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God and Some Limits of Science

Abstract:

Some problems are too subjective, too intimate, too proximal, to admit in principle of any scientific solution: *Why is anything you? Is there free will? Is death the end?* Other problems are too objective, too macroscopic: *Why is there a universe? Why is there anything? What is it to be? Why does mathematics exist? Why does anything happen?* Scientific explanation is therefore essentially subject to at least two types of limit, subjective and objective, even though other problems *prima facie* straddle the subjective/objective divide: *What is consciousness? Why is there such a time as the present? Why is there any distinction between right and wrong?* Classical (Newtonian-Einsteinian) science largely brackets these problems, but the interpretations of quantum physics variously force them upon us. They only admit of solutions if God exists, there is free-will, and, if some existence is your existence, then you are an immortal soul.

Keywords:

science, God, subjectivity, objectivity, free will, Being, consciousness, universe

Some problems are too subjective, too intimate, too proximal, to admit in principle of any scientific solution: *Why is anything you? Is there free will? Is death the end?*¹ Other problems are too objective, too macroscopic: *Why is there a universe? Why is there anything? What is it to be? Why does mathematics exist? Why does anything*

1) This paper is a summary of an unpublished book manuscript, *Cosmic Questions*. I do not pretend there is not much more to be said for and against solutions to each of the problems raised. For useful discussion over the years, I thank: A. J. Ayer, Fergus Kerr, Benedikt Paul Goecke, Michael Inwood, Saul Kripke, Thomas Nagel, Robert Nozick, Roger Penrose, Karl Popper, Mikolaj Slawkowski-Rode, Bede Rundle, Nicholas Waghorn, Ralph Stefan Weir, Timothy Williamson.

happen? Scientific explanation is therefore essentially subject to at least two types of limit, subjective and objective, even though other problems *prima facie* straddle the subjective/objective divide: *What is consciousness? Why is there such a time as the present? Why is there any distinction between right and wrong?* Classical (Newtonian-Einsteinian) science largely brackets these questions, but the interpretations of quantum physics variously force them upon us.²

It will be useful to offer some preliminary definitions:

(S) “science” (*def.*) *x* is a science *iff* *x* is a grammatically third-person, predictive, nomological, and naturalistic inquiry, essentially entailing observation and measurement.

Here “nomological” does not entail determinism, but is consistent with quantum indeterminism. “Naturalistic” does not entail naturalism (“everything is natural”), but means “restricted to the empirical world.” Verification or falsification should not be uncritically accepted as criterial of science, because “*p* is verifiable” is true only if *p* is true, and “*p* is falsifiable” is true only if *p* is false. But if “*p* is verifiable” means something like: “*p* is the kind of claim that, if true, could be shown to be true” and “falsifiable” means something like “*p* is the kind of claim that, if false, could be shown to be false” then the verifiability or (*vel*) falsifiability of some claim is a necessary condition for its being scientific. Neither is sufficient, because not all verifiable or falsifiable claims may be reduced to scientific claims (in the sense of “science” above). The definition is, *prima facie*, neutral between varieties of realism and anti-realism.

(D) “determined,” (*def.*) *e* is causally determined *iff*, given the past and the laws of nature, or (*vel*) given some cause (or set of causes) of *e*, not possibly not *e*.

(M) “materialism,” (*def.*) Materialism is true *iff* if *x* exists, *x* is only physical.

(P1) “physicalism,” (or “weak materialism”) (*def.*) Weak materialism is true *iff* if *x* exists, *x* is physical.

(P2) “physicalism,” (or “weak materialism”) (*def.*) Unless *x* is physical *x* has no (non-physical) properties, or (*vel*), the only substances are physical substances.

Definitions (P1) and (P2) do not rule out property dualism, psycho-physical parallelism, panpsychism.³

(P) “physical,” (*def.*) *x* is physical *iff* *x* has some primary qualities.

So being physical admits of degrees. *x* is more physical than *y* *iff* *x* has more primary qualities than *y*, even though if something has at least one primary quality it thereby counts as physical.

2) The limits of science I identify look more scientifically insuperable than those usefully discussed by Medewar in his *Limits*. I agree with Nagel that there are subjective and objective points of view, or epistemologies, but further argue that these presuppose subjective and objective ontologies. See Nagel, “Subjective,” and *Nowhere*. The view from nowhere is a view onto something objective (not nothing). The subjective view is the view of a subject (not no-one). The subjective view is the view from *now-here*. There is therefore subjective and objective *existence*. For distinctions between some varieties of subjectivity and objectivity see Priest, “Subjectivity.”

3) Weir has recently persuasively argued that if property dualism is true then substance dualism is true. Physicalism as defined above allows mental properties, so property dualism. But, if Weir is right, substance dualism follows. See Weir, “Substances,” and *Mind-Body Problem*.

Classical science is, or is at least thought to be, deterministic, quantum science indeterministic, where indeterminism is the negation of determinism: natural laws and the past, or any set of causes, do not make anything subsequent inevitable. Although their truth is sometimes thought to be entailed, or at least made more likely, by (S), determinism and materialism are philosophical not scientific theories. Nothing in (S) could confirm or refute them. They are treated here because they are widely assumed to be both implications of science, and true.

I

Some Subjective Limits of Science

Why is anything you?

This claim appears obviously false, but in a profound sense is true:

All the well-known scientific facts about your genetic make-up, family; and educative background, social and economic influences, and neurological states contribute nothing whatsoever to answering the question: Why is one particular human being you?

These well-known causal influences, which are fully there, answer an entirely different question:

Why is this particular human being the way it is?

If (perhaps *per impossibile*) all the scientific facts are in, the following question has not been broached:

Why is this particular, socialized, educated, human being who is reading this paper now, you?

The fact that you *are* one particular human being (if it is a fact), or *view the world from* one particular human being, or are centered on it, has not been touched.

A set of “subjective” facts, symptomatic of *being you*, resists scientific explanation, that is, resist adequate third-person characterization, subsumption under natural law, observation, and measurement. This list is not exhaustive:

(a) You cannot see your own eyes because *being* someone is an obstacle to *observing* that person: The eye that sees does not see the eye that sees, because the I that sees does not see the I that sees. In “being you” we need to clarify this “being” and this “you.” The “being-you” of your existence is so close to you that you take it for granted. Because you are you, you are infinitely close to yourself; an absolute proximity which makes self-knowledge hard: your *being* whatever it is you are prevents your encountering yourself, “coming across” yourself. This “infinitely close” therefore entails metaphysical identity but phenomenological distance.

