BEING AND GOOD: A STUDY OF THE INFLUENCE OF PLATONISM ON ST. ANSELM

by

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to examine certain assumptions which emerge very clearly in St. Anselm's writings. These are the belief that things are good by the mere fact of existing, and that they can be arranged in a scale in which degrees of goodness and degrees of existence correspond. These assumptions, it is contended, can be shown to be derived, albeit indirectly, from Plato.

The first chapter, after a brief discussion of the sources likely to have been directly available to St. Anselm, and of his attitude towards reason and authority, discusses the evidence for this conception of the correlation of being and goodness in Anselm's earliest major work, the Monologion. It is shown that the arguments for the divine existence given in the Monologion depend upon a theory of universals (realism) which had its origin in Plato, and upon a hierarchical conception of nature derived, by way of the Neoplatonists, from Plato. In this view of the universe God, or the Form of Good, has an existence superior in degree and kind to that of all other beings, which themselves have a greater or lesser degree of both goodness and existence according to the closeness of their resemblance to God or the Good.

The second chapter discusses Anselm's Proslogion, and it is argued that Anselm's ontological proof for God's existence also depends upon Platonic realism and upon the doctrine that being itself implies goodness. The concept of a 'necessary existent', known by a priori reasoning, which Anselm regards as

a superior kind of knowledge to the reasoning by which we know other things, is shown to have parallels with the Platonic theory of Forms and with Platonic epistemology.

The third chapter discusses a group of three of Anselm's dialogues. In the first, De Veritate, the idea of truth is very closely connected to the moral notion of 'rightness', and things are said to be true insofar as they are based upon a supreme reality or truth. These notions, it is pointed out, very clearly recall Plato's doctrine of Forms, especially of the Form of the Good, as being the sources of both the goodness and the reality of particulars. The second dialogue, De Libertate Arbitrii, with its doctrine that the 'power' to do evil is actually weakness, is shown to contain parallels with Boethius, Plotinus and Plato. The third dialogue, De Casu Diaboli, depends, it is argued, upon Platonic and Plotinian ideas of moral evil as a disruption of the natural order, and of the identity of evil and non-being.

The conclusion is that there is ample evidence for the influence of Platonic thought upon Anselm. Since the ideas discussed have been shown to have close similarities to those of St. Augustine, who is known to have been strongly influenced by Platonism, it can safely be concluded that the main source for Platonism in Anselm is Augustine, though Boethius probably also had some influence. These Platonic notions are, naturally, considerably altered through being Christianized but are still recognizable as basically Platonic when we meet them in Anselm. This Platonism, it is concluded, though never

explicitly acknowledged, constitutes one of the fundamental assumptions of St. Anselm's thought.

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Once the essential Form of Goodness is perceived, the conclusion must follow that, for all things, it is the cause of whatever is right and good; and in the visible world it gives birth to light and to the lord of light, while it is itself sovereign in the intelligible world and the parent of intelligence and truth.

Plato, Republic 517.

If there is truth and rightness in the essence of things, because they are what they are in the supreme truth, it is certain that the truth of things is their rightness.

Anselm, De Veritate ch.7

Introduction

In reading the works of St. Anselm one repeatedly comes across statements such as 'To exist in fact as well as in the mind is greater than to exist only in the mind' (Proslogion 2), 'All good is being and all being is good' (De Casu Diaboli 1), and 'Everything which exists, exists rightly' (De Veritate 7), statements that express a belief that things are good simply by existing. This belief seems to stand in need of some explanation, not to mention justification.

It is the aim of this thesis to show that this assumption that being itself implies goodness, with its ramifications, has a Platonic origin. Though it is recognized by most writers on the subject that Anselm's thought has a Platonic character, this recognition is usually confined to a mere labelling of Anselm as a Platonist, and some recent writers, such as Charles Hartshorne, completely ignore this aspect of his thought. There has been in recent years no detailed study of the extent to which this Platonism affects Anselm's thinking or of the means by which he could have inherited it.

Though most of Plato's works were unknown during the Middle Ages, Platonic concepts were preserved in the thought of Christian writers, notably St. Augustine, the chief theological authority of the Middle Ages and one which Anselm claims to follow. The question arises whether, since the Platonism known to the Middle Ages was derived largely from sources heavily influenced by Neoplatonism, we are justified in speaking of Platonism, rather than Neoplatonism, in Anselm. I hope to show

that the doctrines in question, while for the most part derived indirectly from Neoplatonic sources, have sufficient basis in the text of Plato himself to justify describing them as Platonic.

Considerations of time and space have forced me to limit the scope of the thesis to some of Anselm's earlier and more philosophically interesting works. I have omitted his later treatises and the large collection of letters which survives, together with the Cur Deus Homo, which, however important in the history of Christian theology, yields little which is relevant to the present study; and I have paid only passing attention to the Epistola de incarnatione verbi. I have concentrated on the Monologion, Proslogion, De Veritate and De Casu Diaboli, and have examined the evidence which these works display of the identification of being and good, and the possible sources of this idea in earlier works in the Platonic tradition.

