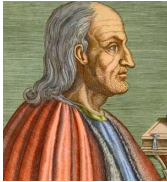


Deductive arguments for the existence of God

Component 2—Philosophy of Religion



Theme 1: Arguments for the existence of God – deductive

This theme considers how the philosophy of religion has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices.



D) Deductive arguments - origins of the ontological argument: Deductive proofs; the concept of 'a priori'. St Anselm - God as the greatest possible being (Proslogion 2). St Anselm - God has necessary existence (Proslogion 3).

E) Deductive arguments - developments of the ontological argument: Rene Descartes - concept of God as supremely perfect being; analogies of triangles and mountains/valleys. Norman Malcolm - God as unlimited being, God's existence as necessary rather than just possible.

F) Challenges to the ontological argument: Gaunilo, his reply to St Anselm; his rejection of the idea of a greatest possible being that can be thought of as having separate existence outside of our minds; his analogy of the idea of the greatest island as a ridicule of St Anselm's logic. Immanuel Kant's objection - existence is not a determining predicate: it cannot be a property that an object can either possess or lack.

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content, such as:

- The extent to which 'a priori' arguments for God's existence are persuasive.
- The extent to which different religious views on the nature of God impact on arguments for the existence of God.
- The effectiveness of the ontological argument for God's existence.
- Whether the ontological argument is more persuasive than the cosmological/teleological arguments for God's existence.
- The effectiveness of the challenges to the ontological argument for God's existence.
- The extent to which objections to the ontological argument are persuasive.

