



Teacher Resource Bank

GCE Religious Studies

Unit RST3B Philosophy of Religion

June 2011 Examination Candidate Exemplar Work



2011 (June) Unit RST3B *Philosophy of Religion*

Example of Candidate's Work from the Examination

Grade B

- 01 Analyse the reasoning of the ontological argument as presented by Anselm, and explain its purpose. (30 marks) AO1

Candidate Response

The ontological argument proposed by St Thomas Anselm was a prayer in Anselm's Proslogion, seeking to gain a deeper understanding of what God is like. St Thomas Anselm's ontological argument has a reasoning such that if you are a religious believer and understand what God is, you cannot deny his existence. For Anselm said, those who can conceive what God is, cannot agree that the statement God does not exist stands.

Anselm's ontological argument is split into two parts. The first part refers to Psalm 14:1, where it states 'the fool says there is no God'. From this Anselm can deduce that that fool has an understanding of what God is. Anselm then goes on to say that there is a difference between objects existing in one's understanding and one understanding something to exist. For example, a piece of art can exist in the understanding of an artist. However, it is not until the artist paints that piece of art, that he understands it to exist in reality. After the piece of art is painted, it exists both in mind and reality. This brings us on to Anselm's argument to explain God. As a believer, Anselm views God as 'that than which none greater can be conceived'. From this statement, as well as the fool's, we can deduce that God exists in the mind as the greatest conceivable being. However, as God exists in the mind as the greatest conceivable being, a greater possible being could exist both in the mind and reality. Namely this being would be God as it would be the greatest conceivable being by definition, existing in both the mind and reality. From this Anselm deduces that God exists. This first part of Anselm's argument confirms, for the believer, the existence of God as the believer views God as the greatest conceivable being.

The second part of Anselm's argument states that God must necessarily exist. Anselm again uses reason to reach this conclusion. Anselm states that as God is the greatest conceivable being it would be less great to think of a being not existing than one that did exist, therefore God must exist necessarily by definition. A God that does not exist would be an absurdity, as it would be to state the greatest conceivable being is not as great as it could possibly be as it does not exist in reality, yet is still the greatest conceivable being. This is logically absurd, and Anselm refers to it as *reductio ad absurdum*.

This part of Anselm's argument also reflects on the wonders of God's work as it states that God's existence is necessary when looking at the world around us. We could not exist had it not been for an eternal God, and the universe's existence is contingent on this eternal being. By demonstrating God's necessary existence, Anselm is enabling any believer reading his Proslogion to gain a deeper understanding of what God is like.

In conclusion, Anselm uses deductive reasoning to explain the existence of a God that he and believers know. The ontological argument is based on a universally accepted definition of God, by believers, and enables believers to have a better understanding of what God is and why he must exist. The purpose of Anselm's Proslogion was to gain a greater understanding of what God is and in turn grow closer to him.

Commentary

This candidate presents the main elements of Anselm's argument (the need for something to exist in reality if it is greater than anything else, the need for God to be necessary). The phrasing of the answer reflects "reasonable understanding" (Level 5 descriptor) rather than "generally thorough" (Level 6 descriptor). The second paragraph on the nature of understanding does include Anselm's examples and basically is a good presentation of this aspect of the argument. However, the paragraph on necessary existence needs to "analyse" (see question) the ideas more, rather than simply stating them. The paragraph about the world being contingent while God is necessary is correct but poorly expressed and undeveloped in the context of the whole essay. While the candidate does include some references to the purpose of the argument ("a prayer seeking to gain a deeper understanding of what God is like", "and in turn grow closer to him"), this part of the answer is very superficial. Had the candidate developed this section further, there would have just been enough overall to take the essay into Level 6, but as it stands the essay is a good Level 5 quality (23 marks).

02 'The ontological argument has no value for the non-believer.'

Assess this view

(20 marks) AO2

Candidate Response

As the ontological argument was written by a religious believer, it therefore carries that perspective, arguably becoming meaningless to anyone who does not share that perspective, the non-believer. The ontological argument is based on a description that believers may carry and is therefore of no value to the non-believer to a great extent. However, as it is a deductive argument it appeals to reason, meaning the most reasonable non-believers may see value in it. Philosophers such as Hume and Kant criticised the ontological arguments grounds for proving the existence of God.

The response to the ontological argument being useless, usually is such that, God is eternal, therefore contingent boundaries cannot be placed on him. In Descartes' version of the ontological argument he responds to possible objections about God's existence. Kant states that we have a distinct innate understanding of what God is through our mind's. The 'Supremely Perfect Being' that God is, must exist as existence is a predicate of God. In the same way mountains cannot be thought of without valleys, God cannot be thought of without existence. Descartes predicts that objectors may say just because we cannot imagine mountains without valleys, that doesn't mean to say there is a mountain as that is a contingent thing. However as God is the 'most perfect being' and the only one, it is impossible to think of this being without existing. For the non-believers, if they do not have the concept of God as the most Perfect being, Descartes' reasoning is meaningless making his version of the ontological argument only applicable to the believer.

The second part of Descartes' argument states that existence is a predicate of God. This is criticised heavily by Hume, Kant and Gasking. This is Hume's second objection to the ontological argument. Hume states that existence is not a property of a thing, whereas hair colour may be. Kant develops this by saying to say something 'exists', bears as much value as to say something 'does not exist'. Gasking then goes on to say that it is 'queer to state existence as a value', for example to say my next house will be greater as it is bigger makes sense. But to say my next house will be greater as it will exist carries no value. Kant develops his argument by saying that to say that something lacks existence is a logical absurdity highlighting the flaw of use of existence. How can something which does not exist lack anything? The non-believer would be sceptical of the ontological argument down to flaws in its reasoning as well as its supposed universally shared description upon which it is so heavily based.