Chapter I

i) The Transmission of Classical Thought

In the general chaos which followed the collapse of the Roman Empire, knowledge of classical culture was preserved only in a few isolated places, mainly monasteries. The knowledge of Greek was lost over most of Europe, though it survived for several centuries in Ireland.[1] Much of classical, especially Greek, literature was lost to the Middle Ages and rediscovered only during the Renaissance.[2] The works of Plato were unknown except for a translation of the first part of the Timaeus by the fourth-century writer Chalcidius, and a twelfth-century translation of the Meno and Phaedo.[3] Aristotle, up to the later twelfth century, was known through Boethius' translations of the Categories and De Interpretatione. The Categories was accompanied by an introduction by the Neoplatonist Porphyry and commentaries by Boethius, whose interpretation of Aristotle's logical doctrines was coloured by the Neoplatonic theory of universals as actually subsisting entities.[4] The bulk of Aristotle's works reached western Europe in the late twelfth and early thirteenth century, translated in some cases from Arabic versions but also from the original Greek, and accompanied by the works of the Arab commentators, also not a little tinged by Neoplatonism.[5]

The works of pagan classical thinkers which could have been directly accessible to Anselm in the second half of the eleventh century were therefore scanty. The works of Augustine and the other Latin Fathers were more likely to have been

at least in part available. However it need hardly be emphasized that the eleventh century was a time in which books were scarce and libraries small, and that study was not usually a leading concern of eleventh-century monastic life.[6]

Anselm was fortunate in this respect in having as his predecessor, first as abbot of the monastery of Bec in Normandy and later as archbishop of Canterbury, Lanfranc, who had been Anselm's teacher for a short while (1059-60) and had acquired a reputation as a leading theologian of his time. He had ensured that the libraries of Bec and Canterbury were endowed with some of the basic works of patristic theology;[7] thus the debt owed indirectly to him by Anselm is great.

The references to and quotations from earlier writers in Anselm are few. In the prologue to the Monologion and in the Epistola de Incarnatione Verbi,[8] he refers to Augustine's De Trinitate, and in the De Grammatico, an early work on logic, there are a number of references to Aristotle's Categories. This paucity of references should be regarded not necessarily as evidence of lack of knowledge of earlier writers, but as a feature of his method, which is to avoid quotations from authorities and attempt to prove his points by argument alone.

ii) The Approach to Authority

In the prologue to the Monologion Anselm states the procedure which he intends to follow in his arguments for the doctrine of the Trinity: 'nothing at all in it should be argued by the authority of scripture, but whatever the con-

clusion of each inquiry affirmed should in a plain style, with commonly acceptable arguments and simplified discussion, be briefly proved by the necessity of reason, and openly manifested by the clarity of truth'.[9]

However, he also adds that he has said nothing which conflicts with the authority of the Fathers and particularly of Augustine's De Trinitate. Conservative readers should refresh their memories of the De Trinitate before criticizing Anselm's arguments as unorthodox. This did not appear to satisfy Lanfranc, to whom the work was addressed and who seems to have disapproved of it because of the absence of citations from authorities, despite Anselm's repeated assertions that he had said nothing which conflicted with Augustine.[10]

Anselm's position on the relation between faith and reason bears some resemblance to that of Augustine. To Augustine, while the faith is given beyond all doubt by divine revelation in scripture, and cannot be understood except by those who believe it, it is reprehensible to accept that revelation mindlessly without attempting to understand it:

> Faith seeks, understanding finds; for this reason the Prophet says (Isaiah ch. 7 v.9), 'Unless you believe you will not understand.[11]

In the Proslogion Anselm adapts Augustine's formula:

> For I do not seek to understand in order to believe, but I believe in order to understand. For this, too, I believe, that unless I believe I shall not understand.[12]

In the Epistola de Incarnatione Verbi, a polemical work against the nominalistic theories of Roscelin, he says unequi-

vocally that faith must come first. For people without faith to argue against 'the truth of the faith confirmed by the holy Fathers' is

> just as if bats and owls which cannot see the sky except by night were to dispute about the rays of the noonday sun against eagles which look with unblinking vision upon the sun itself. [13]

On the other hand, phrases such as sola ratione, rationis necessitas, rationes necessariae are frequent in his writings, and he displays an astonishing confidence in the possibility of proving by rational argument the religious dogmas of the Trinity and the Incarnation, as is shown in the prologues to the Monologion and Cur Deus Homo.[14] Yet if logical arguments cannot be found Anselm will abandon logic sooner than abandon faith. In Cur Deus Homo ch. 1, his interlocutor, Boso, says:

> Therefore, whereas I think that with God's grace going before me I hold the faith of our redemption so firmly that nothing can shake my constant allegiance, even though I can find no reason to help me grasp what I believe, I beg you to show me what many, as you know, seek with me. [15]

Anselm does not envisage a case in which the conclusions of reason conflict with the data of faith, but rather an inability of reason to comprehend what is believed by faith. Reason can show that certain statements about God are true, but cannot explain how they are true:

> and therefore I think that the certainty of faith should be directed just as much to those things which are affirmed by irrefutable proofs, with which no other reasoning conflicts, if owing to the incomprehensible profundity of their nature they are not capable of explanation. [16]

That is, if a truth can be proved rationally it does not thereby cease to be an object of faith. Like Augustine, Anselm does not distinguish the sphere of reason from that of faith or recognize philosophy as a separate discipline from theology. In fact this division was not made in the west until the rediscovery of Aristotle in the early thirteenth century, when the western Christian world was confronted for the first time with a coherent non-religious philosophical system, whose doctrines were in many respects inimical to Christian belief.[17] In Anselm's time it was natural to assume that any method of discovering truth will ultimately arrive at the same conclusions.

iii) Goodness and Being in the 'Monologion'

The Monologion (or Soliloquy), Anselm's earliest important work, was written around the year 1076,[18] while Anselm was still prior of Bec. As has already been noted, Anselm acknowledges his debt to Augustine in the prologue but thereafter avoids quotation from and reference to authorities. He even avoids the word 'God' until the last chapter, using instead such phrases as summum omnium, summa natura, summa substantia, presumably in order to strengthen the impression which he wants to give that the argument is proceeding on strictly logical lines without depending upon presuppositions derived from faith.

