The design argument – as level

Outline the Key Concepts of the Design Argument [21 marks] The design argument is also referred to at the Teleological Argument stemmed from the Greek work ' Telos' meaning end or purpose. It is an ' A posterior' argument (from experience) based on our empirical senses and it is synthetic meaning that it is fromobservation. The argument is also inductive meaning there a number of possible conclusions. The main basis of the Teleological argument is based on a designer commonly known as ' the classical God of theism' (hereafter referred to as God)

The outline of the design argument is that the universe has order and purpose and is regular, the complexities of the universe demonstrate some form of design, a design requires a designer, and this designer is God. This however is an inductive leap meaning that the Design argument is valid but not sound. The key concepts of the argument are that the universe has order, there are laws and regularities, the universe has purpose, and therefore the objects in the universe appear to work towards and end or purpose.

The universe has benefit, meaning that it provides all that is necessary for life and more and finally, the suitability for human life, as the Universe provides ideal environments and conditions for human life to exist and flourish. Like the cosmological argument, the design argument goes back to Plato, who stated that the human body, with all its particles and elements, must owe its origin to ' the royal mind soul and mind in the nature of Zeus'.

The theory of the Design argument was first put forward by Socrates who was a Greek Philosopher who lived in 400 BC, one of the main strengths of Socrates proposing this theory is this means it is a Pre Christian idea and

also that it has withstood the test of time. Socrates said ' With such signs of forethought in the design of living creatures how can there be any doubt that they are the work of choice or design. ' Thomas Aquinas who lived in the 13th century furthered the idea of Socrates Design Argument; he wrote a book called the ' Summa Theologica' and was strongly influenced by Aristotle.

Aquinas rejected the possibility of an infinite regress of movers and causes to explain the existence of movers and causes to explain the existence of mutable beings. Aquinas proposed 5 ways to prove the existence of God, the unmoved mover, the uncaused case, Possibility and Necessity, Goodness Truth and Nobility and the Teleological Argument. He called these the fifth way and is ''from the governance of things''. Aquinas also proposed the theory of design qua regularity, ' That we call God'.

Aquinas maintained that since such behaviour patterns rarely change, and their end result is beneficial, there must be a purpose to them, and if non-rational beings can work towards such a goal, something must be directing them to do so. ' Now whatever lacks knowledge cannot move towards an end, unless directed, and this being we call God. ' He also championed the Analogy of the arrow directed by the archer showing that in order for something to end somewhere, there must be someone causing the movement, the arrow could not have ended us on the board on its own.

William Paley, an 18th Century Philosopher continued to develop the principles of the Design argument, showing many more extended features to Socrates original concept. Paley championed the theory of design qua purpose and that a design requires a designer. ''The world is too complex

and well-designed to have come about by chance. It seems to have been planned by an intelligent mind for a special purpose. '' For Paley, the world is like a machine made up of intricate parts, all of which worked towards an end for the benefit of the whole. Paley proposed the analogy of the watch and the watch maker. 'Suppose you had never seen a watch before. One day when you are out walking, you find one on the ground. You would instantly see how complex it is. '' His theory was that if you came across a watch then it is so intricate therefore it must have been designed. Therefore the universe is so fine-tuned that there must have been a designer for this too. It is obvious that both are not there by chance. Another analogy for this is the eye is designed so well for the purpose of seeing. A designer gave each part of the universe a special purpose. Paley makes the inductive leap to say that this designer is God.

The Anthropic principle is a key feature of the Design argument and suits the theory of Design qua Regularity proposed by F. R. Tennant showing thatscienceand religion are one in the same. He argues that human life flourishes on earth, therefore there must have been a supreme designer, that designer being God. Tennant accepts the scientific reasoning of evolution as a fine balance of ''fine tuning'' and God's chosen way to support life. Tennant also argues that ''the world could so easily have been chaotic'' and that ''the universe is not chaotic, nature is the outcome of intelligent design. ' Others argue that the earth runs so smoothly and everything works together therefore ''The world is compatible with a single throw of a dice and common sense is not foolish in suspecting the dice has been loaded'' cited by Vardy. James Lovelock of the 20th century furthered the anthropic

principle in ways of the Gaia Hypothesis, ''engineering on a planetary scale'' cited by Vardy. He suggests that the oxygen content in the air, the salt content in the sea and the temperature of the earth are all precise in order for human life to flourish.

