

Revision Outline For The Cosmological Argument

AO1	<p>a) Examine the Key features of the Cosmological argument for the existence of God.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Cosmological argument is one of the oldest arguments to prove the existence of God. ➤ The cosmological argument is an a posteriori argument. St Thomas Aquinas, 1224-1274, Summa Theologica "It is certain and evident to our senses that in the world some things are in motion." ➤ The cosmological argument appears to answer the questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the universe begin? • Why was the universe created? • Who created the universe? ➤ The cosmological argument <ul style="list-style-type: none"> P1: All events require a cause P2: The universe is an event. C: The God of classical theology is the first cause. ➤ Adapted by St Thomas Aquinas in his 5 ways to prove the existence of God. Three of Aquinas' five ways support the cosmological argument. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st motion. There are many things in the world that are in motion. All things, which are in motion, have been moved. This chain of movement cannot have gone back to infinity. There must have been a first mover. Aquinas argued that this unmoved mover was God. • 2nd cause. Works on the same principles as motion. All things are caused. In the world around us we can see that nothing is its own cause. Therefore there must be a first cause, on which all other causes depend. This cause is God. Aquinas rejects infinite regress. • 3rd contingency. "We find in nature that things are possible to be and not to be, since they are found to be generated, and to be corrupted, and consequently, it is possible for them to be and not to be." (Aquinas). Such things are contingent and demand an explanation outside itself. The very nature of things in the world (natural law) demands God exists. ➤ The Kalam Argument, Developed by Muslim scholars al-Kindi and al-Ghazali, More recently developed by William Lane Craig, The Kalam Cosmological Argument, 1979. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st part states that the universe is finite, which means it had a beginning. The universe cannot have caused itself. There must have been a first cause. This cause was God • 2nd part looks to prove a personal creator "If the universe began to exist, and if the universe is caused, then the cause of the universe must be a personal being who freely chooses to create the world" William Lane Craig
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AO1/2	b) For what reasons have some thinkers rejected the cosmological argument? How far is it possible to regard the cosmological argument as strong?
AO1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Weaknesses • A question of motion? Anthony Kenny, <i>The Five Ways</i>, 1965. Argues against Aquinas' principle of motion. Kenny argues animals and people do move themselves e.g. <i>inertia</i>. He states that Newton's law "wrecks the argument of the first way. For at any given time the rectilinear uniform motion of a body can explained by the principle of inertia in terms of the bodies own previous motion without appeal to any other agent". Immanuel Kant, 1724-1804 argues that even if we do accept the empirical evidence it can only be applied to our world of sense experience. It cannot be applied to God who is outside our experience • Inconsistency? Why must we conclude that the universe has a beginning? David Hume, <i>Dialogues concerning Natural Religion</i>, 1779, Even if it did begin it doesn't mean it had a cause. The universe could be explained through The Big Bang Theory. Scientists who support the widely accepted Big Bang Theory see no place for God in their account of creation. God is no longer needed to fill the gap in the light of scientific discovery. Bertrand Russell, 1914 was concerned with philosophical logic. He argued that just because humans have a mother it does not mean that the universe had to have a mother. "I should say that the universe is just there, and that's all" • Why the God of classical theism? David Hume, <i>Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion</i> 1779; perhaps an inferior deity? Perhaps many Gods? Evil and suffering does not suggest a omnibenevolent, omnipotent, omniscient (wise) God ➤ Strengths • A posteriori: it is based on evidence which is universally available • Richard Swinburne employed the principle of Ockham's razor to support the cosmological argument. This theory suggests that the most efficient philosophical inquiry is often the simplest. • Gotfried Leibniz, 1710; Sufficient Reason; We need to establish why there is something rather than nothing. God gives us an answer • J L Mackie, argued we would not expect there to be a railway train and an infinite number of carriages without an engine. ➤ Conclusion • Subjective: The success of the argument is dependant on the subject and whether they ask the question why is there something rather than nothing. If you do not ask this question then the argument is invalid. • Probability: Can the cosmological argument make God more probable? • Your opinion: What do you think? Does it work for you/your religion?
AO2	