Faith is unaffected by the ontological argument as it does nothing for proving the existence of God according to Richard Dawkins. The generally accepted perception is that the ontological argument was a prayer for believers to develop an understanding of God. Therefore, the ontological argument has a lot of value for a believer but not for a non-believer. The non-believer may find value in its logic, as Russell said the ontological argument is sound, but ultimately when looking at the logic of the argument it is easy to lose sight of the arguments purpose, thus rendering it useless for the non-believer.

Commentary

The candidate tries to stay with the set question and to link all the material he uses to the question. However, the phrasing of the points made is often clumsy and sometimes very superficial. For example the sentences: "The ontological argument is based on a description that believers may carry and is therefore of no value to the non-believer to a great extent. However, as it is a deductive argument it appeals to reason, meaning the most reasonable non-believers may see value in it" do not really develop the potentially valid points either here or later in the essay. The candidate does use the ideas of Descartes, Hume, Kant and Gasking accurately to show how the ontological argument has no value for the unbeliever. An evaluation is made based on this material. Better phrasing and further critical development of the points made would have enabled this candidate to reach Level 6, but as it stands the answer is a good Level 5 answer (15 marks).

03 Explain what it means to say that religious language is:

- non-cognitive
- symbolic.

(30 marks) AO1

Candidate Response

There are many objectors to the meaningfulness of religious language. The first group to question the meaninglessness of religious language were the logical positivists who originated from the Vienna Circle. They came up with verification principle which reached the conclusion that religious language was meaningless, as it could not be verified empirically, or logically. The falsification principle did the same in saying religious language is meaningless as it cannot be falsified. Response to these claims against religious language have come from religious believers themselves and philosophers such as Tillich who state that religious language is non-cognitive and symbolic respectively.

Tillich felt that religious language was symbolic as it helped us to gain an understanding of things which cannot be derived through our sensory experience. Religious language carries value in this way and therefore meaning as it helps us to develop a greater understanding of what God is. As God created the world he is extrinsically linked to the world. So when making statements such as 'The Kingdom of God' we are given an insight into God's power and rule. This insight can only be obtained through religious language.

Tillich believed that religious language opened our souls due to its symbolism. This is developed by Carl Jung who in his last book spoke of reoccurring religious symbols such as the cross. Jung stated that these symbols are archetypes at the deepest levels of our unconsciousness. A contemporary of Jung developed this by looking at how traditional Greek cross has change to have a longer bottom with its horizontal closer to the top. She stated this to be significant as it shows Christianity ascension to God and develops Christians to look outside themselves for God. Religious language being symbolic gives many the view that whilst it may not be verifiable, it still carries great meaning.

The view that religious language is non-cognitive was a response to the verification principle. The verification principle states that if a statement cannot be cognitively verified then it bears no meaning. However, religious believers argue that religious language is non-cognitive, yet still carries meaning. For example the term Jehovah's Thunder is a non-cognitive statement yet many in religion would understand it as God is angry. Aetiological Myths are examples of non-cognitive language. Their purpose is to give an account of how God brought order from chaos and, therefore, share common themes. They are understood to be myths that bear meaning yet are non-cognitive.

The view that religious language is non-cognitive and symbolic were responses to the claim that there is no meaning to religious language. Both demonstrate that meaning can be found in the statements despite not being verifiable.

Commentary

The candidate has some understanding of the idea of religious language as symbolic, making reference to Tillich, Jung's archetypes and the change in the nature of symbolism. However, none of these elements are really developed. The sentence: "Tillich felt that religious language was symbolic as it helped us to gain an understanding of things which cannot be derived through our sensory experience" displays knowledge of one of the main areas under consideration. The candidate then puts non-cognitive language in the context of the verification principle (which he dealt with in the opening paragraph) but does very little to show understanding of the topic. Overall, the candidate just reaches the Level 5 criterion "information is mostly accurate and mainly relevant" (20 marks).

04 'It is not possible to talk meaningfully about God.' Evaluate this claim.

(20 marks) AO2

Candidate Response

The claim that it is not possible to talk of God meaningfully would be agreeable with the view of logical positivists and those that believe the falsification principle to be valid. However, this is responded to by R.M Hare's idea about 'a blik' as well as Thomas Aquinas' analogical propositions.

Logical positivists agree with this claim as they follow the verification principle. This principle states that only a priori and a posteriori claims are valid. As a priori statements are true by definition for example 'a bachelor is an unmarried man' whereas a posteriori statements can be verified through empirically or logically testing a statement e.g. 'John is a bachelor' is to be verified. However, statements about God are viewed to be meaningless as they cannot be verified making religious language rejected by logical positivists. For this reason logical positivists believe it impossible to talk meaningfully about God.

Those who follow the falsification principle would also believe it impossible to talk about God. When saying to a religious believer God cannot be all loving as he allows suffering in the world, the natural response from the religious believer would be to explain that God is all-loving in a way we do not understand. This makes any religious claim non-falsifiable, which is viewed by followers of the falsification principle as making the statement about God being all-loving meaningless.

Responses to these claims come from R.M Hare and Thomas Aquinas. R.M Hare uses the idea of a university student who is adamant the dons were trying to kill him. Anything you tell the university student cannot alter his reality that just fits in with his perception of reality. R.M Hare named this as a 'blik' and said religious believers have the same thing regarding God. However, followers of the falsification principle called this a 'dialectal dual-cheque'. They claim this tells us nothing about the universal meaning of religious language.

Aquinas responds to the claim that we cannot speak meaningfully about God, as we can through our sensory experience gain some sort of understanding of God. For example in saying God is all loving, we know what love is through our experience of it. Therefore it is meaningful to say that God is all loving. We can also see a reflection of God's wisdom in human wisdom according to Aquinas' analogical proposition, thus making talk about God meaningful.

