A STATEMENT AND EXAMINATION OF THE ARGUMENT FROM DESIGN

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Prefatory Note

There is a long historical association between theism and rationalism on the one hand, and empiricism and atheism on the other. This work arises from the feeling of discomfort which such an alignment produces in me. On the one hand I believe in God, and I think there are good reasons for believing in God. On the other hand, my belief in God, like many others, is not based upon inference but on experience of creatureliness.

The rationalists insist that the concept of God is bound up with that of necessity and that, without it, it is reduced to the status of one finite concept amongst others, not unique. What can be made of a God who merely *happens* to exist ? Arguing for the same premises, the empiricists will maintain that from presented data it will never be possible to infer necessity, and that any being who is not necessarily might *not* be. The support on which everything stands might slip under at any moment, and therefore, cannot be called God.

To meet these objections, it will be necessary to reexamine much of the natural theology and also much of the recent philosopy of religion. From the time of St. Thomas this or that traditional argument for divine existence has been under fire. Of these the ontological argument is the most discussed one, while the argument from design has sadly suffered undeserved neglect. I have chosen to state and examine the argument from design through its ramifications at the hands of such thinkers as St. Thomas, David Hume, Kant and William Paley. This argument is somehow closer to the natural disposition of man. Even the *Vedas* implore us to look upon the world as the undying poetry of the gods : *pasya devasya kavyam, na mamara na jirjati.* It is well enough that Kant treated this argument with respect.

I can hardly think my treatment of St. Thomas' Fifth Way adequate in any respect. The requisite scholarship is poorly lacking in me. However, I have not spared myself of any pains to rise upto my daunting task. For the rest of my thinkers there was access to their texts, I have tried to understand their intentions with a free mind. I have always reminded myself of what St. Paul has said, 'the letter killeth, the spirit enliveneth'. It is the spirit of the argument from design that I have to get at, and state and examine to the best of my abilities. Much of course remains to be said, but I should like to say with Cardinal Newman, I do not look for the other shore, one step will suffice for me.

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INTRODUCTION

It is one thing to elaborate a coherent concept of God, it is quite another to know, apart from revelation, that a being actually exists. A proof of the existence of God would yield such knowledge and it is the task of natural theology to evaluate arguments that intend to be such proofs. As a prelude to revealed theology natural theology restricts the assumption fit to serve as premise in the arguments to things naturally knowable by humans, i.e. knowable without special revelations from super-natural sources. Many people have hoped that such natural religious knowledge would be universally communicated and would justify a form of religious practice that would appeal to all humanhood because of its rationality. Such a religion would be a natural religion. The history of natural theology has produced a bewildering variety of arguments for the existence of God. The four main types are the ontological argument, the cosmological argument, the teleological argument and the moral argument. Of these we shall be concerned with the cosmological argument which is otherwise known as the argument from Design.

The key premises of various cosmological arguments are statements of obvious facts of a general sort about the world. Thus the argument to a first cause begins with the observation that there are quite a few things undergoing change and things causing change. If something is a cause of such a change by something else, then there is an infinitely long chain of causes of change. But it is alleged there cannot be a causal chain of infinite length. Therefore there is something that causes change but it is not caused to change by anything else i.e. a first cause. Many critics of this form of the argument deny its assumption that there cannot be an infinite causal regress chain of causes. This argument also fails to show that there is only one first cause and does not prove that a first cause must have such divine attributes as omniscience, omnipotence, and perfect goodness.

A version of the cosmological argument that has attracted more attention from contemporary philosophers is the argument from contingency to necessity. It starts with the observation that there are *contingent beings* — beings that could have failed to exist. Since

contingent beings do not exist of logical necessity, a contingent being must be caused to exist by some other being, for otherwise there would be no explanation of why it exists rather than not doing so. Either the causal chain of contingent beings has a first member, a contingent being not caused by another contingent being it is infinitely long. If on the other hand the chain has a first member than a necessary being exists and causes it. After all being contingent the first member must have a cause, but its cause cannot be another contingent being. Hence its cause has to be non-contingent i.e. being that could not fail to exist and so is necessary. If on the other hand the chain is infinitely long then a necessary being exists and causes the chain as a whole. This is because the chain as a whole being itself contingent required a cause that must be non-contingent service it is not part of the chain. In either case if there are contingent beings, a necessary being exists. The critics of this argument attacked its assumption that there must be an explanation for existence of every contingent being. Rejecting the principle that there is a sufficient reason for the existence of each contingent thing, they argue that the existence of at least some contingent things is an inexplicable brute fact. And even if the principle of sufficient reason is true, its truth is not obvious and so it would not be irrational to deny it. Accordingly we may conclude that this version of the cosmological argument does not prove the existence of God in the open but the question of whether it shows that theistic belief is ratgional is left open.

The starting point of teleological arguments is the phenomenon of bold directness in nature. Acquinas begins with the claim that we see that things which lack intelligence act for an end so as to achieve the best result. Modern science has discredited this universal metaphysical teleology, but many biological systems do seem to display remarkable adaptation of means to ends. Thus as William Paley insisted, the eye is adapted to see and its parts co-operate in complex ways to produce sight. This suggests an analogy between such biological systems and human artifacts, which are known to be products of intelligent design. Spelled out in mechanical terms, the analogy grounds the claim that the world as a whole

is like a vast machine composed of many smaller machines. Machines are constructed by intelligent human designers. Since like effects have like causes, the world as a whole and many of the parts are therefore probably products of design by an intelligence resembling the human but greater in proportion to the magnitude of its effects. Because the form of the argument rests on an analogy it is known as the analogical argument for the *existence of God.* It is also known as the *Design argument,* since it concludes to the existence of an intelligent designer of the world.

Hume subjected the design argument to a sustained criticism in his '*Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion.*' Most scholars suppose that the character Philo speaks for Hume. Hume does not actually reject the argument. He does however think that it warrants only the very weak conclusion that the cause or causes of order in the Universe probably bears some remote analogy to human intelligence. As this way of putting it indicates, the argument does not rule out polytheism. Moreover, the analogy with human artifices suggests that the designer or designees of the Universe did not create it from nothing but merely imposed order on already existing matter. And on account of the mixture of good and evil in the universe the argument does not show that the Designer or Designees are morally admirable enough to deserve obedience or worship. So, since the time of Hume the Design argument has been further undermined by the emergence of Darwinean explanations of biological adaptations in terms of natural selections that give explanations of such adaptations in terms of intelligent Design and stiff competition.

Hume's critique of the argument from Design may be summarised as under. He takes the argument as purporting to how that our well ordered universe must be the effect of a supremely intelligent cause, that each aspect of the Divine creation as well designed to fulfil some beneficial ends, and that these effects show us that the Deity is kind and benevolent. Hume shows that these conclusions go beyond the available data. The pleasant and well defined features of the world are balanced by a good measure of the unpleasant. Our knowledge of causal connections depends on the experience of constant conjunctions. Such connections cause the vivacity of present impressions to be transferred to the idea associated

with it and leave us belonging in the Idea. But in this case the effect to be explained — the universe — is unique and it cause unknown. Consequently we cannot possibly have experiential grounds for any kind of inference about this cause. On experiential grounds the most we can say is that there is a massive mixed effect and that this effect probably does have a commensurately large and mixed cause. Furthermore, as the effect is remotely like the products of human manufacture, we can say that the causes or causes of order of the universe probably bears some remote analogy to human intelligence. There is indeed an inference to be drawn from the unique effect in question the universe, to the cause of the effect but it is not the argument of the theologian nor does it in any way support sectarian pretentions or intolerence.

We shall now turn to Kant's criticism of the proofs of Divine existence as we find in the *Critique of Pure Reason.* Kant's criticism of the theistic proofs is a part of his general treatment of the Ideas of Reason. In the context of Kant's vocabulary, an idea of reason is an *a priori* concept to which no empirical intuition may ever be found to correspond. The concept of God for Kant is one such *a priori* concept for an idea of reason.

We shall take up Kant's criticism of the theistic proofs in greater detail in a later sequence. But in the present context we shall be briefly outlining the general thrust of Kant's criticism. Kant thinks very highly of the argument from design, and appears to take the argument as coming practically near being sufficient to justify belief in God.

Kant calls the argument from Design by a new name. He calls it 'The Physico-Theological proof'. Kant's main criticism is that, if this argument is to be used to establish the kind of God the theologians want, the ontological argument again presupposed. We may summarily mention Kant's own statement of the ontological proof. It consists of three propositions[1] God, by definition is the sum of all positive attributes. The definion means the substance qualified by all positive attributes. By 'positive attributes' Kant means the exclusion of evil attributes since they are negative. (2) Existence is a positive attribute.

Therefore God exists. In general Kant meets the argument by denying the second premises and thus lays down a logical principle which is of great importance that existence is not a real predicate. Now, at the best the argument from design could only estabalish a very good, very powerful, very wise God but not a perfect and omnipotent God. Nor does it even establish the conclusion that God created the world and did not merely impose farm on a pre-existing matter. In order to prove more, the argument from design must be supplemented by the cosmological argument which also, as Kant shows, cannot establish its conclusion without pre-supposing the ontological argument.

The cosmological proof is known as the first cause argument. It involves the notion of a necessary being but it differs from the ontological proof in starting not from the idea of such a being, but from experience. The cosmological proof differs from the physico theological proof not from the specific nature of certain experience but from the fact that there is some experience. As summarised by Kant, the argument "If anything exists, an absolutely necessary being must also exist. Now I, at least exist. Therefore, an absolutely necessary being exists" (B 632).

The cosmological proof, Kant contends, correctly presupposes the ontological proof and is therefore wrecked by the failure of the latter. For without the ontological proof, even if we could prove the existence of a necessary being we should have no means of obtaining his nature. It is only if we already know by the ontological proof that a perfect being must be a necessary being and assume that no other being can be necessary that we have by the cosmological proof establish the existence of God in the science of a perfect being; but if we have already accepted the ontological proof, the cosmological proof in superfluous.

What could have been the motive behind Kant's criticism of the theistic proofs ? It has been suggested what Kant was attacking was not religious but the pseudo-intellectualized abstractions of the 18th century modernism. The supreme cause, regarded merely as such,

is not an object of religion. It is *a priori* of pseudo-science "we might, in strict rigour, deny to the deists any belief in God at all, and regard him merely as the maintainer of existence of a primal being or thing — the supreme cause of all other things" [A 633]. Kant is contending that the deist is missing the religious point and this is brought out by the contrast he makes between 'God' and 'Supreme Cause'. It has also been said that one of Kant's achievements was to rescue the concept of God from the Deists's lack of religious interest.

If one takes care of Kant's assumptions his conclusions should not surprise us. Reason in the ordinary sense produces certainty only within the limits of space and time. Propositions about God do not fall under that heading. Therefore, there can be no certainty in propositions about God. Reason is only regulative, and rules are not existences. Therefore, there is no knowledge of any *existence* other than the spatio-temporal. The argument is conclusive, the detailed disproofs are only expansions and applications of it. To conclude : Kant has shown that *proofs* of the existence of God are impossible. What he objects to is not God but the idea for demonstration. It has been Kant's conviction that religion will not suffer from the disappearance of theological metaphysics.

The argument from design was the main highway to God in the 18th century. Hume took it seriously and Kant in a well known passage wrote that it "deserved to be mentioned with respect", as "the oldest, the clearest and the most accordant with the common sense of mankind." (A 623 and B 651). The argument from design was the contemporary accommodation of science and religion. The 18th century mind found in the laws of nature the decrees of God. It works through the newly discovered amazing evidences of adaptation and found that so far from diminishing God, they added to his glory. The argument may now be summarised as follows :

There is in the world a remarkable order, an arrangement of detail, fit to excite wonder and for excelling the best efforts of human craftsmanship. Everything falls beautifully onto place, at any rate, *as if* it had been disposed by a master planner. In the

dialogues Hume makes Clenthes' talk "The author of nature is somewhat similar to the mind of man though possessed of much larger faculties; proportion to the grandeur of the work which he has executed. By the argument *a posteriori,* and by this argument alone, do we prove at once the existence of Deity and his similarity to human mind and intelligence". Clenthes and Philo argues that this is a fair statement. (*Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion,* ***Part II,*** *edited by* ***Kempsmith,*** *p.176*).

It has been generally assumed that the argument is to be taken as demonstrated but if it is *a posteriori,* as Clenthes is made to affirm it cannot be demonstrative. That the argument from design cannot demonstrate Divine existence is that Hume and Kant between them have succeeded in showing.

We may take it for granted that there is in the world a very remarkable degree of order and adaptation, and that the natural wonder which it awakens is increased by the discourses of science. The question then is whether it requires an orderer or designer. The analogy of the architect is only an analogy. An analogy is useful as a suggestion and it should prevent unprejudiced people from concluding to a direct negation without closer argument. It may prove to be a lead to an important discovery. But if it is put forward as a demonstration, it is bound to drop a point. It is tempting to treat it as a clarification. Nothing in either Hume or Kant is inconsistent with this policy.

The argument from design might better be described as an argument to design. If it is merely from design, design being one of the premises, it has its conclusion in its pocket. What is at issue is whether there is design. If there is, there is obviously a designer. This is not wholly a triviality, for an argument which does not clearly make the distinction may unfairly make the best of both worlds. At its best it is an argument from order to design and a designer. And it is proper to accept it, and to insist on its being taken in that limited sense.

Chapter I

THE FIFTH WAY : ARGUMENT FROM DESIGN IN ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

St. Thomas Acquinas (225-274A.D.) was an Italian philosopher - theologian, the most influential thinker of the medieval period. He produced a powerful philosophical synthesis that combined Aristotelian and Neo-platonic elements within a Christian context in an original and ingenious way.

Acquinas was both a philosopher and a theologian. The greater part of his writings are theological, but there are many strictly philosophical works within this corpus. Also important are large sections of strictly philosophical writings incorporated into theological works. Aquinas clearly distinguishes between strictly philosophical investigations and theological investigations. If philosophy is based on the light of natural reason, theology (*Sacra doctrina*) presupposes faith in divine revelations. While the natural light of reason is insufficient to discover things that can be made known to human beings only through revelation, e.g., belief in the Trinity, St. Thomas holds that it is impossible for those things revealed to us by God through faith to be opposed to those we can discover by using human reason. For then one or the other would have to be false; and since both come to us from God, God himself would be the author of falsity, something St.Thomas rejects as abhorrent. Hence it is appropriate for the theologian to use philosophical reasoning in theologizing.

Acquinas also distinguishes between the orders to be followed by the theologian and by the philosopher. In theology one reasons from belief in God and his relevations to the implications of this for created reality. In philosophy one begins with an investigation of created reality in so far as this can be understood by human reason, and then seeks some knowledge of desired reality viewed as the cause of created reality and the end or goal of one's philosophical enquiry.

