

proofs for existence of God

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God's existence is infinite & is not subjected to the limited understanding of men, but men refuses to see what this unequal struggle. For the religious person the existence of God poses no problem because for him it is self-proved, on the other hand atheist not concerned with whether God exist or not. It is man's nature to have logical confirmation of his beliefs even if the beliefs have a psychological basis - it is the man's nature which compelled the philosophers to find logical proofs for the existence of God, who provides the basis of religious faith.

a belief which cannot be supported by arguments is treated as blind faith; consequently, philosophers have found it necessary to butt up their faith in God with logical arguments in order to avoid undermining their estimation of faith. Thus, all proofs that God exist, are pleas put forward in justification one's faith.

Deductive proof:-

Best exemplified in mathematical reasoning, but mathematical reasoning is purely a priori. Naturally such reasoning does not refer to any actual state of affairs, but to tautologies or use of words. Hence, if we could deductively prove the existence of God, then this conclusion will remain valid with regard to God as a word or a stipulated definition of the term 'God' - God is

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proved as merely an idea only, but this will not establish the fact of God's existence of personal being for ex - ontological argument.

→ inductive proof . -

It is a posteriori & starts from sth observable, but God is not an observable entity, even in principle. A god who can be sensed or observed is not an infinite god, but an observable object that can be limited to a certain span of space & time - such god becomes an idol. Here, God is proved on the basis of observations & evidences, thus, at most analogies may be used to prove the existence of God like wrist watch in design argument, or Cosmological causal argument; but it never leads to certainty.

"Thus, no amount of observation or reason of this world can yield any proof or conclusion regarding God, either deductively or inductively"

It is as the ~~proposition~~ ^{proposition} says, if God does not exist it would of course be impossible to prove it; & if he does exist it will be a folly to attempt it.

⇒ Arguments for proof of God

Ontological :- Existence is the very essence of the idea of God - a priori as just from the idea of God we are deducing his existence

Cosmological :- World is Contingent & Contingent implies a necessary ground of the world, i.e. idea of necessary implies existence

Teleological :- Infinite Contingent harmony in this world implies a necessary designer, & idea of necessary implies existence

Moral :- adds the Contingency of moral existence in this world along with contingent harmonious design -

Ontological argument is the most important argument as it is the nerve of all other arguments, but it being a priori cannot establish any fact, thus other arguments like cosmological, teleological & moral arguments were put forward in its support. Empty content of ontological argument is progressively filled by succeeding arguments, & thus all arguments rest on the efficiency of ontological arguments

ontological Argument

The goal of this argument is to find why plato's theory of ideas. St. Anselm furthered this argument to propound the existence of God -

- ✓ God is an object of worship & to be worshipped, God must be the highest - greater than whom nothing can be conceived.
- ✓ Existence is a state of highest perfection or excellence, hence, existence is a predicate or quality like omnipotent, omniscient etc.
- ✓ Therefore, existence is the very essence of the idea of God - from mere analysis of the idea of God, his existence is deduced.

For Anselm, God, who is being, greater than whom nothing can be conceived to be existing, is a necessary being, & a necessary being cannot but exist. This is what Descartes also tries to hold by saying that, existence of God follows from the clear & distinct idea of God. Just as the word triangle necessarily implies that sum of all its angles is 180° & red wine necessarily implies that it is colored, similarly, to say that God is all perfect but does not exist is self-contradictory.

Spinoza & Leibniz also held that for the idea of perfect being, God must necessarily exist. If it is presumed that God does not exist then it would mean that God is not perfect. \therefore for God to be perfect it is necessary that he should possess the quality of existence.

Critical Comments by Raw

- ✓ To say God is a necessary being is self-contradictory just as a square circle, because this is a transgression of linguistic usage; as necessary can be legitimately used with regard to symbols or propositions, not with respect to things or beings.
- ✓ Existence is not a real predicate as the word 'God's' or 'God exists' do not add anything to God.
- ✓ If existence of perfect 'being' is a predicate of God in empirical proposition, then it is contingent & not necessary.
- ✓ By mere thought or concept we cannot bring anything into existence, thus concept of God remains a concept, no matter how hard we think.

Critics argue that Anselm's reasoning would result in absurd conclusion if it is applied in other field like an argument for most perfect island, but unless it **exists** in reality it cannot be the most perfect conceivable island.

⇒ Epistemological Argument

ontological argument failed because it is purely a priori & analytic, hence, one has to take recourse to actual state of affairs, which are based on some verifiable experience. so this is what is properly attributable to

God - defined as Prime mover + Architect + Perfect
 than the world + Efficient cause + Self caused
 in its elementary form it was first formulated by
 Plato, then Aristotle stated it quite clearly, &
 afterwards St. Aquinas propounded it as central
 argument for proving God. The Cosmological argument is
 usually expressed in these forms - Causal argument &
 argument from Contingency

- Causal Argument :-

Every event has a cause & Causal Series is inter-
 minable, but to understand the whole Series, we have
 to posit a first cause. The first cause which produ-
 ces the whole series of cause & effect is the necessary
 & cannot be in turn moved by anything else. This uncaused
 cause is God. Hence, the world of Causal Series
 requires God to explain it. St. Aquinas did not use
 the concept of causality in modern scientific sense,
 but in Aristotelian sense of efficient causality.

