

Arguments for God's Existence

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In the entire history of philosophy, perhaps no subject has consumed so much time and talent and energy as the question of whether or not God's existence can be rationally demonstrated. Even today, we are prepared to listen once again to the whole gamut of arguments for and against.

Possibly many of the professors of rational theology presume they have nothing new to learn. Many years of teaching may give people the feeling that in their respective provinces they have acquired a sort of infallibility. Human psychology is such that a calculated repetition of errors gives people the impression of unshaken truth, if not of downright infallibility. Of course, many specialists may claim that their certainty is upright rather than downright.

There is a sense in which history repeats itself; but history may also be considered as linear rather than cyclic-never repeating itself. And contemporary developments in culture and science have elaborated so many tools of research, that new ways of thinking have emerged that not only prepare us for the thrill of the future, but throw new light on the documents and monuments of the past. Hence a review of what we already know may not be out of place.

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The Sense of the Holy

Rudolf Otto, in his *Idea of the Holy*, has made a brilliant attempt to analyze the roots of the religious instinct which keeps on haunting the human spirit even in the most atheistic periods of history. He makes a keen analysis of the experiences of dependence, dread, devotion, awe, fascination,¹ He compares this idea of the Holy to the Kantian categories so deeply embedded in the human mind that some encounter with the Holy is inevitable.²

For Otto, this 'a priori' category is not exactly an innate idea, but a capacity or potentiality that awaits fulfillment. In history, this way to final realization may pass through stages of imperfect modes of religion to theism and monotheism.³

The Metaphysical Urge

The whole history of thought in India and Europe and everywhere attests to the dynamism that impels the human mind to transcend the merely sensory and temporal, and to make speculations soaring in the vicinity of the Eternal One: Parmenides and Sankara, Spinoza and Hegel, Aurobindo and Bradley, seem to be instances of flights of fancy that ended in denying the rights of the many in favour of their respective ideas of the One.

But even the Ionians who did not fly so high but merely sought, as initiators of western science, to

¹ R. Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, 2nd. ed. Oxford Univ. Press, pbk. 1958

² *ibid.* Pp. 112 ff. 137 ff.

³ *ibid.* Pp. 117 ff.

establish physical connectedness between the diversity of phenomena, were searching, without knowing it, for *metaphysical* entities such as unity, necessity, causality. As Hume would later point out, and Kant would agree, entities such as unity, causality and necessity, are quite beyond the reach of the senses. But the first western philosopher-scientists suspected them to be realities. Only two thousand years later would Kant clarify that these are '*a priori*' forms built into the understanding. Kant introduced the idea that metaphysics was impossible as a *science*. But even Kant recognized the *metaphysical urge*.⁴

Human reason feels urged to reach out beyond what is sensory and empirical and material, even though this metaphysical enterprise results in antinomies and contradictions. And, that the human mind has a metaphysical urge, is admitted by Aristotle and any number of other specialists who have become addicted to metaphysics in spite of all the speculations of Kant. Kant, however, is to be taken seriously, but also seriously criticized. And one of the critiques levelled against him is that epistemology is at least etymologically a metaphysical activity.

Meanwhile, this metaphysical urge seems to be quite a driving force, not just in the Kantian sense of the word, at the intellectual level, but also at the volitional level. The human spirit seems to be hungering for the Absolute and Transcendent to such an extent that even materialists and positivists, while combating metaphysics at the conscious level, seem to be gripped firmly though unconsciously by this inescapable urge.

⁴ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, II, Bk.2, ch.3.

Urge for the Absolute

Kant's metaphysical urge seems to correspond quite closely with Otto's dynamic 'Idea of the Holy,' though the latter appears somewhat more restricted in the range of its possible objects. Aristotle and Thomas tell us that the human soul is "*in some fashion, everything*" (*anima humana quemadmodum omnia*). In other words, the human soul is potentially everything; it has some potentiality for some absolute. True, the true Absolute is Holy, but when intellectually articulated, from the stand point of the human '*a priori*', the Holy itself is the boundless, unlimited ocean of being and bliss for which the human spirit is groping with unquenchable yearnings. And this search is not restricted to the objectively holy, nor to the merely intellectual. The *real* object of this inner human dynamism and urge, cannot be other than the true Absolute. But such is the human need for this True Absolute, and such is the drive of this inner urge, that those who do not discover or accept the True Absolute, will almost inevitably absolutize something else, and this something else *can* be anything and everything.⁵

This urge could very well have been used as an argument for the existence of God, as St. Thomas himself points out. Apart, however, from being rather subjective,⁶ it might be construed as defending idolatry.

