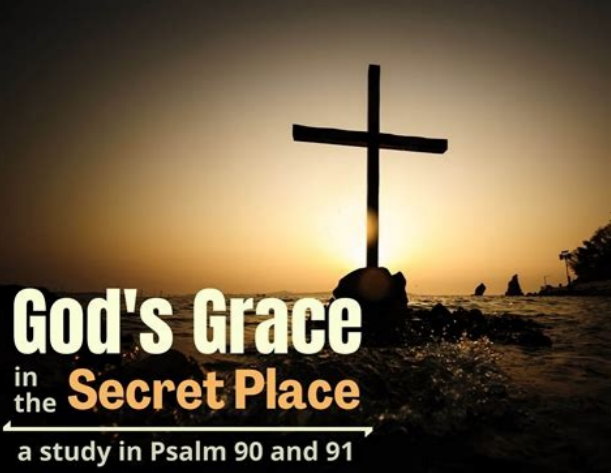


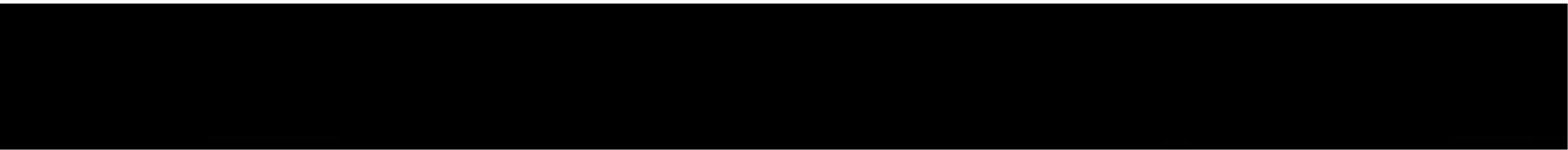
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It is here that my parable differs from Hare's. The partisan admits that many things may and do count against his belief: whereas Hare's lunatic who has a *blik* about dons doesn't admit that anything counts against his *blik*. Nothing *can* count against *bliks*. Also the partisan has a reason for having in the first instance committed himself, viz. the character of the Stranger; whereas the lunatic has no reason for his *blik* about dons – because, of course, you can't have reasons for *bliks*.

This means that I agree with Flew that theological utterances must be assertions. The partisan is making an assertion when he says, 'The Stranger is on our side.'

Do I want to say that the partisan's belief about the Stranger is, in any sense, an explanation? I think I do. It explains and makes sense of the Stranger's behaviour: it helps to explain also the resistance movement in the context of which he appears. In each case it differs from the interpretation which the others put up on the same facts.