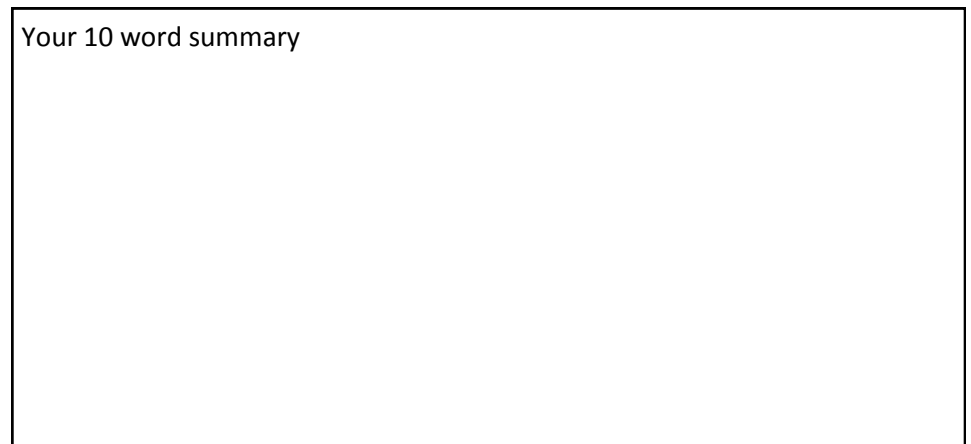
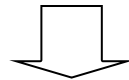
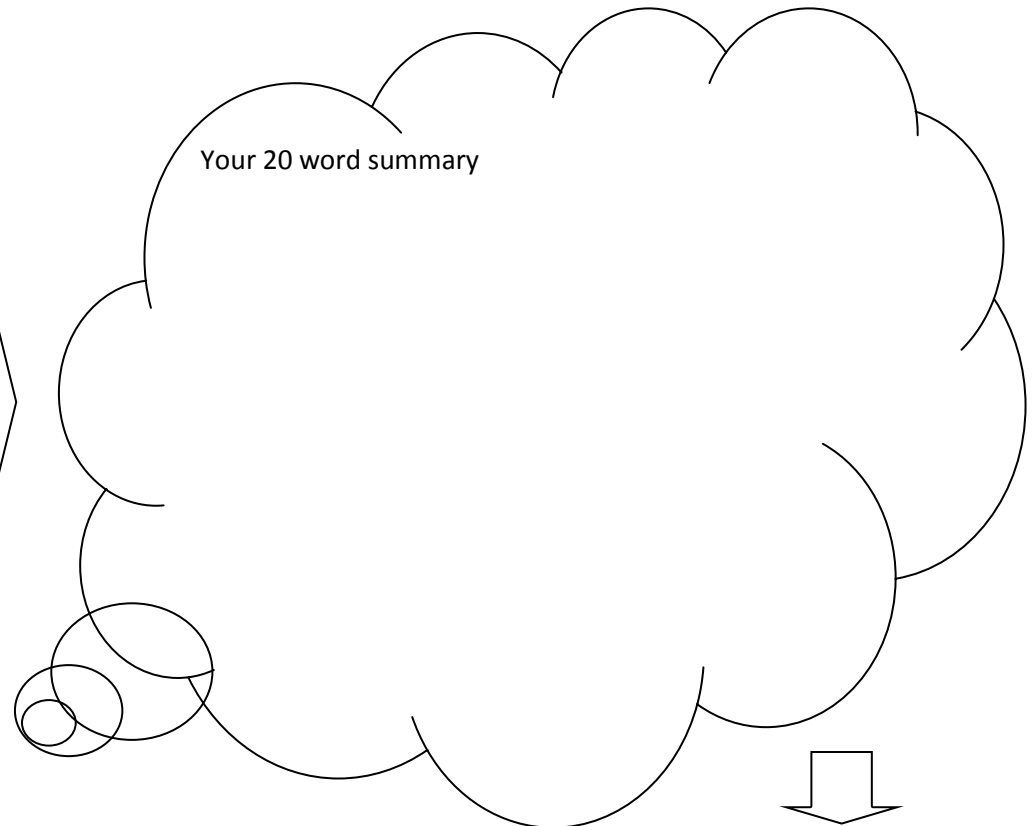
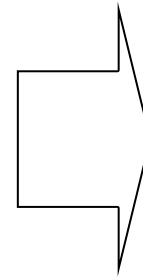
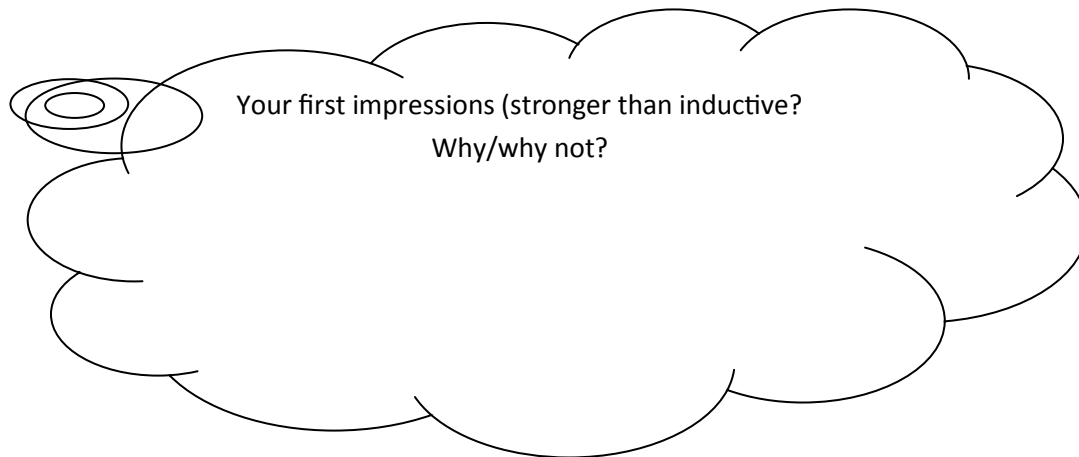


The Ontological Argument

Ontology is the branch of philosophy that explores the concept of existence. There are different types of existence eg

- (a) You and I exist in the physical sense
- (b) We sometimes assume things exist, even though we haven't discovered them yet, because a number of factors point to their existence (happens a lot in physics)
- (c) Forgiveness, boredom and jealousy exist but cannot be seen.

