

Ontological Arguments

D1: *x* is *God* =df. *x* is the being than which none greater can be conceived.

D2: *x exists in reality* =df. *x* actually, really, in fact exists.

D3: *x exists in the intellect* =df. someone thinks about, conceives, or imagines *x*.

Anselm's Ontological Axiom: If *x* and *y* are alike in all respects except that *x* exists in reality, and *y* exists only in the intellect, then *x* is greater than *y*.

An Interpretation of Anselm's Argument

1. If God exists only in the intellect, then we can conceive of a being greater than God.
2. We cannot conceive of a being greater than God.
3. Therefore, it's not the case that God exists only in the intellect. 1,2 MT
4. Either God exists in reality or God exists only in the intellect.
5. Therefore, God exists in reality. 3,4 DS

Gaunilo's Parody

D4: *x* is *Lost Isle* =df. *x* is the island than which none greater can be conceived.

1. If Lost Isle exists only in the intellect, then we can conceive of an island greater than Lost Isle.
2. We cannot conceive of an island greater than Lost Isle.
3. Therefore, it's not the case that Lost Isle exists only in the intellect. 1,2 MT
4. Either Lost Isle exists in reality, or it exists only in the intellect.
5. Therefore, Lost Isle exists in reality. 3,4 DS