(b) The Belgian surrealist painter René Magritte paints the problem of being someone in his interesting *Réproduction Interdite*. (*a fortiori*, some philosophical problems can be painted.) You cannot see the back of your own head. You can see the back of anyone else’s. Why is your perception of yourself *not* like that in the Magritte painting *Réproduction Interdite*? *Why is réproduction interdite*? The reproduction would not be you. Of course, “no reproduction is *ever* the original,” but the problem is much deeper than that: *you would still view the world from the original human being but the reproduction would be in your visual field.*

(c) You are not your *Doppelgänger*. Why not? Your *Doppelgänger* is qualitatively the same as you in every respect: not *being you*. If you and your *Doppelgänger* exist, then there are two human beings not one. But, on a completely abstract level, it is not built into this situation *which* is the *Doppelgänger* and *which* you. The view from nowhere, the *vue de nulle parte*, does not show who is you and who the *Doppelgänger*. No difference is apparent. For example, if we ran a film of you and your *Doppelgänger* *who is whom* would not show up.

In *the view from now-here* the difference is utterly obvious. Suppose you meet your *Doppelgänger*. You view the *Doppelgänger* from one particular human being, but the *Doppelgänger* is an object in your sensory field. You do not view the world from the *Doppelgänger*. The *Doppelgänger* is a perceptually discriminable item you could tour. Just one particular human being is not a perceptually discriminable item you could tour, the one “you are.” In the view from *now-here*, you are never mixed up about which human being is you and which your *Doppelgänger*.

That something or other is you, is extremely odd. Until symptoms are pointed out, many people *do not realize that they exist*. Why not? One obstacle is that they assume they do know they exist, that it is completely obvious. But there are three habits of thought inimical to being brought up sharply by the mystery of being yourself:

(a) Thinking in the third-person way entailed by doing science *leaves you out of the picture*. “But where ‘I’ and ‘he’ refer to the same person, ‘I am in pain’ is true if and only if ‘He is in pain’ is true.” This is right, but “I” is the word *any* person may rightly use to refer only to him or herself. That some “I” user is you is an extra fact. In a world viewed only from a third-person standpoint, something’s being you would not show up.

(b) Thinking in generalities, including those entailed by subsumption under natural law, is an obstacle to being brought up sharply by the existential reality of your own being. Being you escapes the forms “all *a*’s are *b*’s,” “most *a*’s are *b*’s,” or even, “this *a* is a *b*.” You are indeed an instance of a type (for example, the type “soul” or “human being”), but only thinking of yourself as an instance of a type, does not do justice to the *one-off-ness*, the *here-and-now* reality of being you.

(c) Abstract thinking takes you away from your existence *here-and-now*; not just *in the here-and-now* but *as the here-and-now*. The use of “persons,” “*the* mind,” “*the* brain,” and “*the* self,” renders thought anonymous, and so is not conducive to solving fundamental problems about subjectivity.⁴

“Could a possible answer to *Why is anything you?* be that there is an ‘observer selection’ effect at work here? Given that you exist, you have to be somebody, and if you were someone else, then you would observe something different.”

But none of this explains why anything is you, or what it consists in for something to be you. It is logically possible that you could have been someone else if that means “could have been centered on a different human being.” I could have had your body, thoughts, and experiences. You could have had mine. Indeed, logically, we could swap human beings.⁵

4) Adopting the vocabularies of Kant and Hegel takes us some way to understanding the problems. See Priest, “Subjectivity.” I examine some differences between Husserl and Sartre on the ontology of the subject in Priest, *Question*.

5) So, there could be a metaphysical difference which does not show up empirically. You lose empirical properties, and gain others, but remain you. Michael Inwood said to me that we would not know about the swap (because we leave one mind, and adopt another). This is right if the swap is instantaneous. But we might be aware of the swap if the transition is gradual. At some percentage of the transition, one might retain enough memory and judgement to register the incoming properties as new.

What is it to be you?

(i) Individuality

Your own existence is, in some sense, most particular, so

$\exists(x) (Fx)$ ⁶

clearly does not give us

$\exists(x) ((Fx) \text{ and } (x = \text{you}))$

But even if we preface the existential quantifier with the Russellian “!” (to obtain “ \exists shriek”), that does not give us anything that is you, because

$!\exists(x) (Fx) \rightarrow \exists(x) (x = \text{you})$

is false, even though

$\exists(x) (x = \text{you}) \rightarrow !\exists(x) (Fx)$

is right. The existence of exactly one individual is not sufficient for your existence, even though your existence is sufficient for the existence of exactly one individual. The existence of exactly one individual is necessary for your existence, even though your existence is not necessary for the existence of exactly one individual.

(ii) Self-Identity

Nor does the modal, or logical, fact that some individual is self-identical semantically express “something is you,” because something’s being self-identical is *onto-logically* insufficient for its being you. The implication

$\exists(x) (x = x) \rightarrow \exists(x) (x = \text{you})$

does not go through, even though the converse implication goes through:

$\exists(x) (x = \text{you}) \rightarrow \exists(x) (x = x)$.

(iii) haeccity

Something’s *haeccity* (its being just the very thing it is, and not anything else), is insufficient for its being you, even though you are one unique being, and numerically distinct from any other being, no matter how quali-

6) The logic in this paper presupposes an ontology of distinct items for variables to range over. This presupposition does not entail that if God, consciousness, and the soul, exist then they are *things* (in anything but the broadest sense). It does entail that they are self-identical and individuated.

tatively similar. The entailment may be perceived to only go one way, because the symptoms of being you only show up in your own case. Admittedly, that there is some x such that $x = a$, where a rigidly designates you, does, trivially entail that you exist. But that something is you is already built into this claim. We still do not know what it is for anything to be you.

(iv) Nor is being you any kind of physical or mental fact. Once (perhaps *per impossibile*) all the physical and mental facts are in, something's being you is not entailed. You might not have been *this* psycho-physical constellation.

You cannot be explained by "(S)"; by any grammatically third-person predictive, naturalistic, and nomological inquiry, which entails observation and measurement essentially. *What is it to be you?* We have no idea. *Why is anything you?* It remains open that something is or was made you in a deterministic way, but not in any scientific way. Science cannot explain the scientist.⁷

Is there Free Will?

Suppose free will is this:

(F) "freely" (*def.*) A does x freely ("A(F) x ") *iff* A does x but could have not done x .

Freedom is then *the capacity to choose, or agency with the possibility of refraining*.

As defined, free-will and determinism are easily seen to be mutually inconsistent on the minimal assumption that an action is caused (that there is a past, and laws of nature):

(A could have not done x) and (A could not have not done x)

So,

"A could have not done x " is both true and false, which is a contradiction. If there is agency, then at most one of free-will and determinism can be right.

The determinism entailed (or thought to be entailed), by classical science is therefore inconsistent with free will. Quantum physics, on any plausible interpretation, entails indeterminism, the negation of determinism:⁸

(UND) "undetermined," (*def.*) e is undetermined *iff* it is not the case that, given the past and the laws of nature, then not possibly not e .