The work begins with a confident statement of the possibility of proving the existence and attributes of God by argu-

ment.

> If there is anyone who does not know, either through not having heard or through not believing it, that there is one being, the highest of all that exist, sufficing alone to itself in its eternal blessedness, through its omnipotent goodness granting and causing that all other things should be something and should be in some degree good, and the very many other things which we of necessity believe about God or about his creation, I think that for the most part, if he is of even moderate intelligence, he can persuade himself of these things by reason alone.[19]

In this 'definition' of God, God is said to be the source of the being and goodness of everything else, and to cause both these by his omnipotent goodness. This is similar to what Anselm is to say later in the De Casu Diaboli ch. 1:

> 'So nothing and not-being is not from God, from whom is nothing but good and being.'[20]

The general term 'good' can of course include more specific properties such as justice, wisdom, beauty and so on which are said to be derived from God.

Anselm goes on to give a series of arguments by which the unbeliever might be persuaded of God's existence. The first is one from the variety of good things in the world to a single highest good.

> For whatever things are said to be just in relation to each other, whether equally, more so or less so, cannot be understood to be just except through justice, which is not a different thing in different cases. Therefore since it is certain that all good things, when compared to one another, are either equally or unequally good, it is necessary that all things are good through something which is understood to be the

> same in the different good things, even though one may sometimes seem to be called good for one reason and one for another. [21]

A thing, Anselm continues, may be called good because it has any one of a variety of desirable qualities. There are two criteria by which to decide whether a quality makes a thing good or not. One is usefulness (utilitas); for instance strength or speed will make a horse better because more useful, but will also make a thief worse because more dangerous. And since most people agree in considering good such qualities as beauty, from which they derive no personal advantage, there is another criterion of 'some kind of nobility' (quamlibet honestatem).[22]

The conclusion of the argument is that that through which everything is good is good 'through itself', and that which is the source of its own and everything else's goodness must be the greatest good.[23] An exactly similar argument in ch. 2 leads to the same conclusion in respect of 'greatness' which here does not mean spatial size but has more or less the same meaning as 'goodness', as when it is used of desirable immaterial qualities such as wisdom.

These arguments are hardly likely to seem convincing to any non-Platonist. They clearly depend upon the realist theory of universals, deriving originally from Plato, according to which the common property shared by good and great things is not merely a mental abstraction but actually exists. Plato in the Republic postulated the Form of the Good as the source of the existence and intelligibility of everything else.

> Intelligible things may be said not only to have their intelligibility from the Good, but also to derive their existence and reality from it; yet the Good is not itself reality, but is beyond reality, and superior to it in dignity and power. [24]

The identification of God with the universal 'good' is made in Augustine, De Trinitate VIII.5.

> If you can put aside those things which are good by participation in the good, and discern that good itself by participation in which they are good ... if then, I say, you can remove those things and discern the good itself, you will have discerned God. [25]

In the third chapter Anselm uses an analogous argument to prove that, just as all things are good and great through some one thing, which is good and great 'through itself', so everything which exists has existence through some one thing which exists 'through itself'. He completes the parallel by adding:

> Whatever exists through something else exists less than that through which all other things exist, and which alone exists through itself. Therefore whatever exists through itself exists to the greatest degree of all. [26]

The statement that of all beings God has existence in the highest degree plainly does not disturb Anselm in the least, but to a modern reader it strikes an odd note. We can imagine what it means to say of two existing things that one is better than another, but it is not quite clear at this point what is meant by saying that of two existing things one exists more and the other less.[27] But we note that the idea of a thing's having a greater degree of existence is connected with the

idea of independence from any cause (existence per se), while things with a lesser degree of existence are those which depend on something else for their existence (existence per aliud).

Anselm has now, in accordance with the definition from which he started (see above p.7 and note 19), arrived at two concepts of God: one, as the source of the goodness and greatness of all existing things and the other as the source of their existence. From here he combines the two and asserts that what gives existence to good and great things must itself be supremely good and great.[28]

The identification, in the case of God, of 'greatness' with existence, reality or truth is to be found in Augustine, De Trinitate, VIII.2:

> For where truth itself is greatness, nothing is greater which is not more true; since in the essence of truth, truth is the same as being, and being is the same as greatness; therefore truth and greatness are the same.[29]

Augustine adds (Bk. VIII.3) that this simple identification of greatness with being or truth is possible only in the case of God, since a greater amount of gold does not exist any more truly than a smaller, nor 'a greater' (i.e. better) soul than a lesser.