In conclusion, I agree with the claim that we cannot speak meaningfully about God, as although Aquinas' argument is good it needs to be verified.

Commentary

The candidate presents different responses to religious language, showing how each of these responses regards religious language as meaningful or not. The material is accurate and valid but there is not a lot of critical analysis of any of the different approaches presented. The evaluation is at best implicit in the presentation of the differing views next to each other, with a comment at the end of each paragraph relating to the meaningfulness of the language. The final statement: "I agree with the claim that we cannot speak meaningfully about God, as although Aquinas' argument is good it needs to be verified" has little to justify it. For these reasons the candidate cannot be awarded a Level 6 ("well-focused"). Final mark = Level 5 (15 marks).

Grade A

- 01 Analyse the reasoning of the ontological argument as presented by Anselm, and explain the purpose. (30 marks) AO1

Candidate Response

Part 1 – ttwngcbc (that than which no greater can be conceived)

Part 2 – necessary existence.

The ontological argument is an argument used to prove the existence of God through using logic alone. It was first set forward by Anselm in his prayer in the 'Proslogion'. He attempted to prove God existence through definition as opposed to logic. The purpose of Anselm's prayer, however, is unclear as he does not state who is addressing.

In the first part of Anselm's argument, Anselm uses reason to demonstrate how God is 'that than which no greater can be conceived.' Anselm reasons that everyone accepts this definition, even the fool in the Psalms who said 'That within his heart' that there was no God (Psalm 14:1 or 53:1). Anselm argues that to think of great being means to think of God. Anselm also uses his reasoning to demonstrate how the fools position is absurd as there is a contradiction in agreeing that God is the greatest conceivable being but rejecting the existence of such a being. In other words, the fool agrees that God exists but denies that God exists. Anselm uses his reasoning to say that the fool has not understood the concept of God, unlike a believer, at whom the argument could be aimed. Anselm attempts to use his reasoning to demonstrate how there is a difference between 'in ones understanding' something exists and 'to understand' that some exists. For example, a unicorn in ones understanding exists but the person understands that unicorns do not exist. The fool has made the mistake in believing that 'in ones understanding' means 'to understand'. Anselm also uses the analogy of a picture to further cement his reasoning. He says that before a picture is painted, it exists in the artists mind but when the picture is painted it exists in the artists mind and in reality. Anselm is therefore using his reasoning to demonstrate that God is like a painting, once the artist, or a person in the case of God, has understood the concept of God, then God exists in reality as well as the mind. Anselm next uses his reasoning to demonstrate a reductio ad absurdum where he reduces a counter argument to absurdity. He argues that if God was 'ttwngcbc' but only existed in the mind, there would always be a greater being that would exist in the mind and reality. Therefore for God to be 'ttwngcbc' he has to exist in both. This Anselm's reasoning in Part 1 of his ontological argument.

The second part of Anselm's argument also uses his reasoning to prove God's necessary existence. Anselm argues that God has to exist in reality otherwise there would always be a greater being that existed in reality. Anselm is using his reasoning to prove that God is de re (in reality) necessary as opposed to de dicto (in the mind) necessary. This means that God in Anselm's eyes is a necessary being who exists in both reality and the mind. Anselm uses his reasoning to prove that God is necessary by arguing that God has to be 'ttwngcbc' as it was proven in part 1. Therefore, for God to be the greatest being, he requires necessary existence. Gaunilo, a contemporary of Anselm, attempted to rebuff his argument in 'On behalf of the fool' with the analogy of a perfect Island but Anselm would argue that Gaunilo's perfect island is contingent whereas God is necessary as the logic only applies to him. This is how Anselm uses his reasoning to prove the 2nd part of his ontological argument.

The purpose of Anselm's argument is not clear. Anselm, in the eyes of many, is not attempting to convince a non-believer to believe. Instead, due mainly to the reasoning demonstrated in Part 1 of his argument, it is aimed at those who already believe in an immutable God of classical theism. But as it is prayer, Anselm never gave any guidance on how it should be received or its purpose. Therefore its purpose is unclear other than to prove that God is 'ttwngcbc'.

Overall, Anselm uses his logic to prove the existence of a God of classical theism. As it is a prayer, there is no cohesive answer to the purpose of it, other than to use logic alone to prove the existence of God.

Candidate Response

This candidate gives a clear presentation of the first part of Anselm's argument, making good reference to material contained in Anselm's own work. The candidate tries to use technical terms but fails somewhat ("reductio and absurdism"), however, the context shows the candidate's understanding of what he is presenting. The paragraph on God's necessary existence is much weaker than his presentation of the first part of the argument. The candidate struggles to express the idea clearly and the penultimate sentence of this paragraph, "Anselm would argue that Gaunilo's perfect island is contingent whereas God is necessary as the logic only applies to him", leaves a lot unexamined. The candidate does cover the purpose of Anselm's argument, though his approach is to say "the purpose of Anselm's argument is not clear", a statement that he goes on to explain briefly but accurately. The Level 6 criteria "generally thorough... information almost all accurate.. clear understanding through the use of relevant examples" apply to this essay. (26 marks).

02 'The ontological argument has no value for the non-believer.'
Assess this view.

(20 marks) AO2

Candidate Response

The ontological argument has no value for the non-believer. As the argument fails through a use of bad logic, it is never going to convince a non-believer, merely strengthen the faith of those who already believe in a God of classical theism.