But indeterminism, although entailed by and therefore necessary for free will, is logically insufficient for free will, because an indeterministic event might be random, that is, happen only by chance, and a random event is not an action. So, that some event is not causally determined does not entail that it is a freely performed

7) See Priest, *Scientist*.

8) The Einstein Podolsky Rosen experiment rules out any deterministic, classical, or Einstein-Newton level of reality causing quantum effects. See Einstein, Podolsky, Rosen, *Quantum*. On quantum indeterminism, I essentially follow Popper in *Propensities*.

action. But free will, as we define it, nevertheless implies the absence of determinism, and contingency. There is incoherence in: “A does x freely and inevitably.”

It is a (formal or informal) assumption of classical science that if an event is predictable, it is causally determined; and if an event is causally determined, it is predictable. Indeed, some philosophers and scientists use “predictable” and “determined” synonymously. This is not right, because predictability is this:

(PY) “predictability,” (*def.*) p is predictable *iff* $\Diamond Kxpt^1$ and (pt^2)

That is: It is possible that someone knows that p at an earlier time and, at a later time, (it is the case that) p . And prediction is this:

(PD) “predicted,” (*def.*) p is predicted *iff* $Kxpt^1$ and (pt^2)

which is clearly not synonymous with the determinist thesis:

(D) “determined,” (*def.*) e is determined *iff*, given some cause (or set of causes) of e , e cannot not happen.

I write “or set” here because a cause might be a member of a set of individually necessary conditions jointly nomologically sufficient for the effect. (It is then false that e is determined *iff* if some particular member of the set happens, and so not right that if some cause of e happens e cannot not happen).

Also, “cause of e ” is ambiguous between a *de re* and *de dicto* reading. On the *de dicto* reading it is trivially true that if a cause of e happens, e cannot not happen. In other words, there is no possible world where a cause of e (*de dicto*) happens but e does not happen. Therefore, “cause” in the definition is to be read *de re*.

I outline some arguments for free will.

(a) Action

The reality of free will is a necessary condition for action, and there is action. Therefore, there is free will. There is a distinction between what is *done* by someone and what *merely happens* to that person. What is done depends upon the possibility of *not* doing it, that is, upon free will. If actions were automatic, like heartbeat or the operations of the liver, we would not say anyone *did* them (except in the minimal sense that they belong to one person rather than anyone else).

Some thoughts and actions seem automatic. If I do not choose to breathe faster, or deeper, and so forth, breathing goes on anyway. If I do not choose to think this rather than that, thinking typically goes on anyway. Some actions are performed unconsciously. It is possible to wonder “did I just do that?” But a necessary condition for such events being actions is that they are not all like that: unless some things are done deliberately, consciously, freely, then nothing is done.

(b) Belief

The reality of free will is a necessary condition for belief, and there is belief. Therefore, there is free will. Admittedly, we are caused to acquire most of our beliefs in an involuntary way. For example, your belief in the existence of the objects around you now is caused by your conscious or unconscious perception of them. Perceptions are belief causers. However, a necessary condition for these being *beliefs* is that they are not all

acquired involuntarily. There could not be any *beliefs* unless some beliefs are acquired by weighing of evidence, choosing to accept or reject, allocating a probability of being true or false. A mechanical disposition to allocate the truth value “true” to a proposition is not sufficient for belief, even though believing entails allocating the truth value “true” to a proposition. Belief exists only because at least some believing is action.

(c) Illusion

A tenet of philosophies still in the grip of pre-quantum science is that free will is an illusion. The view is defensible in a philosophy seminar, but anyone who has ever faced an agonizing moral dilemma knows that it is false. Suppose my mother is in a coma in hospital, with no hope of recovery, and a doctor asks me, as next of kin, to decide whether her life support should be cut off. In the most drastic sense, *the decision rests with me*. I am deliberating. If I choose one way, my mother’s life will end. If I choose another way, her life will continue. The switch is within me as much as in the hospital machinery. If this choice is not real, then what is real? Suddenly freedom of choice looks like reality, and determinism just looks like a theory held by philosophers who think it scientific. Even if determinism is true, it is of no use to me in my dilemma, which pragmatically speaking, is as good as saying determinism is false.

Being subject to illusion entails acquiring a false belief, but only a being with free will can hold beliefs. So only a being with free will may be subject to illusion.

The arguments from action, belief, and illusion to the reality of free will have a common logical form:

- (1) $\forall(x) (Fx) \rightarrow (Gx)$
- (2) $\exists(x)(Fx)$
- (3) Gx

Free will cannot be explained by any grammatically third-person predictive, naturalistic, and nomological inquiry, which entails observation and measurement essentially. Therefore, free will cannot be explained scientifically. Quantum science, although logically consistent with free will, has no explanation of free will. Quantum science might in principle explain free will, but that essentially depends on its taking seriously the efficacy of the consciousness it presupposes. But this will require breaking with at least the “third person” and “naturalistic” tenets of (S).⁹

Necessity and Contingency

Free will entails contingency, where p is contingent *iff* p and possibly not p . Determinism entails necessity, where p is necessary *iff* p and not possibly not p . Each of free will and determinism entails a single root notion: *possibility*, common to “ \square ” and “ \diamond ,” expressed intuitively by “can” or “could,” and by which contingency and necessity are interderivable:

$$\square p \leftrightarrow \neg \diamond \neg p$$

and

$$\diamond p \leftrightarrow \neg \square \neg p$$

9) Priest, “Quantum.”

Necessity and contingency may not be logically inferred from the bare fact of an occurrence, cannot be “read off” the world, and (as Hume saw) cannot be observed. “Possibly not being the case” and “not possibly not being the case” are not natural or empirical properties. Science detects and reports what is the case, but neither that it could be otherwise, nor that it is necessarily the case. Necessity and contingency resist explanation by any grammatically third-person predictive, naturalistic, and nomological inquiry, essentially entailing observation and measurement. Therefore, necessity and contingency cannot be explained scientifically.

Necessity and contingency are presupposed by determinism and free will so determinism and free will cannot be explained scientifically.

Similarly, (S) can say nothing about what ought or ought not to be the case, over and above what *is* the case. Morality and immorality *onto-logically* transcend the world, so cannot be explained scientifically.

Is Death the End?

Science only provides an explanation of death from the standpoint of exteriority, that is, from a third-person perspective. There are two and only two means of natural destruction:

(ND1) Physical objects may be destroyed by *dissolution into parts*.

(ND2) Psycho-physical events may *cease*.

Therefore, if you were a physical object, you could be destroyed by dissolution into parts. If you were a psycho-physical process, you could be destroyed by ceasing. But *me-ness*, *absolute interiority*, *inner space*, *one-ness*, *the Now* are essential feature of “the self” which do not admit of dissolution into parts, or cessation:

“me-ness,” (*def.*) (a) the property of being oneself (b), the feeling or tone of being oneself.

“absolute interiority,” (*def.*) an inside without an outside.