We shall now turn directly to the way in which St.Thomas considers the argument from design. St.Thomas' discussion may be conveniently indicated under the heading : the existence of God and the "five ways."

St.Thomas holds that unaided human reason, i.e. philosophical reason can demonstrate that God exists, that He is one, etc., by reasoning from effect to cause. Best known among his many presentations of argumentation for God's existence are the five ways. In one of his first writings, *On Being and Essence,* St.Thomas wishes to determine how essence is realised in separate substances like the soul, angels of the Christian tradition and the first cause, God. He criticises the view that created separate substances are composed of matter and form. Aquinas counters that they are not entirely free from composition. They are composed of a form or essence and an act of existing (*esse).* We can present the development of St.Thomas' complex argument in the following manner.

(I) We can think of an essence without knowing whether or not it actually exists. Therefore, in such entities essences and acts of existing differ unless (II) there is a thing whose essence and act of existences are identical. At best there can be only such beings (III) Since *esse* in all other entities is distinct from essence, existence is communicated to such beings by something else, i.e., they are caused. Since that which existing through something else must be traced back to that which exists of itself, there must be something that causes the existence of everything else and that is identical with its act of existing. Otherwise one would regress to infinity as caused, causes of existence, which St.Thomas dismisses as unacceptable.

It should be noted that the problem of divine existence and its proof is taken up by Aquinas both in "*Summa Contra Gentiles*" as well as "*Summa Theologica*". But the *Summa Contra Gentiles* is less widely known and much less widely read than the later longer and more famous *Summa Theologica.* It is held that by comparison the *Contra Gentiles* is more philosophical as its author intended and as its title implies. Perhaps the *Summa Theologica*

has gained its fame through its widespread use in Church dogmatics, since it is that *Summa* which contains most of the detailed arguments in doctrinal issues. However, we shall try, in an humble manner, of course, to look at both the *Summas* in the context of the argument from design.

I

The *Contra Gentiles* defines the wise man as one who deals with the first beginning and the last end of the Universe. One of the principal ideas advanced in the first *Summa* is that Truth is the final end and the divine nature must first of all be considered if one is to understand first and last things. St.Thomas addresses himself to establishing the mode of possible proof where God is concerned. It is one of the contentions of St.Thomas that reason and faith must agree. It is impossible for the truth of faith to be contrary to principles known by natural reason. Although as human beings our knowledge begins with sense-objects, these retain in themselves some trace of the imitation of God. Here is both Plato and Bonaventura. Bonaventura held that the natural world is seen as a sense-world but it is also one containing traces within itself of its supernatural origin as recreation of God. Thomas also affirms the use of negative method. We have some sort of knowledge of the divine nature by knowing what it is not.

The famous proofs for God's existence appear in the "*Contra Gentiles*" in briefer form than in the other "*Summa*". It does not take much vision to see the *Contra Gentiles* as the framework upon which the *Summa Theologica* was finally built.

According to Aquinas philosophy considers man and the natural order as these things are in themselves. Philosophy makes no necessary reference to God, but the Christian faith considers natural things, not in themselves but in as much as they represent the majesty of God. The philosopher takes his stand on the immediate and natural causes of things; but the Christian argues from God as first cause, indicating what things are revealed and what we

can leaqn about the divine nature. Philosophically we begin with the creatures and then may be led to a knowledge of God. Faith studies creatures only in relation to God and so studies God first and creatures after that.

The *Contra Gentiles* does not make more use of the proofs as the later *Summa*. The proofs received less stress and St.Thomas moves directly into a discussion of the divine attributes. He discusses God's eternality, his freedom from potentiality, his lack of composition, and his incorporeality. In short, God understands not temporarily but eternally; He understands all things not directly but by understanding their intelligible counterparts, he knows individuals as well as universals. Further, God's will is free, having no cause but his own wisdom. In God there is active power, but no potentiality. He is essentially infinite, and his knowledge and understanding are infinite.

II

We may now have a quick and brief look at the principal ideas advanced in "*Summa Theologica*". They may, with hazards of course, be put as under : Man requires more than a philosophy in his search for truth, Certain truths are beyond human reason and are available only because of divine revelation. Theology which depends upon revealed knowledge supplements natural knowledge.

The existence of God can be proved in five ways by reference to motion and the necessity of a first moves, by reference to possibility and necessity, by reference to the gradations of perfection in the world, and by reference to the order and harmony of nature which suggests an ordering being who gives purpose to the created world.

God alone is the being whose nature is such that by reference to him one can account for the fact of motion, efficient cause, necessity, perfection and order.

God's principal attributes are simplicity, (for he is non-corporeal, and without genus),

actuality, perfection, goodness, infinitude, immutability, unity and immanence. But the created intellect can know God only by God's grace and only through apprehension.

We may now go in for a little detailed consideration of the five ways with special reference to the argument from design. As compared with other classical theologians St. Thomas believed in a fairly straightforward approach to questions about God. However, St. Thomas did admit the necessity of the familiar negative method, since where God is concerned what he is not is clearer to us than what he is. The proposition, "God exists" is not self-evident to us, although it may be itself. The contradictory of the proposition "God is" can be conceived. In this case Thomas seems to oppose Anselm's Ontological argument, although the opposition is not quite as straightforward as it seems. St. Anselm formulated the Idea of God as that of "something than which nothing greater can be conceived" (*Proslogium II*). He then argues that something that exists in reality (*in re*) must be greater than something that exists in the mind only (*in intellectu*). So God must exist outside as well as in the mind, for if he existed in the mind only and not in reality he would not be "something than which nothing greater can be conceived." [*aliquid quo nihil maius logitari potest*].

TheThomistic objection seems to allow the basic principle that the proposition 'God does not exist' is self-contradictory, while distinguishing what is self-evident in itself from what may or may not be self-evident to this or that person. It may be remembered in this connection that St. Anslem had at the back of his mind the line of the Psalm; "the fool said in his heart there is no God." Anselm however proceeds almost at once to insist on a distinction between what exists in reality and what exists only in thought. St.Thomas denies that we can know God's essence directly, even though such vision would reveal that God's essence and existence are identical and thus support St.Anselm's contention. But the ontological argument, he reasons, is built upon a kind of direct access to the divine which human reason does not have.

The existence of God, then needs to be demonstrated from those of his effects which are known to us. St.Thomas readily admits that some will prefer to account for all natural phenomenon by referring everything to one principle which is nature herself. In opposition he asserts that God's existence can be proved in five ways. (1) The argument from motion; (2) The argument from the nature of efficient cause; (3) The argument from possibility and necessity; (4) The argument from the gradations of perfections to be found in things; and finally (5) the argument from the order of the world. We shall not analyse these arguments individually. We shall take up the fifth way later in greater detail. But presently several things can be noted about the five ways as a group. First, all are based on the principle that reason needs a final stopping point in any chain of explanation. Second, such a point of final rest cannot be itself within the series to be accounted for, but it must be outside it and different in kind. Third, in each case it is a principle which arrives at, not God himself, but these principles (for example a first efficient cause) are shown to be essential partrs of the nature of God. God's existence is agreed to by showing reason's need for one of his attributres in the attempt to explain natural phenomenon.

It is probably true that St.Thomas' five proofs have been given a disproportionate amount of attention, for following them he goes into elaborate detail in a discussion of the divine nature and its primary attributes, like simpliciuty, goodness, infinity and perfection. Taken together these passages of discussion form one of the most elaborate and complete discussions of God's nature by a majorChristian theologian. St.Thomas' philosophy has encouraged arguments more about the nature and primary attributes of God, rather than about the more formal and brief five proofs.

III

We shall now undertake a consideration of the fifth of the five ways, the *Argument from Design;* In this part we may be critical and suggest an evaluation of the argument as formulated by St.Thomas.

Critical Comments :

It must be noted that St. Thomas does not admit innate ideas, nor does he have recourse to any intuitive knowledge of God. He appears to apply the Aristotlean principle that there is nothing in the intellect which was not before in the senses. It follows then that the human intellect is confined to knowledge of corporeal objects and cannot transcend them. Objects, whether spiritual or corporeal are knowable only in so far as they partake of being, or in act and the intellect as such is the faculty of apprehending being. The intellect has as its object all being. The human intellect it embodied and is dependent on sense for its operation. It must start from the things of sense for its operation. It can come to know an object which transcends the things of sense only in so far as sensible objects bear a relation to that object and manifest it. If corporeal objects bear a discernible relation to an object which transcends them, the intellect can know that such an object exists. Moreover, in so far as material objects reveal the character of the Transcendent, the intellect can attain some knowledge of its nature. But such a knowledge cannot be adequate or perfect, since sense-objects cannot reveal adequately the nature of the Transcendent. The corporeal object is the natural object of the human intellect. What Aquinas means is that the human intellect is oriented towards the essence of the corporeal object. It is also true that, the human intellect, even embodied, retains its primary character of orientation towards being in general. It can, therefore, attain to some natural knowledge of God in so far corporeal objects are related to Him and reveal Him. But this knowledge is necessarily imperfect and inadequate and cannot be intuitive in character.

St. Thomas distinguishes between two propositions. In one case the predicate is included in the subject, 'Animal' is included in 'man' in the proposition that man is an animal, since man is a rational animal. But the proposition that God exists is a proposition of different order. God's essence is His existence and one cannot know God's nature, what God is, without knowing God's existence, that He is, Man has no *a priori* knowledge of

God's nature and only arrives at knowledge of the fact that God's essence is His existence after he has come to know God's existence. St. Thomas' objections to the ontological argument is easily understandable. It involves an illicit process of transition from the ideal to the real order. Granted that God is conceived as the Being than which no greater can be thought, it does not follow necessarily that such a Being exists, apart from its being conceived, that is, outside the mind. Owing to the weakness of the human intellect we cannot discuss *a priori* the positive possibility of the supremely perfect Being, the Being the essence of which is existence. We come to a knowledge of the fact that such a Being exists not through an analysis or consideration of the idea of such a Being, but through arguments from its effects, *a posteriori.*

If God's existence is to be proved *a posteriori* i.e. through an examination of God's effects, there are problems on that way too. God's effects are finite, while God is infinite. So there is no proportion between the effects and the cause. The conclusion of this reasoning will contain infinitely more than the premises. The reasoning starts with sensible objects and should end with a sensible object. It cannot proceed to an object infinitely transcending all sensible objects. This will be the tenor of Kant's critique of metaphysics. St.Thomas of course points out that we can argue from an effect to the existence of a cause, and if the effect is of such a kind that it can proceed only from a certain kind of cause, we can legitimately argue to the existence of a cause of that kind. St. Thomas argues from certain facts concerning the world and argues that these facts require a sufficient ontological explanation. He presupposes that the principle of causality is not purely subjective or applicable only within the sphere of 'phenomena' in the Kantian sense. He is well aware that it has to be shown that sensible objects are effects, in the sense that they do not contain in themselves their own sufficient ontological explanation.

St. Thomas' fifth way is the teleological proof, for which Kant had a considerable respect on account of its antiquity, clarity and persuasiveness. But in accordance with

the principles of the *Critique of Pure Reason,* he refused to recognise its demonstrative character.

St. Thomas argues that we behold inorganic objects operating for an end. As this happens, it cannot proceed from chance, but must be the result of intention. Inorganic objects are without knowledge, they cannot tend towards an end unless they are directed by someone who is intelligent and possessed of knowledge, as the arrow is directed by the archer. Therefore, there exists an intelligent Being, by whom all natural things are directed to an end : *et hoc dicimus Deum.*

There is a slight difference between the versions of the proof in the first and the second *Summa.* In the first *Summa* it is argued that when many things with different and even contrary qualities cooperate towards the realisation of one order, this must proceed from an intelligent Cause or Providence. The second *Summa* emphasises the internal finality of the inorganic object, while the first *Summa* emphasises the cooperation of many objects in the realisation of the one world order or harmony.

Kant is right in holding that by itself the proof leads to a Designer or Governor or Architect of the universe. And further reasoning is required in order to show that this Architect is not only a 'Demiurge', but a Creator.

If one chooses to argue in the manner of St. Thomas, one must take account of recent theories which prefer to render intelligible the genesis of the order and finality in the universe without recourse to the hypothesis of anay spiritual agent distinct from the universe.

Of the five ways St. Thomas gives a certain preference to the first, and calls it the *via manifestior.* Yet it is possible to say that the fundamental proof is really the third proof or 'way', that forms contingency. In the first proof the argument from contingency is applied to the special fact of motion or change, in the second proof to the order of causality, in the fourth to degrees of perfection, and in the fifth proof to finality. The argument from contingency itself is based on the fact that everything must have its sufficient reason, the

reason why it exists. Change or motion has its sufficient reason in an unmoved mover; the series of secondary causes in an uncaused cause, limited perfection in absolute perfection, and finality and order in nature in an Intelligence or Designer.

One might feel that *interiority* of the proofs of God's existence as given by St. Augustine or St. Bonaventura are not available in St. Thomas' proofs, though one could apply the general principles to the self, if one so wished. We learn from St. Augustine and St. Bonaventura that a man may contemplate creatures, the world without and the world within, and discern their natures, but his knowledge is of little worth unless he discerns in nature the *Vestiqium Dei* and in himself the *imago Dei,* unless he can detect the operation of God in his soul, an operation which is itself hidden but is rendered visible in its effects in its power. There is yet no watershed between St. Augustine and St. Bonaventura on the one hand and St. Thomas on the other, even though the problems which they discussed were in large measure set by theology. When Aristotle argues to the existence of an unmoved mover, he is answering a problem set by metaphysics and by physics. But when St. Anselm, St. Bonaventura and St. Thomas proved God's existence, they were showing the rational foundation for the acceptance of a revelation in which they already believed. St. Bonaventura was concerned to show God's immanent activity within the soul, and even though St. Thomas employs Aristotle's own argument he is not simply interested in showing that there is an unmoved mover, he is interested in proving the existence of God, a Being who meant a great deal more to him than an unmoved mover. It is true that St. Thomas defines philosophy as a study of Being in general, yet for him, philosophy is so much a study of God, God's activity and God's effects, so far as the natural reason will take us.

Before we round off our discussion of the argument from design or the fifth way of St. Thomas, we may point to the Christian sources of the argument. The *Book of Wisdom* Chapter 13 contains the essentials of the teleological argument. Again, St. Paul in his epistle to the *Romans* writes that God can be known from His works, as transcending His works. St. Thomas has explicated the words of these sources.

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Chapter II

DAVID HUME ON THE ARGUMENT FROM DESIGN

David Hume is one of the most brilliant minds the modern era has produced and at the same time the real father of positivist philosophy. The actual meaning of Hume's philosophy has repeatedly given rise to discussion. I will pass over controversial questions, however, and confine myself to summing up those of his leading ideas in the Reason-versus-Faith controversy that may be regarded as characteristically positivist.