This is supported by Anselm. As his form of the ontological argument is in a prayer and has been later developed, it has no value for the non-believer. Instead, it merely proves that if God does exist then he probably would be 'that than which is no greater can be conceived' but Anselm's logic fails to prove this but Descartes was not praying but the argument still fails. Aquinas also believes that it has no value for the non-believer as it anthropomorphises God. This means that he is brought down to human level, which arguably results in the argument being flawed. The logic that we use cannot be applied to God and therefore fails to convince the non-believer.

On the other hand, the argument could convince a non-believer. Mackie and Russell both argue that it is good logic, highlighting how two of the greatest philosophers of the 20th century see some value in it. Furthermore, the modern developments of Malcolm and Plantinga highlight how the argument can have relevance to a non-believer. But their arguments only work from an anti-realist perspective as argued by Peter Vardy. He argues that the argument can have relevance in the lives of someone who already believes but not a non-believer. Therefore, the argument does not have relevance to the non-believer.

Also, as Richard Dawkins, a well known atheist argues, the logic used to demonstrate the existence of God is flawed. He argues that it would be more convincing and conclusive if there was a God who started the universe but did not exist by using the same logic as Anselm. This highlights that Anselm and Descartes arguments have no relevance to the non-believer as they fail.

Overall, the ontological argument will never convince non-believers. Both Anselm and Descartes as well as non-believers, all remain in a 'blik' as they fail to see the opposite perspective.

Commentary

This answer is short but contains a lot of relevant material. A wide range of scholarly views are accurately referred to in very succinct ways. The candidate makes the best use of time to get breadth rather than depth in his answer, but that is perfectly acceptable. A good use of contrasting ideas is made. The material is always brought back explicitly to the question, for example “This means that he (God) is brought down to human level, which arguably results in the argument being flawed. The logic that we use cannot be applied to God and therefore fails to convince the non-believer”, making the essay “well-focused” (Level 6 criteria). More details of the positions held by at least some of the named thinkers would have enabled the candidate to reach Level 7.

07 Explain the free will defence and examine its purpose.

(30 marks) AO1

Candidate Response

Swinburne – responsibility and development.
Moral evil – result of us doing bad acts out of our own freewill.
Natural evil – not accounted for except death.

The freewill defence (FWD) is a theodicy that attempts to answer the problem of evil. The problem of evil is a diverse problem that affects many. Evil comes in two forms: moral evil (rape, murder) which is the result of human actions, and natural evil (earthquakes and tsunamis) which are accidents of nature. A theodicy, which the free will defence is, must account for the existence of both whilst still having the God of classical theism (omnipotent, omnibenevolent and omniscient). Hume and Epicurus demonstrate this problem in their inconsistent triad. The freewill defences purpose therefore is answer the problem of evil satisfactorily.

The FWD argues that free will is central to the issue of the problem of evil. Freewill features in Augustine’s theodicy, as the reason for the existence for moral evil as well as in Hick’s theodicy so that humans can get a genuine relationship with God. The FWD argues along much the same lines as Hick. Freewill is what has caused evil to enter the world and it is humans misusing their God given freewill which has resulted in acts of moral evil such as The Dunblane massacre. But God gave us freewill to allow us to develop a genuine relationship with him. If God had not allowed us to be free but controlled all of humanity’s actions, we, as Plantinga argues, would all become robots who ‘decisions’ were not our own. Therefore we need freewill to allow us to develop a genuine relationship with God but it has resulted in moral suffering and evil to enter the world. This is the outline of the FWD.

Many philosophers have argued that freewill is the cause of evil and Richard Swinburne is one of them. He argues that freewill is central to the problem of evil. Swinburne believes that the freewill grants us with the capacity to develop a genuine relationship with God that gives us responsibility for our own actions. He says that otherwise it would be like a ‘overprotective parent’ who constantly watches their child. God gave us freewill so we could make mistakes and develop into better people because of it. Moral evil, according to Swinburne, is the result of our misused God-given freewill. For example, when Baby P’s mother abused her child, that was because she was misusing her freewill. Natural evil, to a certain extent, is also addressed by Swinburne. He argues that death, which is a natural evil, occurs so that there is a limit to our freewill and the damage that can be done. People such as Hitler or Bloody Mary had to die so that hurt and anguish that they caused could stop. This is the FWD argument towards moral and natural evil. The FWD also keeps the God of classical theism very much alive. Swinburne argues that God is still omnipotent as he has the power to end the suffering so then we will have no freewill. Therefore God does not but allows humanity to grow and develop into moral beings. This also demonstrates God’s omnibenevolence. This is Swinburnes freewill defence.

Overall, the purpose of the freewill defence is to answer the problem of evil, which it does. Freewill is central to all of the defences of God but it is the freewill defence that brings all of these arguments together under one theodicy.

Commentary

The candidate tries to cover the purpose of the Free Will defence in the first paragraph. The material presented here is a little superficial and needs far greater explanation. The first sentence of the last paragraph: "Overall, the purpose of the freewill defence is to answer the problem of evil, which it does" is not a satisfactory comment as it leaves too much unsaid and the examiner has to imply what is meant from what has been written earlier. The second paragraph does give a decent summary of the free will defence and links it to the work of Hick, Augustine and Plantinga, but as the candidate himself admits, "This is the outline of the FWD." An outline is not the explanation required by the question. The next paragraph tries to show some development, but it gets too bogged down in examples rather than explanations. This limits the overall answer to "a satisfactory treatment" (Level 5). Mark 23.

08 How far is free will a satisfactory explanation for the existence of evil in a world created by God? (20 marks) AO2

Candidate Response

For
Accounts for the existence of evil
Makes humans take responsibility for their actions
Gil Edwards – allows us to grow, love etc.
Used in all four teaching's.

Against
Takes the blame away from God
William Rowe – diverse problem
Natural evil – logical error.

