

PHIL 10100: First draft of mini-paper

due: in discussion sections, January 22

At right is the text of one of Aquinas' arguments for the existence of God that we will not be discussing in class. For the first draft of your first paper, you must do just one thing:

Give an analysis of this argument in premise/conclusion form. The argument you construct must be valid, and should have as its conclusion "God exists." If some premises follow from other premises, you should make this clear.

That is really and truly all that you should do. Do not write an introductory paragraph, a concluding paragraph, include a works cited page, etc. Just a valid argument in premise/conclusion form. You should type the paper.

A few tips: (1) the premises should be in your own words, not Aquinas' (just as we put his "first cause" argument in class in our own words); (2) make sure that you note which premises follow from which other premises; (3) make sure that every premise of your argument is used to get to the conclusion; (4) if you are not sure whether your argument is valid, add a premise which will make it clearly valid.

This draft will not be graded. Your TA will give you comments on the draft and return it to you; you will then submit a second, revised draft for a grade.

The first and more manifest way is the argument from motion. It is certain, and evident to our senses, that in the world some things are in motion. Now whatever is moved is moved by another, for nothing can be moved except it is in potentiality to that towards which it is moved; whereas a thing moves inasmuch as it is in act. For motion is nothing else than the reduction of something from potentiality to actuality. But nothing can be reduced from potentiality to actuality, except by something in a state of actuality. Thus that which is actually hot, as fire, makes wood, which is potentially hot, to be actually hot, and thereby moves and changes it. Now it is not possible that the same thing should be at once in actuality and potentiality in the same respect, but only in different respects. For what is actually hot cannot simultaneously be potentially hot; but it is simultaneously potentially cold. It is therefore impossible that in the same respect and in the same way a thing should be both mover and moved, *i.e.*, that it should move itself. Therefore, whatever is moved must be moved by another. If that by which it is moved be itself moved, then this also must needs be moved by another, and that by another again. But this cannot go on to infinity, because then there would be no first mover, and, consequently, no other mover, seeing that subsequent movers move only inasmuch as they are moved by the first mover; as the staff moves only because it is moved by the hand. Therefore it is necessary to arrive at a first mover, moved by no other; and this everyone understands to be God.