

An Argument for God's Existence from Non-Bruteness

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In what follows, I develop a new deductive metaphysical argument for God's existence, titled the argument from non-bruteness. The argument deploys possible worlds. Possible worlds represent different ways the world could have been, encompassing all variations of how reality might manifest. Each possible world w has a fundamental metaphysical structure, denoted by $S(w)$, and two possible worlds can share the same fundamental structure. Possible world w_1 is accessible from possible world w_2 if and only if there exists a relation between w_1 and w_2 such that any state in w_1 can be accessed from w_2 . I assume that accessibility is a symmetric relation, meaning that if possible world w_1 is accessible from possible world w_2 , then w_2 is equally accessible from w_1 .

Perspectives refer to the points of view or standpoints from which a possible world can be experienced or understood from within. They encode cognitive capabilities and epistemic positions. Let M be a function that maps each possible world to a set of perspectives accommodated by that world. A possible world w accommodating perspective P does not necessitate the existence of an individual in w adopting P . Moreover, the same perspective can figure or be present in multiple possible worlds, necessitating a notion of identity of perspectives across possible worlds. I assume the existence of an adequate notion of transworld identity of perspectives. Thus, some essential feature or set of features of perspectives allows the same perspective to exist across different possible worlds.

Traditionally, transworld identity addresses the question of whether an entity or structure in one possible world is the same in another. Transworld identity of perspectives is closely related to that of entities and structures. A perspective in a possible world can be either unlimited or limited. An unlimited perspective in a possible world is an unrestricted, all-encompassing viewpoint, allowing a complete understanding of all aspects of that world. For example, the human perspective in this world is reasonably a limited perspective.

A proposition can only be self-evident if it can possibly be recognized as such. This necessitates the following conceptual analysis of self-evidence. A proposition p is self-evident in possible world w from perspective P if and only if P is in $M(w)$ and in every possible world w' that is accessible from w , and that is sufficiently similar to w (i.e., is such that $M(w')=M(w)$ and $S(w')=S(w)$), an individual adopting perspective P in w' and contemplating p immediately recognizes it as true without the need for further explanation,

while there is at least one possible world w'' accessible from w and sufficiently similar to w in which an individual exists who adopts perspective P in w'' . The clause requiring that there must be an accessible and sufficiently similar possible world in which the relevant perspective is adopted, prevents a proposition from being self-evident merely because there is no accessible and sufficiently similar possible world in which the perspective in question is adopted. This clause thus avoids a misguided conception of self-evidence. The relation $E(p,w,P)$ denotes that p is self-evident in w from perspective P .

Let S be the fundamental structure of the actual world a . The core premise of my argument asserts that it is not a brute fact that S is the fundamental structure of a ; hence, there must exist an ultimate reason in a for S being the fundamental structure, denoted by proposition r . As an ultimate reason, r not only renders it likely that S is the fundamental structure but also entails that S is the fundamental structure. Proposition r , as an ultimate reason, must terminate any regress of explanations. Therefore, there is an unlimited perspective U in a such that $E(r,a,U)$.

According to the definition of self-evidence, there exists a possible world w_2 , accessible from the actual world, such that $S(w_2)=S(a)=S$, and there exists an individual i in w_2 who has perspective U in w_2 and contemplates r , immediately recognizing r as true without the need for further explanation. This means that individual i recognizes $E(r,w_2,U)$. Additionally, individual i recognizes that r entails S is the fundamental structure. Hence, individual i recognizes r as the ultimate reason for S being the fundamental structure.

Individual i has an unlimited and therefore wholly independent or absolute perspective in w_2 . Hence, specifically, i is uncaused and thus exists by virtue of its own nature in w_2 . It follows that individual i exists necessarily in w_2 . Therefore, i exists in all possible worlds accessible from w_2 , including the sufficiently similar actual world. Thus, there is an individual in the actual world with an unlimited perspective, who is uncaused or first, and who recognizes r as self-evident and as being the ultimate reason for S being the fundamental structure.

A proposition p is self-evident *in an absolute sense* if and only if for all possible worlds w , there exists an unlimited perspective P in w such that $E(p,w,P)$. Now, r must be self-evident in an absolute sense. I will demonstrate this. If r were not self-evident in an absolute sense, there would exist a possible world w^* in which there is no unlimited perspective U^* such that $E(r,w^*,U^*)$. If the fundamental structure of w^* differs from S , an additional explanation for S being the actual fundamental structure would be necessary — namely, why w^* is not actual, thereby preventing S from being the actual fundamental structure. This contradicts r

terminating the regress of explanations. If the fundamental structure of w^* is S , it still follows that if w^* were actual, r would not terminate the regress of explanations due to a lack of an unlimited perspective U^* in w^* such that $E(r, w^*, U^*)$. Again, an additional explanation of why w^* is not actual would be required, preventing r from being an ultimate reason.

Thus, there exists an individual in the actual world with an absolute perspective, who is uncaused or first, who recognizes r as self-evident in an absolute sense, and who also recognizes r as the ultimate reason for S being the fundamental structure of the world. Given parsimonious considerations, we may reasonably assume there is one such individual unless there are good reasons to believe otherwise. This individual is properly referred to as God. Hence, God exists.

The first premise of my argument is the non-bruteness premise. One may reject this premise, of course. That is to say, one may not accept that there must be some ultimate explanation of why the world has the fundamental structure it has. Yet, the argument shows that to the extent it is plausible that there is such an ultimate explanation, it is plausible that God exists. Many believe that such an ultimate explanation plausibly exists. What my argument demonstrates is that if there is such an ultimate explanation, theism is true. Thus, the argument effectively rules out non-theistic ultimate explanations of the world's fundamental structure. If my argument is successful, the atheist must maintain that there is no ultimate explanation for why the world has the fundamental structure it has, which for many atheists may not be a desirable position to hold.