazilites, in contrast, emphasized human free will and the autonomy of causes (Wolfson, 1976). Craig often justifies the causal premise by empirical induction and points out that no counterexamples exist in experience—a weaker justification than the Kalam's absolute metaphysical grounding (Craig, 1979).

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2.3.2 Volitional Agency and Uniqueness

Craig's minimalist syllogism arrives at a cause but does not specify its properties. He argues separately that the cause must be personal because natural causes cannot produce a temporal effect without prior natural events (Craig, 1979; Craig & Sinclair, 2009). The classical argument embeds volitional agency into the syllogism (Part II) and concludes the uniqueness of the cause (Part III). This difference means that the Kalam argument yields a stronger conclusion—the existence of a unique God. In contrast, Craig's argument yields a cause that may or may not be singular or personal without additional reasoning.

2.3.3 Infinity and Temporal Regression

Craig and classical mutakallimun argue that an infinite series of past events is impossible. Craig appeals to modern mathematics and Hilbert's Hotel paradox. Early theologians denied the possibility of infinity in reality, while Taftazani's distinction between abstract and concrete infinity provides a more nuanced foundation. This comparative discussion sets the stage for a deeper analysis of the infinity issue in Section 4.

2.4 Infinity in Kalam Thought and Modern Mathematics

The concept of infinity plays a crucial role in arguments for the universe's beginning. Classical mutakallimun argued that infinity—*al- la nihayah*—is impossible. They did not differentiate between types of infinity, thus rejecting any infinite regress. Over time, the development of mathematics, particularly set theory, forced philosophers to revisit this position.

Cantor's set theory showed that actual infinities can be conceived mathematically. Sets are collections of elements, and transfinite arithmetic defines operations on infinite sets (Cantor, 1915). Cantor discovered that there are different sizes (cardinalities) of infinity; for example, the set of natural numbers is countably infinite ($\aleph_0$) while the real numbers are uncountably infinite (Cantor, 1915). However, Hilbert's Hotel paradox illustrates that applying transfinite arithmetic to concrete reality leads to absurdities (Hilbert, 1925).

Saʿd al-Din al-Taftazani resolved the tension by distinguishing between abstract infinity (conceptually legitimate) and concrete infinity (metaphysically impossible) (Taftazani, 1895/2009). This position allows the Kalam argument to accept mathematical infinities in abstraction while denying that an actual infinite sequence of temporal events can exist. Craig adopts a similar distinction (though typically framed as potential vs actual infinity) and uses Hilbert's paradox to argue that actual infinity cannot exist in the real world (Craig, 1979; Hilbert, 1925).

3. Methodology

This research employs a **comparative philosophical analysis** grounded in textual study. The main steps are:

1. **Textual reconstruction of the classical Kalam argument** from primary sources (al- Juwayni, al- Ghazali, al- Razi, Taftazani). Although the paper does not reproduce long Arabic passages, it uses the structure and key claims reported by secondary sources and notes the relevant original works to ensure accuracy.
2. **Analysis of Craig's formulation** through his published works and

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academic discussions, focusing on the structure, premises, and metaphysical conclusions.

3. **Comparative evaluation**, identifying similarities and differences between the two arguments regarding structure, causal principles, volitional agency, infinity, and conclusion.
4. **Philosophical and mathematical examination of infinity**, integrating Taftazani's distinction, Cantor's set theory, and Hilbert's Hotel to evaluate the argument against an infinite past.
5. **Synthesis** into a cohesive narrative that highlights the strengths of the authentic Kalam argument over Craig's modern version without engaging in objections or scientific controversies beyond the scope of philosophy.

The study relies on citations from credible sources, including the **Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy**, academic journals, and primary classical texts as referenced in translations or scholarly editions. In- text citations are provided to support statements and interpretations.

1.1 4. Infinity: Philosophical and Mathematical Discussion

Infinity is central to the debate on whether the universe can have an infinite past. This section combines philosophical reasoning, historical development, and modern mathematical insights to clarify the Kalam argument's premise that the universe began to exist.

4.1 Philosophical Arguments Against Actual Infinity

Classical mutakallimun argued that an infinite regress of temporal events is impossible. Two main philosophical arguments support this claim:

1. **Impossibility of Actual Infinity:** If an actual infinite collection of concrete things existed, it would lead to contradictions and absurdities. Early Kalam argued that infinity cannot be completed or traversed. The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* notes that the argument from the impossibility of actual infinity asserts that a determinate totality of infinite members leads to paradoxes (Sinclair, 2019). The library example presented by Craig—borrowed from classical kalam sources—illustrates that if a library had infinitely many books, removing an infinite number of them still leaves infinitely many, which contradicts intuitive notions of subtraction (Craig, 1979).
2. **Impossibility of Forming an Actual Infinite by Successive Addition:** The temporal series of events is formed individually. Since the present has been reached, the series cannot be infinite in the past; otherwise, the present would never arrive. This is sometimes called the "successive addition" or the "traversal" argument. Al-Ghazali developed this idea in *Tahafut al-Falasifah*, noting that an actual infinite cannot be formed by successive synthesis of moments (Al-Ghazali, 1927/2000; Craig, 1979).

