

Aquinas, "The Five Proofs of God" – pp. 348-351 (the first three arguments are all versions of the "Cosmological Argument" in favor of God's existence)

1) In your own words, explain the Cosmological Argument for God's existence in terms of motion and (similarly) cause and effect.

The Cosmological Argument is a philosophical argument for the existence of God that traces its roots back to Aristotle and his concept of the "unmoved mover." The argument proceeds from the observation that things in the universe are in motion and that everything in motion must be caused to be in motion by something else. The argument then concludes that there must be a first cause or "uncaused cause" that set everything else in motion.

2) What does an "infinite regress" mean, and why is it so central to the Cosmological argument?

In the context of the Cosmological argument, an infinite regress of causes is seen as problematic because it would mean that there is no ultimate cause or explanation for the existence of the universe. If we were to say that the universe exists because it was caused by something else, and that something else was caused by yet another thing, and so on, we would never arrive at a first cause or explanation for the universe's existence.

3) How is the "third" of the five ways about the contingent existence of everything in the universe?

The argument from contingency proceeds from the observation that everything in the universe is contingent, meaning that it could have not existed. This includes not only individual things like rocks and trees, but also the universe as a whole. Aquinas argues that if everything is contingent, then there must have been a time when nothing existed. However, if there was ever a time when nothing existed, then there would be nothing now, since something cannot come from nothing. Therefore, there must be at least one necessary being that exists by its own nature and does not depend on anything else for its existence.

Anselm, "The Existence of God". pp. 345-347 (this is the "Ontological Argument" for God's existence)

1) Explain in your own words what Anselm means by a being "that than which nothing greater can be conceived".

Essentially, he is trying to describe a being that is the greatest possible being we can conceive of. This being would possess all possible perfections and be completely unlimited in every way. It would be infinitely powerful, infinitely wise, infinitely good, and so on. Anselm is essentially saying that when we think of the greatest possible being we can conceive of, we are necessarily thinking of a being that exists. If this being did not exist in reality, then it would not be the greatest possible being we can conceive of, since a being that exists in reality would be greater than a being that exists only in our minds.

2) On 346, what is Anselm's argument about why this greatest possible being *must* exist in reality, by its very nature?

Anselm's argument on page 346 is that the greatest possible being must exist in reality, by its very nature, because if it only existed in the understanding and not in reality, then there would be a greater being that both existed in reality and in the understanding.

Hume, "The Argument from Design", pp. 365-370 (this is Hume's criticism of the "Teleological Argument" for God's existence...)

1) Describe the Teleological Argument as presented on pages 365-366.

The Teleological Argument, also known as the Argument from Design, is presented by Hume as an argument for the existence of God based on the observation of order, purpose, and complexity in the natural world. According to the argument, the natural world exhibits an order and complexity that can only be explained by the existence of an intelligent designer or creator, and that designer or creator is identified as God. Hume describes the argument in two parts. First, he explains the analogy between the natural world and a human artifact, such as a watch. Just as a watch exhibits order, purpose, and complexity, so too does the natural world. Just as a watch is

the product of a watchmaker, so too must the natural world be the product of an intelligent designer or creator. Second, Hume argues that the analogy between the natural world and a human artifact is weak, and that the argument fails to establish the existence of an intelligent designer or creator. Hume contends that the analogy only holds if there is a known similarity between the cause and effect, and in this case, there is no known similarity between the natural world and a human artifact. Moreover, Hume points out that the argument suffers from the problem of infinite regress. If we say that the order and complexity of the natural world requires an intelligent designer or creator, then we must also ask what caused the designer or creator, and so on, leading to an infinite regress

2) On 367, Hume, through Philo, states that for all we know, "matter may contain the source or spring of order originally within itself, as well as mind does". What do you think he means by this statement and the paragraph it's found in?

Hume's statement through Philo on page 367 that "matter may contain the source or spring of order originally within itself, as well as mind does" is meant to challenge the assumption underlying the Teleological Argument that order and complexity can only be the result of an intelligent designer or creator. Philo is suggesting that there may be natural explanations for the order and complexity we observe in the natural world, rather than invoking the existence of a supernatural being. In this case, matter itself may contain the inherent properties or laws that give rise to the observed order and complexity, rather than requiring the intervention of an external agent. Hume is pointing out that the Teleological Argument is based on an anthropomorphic view of causation, where the only known cause of order and complexity is the human mind. However, Hume argues that there may be other natural causes, such as the inherent properties of matter, that can account for the observed order and complexity in the natural world.

3) What are some of the problems Hume presents concerning the comparison of the universe to a machine and the assumption that it must also be designed?

Firstly, Philo argues that the analogy between the universe and a machine is a weak one. While a machine is the product of human design, we have no direct experience of the creation of a

universe or any other natural system. Therefore, it is not clear that the same principles of design and causation that we observe in human artifacts can be applied to the natural world. Secondly, Philo points out that the analogy assumes that we know what a universe that was not designed would look like, which is not the case. We only have experience of designed objects, so we cannot know what a non-designed universe would look like. Therefore, the argument from design is based on an assumption about what a non-designed universe would look like, which is not supported by evidence. Thirdly, Philo argues that the analogy assumes that the universe is similar to a machine in every respect, which is also not the case. A machine is a finite and specific object, while the universe is infinite and constantly changing. Therefore, it is not clear that the principles of design and causation that apply to machines can be applied to the universe as a whole.