According to Hume, criticism of the concepts of cause and substance bids us suspend all judgment concerning being as distinct from perceived qualities. The same criticism destroys irrevocably every attempt to find in nature something on basis of which to make inferences concerning a divine intelligence ordering it. Hume's writings contain a very extensive critique of religious belief. It is directed not only against all *a priori* proofs for the existence of God, but also against all arguments based on causality or the existence of a rational order in nature. The absurdity of the ontological proof is merely one particular case of the absurdity that characterizes all attempts to prove the existence of anything *a priori*, not to mention the fact that even if this proof were valid, it would not tell us anything about God's presence in the world, his activity as its creator, as guardian and source of love, and hence it would be irrelevant to those truths upon which every religion is based. Nor do proofs of God's existence derived from the order of the visible world have greater force. Whatever reasons we may advance in favour of his existence, we can never get away from the principle that the cause ought to be proportionate to the effect. Following this principle it is impossible to infer the infinite attributes of God from finite things; it could more reasonably be invoked to prove, on the basis of the world's imperfections, the imperfection of God. More generally, correct understanding of causality rules out any kind of demonstration in this domain, for a satisfactory causal inference requires us to avail ourselves of at least a certain number of constantly observable cases in which an *analogous* relation obtains. This task is impracticable, since to do this we should have to know many

worlds and the conditions under which they had been created. But the universe is one, by definition. It compasses 'all', and we cannot reason about it by analogy. That the world is 'contingent' in the sense that its existence requires the assumption of a non-contingent being, namely, one whose essence implies existence, cannot in any way be proved by experience. What reasons than are left upon which to base religious conviction? Hume ostensively resorts to the well-tested method of defence by capitulation : he says - and the theme recurs several times in his writings - that religion, though resisting all rational, *a priori,* or experimental attempts to demonstrate its truth, has its legitimate place thanks to the needs of the human heart. We may keep our faith *qua* faith, though we must renounce as hopeless all attempts to transform it into knowledge.

Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* has appeared ambiguous to several commentators. But the ambiguity is deliberate and constructive, not the product of clumsiness or confusion. There is intellectual work behind every sentence he wrote, and his writings touch on everything of importance in the intellectual life of his time. He was possessed of universal curiosity, he also believed that to determine the limits of human knowledge is a matter of practical importance, for a sense of such limits liberates us from superfluous questions, discussion of which too readily degenerates into bitter dispute and makes it impossible to bring order and clarity into every sphere of human life.

I

Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* is one of the most famous works criticizing theistic proofs. He began writing the *Dialogues* around 1761. Over the years, he revised the manuscript many times, and finally, just before his death in 1776 he made his final revisions. Finally, in 1779, the work appeared, gaining both immediate success and notoriety. It has remained one of the classic texts in discussions about the nature of evidence presented to prove the existence of God and the character of his attributes.

The *Dialogues* are patterned after Cicero's work on the same subject, *The Nature of the Gods,* in which a Stoic, an Epicurian, and a Skeptic discuss the arguments about the nature and existence of the gods. Hume begins the *Dialogues* with a letter from Pamphillus to his friend, Hermippus. Pamphillus explains that the dialogue form is most suitable for discussing theology, because the subject, on the one hand, deals with a doctrine, the being of God, that is so obvious that it hardly admits of any dispute, while on the other hand, it leads to philosophical questions that are extremely obscure and uncertain regarding the nature, attributes, and decrees and plans of God. The dialogue form, presumably, can both inculcate the "obvious truth", and explore the difficulties.

After having Philo and Cleanthes debate the merits of skepticism in Part I, Hume presents Philo and the orthodox Demea as agreeing that human reason is inadequate to comprehend divine truths. They concur in the view that there is no doubt concerning the existence of a deity, but that our natural and rational information is insufficient to justify any beliefs concerning the nature of the deity. It should be interesting to note that the Section XI of Hume's *Enquiry Concerning the Human Understanding,* entitled "Of a particular Providence and of a future state" is in fact a prolegomena to the *Dialogues.* However, Philo sums up the case by asserting that our ideas are all based upon experience and that we have no experience at all of divine attributes and operations. Thus, the nature of the Supreme Being is incomprehensible and mysterious.

Cleanthes immediately objects and states the theory that Hume analyses in great detail throughout the Dialogues. The information and evidence that we have about the natural world, Cleanthes insists, enable us either to infer both the existence and nature of a deity. He then presents what is called "the argument from design", an argument that had been current in both ancient and modern theological discussion, but which had become extremely popular in the form in which it was stated by Issac Newton. Look at the world, Cleanthes declares, and you will see that it is nothing but one vast machine, subdivided into

smaller machines. All of the parts are adjusted to one another, so that the whole vast complex functions harmoniously. The adaptation of means to ends through all of nature exactly resembles the adaptation which results from human design and intelligence. Since natural objects and human artifacts resemble one another, we infer by analogy, that the causes of them must also resemble one another. Hence, the author of nature must be similar to the mind of man, though he must have greater faculties, since his production is greater.

Philo proceeds to criticize the argument from design by pointing out first that the analogy is not a good one. The universe is unlike a man-made object, such as a machine or a house. Also, we discover causes only from our experience; for example, from seeing houses being built or machines being constructed. We have never seen a universe being produced, so we cannot judge if it is made analogously to human productions. We have perceived many causal processes other than human design, processes like growth, attraction, and so on. For all that we can tell from our experience, any of these may be the cause of the natural world.

Cleanthes insists, in Part III, that the similarity of the works of nature to the works of human art is self-evident and undeniable. When we examine various aspects of nature in terms of the latest scientific information, the most obvious conclusion that we come to is these aspects must be the result of design. By citing several examples, Cleanthes tries to show the immense plausibility of the argument from design. In other works such as the *Natural History of Religion* (1755), Hume always stressed the fact that a reasonable man could not help being impressed by the order and design in nature, and could not avoid coming to the conclusion that there must be some sort of intelligent orderer or designer of nature. However, Hume also insisted, as he did over and over again in the *Dialogues,* that no matter how convincing the argument may be, it is not logical, and can be challenged in many ways.

To counterattack, Hume has Demea point out another failing of the argument from

design. If we gained knowledge about God by analogy with the human mind, then we would have to conclude that the divine mind is as confused, as changeable, as subject to influence by the passions, as in man's. Such a picture of God is incompatible with that presented by traditional religions and by the famous theologians. In fact, as Philo and Demea point out in Parts IV and V, if the argument from design is accepted, then strange theology will ensue. Since man's mind is finite, by analogy so is God's mind. If God's mind is finite, he can err and be imperfect. If we have to judge God's attributes from the effects that we are aware of, what can we actually ascertain about God's nature? We cannot determine, from looking at the world, whether it represents a good achievement, as we have no standards of universe-construction by which we can judge. We cannot tell if the world that we perceive was made by one God or by many deities. If one takes the analogy involved in the argument from design seriously, all sorts of irrelevant conclusions are possible and any conclusion about the type of designer or designers is pure guesswork. "This work, for aught he [man] knows, is very faulty and imperfect, compared to a superior standard; and was only the first rude essay of some infant Deity, who, afterwards abandoned it, ashamed of his lame performance; it is the work only of some dependent, inferior Deity; and is the object of derison to his superiors; it is the production of old age and dotage in some superannuated deity; and ever since his death, has run on at adventures, from the first impulse and active force, which it received from him..." These and all sorts of other hypotheses are all possible explanations, by means of the argument from design, of the order in the universe.

Philo, in Parts VI-VIII, maintains that other explanations can be offered to account for the order in the world besides the explanation of a designer, and that these alternatives can be shown to be at least as probable. Two theories are considered, one that order results from a generative or growth process, and the other, that order is just the chance result of the way material particles come together. Over and over again we see order develop in nature as the result of biological growth. Seeds grow into organized plants. We do not see any outside designer introduce the order. Hence if we judge solely by our experiences, one genuine

possibility is that order is an unconscious result of the process of generation. The world, for all that we can tell, generates its own order just by developing. Since every day we see reason and order arise from growth and development, as it does in children maturing, and never see organization proceeding from reason, it is a probable as well as possible hypothesis to suppose that the order in the world comes from some inner biological process in the world, rather than from some design giving cause outside it.

Even the ancient hypothesis of Epicurus, that the order in the world is due to "the fortuitous concourse of atoms" and that there is no external or internal designing or organizing force, suffices to account for the world as we know it. From our experience, it is just as probable that matter is the cause of its own motions as that mind or growth is. Also, nothing that we perceive proves that the present order of things did not simply come about by chance. Philo concludes the discussion on this point by asserting that empirical theology, based solely on information gained from experience, would be inadequate to justify acceptance of any particular hypothesis about the source or cause of order in the world, or any particular religious system about the nature of the force or forces that govern the universe.

In the last part, XII, Philo offers what has been taken as a summary of Hume's own views about religion. Everywhere in nature there is evidence of design. As our scientific information increases, we become more, rather than less, impressed by the order that exists in the universe. The basic difficulty is that of determining the cause or source of the design. The difference between the atheist and the theist, and between the skeptic and the dogmatist, on this matter, is really only a verbal one. The theist admits that the designer, if he is intelligent, is very different from a human being. The atheist admits that the original principle of order in the world bears some remote analogy to human intelligence though the degree of resemblance is indeterminable. Even a skeptic like Philo has to concede that we are compelled by nature to believe many things that we cannot prove, and one of them is that

there is in the universe order which seems to require an intelligent orderer. And the dogmatist has to admit that there are insoluble difficulties in establishing any truths in this area as well as in any other. The skeptic keeps pointing out the difficulties, while the dogmatist keeps stressing what has to be believed.

When these arguments are taken into account, Philo points out, we are still in no position to assess the moral character of the designer. The evidence from the observable world is that works of nature have a greater resemblance to our artifacts than to our benevolent good acts. Hence, we have more basis for maintaining that the natural attributes of the deity are like our own than for maintaining that his moral attributes are like human virtues. As a result Philo advocates an amoral, philosophical, and rational religion. In 1776 Hume added a final summation : "The whole of natural theology ... resolves itself into one simple, though somewhat ambiguous, at least undefined proposition, *that the cause or causes of order in the universe probably bear some remote analogy* to human intelligence." Nothing more can be said, especially concerning the moral character of the cause or causes.

The *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* has been a central text in discussions about religious knowledge ever since its publication. It is generally recognized as presenting the most severe criticisms of the argument from design, in showing its limitations as an analogy and as a basis for reaching any fruitful conclusions about the nature of the designer of the world. Since Hume in the *Dialogues* discusses only the natural evidence for religion, some later theologians, especially Kierkegaard, have insisted that Hume's arguments only make more clear the need of faith and revelation as the sole basis of religious knowledge.

II

The *Dialogues* is in all respects Hume's maturest work and is beyond any doubt the greatest work on philosophy of religion in the English language. Kant saw a German

translation of it. The *Dialogues* says virtually all that is worth saying about the argument from design.

We may now try to indicate something of the structure of the argument and see if the alleged ambiguities are properly understood.

The protagonists are unevenly matched as they are in Plato's *Dialogues,* or in Berkeley's. The philosophical lessons have to be learned from the conversations as a whole, rather than from the contributions of one of the speakers taken singly. In this respect Demea who combines orthodoxy with a belief in *a priori* proofs of God's existence and shows no capacity for dialectic whatsoever is represented as holding views that Hume wishes to dismiss. It is in the interplay between Cleanthes and Philo, the empirical theologian and the careless skeptic that Hume's lessons are primarily to be found. Kemp Smith has suggested that for most purposes Hume holds to the arguments presented by Philo. This implies that Hume embraces the 'careless scepticism' that Philo is said to hold to. Then the overall import of the *Dialogues* is wholly negative toward Cleanthes's version of the argument from design and its empirical theism. But it is not quite obvious that it is wholly negative toward theism in all its possible versions. Philo's position undergoes changes in the final part and he concludes on a far less unorthodox note than on which it begins. Nelson Pike has recently argued for a more positive reading of this part.

Between Cleanthes and Philo it is agreed to putting aside the *a priori* arguments of speculative metaphysicians. Hume uses not Philo, but Cleanthes to refute the *a priori* arguments for God's existence that Demea expounds.

Cleanthes states his argument from design in 143 of the *Dialogue.* The argument tells us that the world is a vast machine, consisting of an infinite number of lesser machines. The machines, and their parts, are 'adjusted to each other', and show a constant 'adaptation of means to end'. Such adaptation is manifested by objects that men have produced. Since

the effects are similar, we are justified in inferring a similarity in their causes. Hence the 'author of nature' can be concluded to be an intelligence like ourselves.

Philo's criticisms include four main attacks. (1) The argument openly depends upon an analogy. Arguments that depend upon analogy are as strong or weak as the analogy on which they depend. In this case the analogy is weak because of the extravagant vagueness with which the comparison is drawn. The likeness required is between the whole universe on the one hand and human artifacts, such as houses, on the other. While some vague analogy may perhaps be said to exist, it is surely not exact enough for such a conclusion,

(2) Not only is the alleged likeness very imprecise, the comparison is of the oddest kind. It is not the comparison of one object, or set of objects, with another, but of the *whole* of the universe with certain selected *parts* of it. Such a comparison has no more force than one between the growth of hair or a leaf and the generation of a man or a tree.

(3) Even if such comparisons are permissible, it is arbitrary to pick out intelligence as the causal force within the universe, and say that it, rather than other observed causal forces, is the creative source of the universe as a whole. In fact, as Philo repeats elsewhere, if one compares the whole universe with *all* the 'machines' in the universe, and does not confine oneself to human artifacts (and on the terms of the argument one should do this), then one has to face the fact that in our experience it is only in the case of the human artifacts that the order and adaptation we find is observed to be the effect of intelligence. In other cases it is apparently the effect of non-intelligent causes, such as animal or vegetable reproduction. To deny that these are the *real* causes is to depart from experience and assume the argument's conclusion in stating the evidence.

(4) Our knowledge of causes and effects comes from our observing phenomena of one kind being succeeded regularly by phenomena of another kind. So no causal inference can have any weight unless the causes and the effects under consideration belong to *classes* of phenomena with which we are familiar. But the universe is clearly unique, and belongs to

no class. When astronomers have seemed to compare worlds, the worlds they compare are not universes, but individual planets, however refined, cannot do more than masquerade as an example of causal reasoning of a scientific kind.