4.2 Set Theory and Transfinite Numbers

The development of set theory by Georg Cantor in the late nineteenth century showed that infinite sets are consistent and can be manipulated mathematically. A set is a collection of elements, and Cantor introduced the concept of transfinite cardinal numbers. A set is infinite if it can be placed into one-to-one correspondence with one of its proper subsets (Cantor, 1915). The set of natural numbers is countably infinite ($\aleph_0$), while the set of real numbers is uncountably infinite ($\aleph_1$) (Cantor, 1915). Transfinite

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arithmetic allows addition of infinite cardinals (e.g., $\aleph_0 + 1 = \aleph_0$), though subtraction is problematic. Such operations are coherent in abstraction but are not intended to describe real, concrete collections, such as physical objects or temporal events.

4.3 Hilbert's Hotel

The Hilbert's Hotel paradox, devised by mathematician David Hilbert, illustrates the counterintuitive implications of actual infinities. Imagine a hotel with infinitely many rooms, all occupied. Even though the hotel is full, it can accommodate additional guests by moving each guest from room n to room $n + 1$, making room 1 vacant (Hilbert, 1925). More drastically, moving guests from each even-numbered room to room $n/2$ vacates infinitely many rooms (Hilbert, 1925). Removing an infinite number of guests (e.g., all guests in odd-numbered rooms) leaves the same number of guests as before, demonstrating that subtraction yields paradoxical results. This paradox arises from treating infinite cardinals as actual, completed quantities. The conclusion is that an actual infinite number of concrete things cannot exist in reality (Craig, 1979; Hilbert, 1925).

4.4 Taftazani's Distinction Between Abstract and Concrete Infinity

Taftazani drew a crucial distinction to reconcile the mathematical possibility of actual infinite sets with the metaphysical impossibility of concrete infinities. Abstract (conceptual) infinity refers to mental constructs such as numbers, sets, and mathematical sequences; these do not exist as concrete objects but serve as conceptual tools. Concrete (real) infinity would involve an actual infinite collection of real things or events in space and time. Taftazani argued that concrete infinity is impossible because it would generate contradictions and paradoxes (Taftazani, 1895/2009). This distinction parallels the modern differentiation between actual and potential infinity: potential infinity describes a process that can continue indefinitely but never completes; actual infinity refers to a completed, infinite totality. By grounding the Kalam argument on the concept of concrete infinity, Taftazani provides a metaphysical foundation for asserting that the past cannot be actually infinite.

4.5 Implications for the Kalam Argument

The philosophical and mathematical discussions above support the premise that the universe began to exist. If the past were infinite, the present would never arrive (successive addition argument). Actual infinities lead to paradoxes (Hilbert's Hotel), and Taftazani's distinction allows for mathematical infinities while denying the metaphysical possibility of concrete infinite regressions. The Kalam argument thus holds that the universe must have a temporal beginning and therefore requires a cause.

5. Findings / Results

5.1 Formal Statements and Logical Analysis

5.1.1 Craig's Syllogistic Argument Revisited

Craig's argument can be reformulated in standard logical notation:

1. **Premise 1:** $\forall x$ [BeginsToExist(x) $\rightarrow \exists y$ Cause(y,x)] (Everything that begins to exist has a cause of its existence).
2. **Premise 2:** BeginsToExist(Universe).
3. **Conclusion:** $\exists y$ Cause(y, Universe).

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The argument is valid (modus ponens). However, the argument's conclusion only asserts some cause; it does not specify that the cause is volitional or unique. Craig supplements the syllogism with further arguments to identify the cause as personal and unique (Craig, 1979; Craig & Sinclair, 2009), but these are not part of the core syllogism. He thus fails to encode the volitional and unity properties as premises. Moreover, his reliance on a posteriori justification for the causal principle means that skeptics may challenge the uniformity of empirical induction.