Freewill, to a certain extent is not a satisfactory explanation for the existence of evil in the world. Instead it removes the blame from God and his creation making humans the victim. But it does account satisfactorily for the existence of moral evil in the world.

This idea is supported by the fact that freewill is central to all three of the theodicy and proven thought. Augustine argues that Eve and Adam misused their freewill by eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Hicke argues that freewill will allow us to develop a genuine relationship with God as does the freewill defence. Process thought suggests that the fact that humans have freewill drives us to do morally good acts and attempts to lessen ours and God's suffering in the world. Therefore freewill does account for the problem of evil.

On the other hand, however, as William Rowe argues in the evidential problem of evil, the causes he uses demonstrate there is too much pointless evil in the world for it to be a result of freewill. He cites the cases of Baby Sue, a five year old who was raped and beaten to death, and the case of Bambi, a faun that burnt alive. No amount of misused freewill could result in such horrific acts. Therefore freewill is not a satisfactory explanation. This idea also supported by the idea that it takes blame away from God. By blaming freewill, it provides the God of classical theism an easy escape from having to account for the existence of evil. If God was truly omnipotent, or omniscient, he would have foreseen that humans such as Adam and Eve would misuse their freewill. Therefore freewill is not a satisfactory explanation.

But, on the other hand, it makes humans responsible for their own actions. Without freewill as Plantinga argues, we would all become robots whose 'decisions' are not our own. If God had not provided humanity with evil then humanity would never have responsibility for killing. Instead people such as Harold Shipman would have not known that their actions were wrong. Gil Edwards argues it allows us to be loving and have a proper relationship with God. But God would have created us with freewill but not the capacity to do evil acts. Therefore freewill is not a satisfactory explanation.

Overall, freewill is not a satisfactory explanation for the existence of evil. Instead it is the easiest way to explain it as any five year old can demonstrate. But as the problem of evil is such a diverse problem, the explanation of freewill does hold some kind of promise in beginning to understand if the God of classical theism can exist while there is evil in the world.

Commentary

The candidate's answer is fairly short but it is directed to the actual question. The first two paragraphs are not well phrased, simply giving some examples of how free will is supported by thinkers. The candidate does become more secure in his handling of the material in the later paragraphs, where there is some evaluation. The candidate makes some nice points like: "By blaming freewill, it provides the God of classical theism an easy escape from having to account for the existence of evil." There is some good use of scholarly opinion but overall the essay is "a well-focused response" (Level 6) rather than "very well-focused response"(Level 7). Mark = 17.

Grade A*

- 01 **Analyse the reasoning of the ontological argument as presented by Anselm, and explain its purpose.** (30 marks) AO1

Candidate Response

The ontological argument is A priori argument for the existence of God. St Anselm, was the author who can be seen as starting off the ontological argument in his proslogian. He produced two ontological arguments, which were contained in proslogian chapter two and proslogian chapter three. The reasoning for Anselm's argument can easily be seen in the arguments proposed themselves, however the purpose is slightly more debateable and seems to be somewhere between the view of a critical rationalist and a strong rationalist, however this will be discussed later on, after the reasoning in the argument has been analysed.

Firstly in this essay, Anselm's ontological argument, will be displayed and then the reasoning behind the argument will be explained. The first thing to explain is that although Anselm's original argument was written in prose, for the purposes of this essay his argument will be shown in the form of a syllogism. The two syllogisms to explain both of Anselm's arguments will both have two premises and then finally and conclusion. Anselm's first argument is as follows:

- P1) God is that than which nothing greater can be conceived.
 P2) It is greater to exist in reality than in the understanding alone.
 C) Therefore God exists.

Anselm's argument here can be described as *reductio ad absurdum*. Essentially his argument takes something in his head, in this case a being that than which nothing greater can be conceived, then he makes a further assertion about existing in reality being better than existing in the understanding alone. Therefore if God is a being that than which nothing greater can be conceived, and to exist in reality is greater to exist in the understanding alone, God must by definition exist in reality. The reason for this is because God is the greatest being, and therefore if it is better to exist in reality, then he must exist in reality because that is better. Therefore, if God exists in reality, then essentially, as the conclusion states he exists. That is the logic behind Anselm's first argument. However Anselm was then criticised by Gaunilo, who used a *reductio ad absurdum* to state his objection about the perfect island. Although this is not strictly necessary for this question, it is important to understand why Anselm produced a second argument, and it is because of the response from Gaunilo. For the purposes of this essay, Gaunilo's argument will also be portrayed in the form of a syllogism.

- P1) I can conceive of an island that than which no greater island can be conceived.
 P2) It is better to exist in reality than in the understanding alone.
 c) Therefore the island exists.

Although this argument may look like a good reply to Anselm. Anselm's second argument uses a logic to get around the challenge posed by Gaunilo. Gaunilo's argument essentially says that he can conceive in his head of this island that than which nothing greater can be conceived, and to exist in the reality is better to exist in the understanding alone, therefore this perfect island must exist. The point of Gaunilo's argument is that he knows this island does not exist, because he just made up in his head, however by applying what seems to be the same understanding as Anselm, he thinks he has arrived at the same conclusion and therefore he has proved Anselm wrong. However Anselm's second ontological argument proves that Gaunilo has not quite got the understanding of the topic, and therefore Gaunilo's objection is invalid. Anselm's second argument will also be shown in the form of a syllogism.

- P1) God is that than which nothing greater can be conceived
- P2) Necessary existence is better than contingent existence
- C) Therefore God necessarily exists.