If the oxygen content in the air were to be 12% less no fire would be able to burn, if the oxygen content were 25% more, then no fire would ever go out, however over the last 25 million years, the oxygen content has remained at 21% which is perfect to sustain human life. One other person who championed the idea of the Anthropic principle is Arthur Brown from the 20th century, he says that science shows the way in which a designer chose to design, ''The ozone gas layer is mighty proof of the creators forethought... Just the right thickness and exactly the correct defence, gives evidence of a plan. ' However there are two type of Anthropic principle, the weak Anthropic principle states that conditions on the earth were such that human life adapted to the conditions, for example evolution. The strong anthropic principle revolves around conditions being set up for human life to be introduced, for example a Baby's nursery being all ready for the baby to be introduced into it. In 1986 Freeman Dyson said " in the universe there are many accidents of physics and astronomy that have worked together for our benefit, it almost seems as if the universe knew we were coming. The weak anthropic principle however states that human life adapted to the conditions of the earth, for example, by way of evolution. This does not eliminate that Evolution means that there was no divine power involved, in the 19th century Archbishop Temple stated " The doctrine of evolution leaves the argument for an intelligent creator... stronger than it was before. " In the

20th century, Tennant worked alongside Taylor in proposing the aesthetic principle which observes that the universe possess a natural beauty that goes beyond that which is necessary to live.

For example art, literature, musicall contribute in making the world a nicer place for us to live, we would be able to live without these things however F. R Tennant observes that 'Nature is not just beautiful in places it is saturated with beauty... from an intelligent point of view beauty seems to be superfluous to have little survival value. ' Another example of the aesthetic principle is shown within people and the example of Weary Dunlop, cited by Vardy. Weary Dunlop was an AustralianDoctorduring World War II who cared for thousands of injured soldiers who showed endless compassion and love.

This example shows that humans are not selfish, leading to an intelligent designer creating some humans to have beauty beyond what is necessary. Franciscan Theology also supports the aesthetic principle and stresses the idea of beauty and the beauty within creation; this therefore leads to a direct pointer of God's nature, showing an omnibenevolent and numinous experience. In the 20th century Richard Swinburne furthered the argument of God due to that of Design, by developing the argument of probability as a key concept.

He furthered a statement made by Socrates, ' with such signs of forethought in the design of living creature, how can there be doubt that they are the work of choice or design. ' Swinburne suggested that the evidence of design and the order in the universe increases the probability of the existence of God. He states that a belief in God is compatible with science. This is due to the theory that without a designer the universe could have been chaotic, the

universe seems to be governed therefore order is present, order is more probable and the probability for design is much greater than that of chance.

Swinburne uses the parable of the card shuffling machine to show that if a man was locked in a room with 10 card shuffling machines and unless the ten machines all chose an ace of hearts from each of the packs, he would die, however the machine chooses an ace of hearts from each pack. Swinburne says it would not be adequate for the victim to claim that no explanation of the draw is required here. You would have expected the card machines to have been designed that way as the chances of this happening are seemingly almost impossible.

Swinburne uses this parable to even say that ''the very succession of science is showing us how deeply ordered the natural world is'' and that ''science provides strong grounds for believing that there is a deeper cause in that order. '' Harold Morowitz thought that the chances of the universe being ordered in such a way would be the equivalent of throwing four billion penny pieces into the air and all of them landing ' heads up'. William Ockham developed the theory of Ockham's razor, and even though not specifically to do with the design argument, he states that ''the simplest explanation is usually the best explanation'.

Fred Hoyle continued Swinburne's probability as a way of explaining a need for a designer by proposing that the probability that the universe developed by chance is much the same as if a whirlwind flew threw and junkyard and assembling a Boeing 747. Even though Kant rejects the idea of the design argument he even states that ' it is the oldest, the clearest and most accordant with the common reason of mankind' and that ' this proof always

deserves to be mentioned withrespect'. b. Comment on the view that the strengths outweigh the weaknesses [9 marks]

The teleological argument contains many opponents who have found weaknesses within its theory. Epicurus, a Greek Philosopher devised the Epicuran Hypothesis, stating that the universe has come about only by chance and that a number of particles floating around in space, at some point these particles formed together to create a universe, due to there being enough time for the combination of particles to make a universe. He rejects Swinburne's theory of probability and believes that the chaotic state, by chance, led to order.

Sarah Tyler explains this theory in ways of monkeys and typewriters in saying that if an ' infinite number of monkeys' were to be given an ' infinite amount of typewriters', in time they would eventually ' produce the entire works of Shakespeare'. However, in my opinion, judging by Epicuran Hypothesis and then Swinburne's theory of probability, I believethat the strength of Swinburne's argument outweighs that of Epicurus. Neither can be proven however with what humans know today, Swinburne's development somewhat seems more probable in explaining how the universe began.