Anselm's fourth chapter contains another argument for God's existence from the hierarchical arrangement of the visible world, similar to an argument in Augustine, De Trinitate, XV.6. From what Anselm takes to be the obvious fact that horses are better than wood and men better than horses,[30] he

argues that this series of gradations must have a highest member:

> Although some natures are undeniably better than others, none the less reason persuades us that some one of them must be above the rest and therefore without a superior. [31]

Otherwise the series would be infinite, and this Anselm thinks would be absurd. In this he follows Aristotle, Porphyry and Boethius, who reject the possibility of an infinite number of species, though they admit that there can be an infinite number of individuals.[32] Clearly, since the idea here is that certain kinds of being (e.g. men, horses) are superior to other kinds, an infinite series would require an infinity of species as well as an infinity of individuals. The statement 'that some one of them must be above the rest and therefore without a superior' is obviously true if there is no infinite regress. But it is not immediately clear that the being which is in fact at the top of the hierarchy must be God, i.e. the highest of all conceivable beings. Why should the series not end at any point, for instance with man? The point of the argument is made more clearly in St. Thomas' version, which he uses as the fourth of his 'five ways':

> Among beings there are some more and some less good, true, noble and the like. But 'more' and 'less' are predicated of different things according as they resemble in their different ways something which is the maximum .... Now the maximum in any genus is the cause of all in that genus, as fire, which is the maximum of heat, is the cause of all hot things, as is said in the same book. (Metaphysics II). Therefore there must be something which is to all beings the cause of their

> being, goodness and every perfection: and this we call God. [33]

The argument is that to possess a certain limited degree of goodness or any other quality is to depend upon something else which perfectly exemplifies that quality. This notion has its origin in Plato and was taken over by the Neoplatonists. In Plotinus as in Plato, the universe is an ordered whole in which some beings are inferior to others but all alike depend upon a single highest principle from which they derive their existence and goodness. In Ennead III.2, Plotinus says:

> The world, we must reflect, is a product of necessity, not of deliberate purpose; it is due to a higher nature engendering in its own likeness by a natural process. And besides, if a considered plan had brought it into being it would still be no disgrace to its maker - for he made it a stately whole, complete within itself, serving at once its own purpose and that of all its parts which, leading and lesser alike, are of such a nature as to further the interests of the total. [34]

Later in the same chapter Plotinus adds:

> There are, it would seem, degrees of participation: here no more than existence, elsewhere life; and, in life, sometimes mainly that of sensation, higher again that of reason, finally life in all its fullness. [35]

All these things insofar as they exist, are good, though the higher beings on the scale are better than the lower. Augustine, in City of God XI, ch. 16, has a similar hierarchy 'according to the order of nature' based on the vital faculties which a being has. This natural scale can conflict with

human standards of value by which we judge things to be good because we find them useful.[36] 'Who would not rather have bread in his house than mice, or money than fleas?'[37] There is a third standard of goodness, the moral one, applicable only to rational creatures:

> But of such consequence in rational natures is the weight, so to speak, of will and of love, that though in the order of nature angels rank above men, yet by the scale of justice good men are of greater value than bad angels.[38]

In Plotinus the 'good' of each thing (meaning that towards which it should aim) is what is above it in the scale of goodness. The good of the body is the soul, the good of the soul the intellect, and the good of the intellect the intelligible Forms. Moral evil is a descent from the higher sphere into preoccupation with the lower world of sensible particulars. (See Ennead IV.8.4 and V.1.1.) Augustine calls this 'a turning aside of the will' (aversio voluntatis).[39] In the De libero arbitrio he says:

> The will which turns from the unchangeable and common good and turns to its own private good or to anything exterior or inferior, sins .... The good things sought by sinners cannot in any way be bad, nor can free will be bad, for we found that it was numbered among the intermediate goods. What is bad is its turning away from the unchangeable good and its turning to changeable goods.[40]

This perversion of the will, Augustine insists, is from a greater good to a lesser, not from good things to bad, since nothing which is totally bad can exist: 'Take away all good, and absolutely nothing will remain.'[41]

Everything which exists, therefore, has a certain degree

of goodness and depends for its existence upon what is absolutely good. Anselm's last argument for God's existence, in ch. 6, is one from the causal dependence of all other things. Nothing in the visible world can cause its own existence; therefore all these things must be ultimately caused by something which is the cause of its own existence (assuming again that there is no infinite regress), and this is God. Anselm then attempts to explain how God is the cause of himself by the analogy of light. Just as light is always and inevitably the cause of shining (but not a pre-existent cause), so this being always and inevitably exists and is the cause of its own existence.[42]

Plotinus often uses a similar comparison of the Good with a source of light; in Ennead V.1., while trying to explain how other things are derived from the Good while it remains unchanged, he says:

> It must be a circumradiation - produced from the Supreme but from the Supreme unaltering - and may be compared to the brilliant light encircling the sun and ceaselessly generated from that unchanging substance.[43]

This analogy recalls Plato's comparison of the Good with the sun in Republic VI.[44] Plotinus, like Plato, uses it as a metaphorical statement of the theory of the emanation of other beings from the One. Augustine, half unconsciously reading Christian ideas into the Neoplatonic works which he read (Confessions VII.9.13-14), interpreted this doctrine in accordance with his own views of divine creation out of nothing.

Creatures are derived from God but cannot be made from the substance of God because if so they would be equal to him.[45] They are wholly other than God, created and maintained in existence by him and liable to return to the non-existence from which they came.[46] They therefore enjoy only a precarious, dependent and mutable existence. When their existence is compared with the unchangeable and self-caused existence of God, it could even be said that they do not really exist at all.