This argument from Anselm gets around the counter argument produced by Gaunilo by bringing in the concept of necessary and contingent existence. Anselm believes that God must necessarily exist however, he also believes that Gaunilo's island does not have necessary existence but instead that it has contingent existence and therefore Gaunilo's argument is seen to be proven as being invalid and therefore Anselm seems to have produced a reasonably sound argument. However now the purpose of Anselm's ontological argument needs to be addressed. For the purpose of this question, the purpose of Anselm's ontological argument is what Anselm hoped to prove by producing the argument. There are two main arguments as to what Anselm was trying to achieve with this argument. The first argument was that he was trying to make it possible to prove God using simple logic and rational argument, which would make him a strong rationalist. The second possible purpose that Anselm had in mind was that he was trying to give religious believers a reason to believe in God as well as their faith, which would make him a critical rationalist.

Firstly the arguments that suggest Anselm was a critical rationalist will be seen. Karl Barth can be seen as the philosopher who examined this case and he came to the conclusion that Anselm was a critical rationalist for the following reasons. The first aspect that is worth mentioning is the fact that the title of Anselm's book, translated from the latin, was faith seeking understanding. This shows that Anselm had faith and was seeking reason to secure his faith. The second argument that shows Anselm is a critical rationalist was that in the preface to the book, which contained his ontological arguments there was a prayer, which shows that he relied on faith and not pure logic alone. This is the most likely case, as Anselm is simply trying to prove his understanding of God and trying to provide believers with somewhere to leap to, when talking about a leap of faith.

However there is an argument which suggests that Anselm is instead a strong rationalist, like Rene Decartes. Anselm, instead of restarting his faith when challenged by Gaunilo, answers using reason, which suggests he could be a strong rationalist as he is simply trying to prove God's existence through pure logic.

To conclude, Anselm's reasoning behind his ontological argument has been shown by this essay, and it has also been proven that the purpose of his ontological arguments was to re-affirm his views on the existence of God, shown by Barth's evidence about the prayer in the preface and the original title of the book which contained his arguments. Although there is a counter argument which claims that because he replied to Gaunilo using reason rather than re-stating his faith, he is a strong rationalist and the purpose of the ontological argument was to prove God through reason. However, Barth's arguments look stronger and so this essay concludes that the purpose was to make it rational to believe in God, and not to outright prove God's existence.

Commentary

This is an excellent answer, showing a mature understanding of Anselm's Ontological argument. The essay has a very good balance between the three main elements that are needed to do full justice to the topic: the need for perfection to include existence, the idea of God being necessary, and the purpose of the argument. While the candidate starts off his presentation of the argument in the form of a syllogism (perfectly acceptable), he does not fall into the trap of thinking that that is all that the essay requires (as some candidates did). He "analyses" (see the question) the material, showing how Anselm's approach works. The quality of this candidate is shown in particular in the sentences: "However Anselm was then criticised by Gaunilo, who used a reduction ad absurdum to state his objection about the perfect island. Although this is not strictly necessary for this question, it is important to understand why Anselm produced a second argument, and it is because of the response from Gaunilo." This candidate recognises what is relevant material, and can justify including material as a stepping stone in his argument. Many weaker candidates presented Gaunilo's argument but did not properly link it up to the second part of Anselm's argument, so failed to justify including it in their essay. This candidate produces an excellent presentation of the purpose of the ontological argument, making superb use of Barth's conclusion. The final sentence of the essay is a good reflection of the high quality of the whole piece: "However, Barth's arguments look stronger and so this essay concludes that the purpose was to make it rational to believe in God, and not to outright prove God's existence." (Level 7 = 30 marks)

02 'The ontological argument has no value for the non-believer.'**Assess this view.****(20 marks) AO2****Candidate Response**

The ontological argument is an a priori argument for the existence of God which consists of two arguments from Anselm and an argument from Rene Descartes. Both arguments can be shown in the form of a syllogism and when put in this form they read as the following:

Anselm 1:

- P1) God is that than nothing greater can be conceived
- P2) It is greater to exist in reality than in the understanding alone
- C) Therefore God exists

Anselm 2:

- P1) God is that then which nothing greater can be conceived
- P2) Necessary existence is better than contingent existence
- C) Therefore God necessarily exists

Descartes:

- P1) God is a being with all perfections
- P2) Existence is a perfection
- C) God exists

There are a number of problems with the ontological argument which would prove that for non-religious believers there is no value involved at all. There are three types of problem with the ontological argument that can be seen to prove it invalid and they are problems with the definition of God, Existence is not a predicate and finally that it is impossible to derive existential claims for the definition of God. The first type of argument will be examined first. Problems with the definition of God are more aimed at Descartes' ontological argument than Anselm's ontological argument, because Descartes attempts to define God whereas Anselm does not really.

The first problem is simply that Descartes argument is circular and therefore invalid. Descartes claims that he is able to define God and that his premises are true, because they are clear and distinct to him. However, Descartes later says that he needs relies on God to prove that his ideas are clear and distinct. The reason why this argument is circular is because Descartes needs God to clarify his clear and distinct ideas about whether God exists. Therefore he needs God to exist to prove God exists, which shows his argument is circular and therefore invalid, which means that non-believers are unlikely to take value from it and change from an atheist to a Christian as the argument appears to be weak.

The second problem in defining God is produced by Aquinas. Aquinas believes that there is a problem with defining God because certain things are self-evident to us and certain things are self-evident to God and only God. One of the things that is only self-evident to God is his nature and therefore by trying to define God's nature, you are trying to do something that is impossible. Therefore Aquinas again proves that there is a problem with trying to define God, which shows that Decartes ontological argument is unsound. This criticism is particularly damaging to the argument as Aquinas was a religious man himself. Therefore if non-believers see a religious figure denying the argument they are likely to take no value from it at all.

The second type of argument against the ontological argument is the argument that existence is not a predicate. This argument was first introduced by Kant, who used the example of 100 Thalers. Kant said that to say something exists is not adding a property, but to simply posit something with all its properties and therefore Decartes argument is seen to fail again.