“inner space,” (*def.*) (a) boundless expanse, (b) void, (c) consciousness.

Consciousness is not space by definition. Consciousness (rather than its contents) is phenomenologically given as space. This is apparent in transcendental phenomenology, and kinds of meditation in which there is cessation of thought and experience, but still pure awareness.

“one-ness,” (*def.*) (a) being necessarily¹⁰ one and only one, (b) not even with a principle admitting of plurality.

“the Now,” (*def.*) (a) the *nunc stans*, as opposed to the *nunc fluens*, (b) the Eternal Present, (c) the time when anything that happens, happens.

So, the following arguments are sound.

10) I write “necessarily” here because it is not a contingent fact about you that you cannot be duplicated: any putative duplication, even if qualitatively identical, is numerically distinct from you. (The obvious truth that no copy is the original conceals the more profound truth that the copy does not have the you-ness of being you). At this level, you are not one of a type, or if you are, if there is an exemplar, then there is necessarily only one exemplar.

● Argument from Parts:

- (1) Only that which has parts admits of destruction by dissolution into parts.
- (2) *Me-ness, absolute interiority, space, one-ness, the Now* do not admit of destruction because they have no parts.
- (3) *Me-ness, absolute interiority, space, one-ness, the Now* do not admit of destruction by dissolution into parts.
- (4) I am *Me-ness, absolute interiority, space, one-ness, the Now*.
- (5) I do not admit of dissolution into parts.¹¹

● Argument from Events:

- (1) Only an event admits of destruction by ceasing.
- (2) *Me-ness, absolute interiority, space, one-ness, the Now* are not events.
- (3) *Me-ness, absolute interiority, space, one-ness, the Now* do not admit of destruction by ceasing.
- (4) I am *Me-ness, absolute interiority, space, one-ness, the Now*.
- (5) I do not admit of dissolution into parts.

From a first-person singular perspective, or phenomenologically, death is a transformation in the contents of the present. *Phenomeno-logically*, the cessation of the transient is an episode *with-in* the permanent. Death happens *with-in* you: within subjective space-time, or absolute interiority. The *you-ness* of you, the *now-ness* of now, and the interior space survive death.

Surprisingly the here and now, *the now-here*, remains at death. The *here-after* is the here, after death. It is still here then. Only temporal items admit of natural destruction. Your real nature is not temporal because nothing in space-time is necessary or sufficient for something's being you.

Properties of your own existence available only to a first-person singular perspective are inexplicable in principle by any grammatically third-person predictive, naturalistic, and nomological inquiry, which entails observation and measurement: *me-ness*, consciousness, absolute interiority (being an inside with no outside), being *this* presence here and now, being simple, and invisible. Therefore, these properties cannot be explained scientifically.¹²

11) The soundness of the argument depends *inter alia* on what a part is. By "part" is meant "metaphysical part" where, if *a* and *b* are metaphysical parts, *a* could exist without *b* and *b* without *a*. I might, admittedly, have phenomenological parts, but not any parts that might "come apart."

12) If consciousness is indestructible, it is *a fortiori*, not destructible by time or anything in time. Schrödinger says "we may, or so I believe, assert that physical theory in its present stage strongly suggests the indestructibility of Mind by Time." See Schrödinger, *Mind*, 87. The thesis that consciousness is more fundamental than the physical world is examined in the papers usefully collected by Göcke and Farris in *Idealism*.

The answers to the cluster *Should we fear death?, Should we mourn the dead?, Is death an unmitigated evil?* (and similar) depend closely on what death is. For an illuminating collection of essays see Slawkowski-Rode, *Mourning*. On questions of non-being and the meaning of life, see Waghorn, *Nothingness*.

II
Some Objective Limits of Science

Why is there a Universe?

The assumptions that there was a Big Bang, and it was the first event, might be false. If a steady-state theory is right after all, there was no Big Bang. If the Big Bang was caused by some predecessor universe, then “predecessor” gives us a temporally ordered series with members earlier than the Big Bang, so then the Big Bang was not the first event. The existence of predecessor universes is hard to rule out *a priori*, but science at the time of writing runs with both assumptions. Suppose the Big Bang was the first event. What, if anything, caused the Big Bang? Some possibilities are these:

(a) (a) *Causa sui*

It is impossible for the Big Bang to cause itself, because, to bring itself into existence, it both must already exist, and must not already exist, which is a contradiction:

(1) For x to be the cause of x , x must already exist (or x has no causal efficacy).

(2) For x to be the effect of x , x must not already exist (or x 's efforts would be redundant),

but the conjunction of (a) and (b) entails the contradiction:

(3) “ x already both exists and does not exist”

where “already” here means “(logically or (vel) chronologically) prior to x .”

Anything predating itself, is logically impossible so *a fortiori* theoretically impossible. But the problem is not just about time:

(1*) To be its own cause x must exist.

(2*) To be its own effect x must not exist.

But the conjunction of (a*) and (b*) entails a contradiction:

(3*) “ x exists” is both true and false.

Anything causing itself, is theoretically impossible because logically impossible.

(b) uncaused

Could the Big Bang happen without being caused to happen?

● Argument that there was no cause of the Big Bang (I):

- (1) All causes are events.
- (2) There was a Big Bang.
- (3) There was no event before the Big Bang.
- (4) Therefore, there was no cause of the Big Bang.

Although not theoretically or *a priori* impossible, this conclusion is difficult to believe. (It is, to borrow Berkeley's phrase, "repugnant to the intellect.") The idea of an event that is not an effect is not contradictory, but we are left with "Why did *x* happen?" as not so much difficult to answer, as devoid of any answer to seek.

(c) Caused

Suppose the Big Bang was the first event. Did the Big Bang have a cause and, if so, what was it? If the cause of the Big Bang could be an event simultaneous with or later than the Big Bang, this argument is not sound. Paradigmatically, causes predate their effects, but (at least in this universe) there is no time before the Big Bang, so *a fortiori*, no event. If we rule out predecessor universes (which is difficult) the possibility remains open that the Big Bang was caused by some reality that is not an event.

Why there is a universe cannot be explained by any grammatically third-person predictive and naturalistic nomological inquiry, which entails observation and measurement essentially. Therefore, why there is a universe cannot be explained scientifically.

Why is the Time Now?

What kind of fact is it that the time is Now? If we ask what time it is, the empirically uninformative but metaphysically true answer is always "Now." At the metaphysical level it is not possible for more than one time to be now because:

- (1) The past is over, so does not exist.
- (2) The future is not yet, so does not exist.
- (3) It is always sometime or other.
- (4) Any time that is not past or future is present.
- (5) Therefore, the time is always the present.

Metaphysically, *there is no time that is not now*. There is no time but the present.

To understand why it is "always" now, it is necessary to understand the difference between the past and the future. (This meta-use of the predicate "always" is legitimated by: "Whatever time it is it is now"). What is this difference?

