

The background features a detailed anatomical drawing of a human face in profile, overlaid with various geometric diagrams. On the right side, there is a large triangle with vertices labeled 'A', 'B', and 'C'. On the left, there are smaller diagrams, including one with a circle and points labeled 'H', 'I', 'K', and 'L'. The text is superimposed on these diagrams.

Introduction to Philosophy

Descartes 3: Arguments for the
Existence of God

Jeremy Dunham

Arguments for the Existence of God

- (i) The Trademark Argument
- (ii) The Cosmological Argument
- (iii) The Constant Creation Argument

The Meditator at the end of Meditation 2

Believe	Doubt
<p>I exist</p> <p>I am a thinking thing</p> <p>intellect priority</p> <p>mind priority</p>	<p>A good God exists</p> <p>All propositions of...</p> <p>Sensory Experience</p> <p>Physics</p> <p>Astronomy</p> <p>Medicine</p> <p>Arithmetic</p> <p>Geometry</p>

From Scepticism to Belief

The Ancient Sceptics

- ▶ The **Criterion** of Truth

Descartes

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- ▶ Cogito, ergo Sum

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The Ancient Sceptics

- ▶ The **Criterion** of Truth

Descartes

- ▶ Cogito, ergo Sum
- ▶ **Clear and Distinct** perceptions as a Criterion

Clarity and Distinctness

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3. Clear and distinct perception would not be sufficient to yield such knowledge if it were in any way fallible.
4. Therefore, clear and distinct perception provides a sufficient ground for knowledge; whatever I so perceive is true.

Clarity and Distinctness

'Let whoever can do so deceive me, he will never bring it about that I am nothing, so long as I continue to think I am something; or make it true at some future time that I have never existed, since it is now true that I exist; or bring it about that two and three added together are more or less than five, or anything of this kind in which I see a manifest contradiction' (7: 36)

Clarity and Distinctness

Epistemological Optimism

- ▶ 'When I turn to the things themselves which I think I perceive very clearly' (7:36)

Epistemological Pessimism

- ▶ When I no longer directly attend to these Clear and Distinct propositions

Ideas

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2. Ideas: Innate, Adventitious or Invented
3. Adventitious Ideas: Still open to doubt even though they do not depend on my will

- ▶ 'All these considerations are enough to establish that it is not reliable judgement but merely some blind impulse that has made me believe up till now that there exist things distinct from myself which transmit to me ideas or images of themselves through the sense organs or in some other way' (7:40)

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- ▶ BUT do some of the things of which I possess ideas (such as God) exist outside me?

Metaphysical Terminology: Substance

Aristotle's Subject-Predicate Logic

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Aristotle's Subject-Predicate Logic

- ▶ A deductive argument is made up of a set of **assertions**
- ▶ Each **assertion** must be made up of a **subject** and a **predicate**.
- ▶ Example: '**Socrates** is **human**' or '**Plato** is not a **horse**'

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Substance

- ▶ **Independence** - That which requires **nothing else** in order to exist
- ▶ 'Objects of **predication**' which are **not** themselves '**predicable**'
- ▶ **Dependence** - There would be no **properties**, if there were no **substances** - it is that which remains the **same** through **change**

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Thinking Substance (*Res Cogitans*)

Material Substance (*Res Extensa*)

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- ▶ **Modes**: individual ideas, emotions, willings (predicates)

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Material Substance (*Res Extensa*)

- ▶ **Principal Attribute:** Extension (Extended in Space/Shape)
- ▶ **Modes:** particular shapes, sizes, movements

The Hierarchy of Being

Degrees of Reality

- (i) Infinite Substance (God)
- (ii) Finite Substances (Thought and Matter)
- (iii) Modes

The Hierarchy of Ideas

All Ideas have the same *formal* reality, but they do not have the same *objective* reality

- (i) The **Idea** of an **Infinite** Substance (God)
- (ii) The **Idea** of a **Finite** Substance (Thought or Matter)
- (iii) The **Idea** of a **Mode**

The Hierarchy of Ideas

'The idea that gives me my understanding of a supreme God, eternal, infinite, omniscient, omnipotent and the creator of all things that exist apart from him, certainly has in it more objective reality than the ideas that represent finite substances'. (7: 40)

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3. This is known according to the 'Natural Light of Reason'

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2. Most of our ideas could have been invented by ourselves (they are of finite things and we are finite)
3. 'the ideas which I have of heat and cold contain so little clarity and distinctness that they do not enable me to tell whether cold is merely the absence of heat or vice versa, or whether both of them are real qualities, or neither is'
(7:43-4)

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3. According to the Hierarchy of Being and the CAP, only an infinite being could have implanted the infinite idea
4. An infinite being must exist

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Couldn't the idea just have been passed down to me?