More specifically, ontological arguments tend to start with an **a priori** argument working from definitions to attempt to demonstrate the existence of God. the organisation of the universe. It is also deductive, meaning that if the premises are true it follows that the conclusion is also true.



Anselm's version



Basic info including the purpose of the argument

Proslogion 2

C11th

Indeed, we believe that thou art a being which nothing greater can be conceived. Or is there no such nature; since the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God? (Psalm xiv.1). But, at any rate, this very fool, when he hears of this being of which I speak – a being than which nothing greater can be conceived – understands what he hears, and what he understands is in his understanding; although he does not



C21st

What is the significance of this Bible quote?



'The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God"' (Psalm 14:1).

Proslogion 2 continued

The painter example



In intellectu

In re

What these terms lead Anselm to conclude...

Reductio ad absurdum

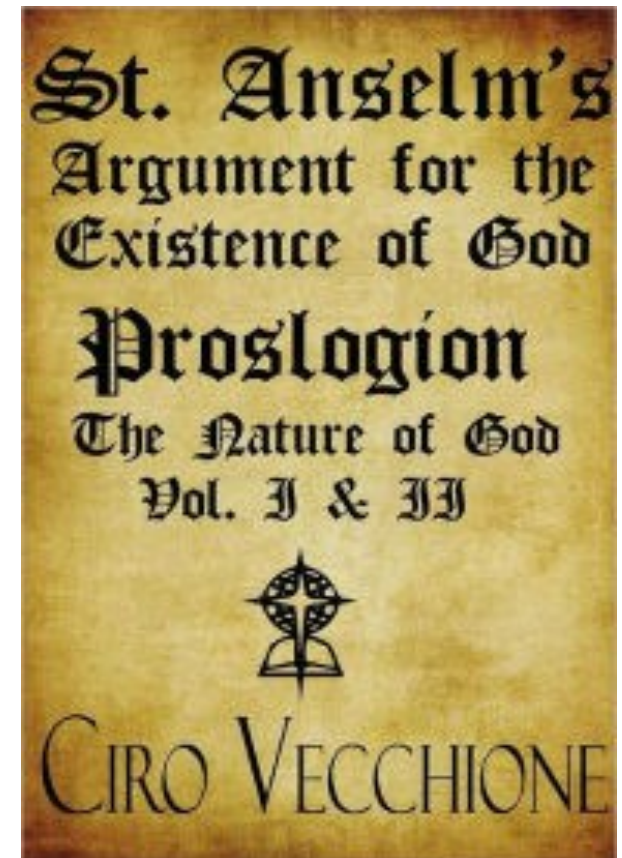
Your thoughts on Proslogion 2

Proslogion 3

Anselm's argument in Proslogion 3...

Difference between Proslogion 2 and 3

Your thoughts on Proslogion 3



Rene Descartes



Who was Rene Descartes?

Descartes' definition of God

What did he think about where this concept came from, and why is this significant?

Predicates

A predicate is...

Some examples...

What relevance does 'predicate' have to Descartes' argument?



Descartes' Ontological Argument

First part

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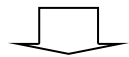
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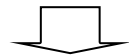
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Second part

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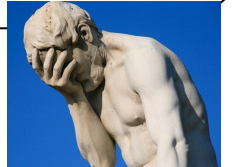


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The objection Descartes anticipated




Descartes' response



Your opinion of Descartes' version, is it stronger or weaker than Anselm's?

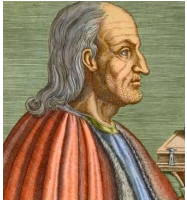
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Malcolm's Ontological Argument

 <p>Name of source</p>	<p>Key points and facts</p>	<p>Summary</p>
<p>Key words and key questions</p>		

Strengths and weaknesses

Do different views on the nature of God have an impact on the OA?