I believe that the strengths in this case outweigh the weaknesses of the design argument. The main critic of the Design argument was David Hume in the 18th century, who was an empiricist, therefore based all his arguments of proof. He does not reject the idea of God, however fails to make the inductive leap from having a designer to that designer being God. He says that ' the world was only the first rude essay of some infant deity who abandoned it afterwards. ' Hume believes that if there is a God that this God

is not necessarily what humans assume him to be, if he is even still in existence.

Hume also believes that there could have been a ' co-operative of lesser god. ' For example a man who claims he builds his own house does not actually build it but requires others to do the work for him, e. g. a carpenter, electrician. Hume states that humans ' assume' what is going on outside the world and beyond, yet we cannot know. Another rejection of the design argument from Hume is that he says the world around us is not perfect yet religious believers claim that God is perfect and unlimited in every way, therefore if a perfect God designed the world, why isn't it perfect?

Hume then furthered his rejection of the Design argument by refuting the use of analogies by saying that they are unsound because God is beyond human understanding therefore anyone who uses Analogies is supporting anthropomorphism and likening God to a human or object, therefore making God less divine. Hume also says that the world is natural like an animal or vegetables, it is organic and it grows changes and moves. Hume continues to say ' the world is more organic than mechanic', likening the world to a carrot. Hume does have many more criticisms on the Design Argument however his main problem with it is due to the inductive leap.

Other criticisms of his include not assuming the laws of cause and effect. In my opinion, Hume's argument for the weaknesses of the design argument is a very strong argument as he considers the theory of God when proposing his ideas. No other person has been able to challenge Hume's criticism that if the world is not perfect then God cannot be omnipotent, omnibenevolent and omniscient, leading to a gap in the inconsistent triad of God. In my

opinion I think that this weakness does have an impact on all other strengths as it is the only one hat I can definitely say is a valid argument and makes sense to me. Another person who opposes the Design argument is J. S. Mill in the 19th century, who furthered the work of Hume and goes contrary to the idea of the world being an ordered, beautiful and harmonious place. He looks at the problem of suffering and that as there is so much in the world, this goes against the idea of an all loving, all powerful God. He states that if there were a designer God, he would have control over cosmic forces. ''Go straight to their end without regarding whom or what they crush in their road. ' In my opinion, this weakness is fairly strong as the problem of evil demonstrates a limited God. A God that is wholly good or wholly powerful would not have created evil therefore it has to be one or the other. JS Mill personally believes that this God is good but not all powerful. Charles Darwin of the 19th century, wrote the book ' Origin of Species' is another person who refutes the design argument and provided an alternative explanation for the design of world without reference to God, this is the theory of evolution and natural selection, ' the survival of the fittest. However, I believe that Darwin's theory of evolution is a weak argument against the existence of a God as it can also be placed into the category of the weak anthropic principle as the way God chose to introduce human beings; however we adapted to the conditions over time. Therefore I believe that Paley as a proponent of the design argument, his theory of there being a designer to design the universe is a much stronger argument than Charles Darwin's theory of Evolution as there is no explanation as to where evolution began in the first place, so ultimately no conclusion.

Richard Dawkins of the 20th century argues that Natural Selection give the appearance of design however we are mistaken into believing that this shows there must be a designer. He opposes Swinburne and Tennant and Taylor and says that nature is random, meaning the world was formed by chance. He says that ''Biology is God'' and people are lazy therefore made up this ''God of the Gaps''. He says there is ''no more evidence for God then there is the Easter Bunny' and that ' life has no purpose' and ' God is a superfluous hypothesis'.

I believe that this weakness to disprove the Design argument is weak as there is no evidence and is trying to disprove one of the earliest theories by comparing it to the Easter Bunny, therefore I feel that this weakness does not outweigh any of the strengths. A. J Ayre as another opponent said ' unless we can say what the world is like without design we cannot conclude design'. Kant furthered this by saying the world could be chaotic but we perceive it as being ordered.

To conclude this argument, the design argument is a religiously ambiguous and Paul Davies makes this clear by stating ''this is really a question of your threshold of conviction. It has to be a matter of personal taste whether you regard the accumulated evidence as compelling enough to want to make that inductive leap. '' The design argument is eschatologically verifiable. Many people however still are not convinced yet do not reject the argument fully, for example John Wisdom's parable of the Gardener showing that everyone has different opinions on how the world was designed and has been maintained.

John Lesley also says that ''if rocks had made by God stamped on them we would know it is made by God – they don't' therefore we can't know for sure. In conclusion to the question of strengths and weaknesses I feel that for me, the strengths, even, though there may be fewer than weaknesses, their principles outweigh the number of weaknesses. I personally think that the design argument cannot thoroughly prove the existence of God; however it gives a clear indicator to a designer.