We may now note a couple of other points that occur in the *Dialogues.* There is an appeal to a direct apprehension of design made by Cleanthes. He asks Philo to imagine the case of a loud and melodious voice coming from the clouds, heard by all nations, conveying a wise message. No one could reasonably hesitate before deciding that this voice is of a benevolent and powerful being. This point is not directly answered by Philo. This case occurs in Part III of the *Dialogues.* Cleanthes makes some other points worth taking note of. For example, he says that to deny the similarity of the divine mind to the human mind is to expouse atheism unknowingly, since a God with a mind that is wholly unlike ours would have no mind at all. Philo of course draws consequences of this sort of anthropomorphic understanding of God. In Part V Philo remarks that (1) an argument from an effect to a cause will only establish the existence of a cause adequate to produce that effect. If the world has to have a mind to cause it, then that mind will not to be on infinite mind, but will have all limitations consistent with its product. (2) If God's mind is like ours, why do we assume that he is not mortal as we are? Why do we assume that God has no body?

Philo points out further that heterodox cosmogonies can also be argued for. One such argument merits mentioning. Philo explores the possibility that the world as we know it has come to exist, as the Epicureans maintained, by blind Chance, through the fortuitous assemblege of atoms. The obvious difficulty about this is the *persistence* of order and predictability in our world. But this can be accounted for by the suggestion that once chance had thrown up an orderly assemblage of particles, the very order it had fortuitously introduced served to sustain itself against destructive forces. Order, in other words, may be a preserving force, but not itself be the result of anything other than accident. This is a preview of the doctrine of Natural Selection, and it has the same explanatory force as that

doctrine does. The reason we see order around us is simply that those conglomerations of particles that do not exhibit it have not survived. Cleanthes objects to this hypothesis saying that it would not explain why we find forms of adaptation that seem to be better than is required for sheer survival. Philo does not answer this objection, though his position is consistent : that one cosmic hypothesis is likely to be as strong or as weak as another, through the very vagueness of the analogies on which it depends. This does not destroy Cleanthes' hypothesis, but renders it in no way superior to an indefinite variety of other possibilities.

It is significant that Philo confesses that in spite of his freedom in argument, "no one has a deeper sense of religion impressed on his mind, or pays more profound adoration to the divine being, as he discovers himself to reason, in the inexplicable contrivance and artifice of nature" (DR 214). Philo speaks at ease with Cleanthes, with whom he lives "in unreserved intimacy". He goes on to say that a purpose, an intention, or design strikes everywhere, and no man can or should reject it. He declaims that a philosopher would be obstinate to doubt a supreme intelligence in the face of such evidence. Philo, in spite of his scepticism, leave us in doubt that he treats the argument from design with due respect.

Philo twice says that the theist and the atheist do not have any genuine conflict. Both times his description is this : it is evident that natural phenomena have a 'great analogy' to human artifacts, even though there are also 'considerable differences'. If we ask about their causes, we should infer that these causes resemble the causes of human artifacts in the same manner. The theist and the atheist will follow Philo thus far, but he points out, that at this point it is a matter of wholly unreasoned preference whether the original intelligence which both have arrived at is one that should be said to be greatly different from ours, though resembling us, or said to be very like us, though immensely different. The decision what to *call* this originating cause will depend on whether one is by temperament sceptical, in which case one will be reluctant to use the language of human personality, or temperamentally dogmatist, in which case one will be struck by the practical value of doing so.

III

There is a change of heart on Philo's part in the final passages of the *Dialogues*. How shall we explain it ? Commentators are divided on this issue. Kamp Smith thinks that Philo's change of heart is feigned, and that Hume's position is consistently negative. Terence Penelhum, however, does not think so. He mentions the 'suspicious covering phrases' in Philo's speeches in support of Design hypothesis. Is it not somewhat odd to hear Philo say that the hypothesis is obviously cogent and that disputes between theists and atheists are merely verbal ? One might recall Hume's similar move concerning liberty and necessity in Book II of the *Treatise*. We have referred to Nelson Pike's advocacy for a positive reading of the final part of the *Dialogues*. It must be admitted that it is no easy matter to decide just which of the positions represented in the *Dialogues* was the one held by Hume. Charles Hendel has suggested that he held all three of them, and John laird that he held one.

In the *Enquiry* (Section IV, Part I, pp.30-31) Hume makes it quite plain that the question discussed in the *Dialogues* is in principle unanswerable. In that case, James Noxon suggests that Hume should be taken to be an agnostic.

Each of these interpretations has its own merit and persuasiveness. Yet it appears that Philo, if he be taken to represent Hume, espouses one fundamental part of Cleanthes's position, namely, that the orderliness which the world exhibits does have a cause which bears some analogy to human intelligence. Is it that Hume is indecisive on the issue? Or is the agreement more social than intellectual, as Penelhum has suggested ? The irony in Hume's writing is so delicate that one is apt to overlook it, and take Philo's proclamations at face value. Philo is not, as most of us are, wholly disillusioned with the design argument, even though it is undermind formally. He may not have any theory to account for this and takes this fact seriously. And so did Kant.

It is also remarkable that Hume has abandoned his usual analytical method in the *Dialogues.* Judging by the methods employed in the *Treatise,* we should have expected him first to have considered the meaning of the word 'God'. If this word has meaning, it must, according to Hume, for some idea, and there must be some possible impression corresponding to this idea. Furthermore, if the idea of God is a simple idea, we must already have had the simple impression corresponding to it. That is to say we must have seen God. If the idea of God is a complex idea, then we have to account for how people come to believe in the existence of the impression corresponding to this complex idea. Then we should have expected Hume to give some account of the origin of our belief in the existence of God, independently of the truth of that belief. In short, we should have expected his treatment of God to follow the lines laid down in his treatment of causation, the material world, and the self. But he does not attempt this. All he does is to consider some ancient arguments for the existence of God, and expose their weaknesses, and conclude that belief in God is not rationally founded. He does this in other cases too, but there he goes on to explain how people acquire a belief which is not rationally founded, and this is the most interesting and original part of his work. One is left wondering what caused him to refrain from a full treatment on his own lines. The *Dialogues* have been said to be only a prolegomena to a full treatment on Humean lines. But is this opinion correct ?

IV

The general tendency in Hume scholarship is to focus on the negative, critical, and sceptical side of Hume's work. The *Dialogues* are not exempted. Recently scholarship has been concerned with bringing out Hume's positive contribution in the *Dialogues.*

What is the point at issue in the *Dialogues ?* Initially, the issue may be taken to have been put forward by the orthodox interlocutor and disputant, Demea : "The question is not concerning the *being,* but the *nature* of God" (D141). This position is also assented to by the

sceptic Philo and Cleanthes, who formulates the design argument and at no time disputes it. Philo asks Cleanthes, as allied in this cause with Demea, to adopt "mysticism" (D172), and defends "the adorable mysteriousness of the divine nature" (D146). This is in accord with Hume's position in the *Treatise* : "the ultimate force and efficacy of nature is perfectly unknown to us" (T159), and the "ultimate cause [of impressions] is ... perfectly inexplicable by human reason"(T84). It may then be said that the extension of the notion of incomprehensibility to God is a corollary of Hume's general position that knowledge of the essence, but not of existence, of ultimate principles is impossible.

Cleanthes states the design argument in Part II (D143), and the argument is based on analogies between machines and the universe. In order for something to be a machine, it must have the following characteristics :

1. An accurate adjustment of the parts to each other.

2. An adaptation of means to ends, and more importantly,

3. The cause of the machine's ordering of parts must be external to the effect.

Cleanthes takes the third characteristic of a machine for granted, and it is a key point in his argument. He makes two points, namely, (a) the means-end relationship, and (b) the coherence of parts typify a product of design, thought, wisdom and intelligence. Since both human artifacts and the universe are characterized by such properties, their causes must be intelligent as well. Again, because both artifacts and the universe are machines they both have external causes. Hume notices that the design argument requires to prove not one but two propositions : (a) that the universe has an intelligent order, and needs an intelligent cause, and (b) that this cause must be external to the universe. It is not sufficient to prove (a). It is also necessary to prove (b) to save the argument from design. Philo points out that this task is impossible.

We have already mentioned the view suggested in the *Dialogues* that the dispute

between the theist and the atheist is merely verbal. Philo compares the operations of nature and "the structure of human thought in 218 of the *Dialogue.* The operation of nature is illustrated by the rotting of a turnip, the generation of an animal. The structure of human mind is ordered from within by a rational principle. The universe is internally structured by a rational cause. The two are compared in a qualified manner, the original principle of order in the universe is compared not to the human mind itself but rather to its economy or order. George J. Nathan puts a significant interpretation of the passage. Philo, or for that matter perhaps Hume nonetheless, prefers the phrase "mind or thought" to "a mind or intelligence". Why ? Nathan suggests that the term 'Mind' that designates the internal cause, forming both the structure of the human mind as well as the structure of all other natural organism, is rational, and it is the ultimate explanation for all order in the universe. And as such it could be so called, though this usage of the term 'Mind' is at the remotest connection with the one traditionally conceived, Nathan calls it Hume's "immanent God", immanent in the world as its structuring force and not transcendent to it as a designer. This immanent principle, Nathan explains, is responsible for the order in the universe. It is rational or intelligent in as much as it resembles the intelligently ordered objects of human artifice. Both natural and artificial objects have parts related to each other by the reciprocal relation of cause and effect, and contribute to some general purpose of the object as a whole. Nature is distinguished as the dynamic, internal structuring principle in the universe. Nathan thinks that God or Mind is such a force, and Hume intends to identify this force with Nature.

Mind, for Hume, consists of a number of ideas or perceptions united together by certain relations. Nature is the principle which arranges and structures the ideas, though it is not the ideas or perceptions themselves. It is the same principle which orders ideas in the mind and also matters in the universe. In the case of men and animals there is awareness of causal connections. The operations of Nature, like instinct, vegetation and generation of order is produced unconsciously. God or Nature is then the impersonal, immanent and rational orderer of the universe. If one so wished, one would say that in lieu of the design

argument Hume develops in the *Dialogues* a concept of the principle of order as incomprehensible, rational and internal. In arguing this point Nathan is opposing the natural belief in design and in a designing God. The two interlocators in the *Dialogues* Demea and Cleanthes expound the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God, the rationality of the Ultimate Cause in their turns. Philo seeks to prove that a principle internal to the universe is required for explaining the order, and this alone can be a necessary and sufficient condition of order. Hume's is not an argument *from* design, rather an argument *in* design.

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Chapter III

WILLIAM PALEY : ARGUMENT FROM BIOLOGICAL AUTONOMY

William Paley is best known for his writings in defence of the credibility of natural religion and of natural religion and of Chriatianity, especially for his *Views of the Evidence of Christianity* (1794) and his Natural Theology, or *Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity Collected from the Appearances of Nature* (1802). In the last-named work he presented his development of the agreement from design. He does not base his agreement upon the phenomena of the heavens. Astronomy, he held, "is not the best medium through which to prove the agency of an intelligent creator".[1] Paley takes his stand instead on autonomy, as he puts it; that is, an evidence of design in the animal organism, particularly in the human organism. He argues that the data are inexplicable without reference to a designing mind. "Were there no example in the world contrivance except that of the eye, it would be alone sufficient to support the conclusion which we draw from it as to the necessity of an intelligent creator".[2] Paley shows considerable skill and ability in his argument and in the development of his argument.

I

Palay opens his argument with an analogy of the watch. While walking in a desert place if and when I see a rock lying on the ground I may ask myself how did this object come to exist. I may attribute its presence to chance, or the operation of such natural forces as wind rain, heat, frost or volcanic action. But if I see a watch lying on the ground I cannot reasonably account for it in a similar way. A watch consists of a complex arrangement of wheels, cogs, axles, springs and balances, all operating accurately together to provide a regular measurement of the lapse of time. It would be utterly implausible to attribute the formation and assembling of these metal parts into a functioning machine to the chance operation of such factors as wind and rain. We are obliged to postulate an intelligent mind which is responsible for the phenomenon.

Paley's watch is an analogue of the world. It may be the case that we have never seen a watch before. But this would not weaken our inference, since we have never seen a world other than this one. Secondly, it would not invalidate our inference from the watch to the watch maker even if the mechanism did not always work perfectly. Even the mechanism of the world too sometimes goes wrong. However, we would be obliged to postulate a watchmaker. It could be the case that we are not able to discover the function of some of the parts of the machine. Even then our inference would not be undermined. We do not know nature in her entirety.

Having postulated the analogy, Paley argued that the natural world is as complex a mechanism as any watch. It is mainfestly designed. The rotation of the planets in the solar system, and on earth, the regular procession of the seasons and the complex structure and mutual adaptation of the parts of a living organism, all suggest design. There are thousands of millions of cells in the human brain. They function together in a coordinated system. The eye is a superb movie camera, with self-adjusting lenses, a high degree of accuracy, colour sensitivity, and the capacity to operate continuously for many hours at a time. Can, Paley asks, such complex and efficient mechanisms have come about by chance, as a stone might be formed by the random operation of natural forces ?

Paley was typical of the religious apologetics in the eighteenth century. He develops a long cumulative argument drawing upon virtually all the sciences of his day. As examples of divine arrangement he points to the characteristics and instincts of animals, which enable them to survive. For example, the suitability of a bird's wings to the air and of a fish's fins to the water. Even a modern aircraft is modelled on these features. Paley is impressed by the way the alternation of day and night conveniently enables us to sleep after a day's activity. A modern writer, Arthur I. Brown appears to endorse Paley's contention when he writes that the Ozone gas layer is a mighty proof of the Creator's forethought. Can anyone attribute this device to a chance evolutionary process ? The gas layer prevents death to every living thing. Its right thickness and the correct defence gives an evidence of plan.[3]

We have already taken note of the classic critique of the design argument offered in David Hume's *Dialogues.* It was published in 1779, twenty three years earlier than Paley's. But Paley took no apparent account of Hume's criticism. Perhaps such has been the lack of communication between theologians and their philosophical critics.

II

The argument from design may now be summarized by way of recapitulation before we proceed further. The argument seeks to establish, that there is in the world a remarkable order and arrangement of detail, fit to excite wonder and for excelling the best efforts of human craftsmanship. Everything falls beautifully into place, at any rate *as if* it had been disposed by a master planner. It is a common impression that the reference is to the mathematical perfection of the planetary orbits. But Paley was more interested in biology than astronomy. He thought astronomy was an unsuitable introduction to Theism. Even Hume made Cleanthes' general statement of the issue right enough. "The curious adapting of means to ends, throughout all nature, resembles exactly, though if much exceeds, the productions of human contrivance; of human design, thought, wisdom and intelligence ... the Author of nature is somewhat similar to the mind of man of much larger faculties proportioned to the grandeur of the work, which he has executed".[4] Cleanthes and Philo agree that this is a fair statement, and perhaps so it is. As far as Paley is concerned this was his main intention. It could be said that he is appealing to some supposed synthetic *a priori* principle of causation, guaranteeing that things of such and such a sort either must be or cannot be caused in this or that way.

