

Handout 2 Supplement

The Meditation III Argument from Ideas Translated:

P1. There is a sufficient reason for every existing thing (nothing is 'inexplicable')

P2. The cause of any existing thing must be at least as real as that thing.

Upshot: a cause is a sufficient reason for its effect.

P3. Everything which can act as a cause must either actually exist (AE), or both actually exist and have causal power(AE!).

Upshot: if you neither actually exist nor actually exist and have causal power, you could not be a cause.

P4. Every idea which is true bec its content accurately represents some thing in the world, has representational content.

P5. The representational content of an idea must have a sufficient reason in something which is AE or AE!. Upshot: nothing comes from nothing, not even ideas (#1&2); only actually existing things or actually existing things with causal powers can be causes (#3); since materially true ideas have representational content (#4), therefore the representational content of an idea (#4) has a sufficient reason which is either AE or AE!.

P6. I have an idea of a perfect being.

P7. The representational content of that idea is infinitely intricate (is maximally complex along all dimensions) (#6 plus defn. of 'perfection')

P8. The sufficient reason for this idea's 'infinitely intricate' content must be something AE or AE!, which is equally, and hence 'infinitely', intricate. (from #5-7).

P9. I am a finite being.

P10. I could not be the existing thing which is the sufficient reason for the idea of a perfect being (from #8 and #9)

P11. Something besides myself is the suff. reason for the repr'l content of the idea of a perfect being (from #1 and #10)

P12. That something besides myself must be an infinitely intricate AE or AE! (from #7 & #11).

P13. That something besides myself which is an infinitely intricate AE or AE! is God. So God exists (from #12 and the defn. of God).