> Also I considered all the other things that are below you, and I saw that they have not absolute being in themselves, nor are they entirely without being. They are real in so far as they have their being from you, but unreal in the sense that they are not what you are. For it is only that which remains in being without change that truly is.[47]

For Augustine, 'to be', in the full sense of the word, is to be unchangeable. Plato had accorded real existence only to Forms because they are unchangeable (cf. Phaedo 78d-e: Timaeus 27d-29d). Augustine, in City of God VIII.11, says that he finds a striking similarity between Plato's theory that only immutable things have real being and the name revealed by God in Exodus 3.14, 'I am who am', which Augustine here and elsewhere interprets as meaning that God, as compared to creatures, truly is, because he is unchangeable.[48]

Anselm follows Augustine's doctrine of creation in chs. 7-14. Everything which is other than God is created from nothing on the model of the ideas (exempla, formae) which previously existed in the divine mind.[49] In chs. 15-28 he goes

on to discuss the kind of existence which is attributable to God. Descriptions such as 'greatest of all beings' are inadequate, since they are predicated relatively and not substantially; that is, if all other things were to cease to exist the designation 'greatest' would cease to be applicable to God. What is needed is a description which is applicable under every conceivable circumstance. On the principle that God is the best of all conceivable beings he can be described as being wise, just, happy, powerful and having every other good quality.[50] But, as Anselm continues in ch. 16, what this really means is that God is identical with the universal properties of wisdom, power, justice etc., since he cannot be something of which universals are predicated as accidents.[51] If God is identical with all his properties they must all be identical with each other; (this is an early version of the doctrine of the convertibility of attributes, later formulated by Aquinas).[52] God, being identical with these universals, cannot logically also be an instance of them, and therefore can only be said analogically to be just, etc.[53]

This doctrine of essential predication was held in order to maintain that it is not only factually but logically impossible for there to be any change in God. Anselm says:

> How is it supremely immutable, if it can - I will not say be changeable, but even be thought to be changeable through accidents? [54]

For, according to Plato, anything which is composed of more than one element is divisible and therefore changeable, while anything incomposite is immutable. (Phaedo 80b). The medieval

theologians therefore thought it essential to maintain that God is identical with each of his attributes; otherwise if there were any composition in God, it would be at least logically possible for his attributes to change. If so, there would have to be a cause of change, and this would introduce an unacceptable notion of God as causally dependent. If the change is caused by something other than God, then God is causally dependent upon and therefore inferior to his creatures; if on the other hand God is the cause of change in himself, this implies (according to the Aristotelian doctrine of change) that his nature must contain unactualized potentialities, which conflicts with the Aristotelian and Neoplatonic doctrine of God or the Good as pure actuality.

The doctrine of the convertibility of attributes implies that, since all statements about God's attributes are identity-statements of the form 'Cicero is Tully' or 'A triangle is a figure with three angles', they are all analytic statements, which explain what is logically implied by the term 'God'.[55] Perhaps it was from this doctrine that Anselm in the Proslogion took what appeared to him the next logical step; that if statements about God's attributes are analytic then the statement 'God exists' is also analytic or 'necessary', and therefore to be proved not primarily by appeals to empirical evidence but by an examination of the term 'God' itself.

There is an ambiguity in Anselm's use of the terms 'what can be conceived' and 'what cannot be conceived'. If, when he says that God cannot be understood (intelligi) as change-

able (see above, note 54) or, in the Proslogion, that God cannot be thought not to exist, he is simply making psychological statements about what happens in our minds when we think about God, clearly such statements cannot be used to prove any objective truth. In chs. 64-65 Anselm discusses the 'conceivability' of statements about God in the sense of what it is psychologically possible for human minds to think. More often, however, he uses 'conceivable' in a logical sense, to mean what is logically possible, i.e. not self-contradictory or meaningless. Thus in the Proslogion Anselm claims that the non-existence of God is logically inconceivable, because self-contradictory; but it is of course quite conceivable psychologically.

In ch. 27, Anselm concludes that God is a unique exception to the classification of substances into particulars and universals, since he is not a particular nor in any ordinary sense a universal. From this statement that God has a quite different kind of existence from anything else Anselm argues in ch. 28 that he also has a greater degree of existence.

> It seems therefore to follow from the preceding that that spirit which exists in such a marvellously unique and uniquely marvellous, way of its own, in a certain sense alone exists - while by comparison to it other things, whatever they seem to be, do not exist. [56]

God exists, Anselm continues in the same chapter, in a different way from and to a greater degree than created things because in contrast to other things he is timeless and immutable,[57] and is a self-caused cause of all other things. (But the

phrase 'cause of himself' cannot be used of God in the ordinary sense of 'cause', since usually causes pre-exist their effects; see above, p.18.)

So far we have two degrees, or kinds of existence, that of God and that of created things. But Anselm goes further. In ch. 31 he returns to the doctrine of the hierarchy of beings on which he based the argument of ch. 4. The higher beings on the scale resemble God more closely, therefore they must have a greater degree of being.

> For insofar as that thing is by nature more excellent which in its natural being is closest to the most excellent; so certainly that nature exists to a greater degree whose being is more like the highest being. [58]

Imagine, Anselm says, a rational being deprived first of reason, then of sentience, then of life and finally of bare existence; is it not clear that it is being reduced step by step to non-existence, so that a thing which has all the higher qualities as well as the lower ones must have a greater degree of existence?[59] Everything in the world is a more or less inaccurate imitation of true and absolute being, or the Word of God.[60]

The idea of the lower members of a hierarchy of beings also having a lesser degree of existence has its origin in Plato's diagram of the Divided Line.[61] In this, material objects have less reality than Forms, and pictures and reflections less reality than material objects. A closer parallel is found in Augustine De Libero Arbitrio II.46, where Augustine says:

> Among created things, what can be greater than intelligent life, and what can be less than body? However they may diminish, thereby tending to nothingness, still some form remains in them so that they have some kind of existence. [62]

Here superiority and inferiority in value (this is clearly what is meant by 'greater' and 'less') are connected with degrees of existence, and a thing's being, as in Neoplatonism, is seen as caused by the inherence of form.