- (a) The past is over, and the future has not happened yet.

But we should not help ourselves to this obvious difference as though it were *explanatory*.

(b) You personally are the difference between the past and the future.

It is possible to go through life without noticing, but once noticed this fact is both startling and obvious. You personally are the dividing line between two portions of reality:

“Earlier than you,” (*def.*) *the whole of elapsed time, absolutely everything that has happened so far, including the whole of human history up to you now*, that we label “the past.”

“After you” or “later than you,” (*def.*) *the whole of what has not happened yet, the totality of unelapsed time, and events to come*, that we call “the future.”

(b) is the explanation of (a). Why? How come? What is so special or unusual about you personally that you should be invested with such enormous cosmological significance? How come, just by existing, you divide reality into two: the part that is *over* and the part that is *to come*? There is no scientific explanation of this mystery.¹³

There is a distinction between the *nunc stans* and the *nunc fluens*. The *content* of the present is transient, not eternal. The present is timeless or, in that sense, eternal. *What happens*, is a fleeting Heraclitean flux: a barely thinkable but thoroughly experiential, synthesis of being and nothingness; transitions without prior or posterior states which are not themselves transitions.¹⁴ The Pure Presence in which the flux happens is Parmenidean. The Heraclitean is *with-in* the Parmenidean. The timeless Parmenidean present is the Now.

The Now cannot be explained by any grammatically third-person predictive and nomological inquiry, which entails observation and measurement essentially. Therefore, the Now cannot be explained scientifically.

What is it to be?

I offer this definition of “Being”:

“Being,” (*def.*) *x* is Being iff *x* is that which nothing lacks;

and this definition of “necessary”:

“necessary,” (*def.*) *x* is necessary iff *x* cannot not be.

No particular item in the universe necessarily exists because there is no incoherence, only falsity, in the supposition that it does not. Yet, there is something rather than nothing only if something necessarily exists.¹⁵ The

13) Questions lacking a scientific method for answering include: *How many temporal divisions into past and future are there? Does each conscious self-demarcate its own? Is there a hyper-now in which we all participate? Do we share a now-ness? When you die, does the universe come to a rest?*

14) Plotinus is right to claim that the present is eternal. He is talking about what I call The Now: “The life, then, which belongs to that which exists and is in being, all together and full, completely without-extension-or-interval, is what we are looking for, eternity.” Plotinus, *Ennead*, vol. 3, 304

15) My late colleague, Bede Rundle, argues this in his *Why There is Something Rather than Nothing*. If there does not have to be something, why should there be anything? If there is something, there is necessarily something.

only remaining candidate for necessary existence is pure Being; being *qua* being, or Being itself.¹⁶ Being not only essentially but necessarily exists.¹⁷

If “There is nothing” means “There is not this, not that” then it is not contradictory. “It is not the case that there is anything” is coherent (though false). (The necessary inference from “there is something” to “it is false that there is nothing” does not show that “there is nothing” is necessarily false, distinguishing sharply the necessity of the inference from the necessity of the conclusion. A box before the inference does not legitimate a box before the conclusion).

But if “there is nothing” means “there is Nothing as opposed to Being,” the “there is” forces a contradiction. “There is Nothing” here means “There exists Nothing” and, with the force intended, that is contradictory. To put it intuitively: *Existing is not an activity absolute absence of existence may engage in. If per impossibile, Nothing existed, it would not be Nothing.*¹⁸ At the level of Being and Nothing, “There is Nothing” cannot be harmlessly re-written as “It is not the case that there is anything” or perspicaciously formalized as:

$\neg\exists(x) (Fx)$

As Parmenides sees, if there is necessarily not Nothing then there is necessarily Being. There is necessarily not Nothing. Therefore, there is necessarily Being.

Being does not depend on plurality.

- Argument that Being did not begin to be:

- (1) There is no Nothingness.
- (2) Beginning is the transition from Nothingness to Being.
- (3) If there is no Nothingness, there is no transition from Nothingness to Being.
- (4) Therefore, Being did not begin to be.

- Argument that Being cannot cease to be:

- (1) There is no Nothingness.
- (2) Ending is the transition from Being to Nothingness.
- (3) If there is no Nothingness there is no transition from Being to Nothingness.
- (4) Therefore, Being cannot end.

16) “Being” has a quasi-Parmenidean, or Heideggerian sense. We could insert here all Parmenides’ arguments, in his poem, for the conclusion that there is necessarily no Nothingness, so necessarily Being. See Barnes, *Greek*, “Parmenides.”

17) I write “Being” with an upper case “B” to indicate Pure Being. “Being beings” is “God creates” rewritten at the level of Fundamental Ontology. Is Being a being? Being is not one being amongst others. Being is necessary, but beings exist contingently. But Being is necessarily and essentially one: does not in principle admit of a plural. In that sense, Being is necessarily and essentially One. It might, with this in mind, not be too misleading to call Being a being. Any problem is probably to do with “a” carrying the ordinary connotation of allowing more than one.

18) This is the fundamental force of Heidegger’s “Das Nichts selbst nichtet.” (In Michael Inwood’s translation “The Nothing itself noths”). Inwood, *Noth?*, 271.

- Argument that Being necessarily exists:

- (1) Necessarily, there is either Being or Nothing.
- (2) “There is Nothing” means “There exists nothing.”
- (3) “There exists Nothing” is contradictory.
- (4) If “There exists Nothing” is contradictory then necessarily, there is no Nothing.
- (5) Necessarily, there is no Nothing.
- (6) Therefore, Being necessarily exists.

To be clear: “There is Nothing” in Premise (2) means “Pure Nothingness has a kind of existence” (or similar). It does not mean “It is not the case that the plurality of beings (entities) exists” (or similar). The incoherence lies in ascribing existence to non-existence (not, here, in ascribing non-existence to things that exist).

Beings can be or not be. Being can only be. It is contradictory to say of Being “it is not.” Although “it exists” is true of anything that exists, it is not necessarily true because the things that exist might not have existed.

- Argument that Being is a substance:

- (1) Being depends upon nothing (else).
- (2) Anything that depends upon nothing (else) is a substance.
- (3) Therefore, Being is a substance.¹⁹

Being does not depend upon nothing because if being depends on nothing there is nothing that being depends upon. Being does not depend upon beings because, for example in *No-thing-ness*, there is Being without beings.

- Argument that “Being” is simple:

- (1) “Being” is not analyzable into more primitive terms.
- (2) Any concept that is not analyzable into more primitive terms is simple.
- (3) Therefore, Being is simple.

- Argument that Being is infinite:

- (1) Being is unlimited.
- (2) Anything unlimited is infinite.
- (3) Therefore, Being is infinite.

Being is infinite in the sense of unlimited. Even if the number of things is finite, Being is infinite.