Frege also added to this argument by introducing first and second order predicates. He said that existence was a second order predicate, as existence is essentially a negation of zero, which shows means a number is being used. However, the first premise of Decartes' is a first order predicate and therefore there is a contradiction, which shows the argument to be unsound.

To conclude, the ontological argument has no value for non-believers because it is not likely to change an atheist to a believer, because of the huge number of criticisms surrounding.

Commentary

This candidate starts off by using general arguments against the validity of the ontological argument and then brings in the question of the value for the unbeliever. The approach can be valid but it runs the risk of the essay going off target. The candidate manages to keep returning to the central point but might have produced a stronger essay if the main element of the essay title held centre stage rather than being an appendage in each paragraph. The candidate uses a lot of accurate, relevant material including the thoughts of Descartes, Aquinas, Frege and Kant. There are some very nice expressions that show a good understanding of the main issue, for example: "This criticism is particularly damaging to the argument as Aquinas was a religious man himself. Therefore if non-believers see a religious figure denying the argument they are likely to take no value from it at all." Overall the answer is a good Level 6 rather than a "very-well focused" Level 7. (17 marks)

07 Explain the free will defence and examine its purpose.**(30 marks) AO1****Candidate Response**

The free will defence was produced as a theodicy to solve the problem of evil, however it is also used in a number of other theodicies to explain the problem of evil. Firstly it is important to introduce a few concepts at the beginning of this essay. Firstly there is the distinction between the two types of evil and they are moral evil and natural evil. Moral evil is evil that humans chose to carry out and therefore the responsibility lies with humans in these cases, an event such as the Holocaust can be seen as a moral evil. The second type of evil that exists in the world is natural evil. Natural evil is shown best by natural events, that cause suffering for human beings. Examples of natural evil, would include major earthquakes, tsunamis and volcano eruptions, that lead to human suffering.

Now that the two different types of evil have been considered it is also important to mention the two problems that evil causes by existing in the world, and they are the logical and evidential problems of evil. The logical problem of evil can be put as an inconsistent triad. An inconsistent triad is a group of three statements, where not all three of the assertions can exist at the same time without contradictions. For the logical problem of evil the inconsistent triad can be viewed as the following: 1) God is omnipotent 2) God is all-loving (omnibenevolent) and finally 3) Evil exists. The problem with this triad is that if God is all-powerful, and therefore has the ability to stop evil, and God is all-loving, which shows that he does not want his creation to suffer evil, then how can evil exist in the world? There are two ways of eliminating the logical problem of evil and they are producing a theodicy, which argues that a just God can allow evil, or by denying one of the assertions in the inconsistent triad. The evidential problem of evil was provided by William Rowe, who commented that there were certain types of evil that could not be explained away by a theodicy. For example, animal suffering and the suffering of children. Rowe explained that this was 'pointless' evil and there was no possible explanation for it.

The free-will defence attempts to answer the problem of evil by producing a theodicy as to why a just God would allow evil to take place in the world. Essentially the free will defence argues that God gave us free-will for two main reasons. The first reason why God gave us free will according to the free-will defence was because it is necessary for humans to have free will if God wants to have a relationship with us. In order to have a relationship with someone, it is necessary for both parties to have free-will. Therefore, we are God's creations, and he wanted to have a relationship with us, he afforded us free will. The importance of free-will for a relationship can be explained easily by applying 'The Parable of the King and the Peasant Girl'. In this parable there is a king who fancies a peasant girl. The King could introduce a law that states that she has to marry him, or he could go to her and impress her with all his wealth, hoping that she would want to marry him. However, in order to ensure that the peasant girl, loves the King for who he is, he dresses in peasant clothing and goes to try and woo her. The reason the King did this because he wanted to ensure that it was the will of the peasant girl to marry him, and therefore this parable shows that free-will is important in order for us to have a relationship with God. Therefore the free-will defence says evil exists, simply because God gives us free-will so that he can have a relationship with us.

Essentially the free-will defence blames the existence of evil on human sins and angles. The free-will defence states that God gave man free-will and we abused his free-will and therefore we must be punished. This abuse of free-will can be tracked back to the Garden of Eden when Adam ate the forbidden fruit off the tree. This was the first sign of disobedience of God and abuse of the free-will that he has given us and therefore all evil is punishment for this disobedience of God, as he commanded Adam and Eve not to eat from the tree. Therefore evil exists for the free-will defence because all men were present in Adam and therefore we are all punished for his mistake in original sin. Original sin states that all human beings are born with sin inside them, and therefore God is punishing everyone because they were all involved in the fall of man and therefore have to have some original sin. Therefore evil was brought into the world because of the fall of man, and therefore God is still omnipotent, because he gave us free-will, it was just that we abused it, and he is all-loving because he wants to have a relationship with us so he gave us free-will.

To conclude the purpose of the free-will defence is to solve the logical problem of evil, by explaining that the reason why evil exists is because God gave humans free-will and not because God is an evil being. Therefore evil was brought into the world by humans and angles. Humans and angles exercising their free-will in an evil way is the cause of moral evil, and the cause of natural evil, is that because of Adam's free will and him choosing to eat from the forbidden tree in the garden of evil, the concept of original sin is in each and every one of us, and therefore God has to punish us, when we abuse the free-will that he gave us in order to have a relationship with us.