Atman and Brahman

It is not surprising that the ancient Indian sages were so fascinated with the awe-inspiring idea of the 'absolute'. They discovered the subjective, potential,

⁵ cf. St. Thomas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a, q. 2, art. 1, ad 1

⁶ *ibid.*

absolute in the *atman* ; and the objective absolute in the Brahman.

The fatal error of *some* Upanishads was to identify the two.⁷ For the Upanishadic sages, the existence of God was in no need of proof. The *atman* or individual self stands self-evident, and without any need of proofs. It presupposes any and every exercise in argumentation and dialectic . Such was the acuteness of the ancient Indians. They seem to have discovered the *atman* sooner than the Greeks; and having made the discovery, they clung to it. The *atman* was originally 'breath,' and then feeling, mind, soul. It was the *knower, experiencer, and thrower of light on the objects.*⁸ The *atman* must be presupposed by denial, knowledge, doubt. And therefore by all propositions and arguments.

The objective side of ultimate reality is known as *Brahman.*⁹

The Upanishadic Absolute manifests itself as the *atman* and the *Brahman and transcends them both.* On second thought, however, theologians like Ramanuja and Madhva question the identification of *Brahman* with *atman* in search of solutions to the difficulties attaching to the identification.¹⁰ *It was what led the Indian sages to press their inquiry as far as the human mind could go.*

⁷ Chandradhar Sharma, A critical Survey of Indian Philosophy, New Delhi: M. Banarsidas, re-print 1987, pp. 25 ff.

⁸ *ibid.*, p. 19

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 345 ff.; 372 ff.

False gods

In his remarkable study, *The Gods of Atheism*, Miceli attempts an analysis of how the desire for the absolute and the metaphysical urge operate in outstanding atheistic thinkers, including Feuerbach, Nietzsche, Marx, Comte and others.¹¹ Going through the lives of these champions of atheism, one notices that they were people who keenly experienced the metaphysical urge, but concrete situations compelled them to misinterpret and misdirect this urge. To cite one example: Auguste Comte, born during the French revolution, had to remain unbaptized and grow up without religion because the practice of religion was punishable by law. He used to proclaim his atheism aloud as a teenager. Endowed with a brilliant intellect, he soon found himself in high academic positions. Looking back into eighteenth-century atheism, Comte noted that previous atheists had tried to banish God without proposing a substitute. Hence, Comte took it on himself to provide a *positive program* to keep God away.¹²

With such people, it is not likely that arguments for the existence of God would have any power to convince. And many of the celebrities examined by Miceli belong to this category. But there are also many who find a substitute without premeditation on their own part. An atheistic culture makes it impossible for them to have access to the true Absolute. Sociological as well as psychological conditions can block the way, as happened in the case of Comte. Forces unleashed against religion by great social upheavals, such as the French revolution

¹¹ V.P. Miceli, *The Gods of Atheism*, Roman Catholic Books, P.O. Box 255, Harrison, New York.

¹² *ibid.* pp. 156 ff.

and the Russian revolution, are not easily reversed. Political regimes see to it that their own 'absolutes' are firmly established in educational systems and cultural organizations.

Anti-metaphysics

Hume apparently exploded the foundations of metaphysics in the eighteenth century; and, like other ideas, his novel approaches made an impression because the soil in Europe was ready for them, and the time in that cultural setting was ripe. Continental rationalism as well as British empiricism, while conflicting with each other on many scores were, all unawares, sowing the seeds of anti-metaphysical resentment. *Rationalism* was building castles in the air, in a way that the scholastics had never thought of attempting. Platonic dichotomies had re-entered Europe in the guise of Cartesian dualism. And the mathematicians who wanted to extend the certainties of mathematics into the philosophical arena, conspired to prove the existence of God with *axioms and theorems, and "clear and distinct ideas."*

These rationalists, demanding from ordinary human reason mathematical certainty in *matter-of-fact* affairs, depreciated the role of the senses. In this way, they discredited metaphysics and provoked *anti-metaphysical* reactions. They began with postulates and ended with postulates rather than with realities.