The idea of creatures which are morally rather than naturally inferior also losing some degree of existence is not infrequent; for instance in Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy, Philosophy says:

> Of those who do evil I do not deny that they are evil, but that they are, purely simply, I do deny. For just as you would say that a corpse was a dead man, but you would not call it simply a man, so I concede that vicious men are indeed evil, but I cannot admit that they are, absolutely. For that is, which keeps its order and preserves its nature: and whatever falls from this, also abandons the being which is dependent on its nature. [63]

This recalls the Neoplatonic doctrine of the soul's 'fall' into involvement with matter and hence a state of lesser being (Ennead IV.8.4), and also seems to echo the Stoic belief that the aim of morality is to live 'in accordance with nature' (whatever that might mean); this suggests that there is a connection between a creature's position in the natural hierarchy and its moral position. Anselm's analysis of moral choice and moral evil will be discussed later.

The rest of the Monologion discusses the relationships

between the persons of the Trinity and concludes that since the rational mind is the closest likeness to God among created things, the rational creature must try 'to express in the action of the will the likeness impressed upon it as a natural potentiality',[64] that is, by remembering, knowing and loving God to attempt to resemble him more closely. Following Augustine (De Trinitate Bk. IX), Anselm uses the analogy of memory, intelligence and love in a human soul to explain the relations between the persons of the Trinity.

The ideas of the Monologion are largely derived from Augustine, and through him from Plotinus and Plato. F.S. Schmitt, in his introduction to the Monologion, has claimed that Anselm 'consciously de-Platonized' Augustine. He points out that Anselm does not use the Platonic metaphor of 'participation' to describe the relation of creatures to God, although it was so used by Augustine (see note 17 above). According to him, God in Anselm's arguments is not an exemplary or formal cause but an efficient cause; and Anselm is much more indebted to Aristotelian logical concepts which he knew through Boethius than to Platonism.[65]

Though it is true that Anselm does not use the participation-metaphor, perhaps because he wants to avoid the pantheistic idea of other things sharing in the substance of God, he shows no such reluctance with regard to Plato's other metaphor, of the model-copy relationship. He frequently refers to other things as images or reflections of the Word of God or the divine mind (cf. chs. 9, 31, 67). His logical

concepts of universal, particular, substance, accident, relation etc. are derived ultimately from Aristotle, but the fact that he knew them in Boethius' translation and commentary, which were influenced by Neoplatonism, makes it likely that his understanding of them was itself coloured by Neoplatonic assumptions.

The universe as envisaged by Anselm in the Monologion is one in which created things are imperfect likenesses of God and in contrast to his unchangeable existence are comparatively non-existent; it is a natural order in which, though everything is good in some degree, some things are both superior to and more existent than others. Except that a personal God who voluntarily creates out of nothing replaces the impersonal Good from which other things necessarily derive their existence, this picture of reality can be paralleled in Plato and Plotinus.

Chapter II

Goodness and Being in the *Proslogion*

The second and third chapter of the Proslogion contain Anselm's best known and most disputed contribution to philosophy. Usually known as the 'ontological' argument for God's existence, it has been accepted by some later thinkers,[1] but dismissed by others as a mere puzzle not worthy of serious consideration.[2] One of the most frequent criticisms is that in deducing God's existence from the idea of God it involves an illegitimate move from the realm of logic to that of reality.[3] Modern writers take differing views of the validity of the argument;[4] some have maintained that Anselm did not intend it as a strictly logical argument, and have interpreted the Proslogion accordingly as an outline of dogmatic theology,[5] or as a mystical treatise.[6] But whatever approach they take, later discussions generally ignore the originally Platonic basis of the argument. An examination of the assumptions underlying the argument, assumptions which for a thinker of Anselm's time and place one might expect to be Platonic or Neoplatonic, should throw some light on what its author intended by it.

We have already seen that the ideas of the Monologion are based on originally Platonic notions of the relation of particulars to universals and of the universe as an ordered hierarchy deriving its existence and goodness from a single absolute Good. In the prologue to the Proslogion Anselm says that, soon after writing the Monologion, he became dissatisfied with the variety of a posteriori arguments which he had

there used:

> Reflecting that this (the Monologion) was made up of a connected chain of many arguments, I began to ask myself whether it might be possible for one argument to be found, which for its proof would require none other but itself, and which alone would be sufficient to prove that God really exists ... and whatever else we believe about the divine being. [7]

Such an a priori argument for God's existence, Anselm tells us, occurred to him quite suddenly, when after much concentrated thought he had despaired of finding one.[8] After a long introductory prayer in ch. 1, written in a highly ornamented semi-poetic style which recurs at intervals throughout the work, the argument is given in ch. 2. It runs as follows:

> We do indeed believe that you (i.e. God) are something than which no greater can be thought. Is there then no such being, because 'the fool said in his heart: there is no God'? But certainly that same fool, when he hears these very words of mine 'something than which nothing greater can be thought' understands what he hears, and what he understands is in his understanding, even if he does not understand that it exists. For it is one thing for a thing to be in the understanding, and another to understand that it exists. Thus when a painter thinks beforehand about what he is going to make, he does indeed have it in his mind but he does not yet understand that what he has not yet made exists. But when he has finished his painting, he has it in his understanding and also understands that what he has made exists. So even the fool is forced to agree that there exists, in the understanding at least, something than which nothing greater can be thought, because he understands this when he hears it, and whatever is understood is in the understanding. But certainly that than which a greater cannot be thought, cannot exist in the understanding alone. For if it exists only in the understanding, it can also be thought to exist actually, which is greater.