Comments upon Paley's version of the argument from design has been continuous, and mostly critical. But it has been generally assumed that the argument is to be taken as demonstrative. If it is *a posteriori,* as Cleanthes in Hume's *Dialogues* is made to affirm, it cannot be demonstrative. A recent commentator on Paley, T. McPherson[5] comments that the argument is intended to reinforce the believer and not to convince the sceptic. Granted that a man believes in God already, it will be of great benefit to him to reflect upon the evidences of contrivance in the world. As far as Paley is concerned this was his main concern, though,

we may add, there is a subsidiary intention to speak outside the circle of faith to the world at large. This thesis is denied by another modern philosopher of religion, namely A. Boyce Gibson.[6] The thesis, he says, is a religious version of the doctrine that philosophy is no more than clarification. If philosophy is to be metaphysical, i.e., concerned with what is in the last resort the case, it must forego this advantage, which a philosopher concerned about religion is constantly tempted to claim, and set out from scratch. If it does so, it cannot demonstrate, and this is what Hume and Kant between them succeeded in showing.

However, we may take it for granted that there is in the world a very remarkable degree of order and adaptation, and that the natural wonder which it elicits is increased by the discoveries of scientists. The analogy of the architect, prominent in Paley than that of the watchmaker, is, admitted as an analogy. Now an analogy is useful as a suggerstion, and it should prevent unprejudiced people from concluding to a direct negative without closer argument. It may prove to be a lead to an important discovery. But if it is put forward as a demonstration, it is bound to disappoint. That is why, Gibson suggests, it is tempting to treat the argument as a clarification. That way it makes sense. He prefers to take it as a hint, to be collected with other hints in exploring the balance of probabilities. Nothing in either Hume or Kant is inconsistent with this policy, and it prevents the failure of the argument as a demonstration from being used to support its negative.

The problem with the argument from design is that it is based on analogy, and it could as well be said, if the analogy is pressed too hard, the result is anthropomorphism, and if, for this very reason, it is relaxed, it leads to an agnosticism within which there is any amount of room for uncertainty and error. This predicament besets most of arguments for divine existence based on analogies. All analogies waver in this fashion. It could be said that the argument from design is a device for stabilizing the imagination, and not for producing certainties. But in lieu of certainty, we may be grateful for incidental illumination. The argument may be said to have its own worth, even without giving us certainty. Following McPherson, we may say that it implies that empirical evidence is

somehow relevant to the question of proof of God. Kant himself had suggested this point. "The physico-theological argument" as he calls it, "can lead us to the point of admiring the greatness, wisdom, power etc., of the Author of the world, but can take us no further."[7] That is all we ask of it.

It must not be forgotten that Paley worked in the eighteenth century environment of deism. The frequent conjunction was 'God and Nature'. Palay's version of the argument was too firmly rooted in the deism of his age in discerning imperfection in Nature. There might have been the atheistic intimation : why does order need to be explained at all ? The argument of design supposes that order is quite ubiquitous, free from interruption. Is the order in the world wholly established in the world ? Is its perfection so evident ? If the answer is 'yes', then there should be no reason for looking for an order beyond it. Paley appears to argue that the *perfection* of the world-order is a reason for believing in God. If so, it is a chance reason, as any imperfection, would by the same token, be a reason for not believing in God, and the imperfections are for all to see. It is the need for order, and its imperfect hold for order, and its imperfect hold on the world, which together point to a centre for it which is not the world, the argument to design is too much weded to order, and it is necessary to go beyond it to meet the objections against it. For example, there are other excellences of the world other than order, e.g. the creative impetus which the world can display, and in virtue of which a failure of order is not necessarily a calamity.

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Chapter IV

KANT : THE PHYSICO-THEOLOGICAL PROOF

Kant has called the argument from design the physico-theological proof. He discusses the theistic proofs in the Transcendental Dialectic part of the *Critique of Pure Reason.* More is known about Kant's criticism of the ontological argument, which he criticised on the principle that existence is no part of the content of an idea. His famous judgement was that existence is not a real predicate, i.e. a conception of something that is capable of being added to the conception of a thing. We add nothing to our conception which expresses merely the possibility of the object, by simply placing its object before us in thought, and saying that it is. The real contains no more than the possible. Kant can be taken to have shown conclusively, that it is not possible from the analysis of a conception to deduce from it existence as a predicate. But it less often mentioned by way of an objection that Kant's reasoning may hold of the idea of a particular thing, say a sum of money; the idea of God as the absolute Being is in a different position. On this ground Hegel tried to rehabilitate the ontological proof. But that is another story. Since Kant has shown also that all other theistic proofs collapse into the ontological, we propose to consider Kant's treatment of the ontological proof in a little detail before we set ourselves to discuss his critique of the argument from design.

I

The first question that we should ask is : How does Kant explain our coming to have the idea of God ? He gives the following answer. His introductory comments at A 567 - 91 and B 505 - 619 examine the doctrines expressed in the thesis of the fourth Antinomy. It seems that it is an inevitable and natural urge of reason to attempt to explain the contingent events of experience by reference to an original event or being that is 'necessary'. Reason attributes a large number of properties to the absolutely necessary being, thereby transforming it into a genuine 'Ideal of Pure Reason'. Having located the absolutely

necessary being, reason attributes to it properties of great moral and theological significance. We are encouraged to regard the absolutely necessary being as God, as omnipotent, omniscient, morally perfect, and so on. Such a theological illusion is nourished by arguments, i.e. arguments for the existence of God. Kant appears not to take into account that there could be many arguments for God's existence other than the three he mentions, for example, the argument from revelation or the argument from miracles.

Kant, in criticising the ontological argument has Descartes' version in mind, which is to be found in the fifth *Meditation*. It consists essentially in the claim that the notion of a non-existent God is self-contradictory, God by definition has every perfection, including existence. God is perfect and existence is a perfection, so God exists.[1]

Kant offers two main objections to the ontological argument in that form. One is an objection used later by Moore in "Is Existence a Predicate?', namely that existence is not a property, that 'exists' is not a genuine predicate. Although grammatically 'exists' is a predicate, it functions differently from such predicates as 'is round', 'is red', etc. We may inform others that something is round or red. There are important facts about it. But when we say that something exists, we do not add to any information or offer a further description of the thing. Kant was not alone in contending that "Being" is not a real predicate, i.e. it is not a concept of something which could be added to the concept of a thing. Hume had expressed a similar objection expressed in the *Treatise*. Hume says that to conceive of something and to conceive of it *as existing* are one and the samething and the same operation. "The idea of existence", he says, "is the very same with the idea of what we conceive to be existent".[2] Russell used this idea in more than one occasion. Kant intends to argue that when I say that something exists I am not referring to a further property of the thing. I am rather indicating that there is in fact something that has the properties already mentioned. Hence one premise in the ontological argument is ill-formed. Since existence is not a genuine property it cannot be a perfection.

But what are the defining features of a property or a predicate, if 'exists' is not a genuine logical predicate ? Kant talks somewhat vaguely about the issue. He appears to suggest that learning of the properties of a thing is learning more about it, and learning about a thing's existence is not learning something more about it. Perhaps we cannot take Kant literally, for we do make the most important addition to a thing when we say that it exists. Existing chairs differ from non-existent chairs in the vital respect that they can be sat on. Even Kant concedes that one's financial position is affected by one's having or not having 100 real thalers. However incomplete Kant's notion of 'existence' may be, the fact stands that the ontological argument cannot prove that God exists.

Kant's other objection is more promising. The crucial passages are at A 594 - 8 and B 622 - 6. Kant argues that the proposition 'God exists' is either analytic or synthetic. Descartes held that it was as analytic as 'a triangle has three angles'. But Kant goes on to argue, if it is analytic, then it is a mere tantology. In either case we mere posit or assume the existence of God and then make his existence explicit. If existence is part of our notion of God, just as having three angles is part of our notion of a triangle, then the proposition 'God exists' does not show that there is anything answering to our notion of God. On the other hand, if the proposition is synthetic, then it can be denied without self-contradiction.

Is there a logical relation between the notions of God, perfection and existence ? Descartes thought there is. In that case the argument could be said to have the following form

Anything God - like is perfect

Anything perfect exists

God exists.

If the two premises are analytic hypotheticals, then the existential conclusion does not follow from them, even though the premises reveal the intimate logical connection between divinity, perfection and existence.

It is surprising that Kant is so pre-occupied with 'existence' that he overlooks the problem attending 'perfection'. Descartes' version of the argument refers constantly to perfection. Is 'perfect' a complete predicate in its own right ? It is not a complete predicate, for something cannot simply be perfect but must be perfect in a certain respect. When we talk of God's perfection we have a set of standards in view. God is perfectly moral, perfectly intelligent, perfectly powerful, and so on. So when the ontological argument treats existence as a perfection it is not obvious that an existing God is more perfect than a non-existent God. Antinomy runs as follows : "If anything exists, an absolutely necessary being must also exist. Now I, at least exsist. Therefore, an absolutely necessary being exists" (A604/B632). In more modern terms, if anything exists, it is contingent or causally dependent on something else, and that in turn on something else, and so on. Since the notion of an infinite series of contingent causes and effects yields an inadequate explanatory model, there must be a first, uncaused, cause in any series. At least one thing exists, so a first, uncaused, cause exists.

Kant rightly observes that the argument is not entirely *a priori* and so represents an advance over the wholly *a priori* ontological argument. It begins with an actual event and attempts to explain its occurrence by appealing to some antecedent cause, and then to a further antecedent cause, and so on until we reach a first cause, God. It should be noted that Kant's version of the argument is considerably different from Descartes' version in the third *Meditation.* Descartes appears to proceed as follows : there must be at least as much reality in the cause as in the effect, that is, there must be a perfect cause of this perfect effect. The only possible candidate is a perfect creator namely God. This argument is more difficult to handle than the one that Kant gives. There is a reference to perfection, and it does not merely hinge on the claim on the first cause of a causal series,but on the claim that effects of an exceptional kind must have causes of an exceptional kind.

Kant's objection to the cosmological argument surprises us. He suggests that the principle weakness of the argument is that it rests on the ontological argument, which is invalid. According to Kant, the cosmological argument rests on the ontological needing

to analyse the notion of an absolutely necessary being. It also needs to reveal that such a being has the properties such as omnipotence, omniscience, moral awareness, and so on. The ontological argument involves the same kind of *a priori* analysis of the notion of an absolutely necessary being. In purporting to be an argument from experience, the cosmological argument differs from the ontological, which is wholly *a priori* and analyses the notion of God independently of any experience. The cosmological argument, says Kant, uses experience for a step in the argument, to conclude the existence of a necessary being. "What properties this being may have, the empirical premises cannot tell us" (A 606 / B 634). To identify the properties of the necessary being we must resort to the ontological argument.

The crux of the ontological argument is this; divinity logically entails perfection, which logically entails existence. But it cannot prove that God exists for the simple reason that the argument cannot prove that there is an instance of any of those concepts or that there really is anything answering to the descriptions 'divine', 'perfection', 'existing'.

The cosmological is an entirely different kind of argument. It begins with an actual event, an instance of some concept. It then moves by way of a general causal principle to the conclusion that there must be a first cause.

If any event occurs, there is a first cause

At least one event occurs

There is a first cause.

How are we to discover the divinity of the first cause ? A similar problem faces us in the inference concerning God as the *nimittakarana* in the Indian classic *Nyayakusumanjali.* However, if we add a premise saying that any first cause is God - like, then we get the desired conclusion that there is a God. It may be gtrue that the ontological argument fails, and that the cosmological, as Kant says, rests in part on the ontological. But does it follow that the cosmological is infected with the weaknesses of the ontological ? The initial

existential assumption, a reference to an actual thing or event is missing from theontological. The cosmological is not a proof from mere concepts. It does not attempt to move from concepts to instances. Its conclusion does follow from its premises.

We may suggest the following about Kant's intentions. The cosmological argument seeks to conclude that there must be a first cause, and it is then claimed that the first cause has all the important properties normally attributed to the Christian God. This claim is false. It is one thing to concede that there is a first cause, and it is another thing to attach any theological significance to it. The first cause may be inert, a spontaneous movement of matter or a big bang. The cosmological argument rests on two assumptions. One, that every event is contingent, i.e. causally dependent on another, and second, that a causal series must have an absolutely necessary first member. The two assumptions cannot be held together. For it is thinkable that a causal series is infinite. Kant's own observations on the Third Antinomy (A 449/ B 477) could have weighed heavier against the cosmological argument.

III

Kant has treated the argument from design or the Physio-Theological proof, as he calls it, with greater respect, since it reflects the very natural awe we feel at the complexity and beauty of the world around us. We tend to seek an explanation of the order, beauty and complexity of things in the form of the argument from design. The world around us is law-governed, systematic, ordered and extremely complex. It is not possible to write off the evidence as a gigantic coincidence, or the result of an accidental conjunction of circumstances. The plausible explanation appears to be that the world is the work of a purposive intelligent creator who fashioned it and sustains it.

Kant has two objections to the argument from design. First, he avers that the argument cannot support the strong conclusion that there is an omnipotent creator. This is what is required by Christian theology. "The utmost", Kant says, "that the argument can

prove is an *architect* of the world who is very much hampered by the adaptability of the material in which he works, not a *creator* of the world to whose idea everything is subject."[3] To say that God is an architect is to reduce his status. We have our admiration and reverence only for a creator who makes his own rules as he goes along, who is really omnipotent.

Let us consider Kant's first objection. It demotes God from omnipotent creator to architect. Orthodox Christianity looks for a God who is an omnipotent creator. Such a creator is one who is able to create a world wholly according to his own wishes without any limitation by materials. A mere architect would not attract the same reverence. Looking at the issue in another way, it could be said that an architect deserves admiration if he can negotiate difficulties. An omnipotent creator is expected to do a good job. But an architect who succeeds in creating and sustaining a world despite restrictions deserves our praise. If God in the cosmological argument is an architect and not a creator as Kant suspects, then. He is perhaps not without any worth.

Kant's second objection is that the cosmological argument as a specific form in the argument from design, and *a fortiori* comes to rest on the ontological. The physico-Technological argument suffers from the weaknesses of the other arguments. It moves from evident effects to non-evident first cause, and then to the *a priori* analysis of the properties of the first cause or absolutely necessary being.

It is of course true that the argument from design is a specific version of the cosmological argument. It is also true that it appeals from certain evident effects to a non-evident first cause. From all these does it really follow that the physico-Theological proof is prey to the weaknesses of the cosmological ? It need not be necessarily true to say that specific versions are infected with the defeats of the general. It may be the case that the specific has important qualifications missing from the general argument. By that way it could make it stronger than the general. For instance the argument from design does not claim that any effect has to be explained by reference to a first cause. It makes the

impressive claim that a particular kind of striking effect, the order and coherence of the universe can only be explained by a particular kind of striking cause, i.e. the efforts of an intelligent and purposive creator.