The *empiricists re-acted*. Of course, empiricism was not totally a reaction against rationalism. There were other contributing factors, such as the re-introduction of atomism into the West, through Gassendi and others. It cannot however be denied that the excesses of rationalism had their part to play in the evolution of empiricism. Just as

the rationalists started and ended with *thoughts and ideas*, the empiricists, finally, made it their programme to begin and end with the senses. The end result was *the elimination of metaphysics*, not as an urge which cannot be eliminated, but as a science.

Consequently, the rationalists could not prove the *real* existence of God as long as they started and ended with *ideas and postulates*. And the empiricists could not prove the existence of God as long as they started and ended with sense perception.

At this juncture, we can note the strong bond between metaphysics and the proofs for God's existence. It appears there is no other way to *rationally* demonstrate the existence of God, except through the *science of metaphysics*. It appears that only the inquiry into being *as being*, can lead the human mind *rationally* to discover the existence of God. No other science or inquiry seems able to achieve this goal. And the *way* to this peak of knowledge must *begin with the senses, and end with the mind*, since a human being is a *blend* of the two.

Anti-causality

Causality shared the fate of metaphysics at the hands of Humean skepticism. Hume lost sight of any *necessary and universal connections* between 'causes' and 'effects'. And such a loss could have been fatal not only to the science of being as being, but also to all the other sciences, whether natural, positive, theoretical or practical. In fact, it could have been fatal also to the medical, legal, and many other professions. Fortunately, however, the physical sciences found an unexpected advocate in Immanuel Kant, who was awakened from his 'dogmatic slumber' by the threats posed by Hume to the

philosophical foundations of science .

In order to justify philosophically to his own satisfaction the possibility of science, Kant effected a Copernican revolution which transferred causation from the sphere of reality where it had hitherto been assumed to belong to the sphere of human understanding where it would have henceforth to belong .

Neither the Humean nor the Kantian revolutions touched the scientists immediately. But these ideas would gradually sink into the soil of European culture, till the rise of new champions who would challenge the so-called 'revolutions'.

Role of Presuppositions

Presuppositions have an inconceivably important part to play in the generation and confirmation of convictions. P. Balasubramaniam, in his scholarly research on the nature of presuppositions, has an entire chapter dedicated to presuppositions in metaphysics.¹³ He starts by comparing two definitions of 'metaphysics': are self-revealing: "Metaphysics is that part of philosophy which has the greatest pretensions and is exposed to the greatest suspicions. Having the avowed aim of arriving at profound truths about everything, it is sometimes held to result only in obscure nonsense about nothing..."--Strawson.

This view is contrasted with Quine's view, who begins his paper on 'On what there is', with the following

¹³ P. Balasubramaniam, *The Concept of Presupposition: A Study* (Madras: Radhakrishnan Institute for Advanced Study of Philosophy, University of Madras, 1984), pp. 109-116

statement :

A curious thing about the ontological problem is its simplicity. It can be put in three Anglo-Saxon monosyllables : "What is there?". It can be answered, moreover, in a word: "Everything." And everyone will consider this answer as true."¹⁴

These two positions reflect well the conflicts between metaphysicians and anti-metaphysicians. And the very relevant question asked by Balasubramian is this : "Is it possible to be anti-metaphysical without using or depending on metaphysical thinking? His own view is that both sides have metaphysical presupposition."¹⁵ Any conceptual scheme that serves a person in the interpretation of all experience, commits him to *some* ontology.

Balasubramanian goes on to quote the results of researchers in history, psycho-analysis, etc. And comes to the following conclusions, among others:

A philosophy is the product of the philosopher's *age, culture, temperament, conscious or unconscious motivation.*

Polanyi is quoted as holding that "all facts presuppose a *framework of interpretation.*"¹⁶ And when it is a question of metaphysics, it is common knowledge that metaphysical systems depend a great deal on epistemological presuppositions.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 109.

¹⁵ *ibid.* P 109-110.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 114

Empiricistic presuppositions

Berkeley and Hume presuppose, apparently, that Locke is right in questioning the knowability of *substance*. This, in turn, presupposes that the *qualities* are correctly distinguished into primary and secondary.

The knowability of substance and causality had been taken for granted during the previous millennia. Now that the knowability of substance is questioned by Locke, Berkeley, with the noble *motivation* of saving people from materialism (he was a bishop!), denied all *material substances*. Hume advanced further, professing himself incapable of even identifying his very self behind the stream of phenomena he was experiencing. No wonder he could not discover causation.