ANSELM

“God is that than which nothing greater can be conceived”

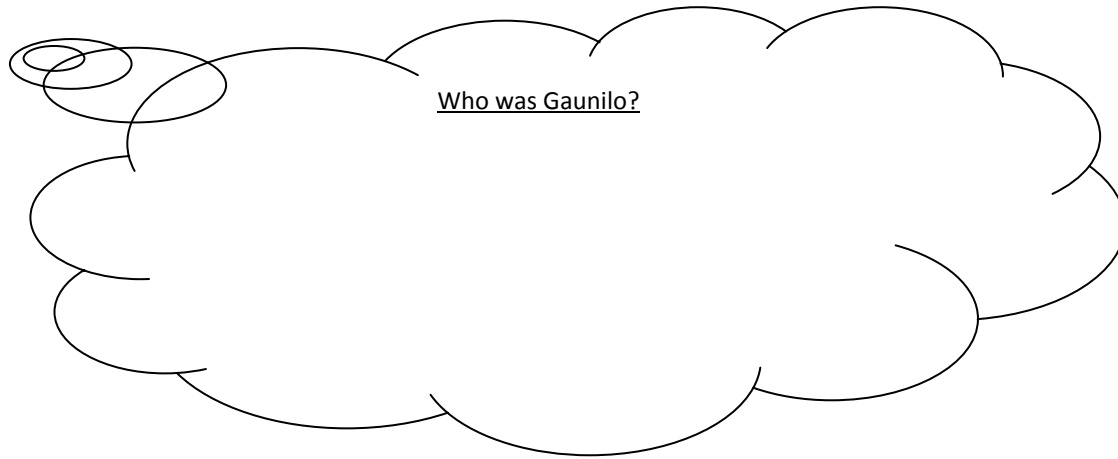


DESCARTES

“God is the supremely perfect being”

Scholar	Their view on the nature of God	Would they accept Anselm’s argument? Why?	Would they accept Descartes argument? Why?
 <p>St Thomas Aquinas</p>	Aquinas rejects that there can be any certainty that the human mind had the correct concept of God. God cannot be defined by human minds.		
 <p>David Hume</p>	Hume said that as human beings we base our lives on that which we can observe. God cannot be observed. He argued it is impossible to take an idea in one’s mind, apply logic to it, and reach a conclusion based in the observable universe.		
 <p>Norman Malcolm</p>	Malcolm said existence was not a characteristic of God, however the concept of God is that He is a being whose existence is necessary.		
 <p>Karl Barth</p>	Barth said God was beyond human reason. Humans do not have the mental capacity to understand God or to prove His existence.		

Gaunilo's Challenge to Anselm



Who was Gaunilo?

3 Ways he challenged Anselm:

1)

2)

3)

The Perfect Island argument

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)



ANSELM'S RESPONSE

1)

2)

3)

Your thoughts, who wins and why?

Kant's Challenge to Anselm



Kant touch this

Kant– basic info



What does Kant's objection have to do with Grumpy Cat? Explain in your own words

Kant's objections, step by step...



Your thoughts, are philosophers right to see Kant's challenge as a knockout blow? Why/why not?

Consolidation- Anselm, Descartes, Gaunilo or Kant?

Anselm

Descartes


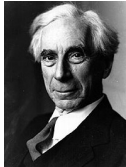


Gaunilo

Kant

'The ontological arguments are successful in proving the existence of God.' Evaluate this view.

Use this space to create an AO2 essay plan

Is the OA persuasive? Who to?

Scholar	What did they say about the persuasiveness of the OA?	Who would they say would be persuaded by the OA? (Atheists? Theists? Neither? Both?)
St Anselm 		
Bertrand Russell 		
Karl Barth 		
Richard Dawkins 		

Which argument is the most successful?

Stick your paper plate to this page or a printed picture of your work

Remember that AO1 means demonstrating knowledge and understanding of a topic area

Exam style questions

Remember that AO2 means analysing and evaluating a topic area

Exam question	AO1/AO2?	Pages
Examine the ontological arguments for the existence of God with reference to Anselm and Descartes.	AO1 20 marks	2-7
'The ontological arguments are successful in proving the existence of God.' Evaluate this view.	AO2 30 marks	9-12 14-15