The weakness of the argument from design lies elsewhere than Kant diagnosed. The central claim of the argument, the order and coherence could be a result of gigantic coincidence. No contradiction perhaps is entailed in saying that, what do we really mean by saying that the world is particularly ordered or systematic ? Our generalisations about the world is not necessarily significant, it could be trivial as well. The ecological disaster that we are about to face indicate that the world is not a very organised machine. The wars and the killings of the innocent people in ghastly way do not bespeak of a wise and merciful creator. The argument from design appears to be at variance with the problem of evil.

IV

Kant's critique of rationalist theology is on the whole right in showing that it attempts to make claims about objects that are not objects of a possible experience. But his criticism and discussion of the specific arguments are not always central. The theme of the Dialectic, that there should be no calling for an extension of our knowledge beyond all limits of experience is not very stringent in the discussion of God. The final thought of Kant on God lies in the claim that the idea of God may have an important regulative use.[4] We cannot have knowlecdge of a God, but it may well be to our advantage to act if there were a God. Kant goes on to indicate that "the only theology of reason which is possible is that which is based on moral laws or seeks guidance from them."[5] In the second *critique* the doctrine of the Dialectic can be glimpsed. Our Theological concepts, he says, are wholly parasitic on our etjhical concepts. We can only understand God as a perfect moral agent, as the giver of just rewards for virtue. The traditional view that Theology is prior to ethics, that moral

imperatives are the commands of God is reversed in Kant. The basic, autonomous concepts are ethical, everything Theological is secondary. The search for God is a search for a noumenal agent.

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Appendix to Chapter IV

KANT ON TELEOLOGY

The argument from design has often been considered in relation to the concept of teleology and the divine. The second part of the *Critique of Judgment* is devoted to teleology : the understanding of the ends of things. Here Kant expresses his ultimate sympathy for the stand-point of theology. Our sentiments of the sublime and of the beautiful combine to present an inescapable picture of nature as created. In beauty we discover the purposiveness of nature; in the sublime we have intimations of its transcendent origins. In neither case can we translate our sentiments into a reasoned argument : all we know is that we know nothing of the transcendental. But that is not all we *feel.* The argument from design is not a theoretical proof, but a moral intimation, made vivid to us by our sentiments towards nature, and realised in our rational acts. It is realised in the sense that the true end of creation is intimated through our moral actions, but it is seen that this intimation is of an ideal, not of an actual world. So we prove the divine teleology in all our moral actions, without being able to show that it is true of the world in which we act. The final end of nature is known to us, not theoretically, but practically. It lies in the reverence for the prime practical reason that legislates for itself alone. When we relate this reverence to our experience of the sublime, we have a sense, however fleeting, of the transcendental.

Thus it is that aesthetic judgment directs us towards the apprehension of a transcendent world, while practical reason gives content to the apprehension, and affirms that this intimation of a perspectiveless vision of things is indeed an intimation of God. This is what Kant tries to convey both in the doctrine of the aesthetic ideas and in that of the sublime. Kant follows Edmund Burke in distinguishing between the beautiful and the sublime. Sometimes, when we sense the harmony between nature and our faculties, we are impressed by the purposiveness and intelligibility of everything that surround us. This is

the sentiment of beauty. At other times, overcome by the infinite greatness of the world, we renounce the attempt to understand and control it. This is the sentiment of the sublime.In confronting the sublime, the mind is "the cited to abandon sensibility", says Kant.

Kant's remarks about the sublime reinforce the interpretation of his aesthetics as a kind of presumption of theology. He defines the sublime as "that, the mere capacity of thinking which, evidences a faculty of mind transcending every standard of taste." It is the judgment of the sublime that most engages our moral nature. It thereby points to yet another justification of the universality of taste, by showing that, in demanding agreement, we are asking complicity in a moral sentiment. In judging of the sublime, we demand a universal recognition of the immanence of a supersensible realm. A man who can feel neither the solemnity nor the awesomeness of nature, lacks in our eyes the necessary sence of his own limitations. He has not taken that 'transcendental' viewpoint on himself from which all true morality springs.

It is from the presentiment of the sublime that Kant seems to extract his faith in a Supreme Being. Teleology, for Kant, is the understanding of the ends of things.

Thus it is that aesthetic judgment directs us towards the apprehension, of a transcendent world, while practical reason gives content to that apprehension, and affirms that this intimation of a perspectiveless vision of things is indeed an intimation of God. This is what Kant tries to convey both in the doctrine of the aesthetic ideas and in that of the sublime. In each case we are confronted with an 'employment of the imagination in the interests of mind's supersensible province' and a compulsion 'think nature itself in its totality as a representation of something supersensible, without our being able to put this presentation forward as objective'. The supersensible is the transcendental. It cannot be thought through concepts, and the attempts to think it through 'ideas' is fraught with self-contradiction. Yet the idea of reason, God, is resurgent in our consciousness, now under the guise of imperatives of action, now transformed by imagination into sensuous and aesthetic

form. We cannot rid ourselves of this idea. To do so would be to say that our point of view on the world is all that the world consists in, and so to make ourselves into gods. Practical reason and aesthetic experience humble us. They remind us that the world in its totality, conceived from no finite perspective, is not ours to know. This humility of reason is also the true object of esteem. Only this is to be reverenced in the rational being, that he feels and acts as a member of a transcendental realm, while recognising that he can know only the world of nature. Aesthetic experience and practical reason are two aspects of the moral : and it is through morality that we sense both the transcendence and the immanence of God.

Notes : The standard English edition of the *Critique of Judgment* (Including both the *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* and the *Critique of Teleological Judgment)*, is translated by J.C. Meredith, Oxford, 1928. All references are made to this book.

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Chapter V

IMPLICATIONS AND SIMILITUDES

The argument from design throws up many suggerstions. One of these is that the God supposed to be proved by the argument is a finite one. The idea of a finite God has been argued for by Plato (*Philebus,* 23C), and Hume (Part V of the *Dialogues).* He makes Philo analyse the argument of Cleanthes, who had deduced God from the facts of nature, and declares that Cleanthes must renounce all claim to infinity in any of the attributes of the Deity. Philo finds the whole view of Cleanthes too anthropomorphic, and in Part XI of the *Dialogues,* we find Cleanthes take up the idea that God is "finitely perfect".

Kant also has contributed to the idea of a finite God in an indirect way. In the course his famous refutation of the traditional proofs of God in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (A 627, B 635) he expressed highest respect for what he called "physico-theological" argument, but complained however that it does not prove a "*world-creator* to whose idea everything is subjected", but at most a "*world-architect,* who would always be greatly limited by the suitability of the staff with which he works", I have put emphasis on the ideas of "world-creator" and "world-architect". Willy nilly, we may ask Udayana, the author of *Nyayakusumanjali,* what does he intend to establish; an *Isvara* as world-creator or world-architect. Kant might tell Udayana that the *Isvara* of his conception "would always be greatly limited by the suitability of the staff with which he works", in this case the atoms, and *adrsta.* Udayana's *Isvara* is a metaphysical logician's God. Just as a formal logician depends upon his set of axioms, rules of replacement and inference, so is Uadyana's *Isvara* dependent up co-eternal atoms and their properties. And since perfection does not necessarily imply omnipotence, as McTaggart has argued in *The Nature of Existence* (Vol.II, 1927, pp.176-187). There is one insight in McTaggert worth our attention in respect of Udayana, for whom time (*Kala*) is real. McTaggart suggests that if time were real, it might hard to prove a creative God. Either time were unreal, or there is a God who controls and governs without creating.

Udayana comes closer to the argument from design in maintaining that a non-intelligent came like *adrsta* cannot produce its effect without the guidance of an intelligent spirit. *Isvara* supervises the work of *adrsta*. The world cannot be explained by the atoms or the force of *Karma*. Nor can the individual soul be the controller of *adrsta*, since then it would be able to avert unwished for miseries. So the unintelligent principle of *adrsta*, which governs the fate of beings, acts under the direction of God, who does not create it, or alter its inevitable course, but renders possible its operation.

Udayana is taken to establish that the maker of the world is an intelligent being, possessed of that combination of volifion, desire to act, and knowledge of the proper means which sits in motion all other causes but itself set in motion by none. It is significant that Udayana mentions that the traditional arts imply an intelligent inventor (*Kusumanjali*, V.I).

The Nyaya theism as presented by Udayana has been the subject of great discussion in the history of Hindu thought. Its critics however have not been wanting in number. A critic might say that *adrsta* constitutes only a limit of explanation. It is supposed to call for an intelligent controller for the remarkable regularity with which events happen. But everything that are there are not products, and Nyaya admits several eternal entities, and with the Naiyayika, of the eternal thing. There is no production. Eternal things do not have causes. So the causal argument made so much of by them will overshoot its mark since the law of causality has not universal validity. It has no other signification than uniform and concomitant variation.

Even if we grant the validity of the arguments employed to establish the reality of God, The *Isvara* of The Nyaya philosophy is not the comprehensive spiritual reality. He is outside us and the world too, however much he may be said to cause, govern and destroy it. He is not the creator of atoms, but only their fashioner. His reason works on the elements of the universe from without, but does not operate as a power of life within. Radhakrishnan has brought out the finiteness of the Nyaya conception of *Isvara* in the following manner : "We

cannot maintain the dualism of an infinite creator on the one side and the infinite world on the other. The two limit each other. Things which are defined each against the other cannot but be finite". (*Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, 1951, p.172).

The problem at hand concerns, in Mill's words, "the Omnipotence of the Designer". In his *Three Essays on Religion* Mill comes to the conclusion that there is a large balance of probability in favour of creation by intelligence. But he maintains that all evidence for design, for the use of means to attain ends, is "evidence against the Omnipotence of the Designer". Therefore the author of the cosmos worked under limitations and was obliged to adapt himself to conditions independent of his will. Those conditions Mill takes to be provided by the eternal and uncreated factors, Matter and Force. Recall the atoms and *adrsta* of Udayana.

Beginning with Plato's conception of a finite God the arguments for there being a finite God have been offered by such diverse thinkers as Bradley (*Essays on Truth and Reality*, pp.428-451), Bergson (*Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, pp.249-251), A.N. Whitehead (*Process and Reality*, especially, pp. 67-68, 519-533), for of course different reasons. These need not detain us, the point worth nothing is the fact that the finite God, taken as having been implied by the argument from design is a person.

Now that God is shown to be a person in virtue of being an intelligent designer, a great religious demand is thereby fulfilled. Omnipotence of God is perhaps not the decisive divine attribute. One loves God, not because he is Omnipotent, but because he is good. Theism requires that God is personal, and that the eternal reality which is the ultimate source of everything good in the universe is a conscious spirit, a mind that is eternally rational and good. Eternal values are essential to the character of God, whether he he absolute or finite. Whatever limits may or may not restrict the power of God, his will is eternally directed towards the realization of ideal ends. Hoffding's thesis about conservation of values, and Ramanuja's concept of God as *sakala-guna-gana-akara* answer this description. Among the

religions of the world, Islam uniquely emphasizes Omnipotence of Allah. And it is not without a reason that Frisk has typologized Islam as the worship of absolute Might. Everything fades into insignificance before Allah's Omnipotence. So if Hume and Kant have sought to play down the God sought to be proved to exist as finite because lacking in Omnipotence, so serious harm could have been done to the religious sensibility. For the loving and good God persists.

There could be two senses of "finite". God could be said to be limited in at least two senses : namely, by the princuiples of reason and by his own self-limitation in his creation of free beings. The laws of reason can not be thought of as created by an arbitrary fiat of will. Reason is an eternal and uncreated attribute of God, not dependent on his will. The famous prayer to the Sun in the *Rg Veda* (III.62.10) seeks the highest power that man is capable of possessing, *dhi,* higher intelligence of which the adorable glory of the Deity is the source. As for the other ground of God's limitation, i.e. man's free will is bound to raise more questions than it can perhaps solve.

Inspite of Ryle's debunking of the concept of Will, following of course Hume, the concept is deeply embedded in the Judaic-Christian tradition of religious consciousness, and has kept surfacing in religious and moral contexts. If God were Omnipotent *simpliciter,* then no man could be free, and the concept of surrender to God would have become vacuous. Nor could the phrase "Amen" could be significantly spoken. A loving God sets his creatures free, he is never adoned by slaves. Rabindranath Tagore makes this point in an epigram that deserves quoting : "I am able to love my God because he gives me the freedom to deny him" *(Fireflies).* It could perhaps be argued that Islam images Allah - man relationship in terms of that between Master and slave, and Hegel was enamoured of this imagery. But an harmeneutical point would be in order, whether the relationship is ontological or devotionally metaphorical remains to be seen. The *Gita* speaks of puppets revolving on the cosmic wheel (Chapter XVIII.61) as a metaphor for ontological rootedness of the human

agent, and yet there is no denial of freewill. In the verse no.63, the listner is told that having been given the metaphysical description of actions worth performing, he is now free to decide whether he would go by that. Both freedom and reason are accommodated therein. This of course is no context for deciding in favour of either freedom or determinism. Religious life has something important to do with salvation. And if that be so, then the idea that God limits himself by creating souls endowed with from will need not be taken literally. As St. Paul has said, the letter kills, it is the spirit which enlivens. Created as we are in His own image, we cannot be wholly antagonistic to God, however much we take a flight from Him. Herein comes in the relevance of the typology of Christianity as the religion of love. The argument from design does justice to the type.

II

I should now like to exhibit some of the scriptural passages which delineate the wisdom at work in the argument from design. We have earlier mentioned that the argument had its sources in the insights of the Book of Wisdom. The Book is specifically the Wisdom of Solomon in the *Old Testament.* It should be noted that the Book is one of the *Deuterocanonical Books* in the Catholic edition of the Old Testament.

The author confessingly asks "who can ever learn the Will of God ? Human reason is not adequate for the task, and our philosophies tend to mislead us, because our mortal bodies weigh our souls down" (No.13). More specific is the *Ecclesiasticus* or The Wisdom of Jesus, son of Sirach. The author was Joshua (or Jesus). There is God's wisdom in creation. Sirach 26-27 states : "In the beginning the Lord did his work of creation, and he gave everything a place of its own. He arranged everything in an eternal order and decreed that it should be that way for ever". Now, says the author, "I will remind you of the works of the Lord". He goes on to say that "The words of the Lord brought his works into being, and the whole creation obeys his commands ... The orderly world shows the greater of his wisdom; ...