Another traditional concept that it became extremely difficult to analyze in the *framework of empiricistic presuppositions*, was the concept of *efficient causality*. Locke makes heroic efforts to explain this 'power'.¹⁷ But his efforts remain inconclusive. Hume, once again, goes a step further, denying the existence of any power.¹⁸

Substance, causation, power and the knowability of being were all presupposed in the Thomistic arguments for proving the existence of God.

Arguments and Human Communication

Arguments being a form of *human* communication,

¹⁷ J. Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Ch.21

¹⁸ D. Hume, *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, sect. 4-7

the *presuppositions* have to be taken into account, not only of philosophical positions, but also of personal human interrelations. A great deal is being said and written today about the presuppositions of human communication, and the spirit of open and sincere dialogue. People are afraid to be open, because in debates of certain types, they are convinced that their opponents will never be open. Attitudes like this will probably take the edge off any argument. Very special good-will and benevolence are needed when theists want to prove anything to atheists. The bad faith of atheists cannot always be presumed. It often happens that arguments are held not for the discovery of truth so much as for the sake of prestige and victory.

Other presuppositions of human communication are researched into by Ramchandra Gandhi,¹⁹ and the students of language and the philosophers of language may be referred to here. Arguments, however, in whatever language they be, must take into account not only the of the words in which arguments for or against are expressed, but their meanings. Often enough arguments run on parallel tracks without meeting one another.

Analytic Philosophy: This trend of thought, like several others, arose as a reaction to what may well be called pseudo-metaphysics. But its subsequent dedication to the analysis of language seems to indicate that it soon acquired the presupposition that all metaphysics was pseudo-metaphysics.

Logical Positivism was another similar reaction to

¹⁹ R. Gandhi, *Presuppositions of human Communication*, Oxford Univ. Press, 1974

pseudo-metaphysics in Austria and Germany. And these two trends soon formed an alliance to define the meaning of meaning for the rest of posterity. Among the radical doctrines of logical positivism was the verifiability theory of meaning. The cognitive meaning of a sentence is its method of verification. If a sentence is not a tautology and is not verifiable, it is cognitively meaningless. Obviously, what positivists are speaking of is empirical verifiability. On this account, statements such as "God exists" is, for Ryle, a misleading, quasi-ontological statement.²⁰

Bertrand Russell, one of the fathers of linguistic philosophy, ends his book *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*²¹ with a brief discussion on language and metaphysics. He concludes with these words :

"...complete metaphysical agnosticism is not compatible with the maintenance of linguistic propositions. Some modern philosophers hold that we know much about language, but nothing about anything else. This view forgets that language is an empirical phenomenon like another, and that a man who is metaphysically agnostic, must deny that he knows when he uses a word. For my part I believe that partly by means of the study of syntax ... can arrive at considerable knowledge concerning the structure of the world."²²

What Russell wants to say is that there *is* some relation between language and metaphysics. This

²⁰ P. Edwards, ed., *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, v.1, p.101 .

²¹ B. Russell,, *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth* , Unwin Hyman Ltd. Pbk 1980 .

²² *ibid.*, p. 347

involvement with metaphysics cannot be eschewed even by logical positivism, as T. H. Irwin points out :

“Positivists have found it difficult ... to interpret science itself without some metaphysical assumptions; even the ontology assumed by science seems to involve empirically unverifiable metaphysical claims.”²³

All this goes to show that the stand that St. Thomas took on proving God's existence by *metaphysical* arguments was very far-sighted, to say the least. We shall present them immediately.

The Five Ways

The five ways are too well known to need presentation here. It may, however, be useful to make a few observations :

I. The first three *ways* have been known as cosmological since the eighteenth century. And this change of *name* has brought about a change of *meaning*. They were never intended by Thomas as cosmological, but as ontological, in the best sense of the word.

II. The first way, leading to the Unmoved Mover, is *primarily* to be associated with *final* rather than *efficient* causality. This is the way that appeals most to Aquinas himself. And, no wonder. This was the route by which Aristotle himself discovered God.

²³ T. H. Irwin, *Aristotle's First Principles* (Clarendon pbk., New York, 1990), p.147

III. The second way does not deal with efficient causality as such, but with *chain* of efficient causes, where the units of the causal chain are *essentially subordinate to* one another.