The effect reflects the nature of design fashioned
 out of pre-existing matter, & the first cause is
 more perfect than the world designed by it as the
 first mover.

Critical Comments

✓ Every event must have a cause is only a procedu-
 ral ~~state~~ assumption of science, & designed to
 explain the series of particular events of the
 world, but cannot be universally accepted.

- ✓ The idea of the world as a single event is controversial, rather the world is sum of all actual & possible events, hence causal theory is not applicable to the world as a whole.
- ✓ Kant - Category of Causality is applicable to phenomenon only but world as a whole is not a perceptible phenomenon.
- ✓ Russell holds that every event has a cause, but fertility need not have any just as every man has a parents but certainly we cannot say that manness too has a parent.

Assumption from Contingency

Assumption of this assumption is that existence is prior to essence or idea that is existence of God is not implied by God's essence. one should not say that there must be a perfect being because we have an idea of him, but he should say that we have an idea of him because he exists.

Aquinas starts with the belief that this world is contingent. There is nothing in the nature of the thing itself to guarantee its perpetual existence or it does not have the ground of its own existence. It is therefore capable of non-existence.

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This basically implies that world as consisting of contingent events requires a necessary being as ground of contingent events, as sth contingent cannot come out of nothing.

Moreover, if all the things of the world are contingent then in the infinite series of time, they should have passed away or ceased to exist. Hence, there should have been a complete void by this time; but it is not so. Therefore there should be a necessary being who sustains all this contingent things. This necessary being is God. Thus contingent things comply the existence of necessary being.

Criticism by Kant -

- ✓ To say God is a necessary being is self-contradictory just as a square circle, because it is a transgression of linguistic usage
- ✓ Emphasizes on only one characteristic of the world - Contingency with the sole aim to conclude the existence of necessary being
- ✓ Contingency is shown with the help of causality, however this principle does not hold true in Intersensible world.
- ✓ From the Contingency, we can infer only contingency and not the opposite - necessary being.

Moreover, from the mere possibility we cannot infer the actuality of all contingent things coming to naught, unless we accept that an infinite series of time has already passed away.

→ Teleological Argument

Teleological means 'end' or 'purpose'. The teleological argument holds that the order in the nature points to a design of infinite intelligence. It proves God's existence on the basis of purpose, design, order & harmony in the world. It is an argument from the order of nature to the divine designer.

An extension of cosmological argument -

- ✓ It takes empirical features of the universe more extensively & in detailed manner than the cosmological argument
- ✓ Holds that order of nature is contingent yet perpetuating, hence has to be grounded in self-existing existence.

A purpose or design is present everywhere, just like Patek watch theory of design concluding a designer, same can be concluded from the order & design in nature - perfect cycle of season, day night, movement of planets etc. Further, climate of earth along with protective Ozone layers has been made so as to make it conducive for human life. Still all cannot be product of accident,

but is the result of divine intention.

Three Characteristics of intention

- ✓ Various organs are so selected in all species so as to perform the adjustive functions with respect to their environment - breathing
- ✓ Combination :- Correlation of organs with mutual interdependence in all species so as to function as a coordinated whole - human body
- ✓ Gradation :- or arrangement of species to attain an interdependent means - lower life sustains & supports higher life.

Critical Comments by Kant :-

- ✓ This proof is analogical based on analogy of a mechanic with respect to his machines - it has no force of demonstration
- ✓ analogy is highly anthropomorphic as we are thinking of the reality in terms of human needs & ends.
- ✓ fails to explain physical, mental & moral evil - so much disharmony & chaos in nature - one-sided explanation
- ✓ God has been compared to a designer & hence been limited by matter, out of which he designs this world.

- ✓ This is disguised form of cosmological argument. It assumes order is contingent & therefore requires an external entity to account for it; but it may be argued that world has come from various permutations & combinations.

Things are as they are because that is the way they have turned out. World may exhibit order but that does not mean it has any purpose or design. Charles Darwin showed that principle of natural selection alone has contributed to the survival of the fittest, hence there is no need of any supernatural entity.

⇒ moral Assumption

This assumption claims that ethical experiences, especially one's sense of obligation towards fellow beings, presuppose the reality of God as a source of moral obligation. It is further assumed that anyone committed to the life of moral values must implicitly believe in the reality of a supernatural source & basis of all these values—moral commands imply a moral Commander—God.

Kant's moral assumptions -

- ✓ The highest good is where moral virtue & happiness coincide.

- ✓ people are rationally obliged to attain the highest good
- ✓ what people are obliged to attain, it must be possible for them to attain
- ✓ If there is no God or afterlife, it is not possible to attain the highest good
- ✓ ∴ God of afterlife must exist

Reality shows that good people often have more miserable lives than evil people, hence only the existence of an afterlife with God could explain this paradoxical situation in a satisfactory way. It appears to be impossible to achieve perfection of morality in short lifespan, thus Kant believed that eternal truth with God is necessary for us to reach that perfection eventually.

Criticism: -

- ✓ moral arguments point to God as a supreme authority on morality, but does not prove the existence of God per se
- ✓ even in the absence of God, humans can & often do abide by moral commands for their own sake - Jains are atheist, yet they follow a strict ethical code