> If, therefore, that than which a greater cannot be thought exists only in the understanding, that very thing than which a greater cannot be thought is that than which a greater can be thought. But certainly this cannot be. There exists therefore, beyond all doubt, something than which a greater cannot be thought, both in the understanding and in fact.[9]

In this argument, Anselm seeks to prove that if God is defined as a being than which no greater can be thought (or conceived), to think of him as non-existent involves one in self-contradiction. In the remaining chapters of the Proslogion a similar combination of this definition with the law of contradiction is used to establish that he has (or strictly speaking is) the various attributes of omnipotence, justice, mercy, infinity, lack of composition, and so on; for all these are conceivable good qualities which the greatest conceivable being must have if he is to be the greatest conceivable being. This definition is, Anselm says, something derived from faith: ('We believe that you are something than which no greater can be thought.')

Karl Barth refers to the definition as a 'revealed name' of God.[10] But, as Gilson has pointed out,[11] even though Anselm describes it as 'something which we believe', it is not a revealed name in the ordinary sense that the words are to be found in scripture. The sources of the formula can be traced back to Augustine and Boethius. At the beginning of Augustine's argument for God's existence in De libero arbitrio II (also directed against 'the fool who said in his heart: there is no God'),[12] the interlocutor, Evodius, says:

> This (i.e. what is eternal and immutable) I will indeed admit to be God, than whom it is certain there is nothing superior. [13]

Augustine, however, does not attempt to prove God's existence directly from the idea that he has no superior, but argues from the existence of certain unchanging truths, such as those of mathematics, which are common to all minds. Elsewhere, in De doctrina christiana I.7, Augustine says that everyone, even pagan polytheists, when they think of God or gods are thinking of the best and highest being which they can conceive.

> Nor can anyone be found who believes that God is that than which anything better exists. So everyone agrees that God is that which they value more than all other things. [14]

Boethius uses a similar argument in the Consolation of Philosophy to prove that God is good:

> That God, the first principle of all things, is good, is proved by the common concept of men's minds; for since nothing better than God can be conceived who can doubt that that than which nothing is better is good? [15]

Boethius, like Augustine in the De doctrina christiana passage, regards the definition of God as the best of conceivable beings as one which is generally acceptable to all mankind.[16] If, as seems likely, Anselm had these passages in mind, it appears that he uses this formula precisely because it is not a revealed dogma, but a definition which even an atheist might accept as an adequate description of the meaning of the term 'God', and what he needs to form the starting-point of his argument is an idea of God which the Fool will

accept as being 'in his mind'.

As we have seen, Anselm altered the definition from 'that than which no better (melius) can be conceived' to 'that than which no greater (maius) can be conceived', perhaps in order to make it clear that it is a total superiority in every respect, not only a moral superiority, to which he is referring. He may even have borrowed the phrase from Seneca's introduction to his Naturales Quaestiones, in which the phrase magnitudo ... qua nihil maius cogitari potest occurs.[17] But Seneca does not lay any particular emphasis on the phrase, and it is clear from the content that he is using magnitudo in the sense of spatial magnitude, since as a Stoic he identified God with the universe.[18] Though we cannot be certain how familiar Anselm was with Seneca, there remains the possibility that Seneca was a source for Augustine's use of the definition.

None of these writers had used the formula 'that than which no greater can be conceived' as the basis for a formal proof. Anselm tries to show that the existence of this being can be deduced simply from the fact that the idea of it is in the mind of the person who thinks about it. The Fool might say that he does not understand what is meant by the word 'God', but he cannot, Anselm thinks, reasonably deny that he understands what is meant by 'that than which a greater cannot be thought' if the words are spoken to him in a language which he knows. It is not necessary that he should be able to imagine such a being or fully understand it, but simply that he should understand the verbal formula. If he is thinking about

the object described by this formula (as he must, if he is to deny its existence), it is in his mind, but it cannot exist only in the mind or it would lack the attribute of existing in fact, which would give it greater value. It could not be the greatest conceivable being, therefore, unless it actually existed.

This argument depends upon the assumption that it is possible to compare, in terms of value, a real and an imaginary being, and that actual existence is a value-conferring feature of an object. It further assumes that the quo maius cogitari nequit is the same being if it exists in fact as if it exists only in the mind; otherwise its existing only in the mind would not be a contradiction. Anselm seems to regard it as obvious that 'whatever is understood is in the understanding.'[19] This is an assumption of the realist theory of universals widely accepted at the time,[20] and derived ultimately from the Platonic theory of Forms. According to the realist theory, every general term refers to a universal substance which exists both within and outside the mind.

Anselm's acceptance of this theory is shown very clearly in his Epistola de Incarnatione Verbi, an attack on the nominalist teachings of Roscelin of Compiègne, which Anselm considered to be theologically dangerous. Roscelin, according to Anselm, had applied his theory that all existing things are particular and that universal terms are merely matters of arbitrary convention to the doctrine of the Trinity: 'it could be said that there are three Gods, if usage permitted

it.'[21] Anselm comments:

> Those dialecticians of our time, or rather heretics of dialectic, who think that universal substances are nothing but a verbal sound, and who cannot understand colour as a different thing from body nor the wisdom of a man as different from his soul, should be hissed away from the discussion of spiritual questions. In their souls reason, which ought to be the ruler and judge of everything in man, is so involved in the illusions of the body that it cannot extricate itself from them and is unable to distinguish from them those things which should be contemplated alone and unmixed. How will someone who does not yet understand how men who are many in species are one man, grasp how, in that most mysterious and exalted being, several persons, of whom each is perfect God, are one God? And how will someone whose mind is too dull to tell his horse apart from its colour, distinguish between one God and his several relations? [22]

In realism, an object is known when its universal form is in the mind of the knower. In Anselm's example in Proslogion 2 of the painter and the picture,[23] what the painter knows in advance and which is 'in his understanding' is the form which he is going to impose on the matter. According to the Augustinian doctrine of universal hylomorphism (cf. Confessions Bks. XII-XIII), all created things are composed of form and matter. God, on the other hand, as in Aristotle, is pure form without matter.[24] Therefore, Anselm's argument runs, the form of God, and hence God himself, must be in the Fool's mind when he thinks about the idea of God.