IV. The fifth way has been extremely popular with scientists, especially during the last three centuries, not precisely the fifth way, but as the *teleological argument*. And, because of the appeal of teleology to scientists, *this* argument may well be called 'cosmological'. *Cosmos* is the opposite of *Chaos*. And right from the dawn of western science, the universe has been seen as a *cosmos*. Only in the twentieth century is some chaos being discovered.

A Few Questions

The conclusion of each of the five ways, as mentioned above is not simply "God," but One Whom 'everyone understands to be God,' 'everyone calls God', 'all speak of as God,' 'we speak of as God,' '... we call God.'

Why does Aquinas use these circumlocutions?

Possibly because he is aware that no human word can describe or contain God. He tells us that "*the names given to God are taken from His effects, not from His Essence.*"²⁴

What are the presuppositions of Aquinas?

First and foremost, his theological presuppositions

²⁴ Summa Theologiae, 1a, q.2, a. 2, ad.2

require that he place full faith in the truth of God's Revelation. He believes in Sacred Scripture, holding that the language and words of Scripture are not always to be taken literally, but sometimes metaphorically or analogically.²⁵ He reminds us that Scripture is for all the wise and the unwise .

As for his epistemological presuppositions, he takes it for granted that human knowledge begins with the senses, and hence material being is the proper object of the human intellect. But being as being is the object of the intellect as intellect. Hence, while Aquinas agrees in some respects with the empiricists and Kant, he maintains the possibility of metaphysics. In fact, considering that the metaphysical urge would run wild if it were not guided by scientific cultivation, the study of, and training in, metaphysics is necessary. Obviously, metaphysics is not necessary for salvation, and Aquinas points out:

“... there is nothing to prevent a man who cannot grasp a proof accepting, as a matter of faith, something that can be scientifically known and demonstrated .”²⁶

At this juncture, let us take note of the difference between knowing and demonstrating. Not all who know, are capable of drawing up arguments to demonstrate. Moreover, understanding arguments is one thing; accepting them, is another. Furthermore, it would seem that arguments that are valid and effective at one time in one culture, may appear without much value and ineffective, at another.

²⁵ *ibid.*, q.1.

²⁶ *ibid.*, q. 2, art. 2, ad 1

There are thinkers who believe that words and propositions can prove only words and propositions, and have nothing to do with matters of fact. And these will naturally not be much impressed by the five ways.

Yet another factor to be taken into account when assessing the value of arguments, is the limit of proof. There are very fundamental principles that cannot be proved. One such is the principle of non-contradiction - a principle that is presupposed in every argument and every statement. This principle itself, however, cannot be proved. Somewhat similar is the case of metaphysics in the sense that we have referred to above. There are anti-metaphysicians, who, while denying metaphysics, are engaged in doing metaphysics. It could be suggested that something similar is the case with the topic we are currently discussing: even arguments attempting to disprove the existence of God, actually prove His existence. How come ?

Arguments are thought out by the human mind in such a way that from valid or apparently valid premises, convincing and cogent conclusions may necessarily follow . Patterns of procedure from premises to conclusions seem built into the human mind. This teleology WRITTEN INTO THE STRUCTURE of the human seems to be itself a proof of God's existence .

Why does Aquinas not use this and other proofs?

This proof may possibly be implicit in the fifth way . By "way", we may understand 'general orientations' or paths along which arguments may be routed. It would appear that *all* other possible arguments should be reduced to one or more of these five ways.

Thus, the moral argument would pertain to the first and fifth ways. Aquinas, however, might hesitate to use it, since it savours so much of subjectivity. And the same may be said of arguments from religious experience.

Such proofs may indeed be sufficient, and more than sufficient, for the person who has the benefit of the experience. But arguments require something more.

Some Corollaries

The problem of evil is still raging, and often being transformed -- as Gabriel Marcel would put it - from problem into 'mystery.'

This argument is examined in further detail by Richard Swinburne.²⁷

Swinburne notes that a very great deal of suffering and pain in the world is brought about by human agents who *intentionally* cause pain and suffering to others.²⁸ An atheist may argue: "*Look at the amount of natural evil,*" A theist may reply: "*It is there for a higher good. Human inventiveness has been greatly stimulated. Wonder drugs have been manufactured. Moreover, human attributes of courage and patience have been nurtured and developed in the face of suffering and pain. Furthermore, the great virtue of human compassion had had a chance to shine - as in*

²⁷ R. Swinburne, "Knowledge from Experience and the Problem of Evil," in *The Rationality of Religious Belief*, ed. W. J. Abraham and S. W. Holtzer (Clarendon, Oxford, 1987), pp.141 ff.

