The Cosmological Argument
Cosmological arguments attempt to prove that the universe requires a *cause* (and that this cause is what we call ‘God’).

All cosmological arguments require three things:
1. **PSR**: A principle that every being or event requires some cause to bring it about. (PSR = Principle of Sufficient Reason)
2. A *contingent being* (or event or series).
3. **AIR**: A principle that infinite causal chains are illicit. (AIR = Anti-Infinite Regress Principle)

[Something is *contingent* if it requires something else in order to exist or occur. If it is not contingent, then it is *necessary*.]

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[Something is *contingent* if it requires something else in order to exist or occur. If it is not contingent, then it is *necessary*.]
Cosmological arguments attempt to prove that the universe requires a cause because of some contingency (and that this cause is what we call ‘God’).

There are two kinds of cause, and therefore two kinds of this argument:

(1) **Sustaining cause**: the Atemporal Cosmological Argument. (Even if the universe is eternal, and so was never caused in time, it still needs a cause to keep it in existence). [Aquinas]

(2) **Initiating cause**: the Temporal Cosmological Argument. (The universe cannot be eternal, and therefore requires a cause to bring it about at some time in the past). [Bonaventure, al-Ghazali]
Causal Series

Accidental Causal Series: involve temporally sequential causes (e.g., dominoes in a row, parents begetting offspring).

Essential Causal Series involve temporally simultaneous causes (e.g., a book supported by a lectern, which in turn is supported by a desk, and so on).

According to Aquinas: both series can progress infinitely, but only accidental series can regress infinitely. Therefore, the “Anti-Infinite Regress” principle applies only to contingent objects/events that are part of an essential causal series.
(1) If something is contingent, then there is something else which causes it to exist. \[\text{[by definition of 'contingent']}\]

(2) X is a contingent being.

(3).∴ There is something other than X that causes it to exist. \[1, 2\]

(4) This something is either necessary or contingent. \[\text{excluded middle}\]

(5) If it is necessary, then God exists (because it would be God). \[\text{[by definition of 'God']}\]

(6) If it is contingent, then it will have a cause other than itself. \[\text{[definition of 'contingent']}\]

(7) An infinite regress of causes is not possible \[\text{[AIR]}\]

(8).∴ If the cause of X is a contingent being, then God exists. \[6, 7\]

(9).∴ God exists \[4, 5, 8\]

\text{AIR} = \text{Anti-Infinite Regress principle}
\text{Law of Excluded Middle} = \text{for all } x, x \text{ is either } A \text{ or not-} A.
\text{X} = \text{an individual contingent thing or event (or) the composition of the world (or) the entirety of the material of the world itself.}
Aquinas’s Argument

(1) Whatever moves is moved by another. [argued for at §§5-10]
(2) Some things are in motion. [evident by the senses]
(3) ∴ There must be other things moving them.
(4) We cannot regress infinitely through movers. [argued for at §§11-15]
(5) ∴ There is an unmoved mover.

[Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Bk. 1, ch. 13]
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1st Argument for Premise #1 (§§5-7)

(1) If X moves itself, then it has within itself its own principle of motion. [this in itself implies divisibility]
(2) Whatever is moved is divisible (i.e., composed of parts).
(3) A whole composed of parts is dependent upon its parts.
(4) ∴ Whatever is moved depends on its parts.
(5) A self-mover will be moved by one of its parts (the inner principle of motion)
(6) But if a part of a whole is at rest, then the entire whole must be at rest.
(7) ∴ The whole cannot be self-moving (by some inner principle).
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2nd Argument for Premise #1 (§8)
This is from induction: all known motions are caused by another.

3rd Argument for Premise #1 (§§9-10)
This is from act and potency: The same thing cannot be both in act and in potency (with respect to the same thing). For instance, a cold stone cannot warm itself; rather, it requires something already warm to bring it from “potentially warm” to “actually warm.” Therefore, whatever is potentially moving cannot bring itself to be actually moving by itself; therefore, whatever moves is moved by another.
Aquinas’s Argument

(1) Whatever moves is moved by another.  [argued for at §§5-10]
(2) Some things are in motion.  [evident by the senses]
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Three proofs of premise 4 (the “anti-infinite regress principle”)
(1) (§§12-13): An infinite regress of motions cannot occur in a finite time. Only a finite time has passed; therefore, only a finite number of motions have occurred.
(2) (§§14): Without a first mover, there is no motion (this assumes an essential series of causation, of course).
(3) (§15): (Same as with 2, only reversed.)
- Necessary,
- Actual, or
- Possible.
- Non-necessary
- Non-actual (= possible, but not actual)
- Contingent (= actual, but not necessary)
- Impossible