- Argument that Being is timeless:

- (1) Being is without beginning, change, or end.
- (2) Anything without beginning, change, or end is timeless.
- (3) Therefore, Being is timeless.

19) This conclusion is consistent with Spinoza’s thesis that there exists one and only one substance. However, on the present view there is a clean distinction between God and Creation, because there is a clean distinction between Being and beings.

What it is to be cannot be explained by any grammatically third-person predictive and nomological inquiry, which entails observation and measurement essentially. Therefore, why there is something rather than nothing cannot be explained scientifically.

Why is there anything?

If “something” means “some-thing” then the question means: “*Why are there any beings?*” or perhaps “*Why does anything happen?*” *The answer is, fundamentally: Being beings.* Because there is no incoherence in the idea that Being does not being, Being *beings* contingently.

Being cannot not be. Being necessarily is. Although “it exists” is true of anything that exists, it is not necessarily true because the things that exist might not have existed.

- Argument for a distinction between Being and beings (I):

- (1) Being is timeless.
- (2) Beings are temporal.
- (3) Nothing is both timeless and temporal.
- (4) Therefore, Being is distinct from beings.

- Argument for a distinction between being and beings (II):

- (1) Being is necessarily one.
- (2) Beings are contingently one or many.
- (3) Nothing is both necessarily one and contingently one or many.
- (3) Therefore, Being is distinct from beings.

- Argument for a distinction between being and beings (III):

- (1) Being exists necessarily.
- (2) Beings exist contingently.
- (3) Nothing exists both necessarily and contingently.
- (4) Therefore, Being is distinct from beings.

Why there is something rather than nothing cannot be explained by any grammatically third-person, predictive, and naturalistic nomological inquiry, which entails observation and measurement essentially. Therefore, why there is something rather than nothing cannot be explained scientifically.

Why does mathematics exist?

Why is the world mathematical? Why is there any mathematics? Is the mathematical order of the physical world “independent of man” or only a product of human minds?

But the existence of order would not be any *less* startling if it were “only” in the mind. If order exists in the mind, it exists. If order exists, why does it exist? The problem does not disappear if order is “in the mind,” “subjective,” “in language,” and so forth.

But order is not just in the mind. The universe is mathematical in its own right. If human beings only mentally projected mathematics onto the universe they could never be *surprised* by it. Mathematics could not be used to make successful *predictions*. Or, conversely, any prediction would be guaranteed *a priori*. If the universe were not inherently mathematical there could never be *discoveries*. Mathematical facts about the physical world would be *inventions*. Even proofs in pure mathematics are discovered, not invented, because, although the mathematician thinks up possible proofs, he “hits upon” one that works. The physicist, despite the plethora of theories, is constrained by the disciplines of observation and prediction. His or her mathematical theories have to stand the test of conjecture and refutation by the physical world. If the mathematical order of the world were only “in us” our theories would never be refuted by experience, only by thought. If mathematical idealism were true, physics would be *a priori*. Physics is not *a priori*, so mathematical idealism is false.²⁰

Although mathematics is *a priori*, it has an empirical dimension: if there are two objects in front of you on a table, and three objects in front of you on another table, you can *see that* there is a difference in the number of objects. The number of objects does not depend on the conceptual scheme deployed, even though the reporting or the intelligibility of that number is concept-dependent. (The distinctive thing about *a priori* truths is that they *are* knowable *a priori*, not that they are not knowable empirically. The distinctive thing about empirical truths is that they are *not* knowable *a priori*, not that they are knowable empirically.) That there is *this* number of objects here but *that* number of objects there is just as much an objective fact as that there are any objects there at all. Indeed, some philosophers argue that there can only be numbers because there are numbers of things. Either way, the numbers of things are *out there*. Planck is therefore right to say mathematical order exists independently of us, and is recognized in both physics and religion. Indeed, physics is essentially the discovery of the mathematical order of the universe.

The answer to *Why is the universe mathematical?* cannot be found within the universe. Any further scrutiny of the universe will only reveal the universe, and its mathematical order. The cause, or reason, why the universe is mathematical lies outside the universe, on pain of circularity.

Why there is mathematics cannot be explained by any grammatically third-person predictive and nomological inquiry, which entails observation and measurement essentially. Therefore, why there is mathematics cannot be explained scientifically.

III

Science and the Existence of God

Each of these arguments entails the existence of some reality with several of the properties of God. Not just the theoretical desideratum of elegance, but the logic of “Being” and “Presence” compel us to conclude that this is in fact one reality that has all and only the properties of God. Answers to the objective questions jointly entail the existence of God, essentially as described in the great monotheistic religions. Answers to the subjective questions further entail the existence of the soul, and the reality of free will. The questions only admit of theological answers.

Theology is the study of God, where God is this:

“God,”(def.) *x* is God *iff* *x* is the unique, omnipresent, eternal, infinite, immaterial, omniscient, omnipotent, necessarily existing, and benevolent, free Creator of the universe.

20) These theses are of course consistent with one mathematician surprising another, and mathematical discoveries being within the mathematical community.

At the most fundamental level, God is Being. Or, more accurately, Being is the being of God. This does *not* mean that God is the universe, the totality of what exists, or anything like that.²¹ “God is Being”; means “God is Pure Being,” and the plurality of beings depends on God (because beings depend on Being). I define “Being” this way:

“Being,” (*def.*) Being is that which Nothing lacks.

Does it follow that nothing lacks eternity, omnipresence, infinity, and so forth? Indeed, this does follow. Pure Nothing lacks all properties (save perhaps being mentioned in Philosophy seminars, being written about, being mistakenly assumed to have some sort of existence, etc.). If Nothing lacks all properties, *a fortiori*, Nothing lacks any divine property.

Why is anything you?

By “an autological argument” I mean any deductive argument from some premise which is a first-person singular existential claim. (I state the argument using “natural” but could have chosen any of the other components of (S).)

- The Autological Argument for the Existence of God (I):
 - (1) I exist.
 - (2) I was caused to be.
 - (3) There can be no natural cause of my existence.
 - (4) There is a non-natural cause of my existence.
 - (5) If there is a non-natural cause of my existence then it is God.
 - (6) Therefore God exists.²²

Why is there free will?

- The Libertarian Argument for the Existence of God:
 - (1) There is free will.
 - (2) There is no scientific or logical explanation of free will.
 - (3) Any explanation is scientific, logical, or theological.
 - (4) There is an explanation of free will.²³
 - (5) There is a theological explanation of free will.

21) Distinguish two kinds of Pantheism: (1) God is everywhere, (2) God is everything. On the present view, (1) is true and (2) is false.

22) The argument is stated in first-person singular terms. I have used the second-person singular, up to this point, because (ironically) this causes the reader to think in first-person singular terms. Beginning with “I,” and so on, the reader is caused to think of someone else, and the force of the phenomenology is missed.

