Converted Platonic demiurge into Christian God.

*Summa Theologica*

Five proofs for the existence of God

Argument from Motion

- Nothing can move itself.
- If every object in motion had a mover, then the first object in motion needed a mover.
- This first mover is the Unmoved Mover, called God.
Causation of Existence

- There exists things that are caused (created) by other things.
- Nothing can be the cause of itself (nothing can create itself.)
- There can not be an endless string of objects causing other objects to exist.
- Therefore, there must be an uncaused first cause called God.

The Design Argument

- **Teleological argument**
- Common sense tells us that the universe works in such a way that one can conclude that it was designed by an intelligent designer.

Justification of Religious Belief

- Experience (a posteriori)
- Revelation (a priori)

Theology

- Natural (a posteriori)
- Revealed (a priori)
Belief in God must be supported by objective evidence. Any belief is rational if and only if there is sufficient evidence to support it, and rationality is in direct proportion to the balance of evidence.

Basic beliefs can be held without objective, rational evidence. Subjective justifications are themselves reasonable, though reason alone is insufficient proof for claims.

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Theism

Deism

What kind of God?

(i) and (ii) accepted based on reason, but (iii) not accepted

One and only one all-powerful God

who created the Universe

and remains immanent in his creation

Mechanical Philosophy

- Replaced Aristotelian Philosophy
- Sought to account for all the phenomena of nature solely in terms of matter in motion
- God acted through fixed laws and this made Him greater.
- Rene Descartes – argued for God based on pure reason (a priori)
- Baruch Spinoza – argued against Biblical miracles
- Pierre Gassendi – revived Pre-Socratic atomism and Epicurean thought
- Was this encouraging unbelief & atheism?
Robert Boyle

The universe “is like a rare clock … where all things are so skillfully contrived, that the engine being once set a-moving, all things proceed according to the artificer’s first design, and the motions … do not require the particular interposing of the artificer, or any intelligent agent employed by him, but perform their functions upon particular occasions, by virtue of the general and primitive contrivance of the whole engine.”

Newton’s own thoughts

“This most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent Being. … This Being governs all things, not as the soul of the world, but as Lord over all; and on account of his dominion he is wont to be called Lord God pantokratōr … The Supreme God is a Being eternal, infinite, absolutely perfect being; but a being, however perfect, without dominion is not the Lord God.”

General Scholium to Principia

Newton’s own thoughts

“Gravity explains the motions of the planets, but it cannot explain who set the planets in motion. God governs all things and knows all that is or can be done.”

Physico-Theology

- Revival of *a posteriori* arguments
- Particularly British (and Protestant)
- John Ray – *Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of the Creation* (1691)
- William Derham – *Physico-Theology* (1715)
- Aimed at the lay public rather than theologians or natural philosophers
William Paley  
(1743–1805)

- Attended Christ's College, Cambridge and became a Fellow in 1766
- *The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* (1785)
- *A View of the Evidences of Christianity* (1794)
- *Natural Theology* (1802)

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The Watchmaker Argument

“When you see a sundial or a water-clock, you see that it tells the time by design and not by chance. How then can you imagine that the universe as a whole is devoid of purpose and intelligence, when it embraces everything, including these artifacts themselves and their artificers?”

(Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*)
"For, as divers Watches may be made out of several materials, which may yet have all the same appearance, and move after the same manner, that is, show the hour equally true, the one as the other, and out of the same kind of matter, like Watches, may be wrought differing ways; and, as one and the same Watch may, by being diversely agitated, or mov'd, by this or that agent, or after this or that manner, produce a quite contrary effect: So may it be with these most curious Engines of Insect's bodies; the All-wise God of Nature, may have so ordered and disposed the little Automatons, that when nourished, acted, or enlivened by this cause, they produce one kind of effect, or animate shape, when by another they act quite another way, and another Animal is produc'd. So may he so order several materials, as to make them, by several kinds of methods, produce similar Automatons"
“We have no reason to fear”

“The hinges in the wings of an earwig and the joints of its antennae, are as highly wrought, as if the Creator had nothing else to finish. We see no signs of diminution of care by multiplicity of objects, or of distraction of thought by variety. We have no reason to fear, therefore, our being forgotten, or overlooked, or neglected.”

Darwin on Paley

“To pass the B.A. examination, it was also necessary to get up Paley’s Evidences of Christianity, and his Moral Philosophy… The logic of… his Natural Theology gave me as much delight as did Euclid…. I did not at that time trouble myself about Paley’s premises; and taking these on trust, I was charmed and convinced by the long line of argumentation.”

Autobiography, 1887

David Hume’s Critiques of Religion

Treatise on Human Nature (1739–40, vs. natural religion)
- Our ideas reach no farther than our experience and we can thus have no conception of divine attributes

An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding (1748, vs. revealed religion)
- It is never reasonable to believe in violations of natural law

Natural History of Religion (1757)
- We are only left with “vulgar religion” – the religion of the masses, emotions and instincts
- This religion has its origin in dread of the unknown

Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion (1756’s ; 1779, vs. natural religion)
### The Arguments

**A priori arguments**
- The world contains an infinite sequence of contingent facts
- An explanation is needed which cannot reside within the sequence
- This is God as it needs to be the explanation for its own existence.

**A posteriori arguments**
- Machines are produced by intelligent design
- The universe resembles a machine
- Therefore, the universe was produced by intelligent design

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### The Conclusion

- Design argument is a flawed analogy
- Limits of our experience of the vast universe
- No definitive proof of the unity, powerfulness, or presence of the creator

  "a total suspension of judgement is here our only reasonable resource."

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### The Bridgewater Treatises 1833 – 1840

- The Adaptation of External Nature to the Moral and Intellectual Condition of Man, by Thomas Chalmers
- On The Adaptation of External Nature to the Physical Condition of Man, by John Kidd
- Astronomy and General Physics considered with reference to Natural Theology, by William Whewell
- The hand, its Mechanism and Vital Endowments as evincing Design, by Sir Charles Bell.
- Animal and Vegetable Physiology considered with reference to Natural Theology, by Peter Mark Roget.
- Geology and Mineralogy considered with reference to Natural Theology, by William Buckland
- The Habits and Instincts of Animals with reference to Natural Theology, by William Kirby.
- Chemistry, Meteorology, and the Function of Digestion, considered with reference to Natural Theology, by William Prout

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### All Things Bright and Beautiful

All things bright and beautiful, All creatures great and small, All things wise and wonderful, The Lord God made them all.  
Each little flower that opens, Each little bird that sings, He made their glowing colors, He made their tiny wings.  
The rich man in his castle, The poor man at his gate, He made them, High or lowly, And ordered their estate.
Is God willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then He is not omnipotent.

Is He able, but not willing? Then He is malevolent.

Is He both able and willing? Then whence cometh evil?

Is He neither able nor willing? Then why call Him God?

The Epicurean Problem of Evil

Are God and Nature then at strife,

That Nature lends such evil dreams?

So careful of the type she seems,

So careless of the single life;

In Memoriam A.H.H 1849

Alfred Lord Tennyson
“Nature, red in tooth and claw”

'So careful of the type?' But no.

From scarped cliff and quarried stone

She cries, 'A thousand types are gone:

I care for nothing, all shall go.

John Henry Cardinal Newman

"I believe in design because I believe in God; not in God because I see design."

Letter to Brownlow, April 13th, 1870.