

## **Aquinas' Third Way**

Worksheet 2

## **Source**

Here, J.L. Mackie considers Aquinas' argument that there must be a being that is 'necessary', which provides the reason for the existence of all 'contingent' things. Mackie argues that there could be another explanation for all the matter in the Universe:

... the final objection to the argument is that we have no reason for accepting this implicit assumption. Why, for example, might there not be a permanent stock of matter whose essence did not involve existence but which did not derive its existence from anything else?

Miracle of Theism, J.L. Mackie (OUP, New York, 1982), p. 91

Aquinas is making an assumption that if something isn't necessary it must rely on something else for its existence.

There could be a nonnecessary impersonal block of matter (i.e. not God) which is responsible for the matter that we see around us.

## **Analysis**

What do you think?	
1.	What do you think of Mackie's argument against Aquinas' Third Way?
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2.	What do you think of Aquinas' Third Way? Do you have any objections of your own? Or responses to possible objections?
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