23) We do not know that the existence of free will is a brute fact (as, for example, van Inwagen thinks), and therefore has no explanation. Only something that is its own explanation, paradigmatically by necessarily existing, has no explanation outside itself. But it is a contingent fact that there is free will. Therefore, free will has some explanation. There is not anything that has no explanation, because everything is either its own explanation or is explained by something else. Whether we *know* any of these explanations is another matter.

- (6) If there is a theological explanation of free will then God exists.
- (7) Therefore, God exists.

Only something rightly called “God” has the power to cause free-will. In actualizing the universe, God actualizes a free, or self-determining, system. In that sense, the universe as a whole is free, and contains free agents. It is a logical truth that when an event happens, the time is now, so all events are in the Now. If all events are in the Now, free actions are a pure spontaneity issuing, not from Nothingness, but from *No-thing-ness*.

Why are there Necessity and Contingency?

- Argument that Necessity and Contingency are Bestowed by God:

- (1) There is no scientific or logical explanation of necessity and contingency.
- (2) There is an explanation of necessity and contingency.
- (3) Any explanation is scientific, logical, or theological.
- (4) There is a theological explanation of necessity and contingency.

How is Morality Possible?

Only God has the power to make what *could be otherwise* or *is necessarily* the case, the case. There is what *could be otherwise* and there is what is *necessarily* the case.

Therefore: what *could be otherwise* and what is *necessarily* the case are bestowed by God. To this extent, a kind of voluntarism is true.

Because (S) can say nothing about what ought or ought not to be the case, a parallel argument could be deployed to show that morality is only caused by God:

- Argument that Morality is Bestowed by God:

- (1) There is no scientific explanation of what ought or ought not to be the case.
- (2) Only God has the power to make what ought or ought not to be the case.
- (3) There is that which ought or ought not to be the case.
- (4) That which ought or ought not to be the case is bestowed by God.

Does the Soul Exist?

The conjunction of those properties of yourself inexplicable by science, and sufficient for immortality, are logically sufficient for your being an immaterial soul, in a traditional sense.²⁴

- Argument that You are an Immaterial Soul:

- (1) You are pervaded by *me-ness*.
- (2) You are this consciousness.

24) Metaphysical properties of the self are discussed in Göcke and Weir, *Existentialism*.

- (3) You are this absolute interiority.
- (4) You are this *presence*.
- (5) You are immaterial.
- (6) You are simple.
- (7) You are invisible.
- (8) The immaterial soul of traditional theism has the properties that being you consists in.
- (9) You are an immaterial soul.

Something is *essentially you*. Your soul is *essentially you*, so logically necessary and sufficient for your existence.²⁵

Why is there Immortality?

- The Thanatonic Argument for the Existence of God:

- (1) Immortality exists.
- (2) There is no scientific or logical explanation of the existence of immortality.
- (3) Any explanation is scientific, logical, or (*aut*) theological.
- (4) There is an explanation of the existence of immortality.
- (5) There is a theological explanation of the existence of immortality.
- (6) If there is a theological explanation (of the existence of immortality) then God exists.
- (7) Therefore, God exists.

What Caused the Big Bang?

If there was a Big Bang, and if the Big Bang had a cause, but that cause was not in time, it is natural to ask “what is the cause of the Big Bang?”

- Argument that God is the Cause the Big Bang:

- (1) The cause of the Big Bang is not in time.
- (2) The cause of the Big Bang is sufficiently powerful to initiate the universe.
- (3) Anything timeless, and sufficiently powerful to initiate the universe is rightly called “God.”
- (4) Therefore, God is the cause of the Big Bang.

Something has the power to make you personally the divide between the past and the future. Anything with such a power should rightly be called “God.” Therefore, God exists.

25) Interestingly, it follows that all versions of so-called “Christian Physicalism” are false. This is as well, because the existence of the soul is a necessary condition for some resurrection being *your* resurrection. Only the soul guarantees personal identity, so *a fortiori*, personal identity after death. To see this, note that it is well within the power of God to “resurrect” any number of human beings qualitatively identical to the human being you are closely associated with in worldly life.

Why is it Now?

- Argument that the Unchanging or Eternal Present is the Presence of God:

- (1) The eternal Now has all and only the properties of the Presence of God.
- (2) Whatever has all and only the properties of the Presence of God is the Presence of God.
- (3) Therefore, the Eternal Now is the Presence of God.

On the view that I am advocating God is very close to us. Its being “always” Now is God’s being present. God’s immanence is the present.

Because presence is the Presence of God, everything happens in the Presence of God, both in the sense of present to God and in the sense of in The Eternal Now of God. Trying to prove or disprove God as a strange object is looking in the wrong place. God is pure presence, not any kind of present or absent object.

That the present is the presence of God entails that God is eternal in the sense of timeless, rather than in the sense of existing for an infinite duration. God has no beginning or end but that is not because God exists at all empirical times, but because God has no temporal properties. Nevertheless, “God exists,” *said at any time*, is true. And God is a-temporally related to temporal things.²⁶

Presence may not be adequately modelled on its fluctuating contents, but we may partly understand Presence, because we live in the present. Intuitively: it is always Now. Now is the time it is within the soul.

The eternal Now may be intuited.²⁷ To see this, consider the ordinary perception of some event in clock-time. Suppose you visually perceive the event. You perceive it as now because it is true at the time that you perceive it that it is now. Its being now is not an extra property of the event that is directly visible. You do not see now-ness. Nevertheless, it is true that the event’s happening now is detectable by the sense of sight. You see *that* the event is happening now because you perceive the event happening.

- The Parousial Argument for the Existence of God:

- (1) The time is Now.
- (2) There is no scientific or logical explanation of *the time being now*.
- (3) Any explanation is scientific, logical, or theological.
- (4) There is an explanation of *the time being now*.
- (5) There is a theological explanation of *the time being now*.
- (6) If there is a theological explanation of *the time being now*, then God exists.
- (7) God exists.

Pure Presence has all and only the properties of the Presence of God.

26) “Eternity is the complete possession all at once of illiminable life,” Boethius, *de Trinitate* 422.9–11. “Just as eternity is the proper measure of existence as such, so time is the proper measure of change.” Aquinas, *Summa*, 1a.10.1,4.

27) By “intuition” I mean that consciousness common to thought and the sensory modalities, but, as “pure consciousness” *onto-logically* independent of them. This independence is largely unknown to the conditioned mind, but pure consciousness is the intuition deployed by the world’s great mystics.

Is Being the Being of God?

- Argument that Being is (the Being of) God:

- (1) Being has all and only the essential properties of (the Being of) God.
- (2) Anything with all and only the essential properties of (the Being of) God is (the Being of) God.
- (3) Being is (the Being of) God.

We saw above, that Pure Being has at least these scientifically inexplicable properties: necessity, being without beginning or end, simplicity, timelessness.