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- ▶ 'eventually one must reach a primary idea, the cause of which will be like an archetype which contains formally all the reality which is present objectively in the idea' (7: 42).

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- ▶ The five year old child who produces a highly complicated design for a computer (see Cottingham, 1986)

The Cosmological Argument

From whom would I derive my existence?

- ▶ Myself?
- ▶ My Parents?
- ▶ From some other being less perfect than God?
- ▶ God?

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- ▶ My Parents?

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The Cosmological Argument

From whom would I derive my existence?

- ▶ Myself?
- ▶ I would have created myself as perfect
- ▶ My Parents?
- ▶ Infinite Regress
- ▶ From some other being less perfect than God?
- ▶ Infinite Regress
- ▶ God?

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- ▶ The distinction between creation and preservation is only a conceptual one - the same power and action are needed to preserve anything at each individual moment.

'It will be impossible for anything to obscure the clarity of this proof, if we attend to the nature of time or of the duration of things. For the nature of time is such that its parts are not mutually dependent, and never coexist. Thus, from the fact that we now exist, it does not follow that we shall exist a moment from now, unless there is some cause - the same cause which originally produced us - which continually reproduces us... which keeps us in existence. For we easily understand that there is no power in us enabling us to keep ourselves in existence... He who has so great a power that he can keep us in existence... must be all the more able to keep himself in existence... and hence... is God.' (AT VII 13: CSM I 200)

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2. Not Invented
3. Not Adventitious

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2. Not Invented
3. Not Adventitious
4. Innate - 'The mark of the craftsman stamped on his work' (7: 51)

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1. God is supreme, eternal, infinite, omniscient, omnipotent
2. Fraud and Deception are the products of defects
3. God has no defects (see 1)
4. God cannot be a deceiver

The Meditator at the end of Meditation 2

Believe	Doubt
<p>I exist</p> <p>I am a thinking thing</p> <p>intellect priority</p> <p>mind priority</p>	<p>A good God exists</p> <p>All propositions of...</p> <p>Sensory Experience</p> <p>Physics</p> <p>Astronomy</p> <p>Medicine</p> <p>Arithmetic</p> <p>Geometry</p>

The Meditator at the end of Meditation 3

Believe	Doubt
<p>I exist</p> <p>I am a thinking thing</p> <p>intellect priority</p> <p>mind priority</p> <p>C and D propositions are true</p> <p>God exists</p> <p>God is not a deceiver</p> <p>Various metaphysical principles</p>	<p>All propositions of...</p> <p>Sensory Experience</p> <p>Physics</p> <p>Astronomy</p> <p>Medicine</p>

The Meditator at the end of Meditation 3

TRUE	Doubt
<p>I exist</p> <p>I am a thinking thing</p> <p>intellect priority</p> <p>mind priority</p> <p>C and D propositions are true</p> <p>God exists</p> <p>God is not a deceiver</p> <p>Various metaphysical principles</p>	<p>All propositions of...</p> <p>Sensory Experience</p> <p>Physics</p> <p>Astronomy</p> <p>Medicine</p>

Objections

Thomas Hobbes



- ▶ 'We have no idea or image corresponding to the sacred name of God' (7: 180)
- ▶ Our idea of God is like the blind man's idea of fire
- ▶ Reality does not come in degrees - either something exists or it does not

Objections



Antoine Arnauld

- ▶ The Cartesian Circle
- ▶ ...I am sure that a good God exists so... I am sure my clear and distinct perceptions are true so... I am sure that a good God exists so...
- ▶ Arnauld wants a proof of clear and distinct ideas

The Summer Exam

- ▶ 3 hours - 3 sections - You will have to answer one question from each section
- ▶ 1 section on Critical Thinking, Truth Tables and Logic, 1 section on Descartes, 1 section on Hume
- ▶ Each question in the Critical Thinking section will be divided into three parts - you must attempt all three parts
- ▶ You aren't allowed to have any books or any other materials with you during the exam.
- ▶ We'll provide revision classes closer to the time of the exam

Essay

- ▶ Due on 5th April 2012, by 2pm
- ▶ Questions announced next week