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Metaphysical question The examples and perspective in this article may not include all significant viewpoints. Please improve the article or discuss the issue. (April 2019) (Learn how and when to remove this template message) This question has been written about by philosophers since at least the ancient Parmenides (c. 515 BC)[1][2] "Why is there anything at all?" (or "why is there something rather than nothing?") is a question about the reason for basic existence which has been raised or commented on by a range of philosophers and physicists, including Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz,[3] Ludwig Wittgenstein[4] and Martin Heidegger, the latter of which called it "the fundamental question of metaphysics"[5][6][7] The question is posed totally and comprehensively rather than concerning reasoning for the existence of anything specific, such as the universe or multiverse, the Big Bang, God, mathematical and physical laws, time or consciousness. It can be seen as an open metaphysical question, rather than a search for an exact answer.[8] [9][10][11] The circled dot was used by the Pythagoreans and later Greeks to represent the first metaphysical being and the metaphysical life, the Monad or the Absolute. On causation The ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle argued that everything in the universe must have a cause, culminating in an ultimate uncaused cause. (See Four causes) Bertrand Russell took a "brute fact" position when he said, "I should say that the universe is just there, and that's that"[12][13] Philosopher Brian Leftow has argued that the question cannot have a causal explanation (as any cause must itself have a cause) or a contingent explanation (as the factors giving the contingency must pre-exist), and that if there is an answer it must be something that exists necessarily (i.e., something that just exists, rather than is caused).[14] Philosopher William Free argues that the only two options which can explain existence is that things either always existed or spontaneously emerged. In either scenario, existence is a fact for which there isn't a cause.[15] Arguments that there may be no need for causation David Hume argued that a cause may not be necessary in the case of the formation of the universe. Whilst we demand that everything have a cause because of our experience of the necessity of causes, the formation of the universe is outside our experience and may be subject to different rules.[16] [17] Criticism of the question Philosopher Stephen Law has said the question may not need answering, as it is attempting to answer a question that is outside a spatio-temporal setting, from within a spatio-temporal setting. He compares the question to asking "what is north of the North Pole?"[18] Noted philosophical wit Sidney Morgenbesser answered the question with an apothegm: "If there were nothing you'd still be complaining!".[19][20] or "Even if there was nothing, you still wouldn't be satisfied!" [21];[17 Mathematical necessity Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz wrote: Why is there something rather than nothing? The sufficient reason [...] is found in a substance which [...] is a necessary being bearing the reason for its existence within itself.[22] Philosopher of physics Dean Rickles has argued that numbers and mathematics (or their underlying laws) may necessarily exist.[23][24] Physicist Max Tegmark wrote about the mathematical universe hypothesis, which states that all mathematical structures exist physically, and the physical universe is one of these structures. According to the hypothesis, the universe appears fine-tuned for intelligent life because of the anthropic principle, with most universes being devoid of life.[25] Physics Physicists such as Stephen Hawking and Lawrence Krauss have offered explanations that rely on quantum mechanics, saying that in a quantum vacuum state, virtual particles and spacetime bubbles will spontaneously come into existence, which is mathematically proven by the Chinese physicists Dongshan He, Dongfeng Gao, and Qing-yu Cai.[26][27] Nobel Laureate Frank Wilczek is credited with the aphorism that "nothing is unstable." However, physicist Sean Carroll argues that Wilczek's aphorism accounts merely for the existence of matter, but not the existence of quantum states, space-time, or the universe as a whole. Carroll concludes, as did Bertrand Russell, that "any attempt to account for the existence of something rather than nothing must ultimately bottom out in a set of brute facts: the universe simply is, without ultimate cause or explanation." [28][21];25 God Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz attributed to God as being the necessary sufficient reason for everything that exists (see: Cosmological argument). He wrote: "Why is there something rather than nothing? The sufficient reason... is found in a substance which... is a necessary being bearing the reason for its existence within itself." [29] Philosopher Roy Sorensen writes in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy that to many philosophers the question is intrinsically impossible to answer, like squaring a circle, and even God does not sufficiently answer it. "To explain why something exists, we standardly appeal to the existence of something else... For instance, if we answer 'There is something because the Universal Designer wanted there to be something', then our explanation takes for granted the existence of the Universal Designer. Someone who poses the question in a comprehensive way will not grant the existence of the Universal Designer as a starting point. If the explanation cannot begin with some entity, then it is hard to see how any explanation is feasible. Some philosophers conclude 'Why is there something rather than nothing?' is unanswerable. They think the question stumps us by imposing an impossible explanatory demand, namely, 'Deduce the existence of something without using any existential premises'. Logicians should feel no more ashamed of their inability to perform this deduction than geometers should feel ashamed at being unable to square the circle." [30] Argument that "nothing" is impossible The pre-Socratic philosopher Parmenides was one of the first Western thinkers to question the possibility of nothing. Many other thinkers, such as Bede Rundle,[31] have questioned whether nothing is an ontological possibility. It can be argued that all encompassing nothingness is an impossibility as there is already an existence, and the cessation of existence cannot erase that.[32][33][34] Non-existence The contemporary philosopher Roy Sorensen has argued that curiosity is possible "even when the proposition is known to be a necessary truth." For instance, a "reductio ad absurdum proof that 1 – 1/3 + 1/5 – 1/7 + ... converges to n/4 demonstrates that not converging to n/4 is impossible. However, it provides no insight into why not converging to n/4 is impossible. Similarly, it's legitimate to ask why non-existence or "nothingness" is impossible, even if that is the case.[35] Philosophical Explanations Robert Nozick outlined in the second chapter of his Philosophical Explanations the following possible answers to the question:[36][37] Self-Subsumption: "a law that applies to itself, and hence explains its own truth." The Nothingness Force: "the nothingness force acts on itself, it sucks nothingness into nothingness and produces something." The Principle of Indifference: establishes that nothing is a possibility among the possibilities of having something. Then "the probability that there is something is n/(n + 1) if n is finite and 1 if n is infinite." Fecundity: "Every possibility—including the possibility that there is nothing—exists in its own independent noninteracting realm." See also Being Causality Cosmogony First Cause Ex nihilo Nothing comes from nothing Problem of universals Something (concept) References ^ "Poem of Parmenides : on nature". philoctetes.free.fr. Retrieved 2 May 2017. ^ "Parmenides". World History Encyclopedia. Retrieved 2 May 2017. ^ "Principles of Nature and Grace", 1714, Article 7. ^ "Not how the world is, is the mystical, but that it is." Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus 6.44 ^ Martin Heidegger, Introduction to Metaphysics, Yale University Press, New Haven and London (1959), pp. 7–8. ^ "The Fundamental Question". www.hedweb.com. Retrieved 26 April 2017. ^ Geier, Manfred (2017). Wittgenstein und Heidegger: Die letzten Philosophen (in German). Rowohlt Verlag. p. 166. ISBN 978-3644045118. ^ "Metaphysics special: Why is there something rather than nothing?". New Scientist. Retrieved 26 April 2017. ^ Sorensen, Roy (2015). "Nothingness". The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Retrieved 26 April 2017. ^ Dascal, Marcelo (2008). 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Closer to Truth. ^ There are two errors in the the title of this book: A sourcebook of philosophical puzzles, paradoxes and problems, Robert M. Martin, p. 4, ISBN 1-55111-493-3 ^ Goldstein, Rebecca (2011). 36 Arguments for the Existence of God: A Work of Fiction. Vintage Contemporaries. p. 349. ISBN 978-0307456717. The Cosmological Argument, like The Argument from the Big Bang and The Argument from the Intelligibility of the Universe, is an expression of our cosmic befuddlement at the question, why is there something rather than nothing? The late philosopher Sidney Morgenbesser had a classic response to this question: "And if there were nothing? You'd still be complaining!" ^ a b Holt, Jim (2012). Why Does The World Exist. New York: Liveright. ISBN 978-0-87140-409-1. ^ Monadologie (1714). Nicholas Rescher, trans., 1991. The Monadology: An Edition for Students. 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