Being is one (even though beings are many). But these are properties ascribed to God in the great monotheistic religions. Because Being is Fundamental, and there is not anywhere that Being is not, there is not *onto-logical* room for the being of God to be anything other than Pure Being itself, or Being *qua* Being.

(a) Necessity

Is the necessity of existence the necessity of the existence of God? Even though beings exist contingently, this is sound:

- Argument that the Necessity of Being is the Necessity of the Existence of God:

- (1) Being exists necessarily.
- (2) Being is the being of God.
- (3) Therefore, God exists necessarily.

In Creation, God creates beings. God lends Being to make the things that are be.

This matters to the present argument because if there is a possible world in which nothing exists then that is a *prima facie* objection to my claim that God exists in all possible worlds. I am inclined to reject the view that there is a possible world in which there is nothing, because there cannot be nothing.²⁸ God exists in all possible worlds. So, God's self-identity entails God's existence because God's self-identity entails being God which entails existence. Being God entails the being of God.

Not beginning to be or ceasing to be are two properties of God. If God chooses not to create, there is Being but no beings.

(b) Substance

- Argument that God is a Substance:

28) I once asked David Lewis whether there is a possible world in which there is nothing. He was quiet for a moment, as was his way. Then he said that this would not be a world.

Depending on one's definition of "possible world" one could argue that only beings exist in possible worlds, but God (as Being itself) is not some being, so God does not exist in any possible world. Possible worlds, perhaps, exist in God, or are in the mind of God (in some sense of "in"). If possible worlds exist (even as mere *possibilia*) they are "in" Being.

- (1) Being is a substance.
- (2) Being is the being of God.
- (3) The being of God is a substance.
- (4) Therefore, God is a substance.

(c) Simplicity

● Argument that God is Simple:

- (1) Being is simple.
- (2) Being is the being of God.
- (3) The being of God is simple.
- (4) Therefore, God is simple.

(d) Infinity

● Argument that God is Infinite:

- (1) Being is infinite.
- (2) Being is the being of God.
- (3) The being of God is infinite.
- (4) Therefore, God is infinite.

Being is timeless in the sense of without beginning or end, is an essential property of God.²⁹

(e) Timelessness

● Argument that God is Timeless:

- (1) Being is timeless.
- (2) Being is the being of God.
- (3) The being of God is timeless.
- (4) Therefore, God is timeless.

(f) *Creator*

If Being *beings*, and Being is the Being of God, then the Being of God *beings*, or, in brief God creates. That Being *beings* contingently is an entailment of the theological thesis that God creates freely: creates with the possibility of not creating.

29) "Just as eternity is the proper measure of existence as such, so time is the proper measure of change." Aquinas, *Summa*, 1a.10.1.4.

How is Mathematics Possible?

Mathematics is perfect, necessarily true, immaterial, and infinite. Anything with these properties, that is necessary for the existence of the universe, deserves to be called “the mind of God.” Therefore the answer to *Why is there any mathematics?* is theological. Mathematics is the mind of God.³⁰

● The Mathematical Argument for the Existence of God:

- (1) Mathematics exists.
- (2) There is no scientific explanation of the existence of mathematics.
- (3) Any explanation is scientific or (*aut*) theological.
- (4) There is an explanation of the existence of mathematics.
- (5) There is a theological explanation of the existence of mathematics.
- (6) If there is a theological explanation [of the existence of mathematics] then God exists.
- (7) Therefore, God exists.

What is Fundamental?

● Argument that God is Fundamental:

- (1) Being is Fundamental.
- (2) Being is the Being of God.
- (3) Therefore, God is Fundamental.

“Trinity,” (*def.*) x is the Holy Trinity *iff* x is Being, Presence, and Consciousness in their mutual dependency.

“person,” (*def.*) x is a person *iff* a first-person grammatical account of x is possible.³¹

Any consciousness entails *being someone* (in Nagel’s sense), so is personal.³² Therefore quantum consciousness is personal, or is a person. (Being is *being-for-itself*, *pace* Sartre, *l’être* is fundamentally *l’être-pour-soi*).³³ There being Being entails this tripartite structure:

30) For discussion of the mystery of why the mathematics presupposed by the physical world works, see Wigner, “Unreasonable.”

31) This definition is too strict if we count, for example, non-human higher animals as persons, because it makes being a person depend on grammatical accounts, and so language. It does not affect what follows if we replace “iff” with “if” and so understands the criterion as only sufficient, and not necessary, for personhood. Obviously, some computer might run a grammatically first-person account but lack consciousness, sentience, free-will, and so on, and arguably, personhood. This suggests the definition also does not provide a sufficient condition for being a person. Here, much depends on what the presuppositions of first-person singular psychological ascriptions are.

32) Nagel, *Nowhere*, 52 ff.

33) If quantum reality presupposes consciousness, and (uncontroversially) the physical world presupposes quantum reality, then the physical world presupposes consciousness. It does not follow that consciousness is absolutely fundamental (i.e., presupposes nothing but itself). But, like anything, consciousness does presuppose Being. Theologically: The Father is *onto-logically* prior to the Holy Spirit. If the physical world presupposes consciousness (but not conversely) then some kind of idealism is true. On the plausibility of idealism see Priest, “Problems.” On *being-for-itself* see Sartre, *Nothingness*.

- [1] Being
- [2] Presence
- [3] Consciousness

Being, Presence, and Consciousness cannot *come apart*. Being is the being of Presence. Being is the being of consciousness. Presence is the presence of Being. Presence is the presence of Consciousness. Consciousness is the consciousness of Being. Consciousness is the consciousness of Presence. So, there is only one underlying reality with three “dimensions” or “ecstasies.”³⁴ This Trinity, therefore, is one substance.

The persons of the Holy Trinity are grammatical persons. The first-person is the “I am” of Exodus. The second Person is Christ, who exists from all Eternity. The third-person is the Holy Spirit. Unless there is the Holy Trinity there is nothing. God is Fundamental.³⁵

34) Roger Penrose comes close to expressing this doctrine and (no doubt unknowingly) engages in quasi-Hegelian dialectic. He uses the image of a triangle (138) to describe the relations between three “worlds” (96) and three “mysteries.” [1] Platonic [2] Mental [3] Physical. Penrose argues that each “emerges” from the other. Penrose says “There is something distinctly mysterious about the way that these three worlds interrelate with one another – where each seems almost to ‘emerge’ from a small part of its predecessor.” Roger Penrose, Shimony, Cartwright, and Hawking, *et. al. Large*, 139.

35) I should mention that I was brought up to be skeptical of religious claims, and suspicious of religious institutions. I do not arrive at these conclusions because I “want” them to be true. Far from it. I would prefer not to be judged, and find the prospect of living forever agoraphobic. But profound questions at the limits of science force religious answers, whether we like them or not.

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