M20HSS316-ITP/Assignment-2/20171213/CSD

Part-1) Q1. Why can't causal chain extend backward infinitely?
(12) premise states that "an ordered series of efficient causes cannot precede infinitely". The given question challenges this 12th premise, along with premises (9, 10, 11) that concludes that 12th premise must be valid. According to the 15-step argument, if the causal chain has to extend backward infinitely then there won't be any first cause (9). And if there does not exist any first cause, there won't be any subsequent effects (8, 10). Here, it can be seen that premise 8 is more stronger than 10, as 10 is somewhat derived from 8.

But what we see clearly around us, subsequent effects do exist (11). So there must exist some first cause which caused these subsequent causes. Hence, the given question challenges (8, 9, 10 & 12) premises. Where 8 and 12 are relatively more challenged than others.

Q2. Why must there be just one first cause?
Consider the 14th premise which states that "an ordered series of efficient causation terminates in **an** uncaused cause". The given question challenges the fact of the existence of only **one** first cause, and it is stated in 14th premise also in 13th (which have a role in concluding 14) that there is only "**an**" uncaused cause, rather than "**some**" uncaused cause which reduces the number to **one.**

Q3. Even if there is a first cause, why must it be a divine act of creation?
It is stated in 15th premise that "this uncaused cause is **God (definition)**", and it is apparent that the given question challenges this premise. As the God is considered some divine entity, the given question challenge why this uncaused cause or the first cause is "God", why it must be a divine act of creation by some "God" (which is considered as the creator of the universe).

Q4. Even if the universe has a creator, why assume that the creator still exists, and is omnipotent, omniscient, and perfectly good?
According to the 15th premise "the uncaused cause is God", and the question challenges that even if there is some creator of the universe (God according to the 15th premise), why that creator still exists, and is omnipotent, omniscient, and perfectly good.

It doesn't seem to challenge any premise in the 15-step argument, it just challenges the definition of "God" which is not included while considering 15th premise is true.

Part-2) Yes, the fourth question "**Even if the universe has a creator, why assume that the creator still exists, and is omnipotent, omniscient, and perfectly good?"** does not challenge any of the premises as explained in Part-1.

Part-3) Premises **1 to 7** are not challenged by any of the four questions. As the first question only challenges premises 8-12, while the second one challenges 13-14 and lastly the third one challenges 15th one, leaving 1-7 unchallenged.

Part-4)a) Q1. Does there exist two distinct prior causes which have the same effect? If there exist two distinct prior causes which have the same effect then if one of the prior causes is removed then how subsequent effects will be removed?
This question challenges premise 7 which states that " if a cause is removed from an ordered series of efficient causes, then the effect after that cause is removed as well".

Q2. Consider a circular chain of causal events where A is the prior cause of B, B is the prior cause of C and C is the prior cause of A. Then how can it be said that A cannot be an efficient cause of itself?
This question challenges premise 5 which states that "it is not possible for X to be an efficient cause of itself."

Q3. Why is there an ordered series of efficient causes?
This question challenges premise 1 which states that "there is an ordered series of causes".

b) According to me, Q2 is the best because it is extending the possibilities of causes and effects and questions the first cause itself. The possibility of events happening in circular rather than a timed linear fashion.

c) As it has not been observed that there is a time loop or a future event can affect the past event, therefore there must be an ordered series of efficient causes (and linear) rather than circular. So, if there is a cause to an effect it must be prior and the effect cannot cause itself as an event can not be prior to itself. Hence, A cannot be an efficient cause of itself.