²⁸ *ibid.*, pp.144-145, *passim*

the case of Mother Teresa of Calcutta."

It can, of course, be argued by an atheist that, however far compassion may reach, it is *inadequate* to the suffering in the world.

From the above it follows that arguments starting from the presence of evil in the world and ending with the non-existence of God, are, to say the least, resting on foundations that are shaky. They presuppose some sort of omniscience for the human mind - which is evidently a false presupposition. This argument is examined in further detail by Richard Swinburne.²⁹

The person who argues that "*if there is evil in the world, there is no God,*" is labouring under the false presupposition that the real God *must* conform to some particular human ideas about Him. This is preposterous.

Such discussions remain on the psycho-social levels. A question of ethics would be: why do people have the freedom to do what is evil? The answer of Aquinas is that *logically* freedom follows and flows from reason and intelligence. It is against the deepest demands of intelligent natures, that they be denied freedom to act and choose. And that is why God permits people to choose. Sartre, of course, has different presuppositions: he argues "*If I am free, there is no God.*" The truth is exactly the opposite.

It is God Who has established human freedom in the powers to *know, think, deliberate, which He Himself has given to human beings.*

²⁹ R. Swinburne, pp. 141 ff.

But when we use our freedom *against* our intelligence, *that* is not freedom at all, at least not a healthy form of freedom. It is just a *sign* of freedom, as sickness is the sign of life in the sense that a dead person cannot get sick.

Metaphysically speaking, goodness is a property of being as being. Evil is privation of being. This *natural* insight affirmed by Aristotle, was seen by Aquinas as corresponding with Revelation.

Full of confidence in the goodness of human reason, and making good use of this great gift, Aquinas accepts and confirms the views of Aristotle.

Once again, it is *metaphysical* suppositions on which this idea of God is constructed. And it is in the framework of Aristotelian metaphysics that God's goodness is to be understood. Here, however, metaphysics is supported by the Word of God. This is therefore a juncture where *guarantee* is provided for the correctness of human reasoning. The *experiencing* of the *problem and mystery of pain and suffering*, may consciously or unconsciously deflect the powers of reasoning from objective impartiality and pursuit of the truth without fear or favour.

Here, then, is how the goodness of God is *rationally* inferred:

Every being is good in so far as it is. This applies even to human beings. Now, though the human will is free, it is not free to choose evil as evil. Hence, no one intends evil as such. Even those who intend and do evil, choose it as something good, ...since everything is good, at least

apparently. However, not everything is humanly good. Hence, even people who are not good, choose evil under some aspect or colour of good, and intend good – at least the apparent, if not the real good. Therefore, if every being is good, and even human beings, even bad ones, can just not choose the evil as such, it follows that the Supreme Being is Infinite Goodness, precisely because He is the Infinite Being.

From this it follows that what appears evil at the human level, may not necessarily be so. As has been earlier pointed out, presuppositions have a part to play in arguments. The same applies to judgments of good and evil.

A further consequence is that 'good' and 'evil' are relative in the sense that 'what is food for one, may well be poison for another.' Hence, as Aquinas points out, the good of justice and punishment may well appear evil to a culprit.

Concluding these reflections on arguments for the existence of God in general, and especially on the ways of Aquinas, it may be useful to make a few suggestions: With the progress of studies in psychology and sociology, and with the enjoyment of the fruits of advanced technology, the capacity for concentration needed for metaphysics seems to have declined greatly.

It is appropriate to quote the well-known text of St. Augustine: "Amanthomines veritatem lucentem, sed oderunt eam redargentem" ("People love the truth when it shines, but hate it when it argues").

Arguments *alone*, however strong and valid, and

upholstered by the strongest objective evidence, rarely serve to change the deepest convictions of people. Rather than love their neighbour as themselves, people love their creeds and convictions as themselves. And, as has been explained above, these have their *presuppositions*. Moreover, as Schopenhauer pointed out, the *human will* too has its part to play. Aquinas, too, says somewhere "*What one desires, one easily believes.*"

In this sense, the charity of a mother Teresa of Calcutta can be a stronger argument for the existence of God than the five ways of St. Thomas.