In his book First Principles (1862), the 19th-century English philosopher Herbert Spencer has a chapter on 'Ultimate Religious Ideas' in which he writes that, as regards the origin of the universe, three hypotheses are possible: self-existence (atheism), self-creation (pantheism) or creation by an external agency (theism) [REF]. Analyzing these three hypotheses, however, Spencer finds that, 'differing so widely as they seem to do', they all 'contain the same ultimate element. It is impossible to avoid making the assumption of self-existence somewhere',[REF] whether with regard to a part of the universe (atheism), the universe as a whole (pantheism), or an external creator (theism). Furthermore, the idea of self-existence is not merely inescapable but 'rigorously inconceivable; and this holds true whatever be the nature of the object of which it is predicated'. For Spencer, therefore, atheism, pantheism and theism alike, despite 'seeming to their adherents quite rational, turn out, when critically examined, to be literally unthinkable' [REF]. In view of its inability to evade assuming self-existence somewhere, 'even that which is commonly regarded as the negation of all religion - even positive Atheism comes within the definition' of religion [REF