Nothing can be added to him, and nothing taken away. All his works are beautiful, down to the smallest and faintest spark of light. All these things go on for ever, and all of them have their purpose" (No. 42). The glory of God in Nature is expressed more eloquently in the following piece. "How beautiful is the bright, clear Sky above us ! What a glorious sight it is !" There is a glowing appreciation of the beauty of nature as the handiwork of God. The natural scene is captured in its varying moods and states, sombre as well as joyful. What strikes one is the admission of mystery felt at the perception of nature in all its forms. Rightly should we say that the argument from design is born of a sense of mystery at the splendour emanating from God's creation. Sirach concludes by remarking that "Mysteries greater than these are still unknown : We know only a fraction of his works. The Lord made the universe and then gave wisdom to devout men". (No. 43).

It must not be supposed that the 'wisdom' at work in the argument from design is confined to Judaism or Christianity. The *Koran* reminds us that Allah speaks to mankind in allegories (Surah 24, Light). Strains of teleological thinking are quite in evidence : "He sendeth herald winds to make you taste His mercy", and "Look, therefore, at the prints of Allah's mercy in creation" (Surah 30, 46 and 50). The concept of creation is prominently important in Islam, and it shares the Judaic tradition of the prophets of the *Old Testament* in a large measure.

When we look at the Vedas we struck by an abundance of material for an argument from design. The concept of 'The poetry of God', *devasya Kavya* is so very striking, and the world at large is referred to as that. The primal chaos is said to be reduced to cosmos by *Rta* or Law Divine. It is said to uphold the earth, as the Atharva Veda (XII. 1.1) puts it. *Rta* upholds the heavens (*Rg Veda*, X.85.1). *Rta* in its moral aspect includes justice and goodness, besides being the unmutable law of nature (*Rg Veda*, VI. 39.4). In Vedic thought natural law and the moral are coordinated, a task which Kant, in the final paragraph of the second *Critique* left to feeling to do ! the starry heaven and the moral law within come

together in awe and wonder. The design supporting the transcendent and yet immanental Existence brought out through beguiling metaphors : in obedience to law the rains break, the fountains, that bubbling steam forward are young virgins skilled in Law (*Rg Veda,* IV. 19.7.) The Lovely Dawn is true to Eternal Order, is sublime by Law (*Rg Veda,* V.80). The following may be taken as the Vedic argument from design :

> Thou who by Eternal Law has spread about
> flowering and seed-bearing plants, and
> Streams of water!
> Thou who hast generated the matchless
> lightnings in the sky,
> Thou, Vast, encompassing vast realms,
> art a fit subject for our song.

This is from *Rg Veda,* II. 13-17, Now God is thought of as 'the Form behind all forms', *rupam rupam pratirupa vabhuva* (*Rg Veda,* VI, 47-48). The *mantra* runs on to declare that for every form He has been the Model, that form of His is the one to look on everywhere! *tad asya rupam prati caksanaya,* Samkara read this mantra as part of *Brahadaranyaka Upanisad,* and in his commentary thereon he wrote : "why did He come in so many forms ? Were name and form not manifested, the transcendent nature of Atman as pure intelligence would not have been known" (commentary on *Brhadaranyaka Upanisad,* 2.5.19). This is precisely what the argument from design seek to establish. The *Gita* simply elaborates the argument in the tenth chapter, called *Vibhuti-yoga* when Arjuna asks, in what aspects art God to be contemplated by him ? The answer is an elaboration of the Vedic version of the argument from design.

III

The reason for treating the argument from design with respect on the part of Hume and Kant has been that the argument (or is it an awareness ?) comes most naturally us. And

it will be expected that poets would often express the conception in deeply moving verse. Rainer Maria Rilke is one of the great modern poets who expressed the argument from design very movingly in his *Sonnets to Orphens*. In our own country, Rabindranath Tagore's drama *The King of the Dark Chamber*, (which had captivated Wittgenstein) is built upon the argument from design. People do not see the King, and the sceptic asks, is there at all a king? He is told to look at the business of the state, how they are carried out in details, justice is done, festivities are observed, and the King's standard is held high. How could all these be there if there were no king. Finally, it should be observed that the argument from design is less an argument, and more an assertion of faith. Faith, as St. Paul writes in one of his letters to the Romans, justifies belief in God and we have peace (*Romans*, V.1). And in Hebrews (II.1) he writes, "faith is the substance of things is quite decisive an assertion in matters religious. Otherwise we simply know in part.

Following his Vedic ancestry, Tagore wrote in his later years a defence of the argument from design. And I close by quoting the testament;

A poet, I cannot enter such arguments
I look at the world
In its true, full essence
At the millions of stars in the sky
Carrying their huge, harmonious beauty—
Never breaking their rhythm
Or losing their truth
Never deranged,
Never strembling.
I can only gaze and I see, in the sky,
The spreading layers
Of a vast, radiant, petalled Rose

The analogy is based squarely on an argument. Simply, beauty presupposes design. Beauty is truth.

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Chapter VI

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Philosophy may be described as the experiential study of the non-empirical. This suggestion came from Samuel Alexander. But what we notice is that there has been a long historical association between theism and rationalism on the one hand, and empiricism and atheism on the other. One may believe in God, not merely on authority, but because one thinks there are good reasons for believing in God. To do so is to be a theist. Again one's belief in God need not be based on inference but on experience. Recent controversy on the philosophy of religion hardly represents this background. Traditional theists insist that the concept of God is bound up with that of necessity, and that without it, it is reduced to the status of one finite concept amongst others, i.e. not unique. What, it will be said, can be made of a God who merely *happens* to exist ? Arguing from the same premises, the empiricist will maintain that from presented data it is never possible to infer necessity, and that any being who is not necessarily might *not* be, the support on which everything stands might slip from under at any moment, and there cannot be called God. Both ways, God is defined so as to make the empirical approach to him self-contradictory.

To meet there objections, it will be necessary to reexamine much of natural theology and much of the recent philosophy of religion. One would have to ask, why it is that it is held to be impossible to be empirically acquainted with the non-empirical ? How the concept of God has become associated in the minds of all kinds of philosophers with the concept of logical necessity ? If God is not logically necessary but practically necessary, faith must carry weight which logical necessity has been made to carry and cannot carry. The programme is formidable but the predicament demands no less, and I have had no pretensions to undertake the job. Moreover the problem of the argument from design is discussed in a Christian setting. It might have been arrogant, since the Christian religion is one which I do not feel from the inside. My thinking of it is thinking about from the outside. But the issues with which I have been concerned are not restricted to Christianity.

Wittgenstein wrote : 'God does not reveal himself in the world' (*Tractatus,* 6.432). If that is true, he does not reveal himself at all : the world is just what it would be if he did not exist. But in fact any alleged revelation of God is also a revelation of something else. We never experience the Divine sheerly in and by itself : We experience the Divine solely through and in connexion with what is other than the Divine. And, if that is so, it is to that other that we must direct our attention if we want to gain a glimpse of the Divine, the traditional way says that we know God through his effects. In this way the factor of immediacy may be sacrificed, and we are required to envisage God, not as presence, but as cause. The cause remains to be recovered from the effect. But if the effect does not in some sense *overlap* with the cause, no recovery is possible. What is called an effect is a presence, not merely a proxy or a signpost. There is creativity observable in the world, inspite of the fact there is much in the world that is alien, or at least alienated from the presence of God. Leibniz held that there is a world of created beings, - living things, animals, entelechies, and souls - in the least part of nature (*Monadology,* ch.66). The seeds of perfection are there at all levels. The separation of factual from perfectional considerations is a mistake, one with serious consequences for theism, which must entertain and defend the final coalescence of perfection and being.

Again, order and creativity are observable in the world. They are prerequites for action. If there were nothing in things corresponding to constraint of order in our minds, confusion would spread through everything we do. In classical arguments of the cosmological and for design the distinction between the imperfect and the perfect coincides with the distinction between the world and God. But it is thinkable that the distinction is revealed in the world through the prolongation of God into the world. The little things of God are as good as the big things, the contingent may well be a prolongation. As experienced, it cannot be parcelled out into constituent attributes. It is a case for poetry or parable rather than for argument. It is prolonged, in nature and in men, as order on the one hand, and as creativity on the other. In both equally the presence is made known. They pull

in different ways, and for that very reason they belong together. They put pressure on us to look behind them for a presence in which they are united. There are at least some significant human analogies. The most significant prolongation is to be found in the moral life, and no less in the more universal structure of the world. By 'structure' we mean 'order', and 'creation', and these are prolongation of God. We can trace the drift to order in the history of Cosmology. The more we know about nature the more it presents itself as one would. This fact is described by the use of the term 'law'. The discovery that there is nothing odd or priviledged about the heavens is in a sence religious discovery. It is a move away from arbitrariness. As the *Katha Upanishad* puts it : 'What is here is also there, and what is there is also here. Who sees the many and not the one, wanders on from death to death." (Tr. Juan Mascaro, Penguin, 62-63). The drift towards order can be illustrated in the economy of human nature. There appears to be a sort of inbuilt sanction against division, as Plato said, injustice, i.e. subversion of the economy, renders a man incapable of action (*Republic,* 352a). The drift to order is also vindicated in the growth of our knowledge. An order is supposed to have been hammered out in the struggle for survival. It would be strange if our tendency to group things together in thought had no foundation. If there were no order in things the ascription or order to things could result in failure.

It is part of what is meant by order that if requires not only unity but variety. If unity stood alone, there would be no order. Unity does not exclude differences, and that is how there is order. But this picture raises the note of tension between the constituent characters of the world. The other major character of the world is creativity. If God is identified only with order, there can be no source of initiative for decisions to flow from. It is because order has been considered the only requirement that history and individual development have been reduced to predetermined chains of events. There are significant breaks in the order of the cosmos. It is called Emergent Evolution (C.Lloyd Morgan's book *Emergent Evolution,* and Vol.II of Alexander's *Space, Time and Deity*). New qualities do not emerge causelessly. The question is whether a new qualitative simplicity ensues from increased qualitative complexity. Most, determinists, theological and materialist alike, would answer 'No'. The

phenomenon of origination may be thought as an attribute of God always in tension with his unity, namely his creativity. Here is another prolongation of God into the world. Order is the concrete expression of the drift to unity. Creativity is a little different from that. Multiplicity is just presented to us, and in itself is not creative at all. It is the raw material of order, nor is it the opposite of order, which is chaos. Creativity is not chaos. It is invention, initiative, an excursion into the unforeseen. Order is the spring board from which it leaps, and order is what, in a new pattern, it creates. It is bad order that is uncreative and bad creation which is disorderly. Values are apart at the base and converse as each approaches its climax. The opposite of creation is not order but torpor which is not order, just as the opposite of order is not creation, but chaos, which is not creative.

Order and creativity may be looked upon as the constitutive features of the world, and if that be so there is an overlap of divine and cosmic characters. God and the cosmos are continuous. God is not wholly other, he will have in this world channels of activity, and a home.

The two structural elements of nature and human experience, order and creativity, are also traditionally listed among the attributes of God. They are expressions of God hidden from us by their very familiarity. It can be argued that the more the attributes of God can be located in the world, the less we need to look for their explanation to a God beyond the world. If the world in its own right exhibits order and creativity, it can do without the supernatural supplement. So when we find two of the characters most commonly ascribed to God already pervading the world, why should we have to look to God to account for them ? Why, indeed ? asks Kierkegaerd. By saying that there is an overlap of God into the world, we mean that from the side of the world there is a grasping of fringes of God in the world, and that from the side of God the overlap is a prolongation, and finally that there is something about the prolongation which requires to be traced back to its divine hinterland. Our speculation concerning prolongation of God into the world is offered as a presupposition of the cosmological proof. The speculation does not intend pantheism nor idolatory. It is a

matter of high religious belief that there is a God, and there are shapes of God in the world. The structures may pass over into attributes of God, but only human situations can reveal his presence.

II. Our thesis of prolongation of God into the world derives much support from Whitehead's insightful remark that creativity of God is not separable from its creatures (*Religion in the Making,* p.79). To be finite, is a sense, is to be open-ended. So finite creatures are open-ended, and this should mean, if he is to be what he is, there must be somewhere something which is in greater measure what he is, and with which he is somehow continuous. This should apply to the world as well. Both the cosmological and that from design are based upon the speculative contenuous relationship of the creator and the creature.

We may now make some general remarks about the traditional proofs for God's existence.

Empiricists argue that existence is never, and cannot be a matter of demonstration. Hence the demonstrators are at fault. The problem begins with Kant. He held that the moral arguments for God hold fast where the metaphysical fail. In considering Kant's arguments against the traditional proofs one generally misses the point about his intention. He did not say that no arguments are of any avail. His moral arguments are conducted in the same manner as the displaced metaphysical arguments, though with less sophistication. But taking account of the history of thought, the *Dialectic* of the *Critique of Pure Reason* is a watershed. Thence forward rational theology has flourished only in the Thomist revival, despite Kant's own morally grounded belief in God, freedom and immortality. Kant exerted so great an influence, not because of his refutation of individual proofs, but because of his argument that rational theology is formally impossible. Kant's efforts are impressive, but not decisive. He never stated the proofs in their strongest or most persuasive forms. None of the proofs as stated by Kant possess their medieval splendour.

It is through his distinction between Understanding and Reasoan that Kant approaches the proofs. In the *Anayltic of Pure Reason* he lays it down that phenomena can be subsumed under the categories objectively and nescessarily. But that is because they are phenomena. There is no such knowledge of things in Themselves. yet there is an irrestible 'natural disposition of the mind' to carry over to things in themselves the demand for unity under the categories which in the case of phenomena, is shown to be justified. This is the illusion which gives rise to speculative mataphysics. But the drive behind speculative metaphysics has no empirical material to work on. Provided it is taken as 'regulative', not 'constitutive', it serves as the principle of the complete enterprise. Rational unity is allowed in the case of morals, and its relevance in respect of knowledge is also acknowledged, but it definitely excludes the objective application of what it affirms as an Idea, and therefore it means the total rejection of Kant called 'rational theology'. "No satisfactory proof of the existence of a being corresponding to our transcendental idea can be possible by pure speculative reason' (CPR, tr. Kemp Smith, p.518, A620, B 648) from such passages has flowed much scepticism about God. What is forgotten is that Kant was attacking was not religion, but the intellectualized abstractions of eighteenth century modernism. The supreme cauise, regarded merely as such, is not an object of religion. "We might, in strict regour, deny to the Deist any belief in God at all, and regard him merely as the maintainer of the existence of a primal being or thing - the supreme cause of all other things." This excerpt from Kant (CPR A 633, B661) is qualified by its content. The contrast between 'God' and 'Supreme Cause' is significant. What Kant is trying to discredit are terms like *ens realissimum,* 'the ground of the possibility of all things', 'something which exists with absolute necessity', etc. which lack religious interest. It might be said that one of Kant's achievements has to rescue the concept of God from these pseudo - scientific entanglements.