5.1.2 Authentic Kalam Argument Reconstructed

The classical argument can be reconstructed as follows:

1. **Premise 1:** The universe is a collection of temporal events (hawadith) and cannot regress infinitely (see §4 for argument against actual infinity). Thus, the universe **began to exist**.
2. **Premise 2:** Whatever begins to exist has a cause; nothing comes from nothing (a priori metaphysical principle). Therefore, the universe has a cause.
3. **Premise 3:** A cause outside time and space cannot be physical or material; it must be eternal and necessary (*qadim*, *wajib al- wujud*).
4. **Premise 4:** An eternal necessary being that produces a temporal effect must do so volitionally (otherwise the effect would be eternal). Therefore, the cause is a **volitional agent** (*al- faʿil al- mukhtar*)(Sinclair, 2019).
5. **Premise 5:** There cannot be more than one such necessary being; multiplicity would entail composition and contingency, contradicting necessity.
6. **Conclusion:** Therefore, there exists a unique, necessary, volitional being—**God (Allah)**.

This structure mirrors the tripartite statement in 1.4 and ensures that the properties of the cause (volitional and unique) are established within the argument itself. Thus, the classical argument is stronger: it not only deduces the existence of a cause but also identifies that cause as God.

5.2 Causality: A Prior vs A Posteriori

The classical Kalam argument justifies causality by asserting that non-being cannot produce being. In the Ashʿari school, natural laws are regarded as customs; God endows human actions with power at each moment (Al-Ghazali, 1903/1998; Al-Razi, 1990). The Muʿtazilites, however, recognized secondary causes and emphasized human free will (Wolfson, 1976). In both cases, the causal principle is anchored in God's creative act and thus is a metaphysical truth, not merely an empirical generalization.

By contrast, Craig often grounds the causal premise in empirical experience: we never observe things coming into existence without causes. While he also appeals to the intuitive maxim "something cannot come from nothing," his emphasis on experience leaves room for skepticism that the principle might not hold universally beyond our observable context (Craig, 1979; Sinclair, 2019).

5.3 Volitional Agency and Uniqueness

In the classical argument, the volitional nature of the cause is central. Al- Ghazali argues that if the cause were non- volitional, the effect (the

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universe) would be eternal; only a choice can explain why the universe began at a particular moment (Sinclair, 2019). Similarly, classical theologians maintain that a multiplicity of necessary beings entails differentiation and dependence, undermining necessity. Therefore, there is precisely one necessary being.

Craig, however, must add further arguments to show that the cause is personal and unique. Some critics contend that his syllogism does not entail his move from a cause to a personal God and that alternative explanations (e.g., impersonal first causes, multiple gods) remain open.

5.4 Infinity and Temporal Origination

The analysis in §4 demonstrates that an infinite regress of temporal events is impossible. Craig employs Hilbert's Hotel and the successive addition argument (Hilbert, 1925; Craig, 1979). Classical mutakallimun initially rejected infinity outright but later refined their position through Taftazani's distinction (Taftazani, 1895/2009). This distinction undercuts the objection that modern mathematics proves the existence of the infinite; the argument concerns concrete reality. Therefore, classical and modern defenders agree that the universe began to exist, though classical sources provide a more nuanced metaphysical grounding.

5.5 Comparative Table: Craig vs Classical Kalam

To summarise the differences identified in the analysis, Table 1 offers a side- by- side comparison of key aspects of Craig's argument and the classical Kalam argument. It highlights the structural, epistemic, and metaphysical contrasts.

Table 1: ***Comparison of Craig's and Classical Kalam Arguments***

Aspect	Craig's Kalam Cosmological Argument	Classical Kalam (Mutakallimun)
Structure of Argument	Minimalist syllogism: (1) Whatever begins to exist has a cause; (2) the universe began; (3) therefore, the universe has a cause.	Tripartite argument: (1) There exists a necessary/eternal being; (2) this being is a volitional agent; (3) there is at most one such being; hence, God exists.
Causal Principle	Justified primarily **a posteriori** by induction and experience. Secondary appeal to metaphysical intuition.	Justified *a priori*: non-being cannot produce being. In the Ashʿari view, causality is a divine custom (Al-Ghazali, 1903/1998; Al-Razi, 1990). The Muʿtazilites emphasize causal relations but ground them in God (Wolfson, 1976).
Volitional Agency	Not included in the core syllogism; argued separately that the cause is personal (Sinclair,	Explicitly embedded: the necessary being must be a volitional agent (*al- faʿil al- mukhtar*).