Commentary

The candidate spends the first two paragraphs explaining the different types of evil and the problem of evil. While the material is correct, it is not really needed to the degree presented in this essay. A much better use of the time could have been made by incorporating brief comments about these aspects in the course of answering the set question. Correct and relevant use of material in an essay shows the examiner that the candidate understands what is being dealt with. This is a much better approach than spelling out every detail. The candidate's remaining paragraphs deal with the need for humans to be free so that they can have a relationship with God and the Augustinian approach based on the Garden of Eden. All the material covered is correct but could be developed more. A lengthy explanation of the parable of the King and the Peasant Girl limits the candidate's time to show a deeper understanding of the implications of the topics. For example the sentence: "Humans and angles exercising their free-will in an evil way is the cause of moral evil, and the cause of natural evil, is that because of Adam's free will and him choosing to eat from the forbidden tree in the garden of evil, the concept of original sin is in each and every one of us, and therefore God has to punish us, when we abuse the free-will that he gave us in order to have a relationship with us" includes a vast amount of material that has not been covered by the essay but which needs to be developed to allow the essay to be graded as "thorough treatment". Overall, the essay is "generally thorough" (Level 6 criteria). 25 marks.

08 How far is free will a satisfactory explanation for the existence of evil in a world created by God? (20 marks) AO2

Candidate Response

Firstly it is important to mention the definition of evil. St Augustine of Hippo, defined evil simply as the absence of God, Privatio Boni. The essential problem created by this question is that the traditional Theist God, who is supposedly omnipotent, omnibenevolent and omniscient, allows evil to exist in his world. This essay will consist of arguments stating that free-will is a satisfactory explanation for the existence of evil and then counter arguments will be examined.

Firstly St Augustine, believed that free-will as satisfactory because he believed that God gave us complete free-will so that we could have a relationship with him. The parable of the king and the peasant girl can be used to describe the importance of free-will for a relationship, very effectively. Essentially in order to have a relationship, both parties need to have free-will so that they can choose to remain within the relationship. Augustine believes that this free-will that God gave us was the first reason for original sin because he gave Adam free-will, who then abused it. For Augustine this was the original fall of man and therefore created the doctrine of original sin. The doctrine of original sin states that because of the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, all humans are born with original sin. Therefore for Augustine, the existence of evil in the world was God punishing us for its original sin. Augustine did not believe that God's punishments were for individual abuses of free-will but for general disobedience and therefore this could explain the problem of evil. Also another way in which free-will can be explained as the cause of evil is because God is not responsible for moral evil, and this is instead the responsibility of humans, as they have made choices with their free-will which has led to moral evil.

However there are a number of problems with the argument that because God gave us free-will evil exists. The first of these is the challenge posed by Mackie. Mackie accepted that God may have given free-will to humans, but he had a fundamental problem. The free-will defence states that because God gave humans free-will, the consequences of human decisions are not down to God because they are exercising free-will. Mackie's problem with this was that surely if God was omnipotent and all loving, then he would have given humans free-will, but made it so that humans could only choose the right thing to do, and therefore avoid moral evil, as humans would always make decisions that would lead to good and not evil. However John Hick responded to this and said essentially, that it was not real free-will if God made it so that humans would always make the right decisions. Hick believed that true free-will means that it is possible to make both good and bad decisions, which could potentially lead to evil. Therefore Mackie's objection looks to have been defeated by Hick.

However there are other further challenges provided to free-will as being a satisfactory explanation for the existence of evil. Firstly there is an argument which challenges Augustine's concept that evil comes from the abuse of the free-will God gave us, which Augustine claims, stems from the abuse of free-will within the Garden of Eden. The challenge here is that, Augustine says that natural evil and natural disasters are God punishing us for abusing the free-will that he gave us, but essentially how can you then explain natural disasters that occurred before humans existed, for example the meteor which wiped out the dinosaurs. How can that be explained by abuse of free-will as humans did not exist? This argument looks to be strong brings up problems with free will as being a satisfactory explanation for the existence of evil in a world created by God. This can also be tied into the problem that animal suffering creates within the world. Animals are also God's creations, however they suffer, but they clearly do not have free-will and they were not present within Adam at the garden of Eden and should therefore not be affected by the doctrine of original sin.

The final argument is the argument from Rowe and to an extent Rubenstein. Rowe raised the point about pointless evil and said that how can pointless evil be explained by a just God. Rowe believes that the doctrine of original sin, is not sufficient to explain the suffering in babies and children, because he says that a God who punished babies for original sin, is an unjust God, and for the traditional Theist God, being a just God is clearly one of the most important aspects. Rubenstein was a holocaust survivor, who essentially after the holocaust, refused to believe in God, and said that there cannot be a God who would allow such horrific deeds to occur without stepping in. Even if it was the free-will of the Nazi's to commit those crimes against humanity, how did God not step in to protect his creations? For Rubenstein free-will is not a good enough answer for the existence of evil.

To conclude, it seems as though from the arguments free-will is not a satisfactory explanation for the existence of evil due to the unanswerable problems posed by Rubenstein, Rowe and the problem of animal suffering. However the argument posed by Mackie, seems to have been very conclusively answered by Hick. However on balance, free-will does not seem like a satisfactory explanation for the existence of evil in a world created by God.

Commentary

This is a very focused answer that makes good use of different scholarly views. These are both well-understood and clearly evaluated. Sentences like: "The challenge here is that, Augustine says that natural evil and natural disasters are God punishing us for abusing the free-will that he gave us, but essentially how can you then explain natural disasters that occurred before humans existed, for example the meteor which wiped out the dinosaurs. How can that be explained by abuse of free-will as humans did not exist?" show the candidate's full understanding of the central issue and an ability to assess the different claims clearly. A good range of scholarly views are correctly referred to (Augustine, Mackie, Hick, Rowe, Rubenstein) with some exemplification. The main reason that the candidate was not awarded full marks was the clumsiness of expression and the poor spelling of important philosophical words (e.g. "omnipotent, omnibenevolent and omniiscient"). Level 7 = 19 marks.