Kant denies the competence of 'reason', but he does not exclude *reasons.* He attacked metaphysical necessity, which the deists of his time assumed. Kant regards only the ontological proof as wholly *a priori,* the others, and especially the physico-theological, contain empirical premises. He has nothing against the premises, but against the fact that

they require the ontological proof to provide the necessitarian conclusion. But he was impressed by physico-theological considerations (A 622, B 650). If we say 'reasons' instead of 'reason', the intellectual component of religion becomes relevant. It may not be sufficient. This could have been Kant's point if he is read between the lines. Reason for Kant produces certainty only within the limits of space and time. Propositions about God do not fall under that heading. Therefore there can be no certainty in propositions about God. In its more exalted sense reason is only regulative, and rules are not existences. Therefore, there is no knowledge of any *existence* other than the spatio-temporal. The argument is conclusive. But the question remains, whether the premisses are sound.

For Kant the drift of traditional metaphysics is necessatarian. The theory as he states it lays great stress on logical completeness, and very little on perfection. In this it departs from the Fourth Way of St. Thomas, and does not satisfy the religious consciousness, Kant's tests for metaphysics has completeness, and he saw it to be incompatible with freedom. He rejected metaphysics, not the test.

Kant has shown that *proofs* of the existence of God are impossible. What he objects to is not God but the itch for demonstration. People are tempted to say that for Kant reason has no part to play in religion. But that is not Kant's considered view. He allows some persuasiveness, share of demonstration, to the physico-theological proof. Demonstration involves extending to the world as a whole the ways of thinking suitable to natural objects, a procedure which leads in the end to physicalism, Kant was unable formally to think of metaphysics in any other terms. But his criticism of all cast-iuron demonstrations may be regarded as conclusive.

III. Kant, however, was convinced that religion will not suffer from the disappearance of theological metaphysics. From Kierkegaard's *Philosophical Frangments* and the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, we learn that as long as religion is entangled in theological metaphysics, it loses its authentic character as religion. We are shown that

philosophy intrinsically *cannot* discover God, and in its despair it turns over, dialectically *into* faith. For example, a practising Christian worships God in three persons, a concept not to be contained in that of a First Mover or of God-in-general. Even the central doctrine of Incarnation has unquestionabaly an air of paradox. How can that which is infinite also be finite ? How can that to which birth and death are irrelevant, be born and die? Classical Thomism distinguished between the sphere of philosophy and the sphere of revelation. Moreover, Klerkegeard argues that the God-relationship of the individual is a secret, this can never be communicated. Philosophy is essentially 'the system', it deprives man of his 'subjectivity' which is the essential feature of religion. Hence rational theology is a suspect. There can be no proof of the existence of God, because proof is objective, and God is not an object. An object, by definition, is something which is thought contemplated. It does not need to be existentially appropriated. Objective knowledge reduces the thinker to an anonymous level. It does not matter who thinks or contemplates it. Objectivity, anonymity, impersonality are synonymous and what they describe is the standardization of the individuala. God cannot be apprehended in this impersonal spirit. The leap to God must gather up the whole of a man's passionate inawardness. Hence God cannot be proved, because what can be proved, if it could be proved, cannot be God.

The contention is based on an empirical conception of being. The knowing spirit is an existing individual being. To prove the existence of God we should need a God's-eye view. We should have to be able to encompass God by sheer force of intellect. We cannot rise to this infinite occasion. An empirical philosophy such as befits finite individuals cannot encompass God. And by pretending to encompass God, the empirical philosopher denotes God. He encompasses God abstractly and ideally, i.e., not at all. Kierkegeard's point is two-fold : he says *both* that the objective quest must be empirical, not comprehensive, *and* that the empirical quest, being 'approximative', cannot succeed. The empirist does not always experience awe, but it preserves the subjectivity of the inquirer. The rationalist system-

builder has everything so well in hand that there is nothing left to be in awe of. Thus we find Kierkegaard presenting us with reasons why proving God's existence is impossible.

IV. Kant and Kierkegaard between them have established the point that the traditional proofs fell short of demonstration. But we submit that the proofs may be looked upon as pointers and indicators, which, taken together, considerably enlarge our understanding.

The ontological proof of, or argument for, the existence of God is the earliest in modern Christian history in point of time, and raises the most fundamental issues. It has had a chequered career. Propounded by St. Auselm in the *Prosologion* (Chapters 2-4) it was criticized by St. Thomas, reiterated by St. Bonaventura, reinstatsed by Descartes, developed, with important logical additions, by Leibniz, utterly discredited by Kant, generalised by into ineffectiveness by Hegel, treated with contempt or condescension by both Thomists and empiricists over the last century, and within the last decade resurrected by Norman Malcolm and Charles Hartschorne. This is an intriguing story, and bears witness to the fascination of the argument itself. Even those who eventually decide against it have wondered from time to time whether it might not be valid, and have mulled over it in amazement and exasperation. But nearly everyone, except Hartchorne, has treated it as the rationalist argument *par excellence*, containing no empirical premises or references. We do not propose to consider it in detail, or to consider whether the orthodox interpretation is correct. Instead, we offer the following observations.

In one of the versions put forward by St. Anselm it runs as follows : God is that than which nothing greater can be thought. But that which exists in itself is greater than that which exists by way of thought. Therefore God, if thought, exists.

The classical objection is that there is no passage from thought to existence. It is not being suggested that the passage from thought to existence applies in general terms. It applies only to that special case of God, than whom nothing greater can be thought. Kant's sneer about the merchant adding noughts to his cash account is therefore beside the mark. Anselm was not an idealist, nor was Descartes. The first premise of the argument is quite

defensible. It is not possible to think of God except as that than which nothing can be greater. To affirm God is to affirm such a being. To deny God is to affirm that there is none. In the Fifth *Meditation* Descartes makes this point clear by separating the two phases of the argument, and the conclusion of the first, namely that the *concept* of God entails the *concept* of existence. This might be accepted even by those who deny that the concept has any application. And the *concept* of God is in this respect unique, of no other concept could it be said that existence is contained in it Anselm says, *that than which a greater cannot be thought* cannot exist in the mind alone. For if it exists solely in the mind even it can be thought to exist in reality also, which is greater. The *concept* of God uniquely includes reality. But does he really exist ? Descartes argued that if he does not, there is a radical discontinuity between concept and existence from the top downwards, such as makes nonsense of science and of everyday discourse. Therefore the conclusion of the arguments needs be granted.

There is the important point made by Descartes, that it is repugnant to conceive a God who lacks the perfection of existing. There must in reality be existence if there is God, because in this case the necessity which is in the thing itself, the necessity of the existence of God, determines me to have this thought.

Malcolm points out that existence is not a perfection, but necessary existence is. And that God should lack this perfection is inconceivable. Hartshorne points out that the argument is transposed to the field of modal logic. Contingency alone makes existence a question of extralogical fact, and God is not contingent. Leibriz said that God must exist if he is possible, and he is possible if the concept of him is not self-contradictory.

'Necessity' has proved a difficult conception in Theology, because it is thought to hold of God over his whole contents, Leibniz made his version of the argument run as follows : If God is possible, then he is necessary. To say that God is possible is to say that he might or might not be. A possible God is absurd, and from that absurdity the argument proceeds. Everything turns on the various meanings of 'possible'. If 'possible' is

contrasted with 'impossible', of course, God is possible. But this does not mean either that he is necessary or that he exists. It means, at the most, that he cannot definitely be said not to exist.

What is really needed is 'possible, therefore, necessary'. Malcolm argues that there is a sense of 'possible' in which it relates the present to the future. In this sense God must be necessary because, if he were not, he would either here been *caused* to come into existence or have *happened* to come into existence, and in either case he would be a limited being, which by our conception of him he is not. Since he cannot come into existence if he does not exist, his existence is impossible. Malcolm asks us to take religious language seriously. He quotes Psalm 90 : "Before the mountains were brought forth, or even thou hast formed the earth, and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God". Here is expressed the idea of the necessary existence and eternity of God. Necessity of God is not a matter of modal logic, it is a fact of religious experience.

If so, then the proof is not wholly *a priori.* It starts from the notion of that than which nothing greater can be conceived or thought. It is surely a fact that somebody *has* this notion, it is not a disembodied entity. There is an empirical premise. It is the *having* of the concept which sets the whole argument going. It was also Descartes'point that our having the idea of God could not be caused by anything less than God himself. In saying that Descartes went beyond the bounds of the ontologivcal arguments. From the concept as such, distinguished from reality, we cannot conclude extra-conceptually. In Bernard Shaw's *St Joan*, Act I, Joan says that the voices telling her what to do come from God. To the suggestion that they come from her imagination, she remarks that "that is how the messages of God come to us." Joan insists that God speaks to us from the inside through our proper human endowments. Following that train of thought, our having the concept of God might be one of the ways that God gets at us. If the concept of God is God *in us*, it is not a fragment of pure intellect. It has a personal context in the aesthetic, moral and religious responses of a living creature. What it loses as a proof it gains as a guide. As the pivot of a life, the concept of God is a pointer,

though not a guarantee. Kant started the trouble by talking about 'the proof', as if it could be detached from its historical contexts. In Anselm the aura of faith is never absent. His empirically inclined critics turned its contention into a deliberate abstraction. They did not take into account its personal content, not did they admit that it is evocative rather than demonstrative. However, in whatever way they conceived the argument, they insinuated the fruitful suggestion that the concept of God is a prolongation of God in us.

V. We opened our Concluding Remarks by considering the concept of order. Now the argument from design takes it for granted that there is in the world a very remarkable degree of order and adaptation in the world. The question, however, has been, whether it requires an orderer or designer.

It has been argued frequently that the argument from design does not give us God, but only a Demiurge, with enough power to produce the world, but no more. The only thing we can do with this argument is to admit it without reservations. Kant also says that the physico-theological proof must fall back on the ontological argument, which is, in fact, the one possible ground of proof with which human reason can never dispense with (CPR A 625, B 653). But really speaking, we are not forced back on it, for we lay no claim to logical necessity. Indeed, the argument from design has special interest for us because it implies that empirical evidence is somehow relevant to the question of proof of God. Something of what it can contribute is suggested by Kant : "the physico-theological argument can indeed lead us to the point of admiring the greatness, wisdom, power, etc. of the Author of the world, but can take us no further" (CPR, A 629, B 657). That is all we ask of it.

But behind these technical questions; why does order need to be explained at all ? The argument from design seems to assume that order is ubiquitous. But it is neither wholly established, nor its only perfection. Aand that is why there is any reason to look for an order beyond it. It is commonly supposed that the *perfection* of the world-order is a reason for believing in God. If so, it is a chancy reason. Any imperfection would by the same token be a reason for not believing in God, and the imperfections are for all to see. It is the need for

order, and its imperfect hold on the world, which together point to a centre for it which is not the world. The argument from design appears to be impervious to excellences of the world other than order; e.g., to the creative impetus which the world can display, and in virtue of which a failure of order is not necessarily a calamity. All in all, the argument from design is too much wedded to order, and it is necessary to go far beyond it to meet the objection raised against it.

The 'argument *from* design' might better be described as an 'argument to design'. If it is merely *from* design, design being one of the premises, it has its conclusion in its pocket. What is at issue is whether there *is* design. If there is, there is obviously a designer. At its best, it is an argument *from* order *to* design (and a designer), and it is proper to accept it, and to insist on its being taken, in that limited sense.

Could we not see the argument from design in the wider perspective or content of a cosmic ideology? We may refer to F.R.Tennant's great work *Philosophical Theory* (Cambridge University Press, 1968) and appreciate its reviewer, H.D.Lewis' remark that the argument is not yet dead. In Vol.II, Chapter 4 of *Philosophical Theology,* Tennant has given a reconstruction of the argument from design. Cosmic teleology calls for metaphysical imagination, and it requires a survey of the whole system of things, in their ascending order of completeness. Man figures in the story as part of the purpose, and the purpose is his creator as he is the creator of the rest of nature. For Tennant the teleogy is inside the process, and it points beyond the process. There is the remarkable fittingness of human activities with their natural background. Further, the adaptation between man and his environment is marked by his admiration of the beauty of nature. There are few experiences which show man more utterly committed to the world, for some, it almost takes the place of religion. It is an adaptation in which we are claimed by what we belong to. There must be something specific in the world for the feelings to catch on to. There is another subtle adaptation between ourselves and the world we live in, and like other adaptations, it is both too good

and too improbable to have happened accidentally. This is not a proof. It appeals only to what Tenant calls 'alogical probability'(*Op.cit.*, Vol.II, p.II). But that is the most we can ask for. It adds to other adaptations to build up a reasonably convincing picture of a continuous purpose. To render the picture as complete as possible, we should need to give an account of ****the adaptation between the cause of the world and the moral order. If the world had been planned to promote the moral order, it could hardly have been planned better. In particular, if it had been created automatically perfect, it would not have served nearly as well. In all human activities there is a teleology reaching into the world and working its way through the world in an evolutionary spiral, but not centred in the world, though everywhere manifecto in the world. This is a considerable extension of the argument from design. In frings out its central principle, which earned it the unwilling respect of Hume and the warmer though still conditional respect for Kant : that the order of the world is neither self-generating nor self-sustaining.

Thus from a review of the proofs we may be permitted to conclude :

(a) that they do not achieve demonstration;

(b) that many arguments against them do not hold water;

(c) that they provide good reasons for believing;

In religious life we must pass from the shadow of syllogism to living faith.

The argument so far has been that there are good reasons for holding that God exists, and that if there were no such reasons, no amount of devotion; no claim to direct insight, no amount of labour expended, could carry the conclusion. The reasons cannot amount to proof, but they do provide a high degree of suggestiveness. The reasons are always empirical, and for this very reason those who expect demonstration and get only reasons may feel that they have been given nothing. This is short-sighted of them; those who want there to be nothing and insist on proof will be well-pleased. But they have a point. There is a difference between having good reasons which is all that a philosopher can supply, and the finality of religion conviction. The religious attitude cannot be satisfied with good reasons. We cannot juxtapose the languages of extinment and assurance. We have been attempting in

this chapter to avoid this confusion by aassigning each of the languages to its appropriate sphere. The traditional mistake lies not in insisting on the occurrence, but in founding it on the Theoretical concept of necessity; in deriving it from the past and not from the future. Further, the nature of religious occurrence belongs to an open-ended human situation, and its triumph is not that it limits open-endedness, but that it is completely at home in it. That, in the long run, is why reasons in religion cannot amount to proof. If they did, they would not be religious. The traditional proofs in fact supply good reasons, elevated into proofs by mistaken presuppositions.

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