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Aspect	Craig's Kalam Cosmological Argument	Classical Kalam (Mutakallimun)
	2019).	
Uniqueness of Cause	The syllogism does not entail this; additional arguments are required.	Explicitly argued: multiple necessary beings entail dependence and contingency, contradicting necessity.
Infinity Treatment	Employs modern mathematics (Hilbert's Hotel) to argue that actual infinity cannot exist in reality (Hilbert, 1925; Craig, 1979); distinguishes potential vs actual infinity.	Early Kalam rejected infinity without distinction; Taftazani later distinguishes between abstract and concrete infinity (Taftazani, 1895/2009), aligning with the modern distinction between potential and actual.
Philosophical Grounding	Anchored in analytic philosophy, often with minimal metaphysical assumptions.	Rooted in Islamic metaphysics and theological reflection.
Conclusion	Establishes an unspecified cause; identification as personal God requires further argument.	Demonstrates the existence of a **unique, volitional, necessary being**, identified as God.

5.6 Results Summary

The findings reveal that while Craig's formulation effectively highlights the necessity of a cause for the universe and utilizes powerful philosophical tools against infinity, it falls short of the metaphysical depth of the classical kalam argument. The mutakallimun embed volitional agency and uniqueness into the premises, thereby deriving God's existence directly. Craig's reliance on empirical justification and his minimalist syllogism yield a cause but not necessarily a personal God. Taftazani's refined view of infinity offers a more robust philosophical foundation for rejecting an infinite past than a mere appeal to contemporary paradoxes.

1.2 6. Discussion

The comparative analysis underscores the richness of the classical kalam argument relative to Craig's modern reformulation. This section reflects on the implications of the findings and explores their significance for philosophy of religion and metaphysical discourse.

6.1 The Authentic Kalam Argument: Philosophical Strengths

1. **Integration of Volitional Agency**: Embedding volitional agency within the argument explains why a timeless cause produces a temporal effect.

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The cause is not merely a metaphysical principle but a conscious agent who wills the universe at a specific moment (Craig, 1979; Craig & Sinclair, 2009). This provides a natural transition from the cosmological argument to theological attributes.

2. **Unity of God**: By establishing that there is at most one necessary being, the argument affirms divine unity, aligning with the Islamic doctrine of *tawhid*. This conclusion is not derivable from Craig's syllogism without additional arguments (Al-Juwayni, 1950; Al-Ghazali, 1903/1998; Al-Razi, 1990).
3. **A Priori Justification**: The mutakallimun's causal principle is grounded in metaphysical necessity—something cannot come from nothing—making the premise resistant to empirical skepticism. Even Muʿtazilite assertions of human freedom presume God as the ultimate cause (Wolfson, 1976).
4. **Nuanced Infinity**: Taftazani's distinction between abstract and concrete infinity acknowledges modern mathematical developments while preserving metaphysical coherence (Taftazani, 1895/2009). This nuance prevents simplistic dismissals of the claim that infinity is compatible with reality.

6.2 Limitations of Craig's Formulation

Craig's modern formulation has been lauded for bringing the Kalam argument into contemporary analytic debates, yet it has limitations:

1. **Minimalistic Structure:** The three- step syllogism proves only a cause. Additional arguments are needed to conclude that this cause is God. This disjunction between the core syllogism and the theistic conclusion may weaken its persuasive force.
2. **A Posteriori Emphasis:** By defending causality primarily empirically, Craig risks leaving the argument vulnerable to skeptical scenarios. Philosophers have argued that causality might not apply at the cosmic scale, especially given quantum theories where events seem uncaused.
3. **Underdeveloped Infinity Concept:** Although Craig uses modern mathematics to argue against actual infinity, he does not integrate a conceptual distinction akin to Taftazani's abstract vs concrete infinity, which could strengthen the metaphysical argument.

6.3 Broader Implications

The classical Kalam argument shows that medieval Islamic thought offers rich resources for contemporary philosophy of religion. It challenges modern philosophers to engage more deeply with historical sources rather than rely solely on simplified versions. In a broader context, the distinction between abstract and concrete infinity demonstrates how developments in mathematics influence metaphysics. Finally, the study underscores the enduring relevance of rational theologies—kalam remains a fertile ground for dialogue between faith and reason.

7. Conclusion

This research paper has presented an extensive comparative analysis of **Craig's Kalam Cosmological Argument** and the **Authentic Kalam**

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Argument formulated by the **mutakallimun**. The classical argument, originating with theologians such as al- Juwayni, al- Ghazali, al- Razi, and Taftazani, combines premises about temporal origination, causality, volitional agency, and the uniqueness of the necessary being to conclude to the existence of God. Craig's modern version simplifies the structure to a minimalist syllogism, establishing only that the universe has a cause. The classical argument's integration of volition and unity within its premises yields a stronger metaphysical conclusion. Furthermore, the classical distinction between abstract and concrete infinity—anticipating modern potential/actual infinity distinctions—strengthens the argument for the universe's beginning. The authentic kalam argument remains a powerful and philosophically rich formulation that deserves renewed attention in modern discourse.

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