Gaunilo, a contemporary monk who wrote a reply in which he criticised Anselm's argument, denied that an object can be in the mind. The artist's idea of his picture, Gaunilo says,

is not the form of the picture but simply a part of the artist's mind.[25] He cites a passage from Augustine in support of his point of view,[26] (though not very happily, since it is clear from the context of the passage that Augustine was actually using the example of the craftsman and his product as an illustration of the theory of forms pre-existing in the divine mind.) Gaunilo goes on to say that God cannot be in the Fool's mind because the Fool cannot form any idea of what the words 'God' or 'greatest of all beings' might refer to. We can form some idea of a particular man who is unknown to us, because we can think of him according to our general concept of what man is; but, according to Gaunilo, we can form no similar conception of a unique being. The atheist, when he thinks about the verbal formula 'greatest of all beings' is thinking only *secundum vocem* and not *secundum rem*, that is, he is thinking only of the sounds of the words and not of the objects to which they refer: 'and by this (the *vox*) alone it is scarcely or never possible for anything true to be conceived'.[27]

The distinction between *res* and *vox* was a familiar technical distinction recognized by Anselm in *Proslogion* 4:

> An object is conceived in one way when the verbal sound (*vox*) which signifies it is conceived, and in another when the actual object (*res*) itself is understood.[28]

A *vox* is a word seen simply as a physical occurrence (*litterarum sonus vel syllabarum*),[29] or, in the phrase attributed by Anselm to Roscelin, 'a breath of sound' (*flatus vocis*).[30] It differs from *sermo*, a word seen as having meaning, later

introduced into the discussion on universals by Abelard.[31] In the eleventh-century debate the problem was seen in terms of the res/vox alternative; either universals are metaphysical entities or, as Roscelin seems to have maintained, they are words whose application to reality is entirely a matter of convention; Anselm's answer to Gaunilo's objection is that, if the Fool is thinking only of the vox, 'that than which no greater can be thought', without having the res in his mind, then the vox of which he is thinking must be non-significant:

> In one way, therefore (i.e. secundum vocem) it can be thought that God does not exist, but in the other (secundum rem) not at all. For nobody who understands what God is can think that God does not exist, even though he may say these words in his heart, either without any meaning or with some extraneous meaning.[32]

The Fool, who thinks of God only secundum vocem, is therefore not thinking about God at all, but he must think about this being if he is to deny its existence.[33] His statement 'There is no God' has no meaning, because the res to which it refers is not in his mind; if it were, he would realise the impossibility of making such a statement.

By Anselm's argument, if the res than which no greater can be thought is in the Fool's mind, as it must be if he is thinking about it at all, it must also exist in fact, because existence both in fact and in the mind is 'greater' or 'better' than existence only in the mind. Only by the realist theory are these modes of existence even comparable; and the assump-

tion that it is better for a thing to exist in fact than to have a merely imaginary existence seems to the modern reader a very dubious one. We should want to know what the thing is before deciding on whether it is better for it to exist than not to exist. Is an actually existing smallpox virus better than an imaginary one? Anselm's assumption that existence is a value-conferring feature of an object has been much criticised.[34] The reason why he asserts it can be found in the Platonic-Neoplatonic tradition which he inherited.

In Plato's diagram of the Divided Line,[35] the higher sections of the Line have both greater reality and greater value than the lower, and all derive both their goodness and their existence from a common source, the Form of the Good. This theory was elaborated by the Neoplatonists. Plotinus says:

> Everything has something of the Good, by virtue of possessing a certain degree of unity and a certain degree of existence and by participation in form; by participating in these things it shares also in the Good.[36]

If, as Plotinus maintained, everything that exists is in some degree good, how is the existence of evil things to be accounted for? Plotinus answers that evil 'is situated in the realm of non-being, and is a form, as it were, of non-being.'[37] It is identified with 'matter', which, like the Receptacle of Becoming in Plato's Timaeus[38] is seen as a principle of formlessness and indeterminacy which barely exists at all. Augustine, in Bk. VII of the Confessions, tells how his reading of the 'books of the Platonists' provided him with an answer

to the problem of evil. 'If things are deprived of all good', he says, 'they cease altogether to be; and this means that as long as they are, they are good.'[39] Since evil or corruption tends to reduce things to non-existence, nothing which is totally corrupted can exist. In City of God XII he argues that there is no evil principle contrary to God, since God is Being in the highest degree, and according to Aristotelian logic, Being or substance has no contrary.[40]

The argument of Proslogion 2, therefore, since it hinges on the supposition that to exist is to be good, implies the whole Platonic-Neoplatonic-Augustinian tradition of the identification of goodness with being, which, as we have already seen, Anselm accepted in the Monologion. The third chapter of the Proslogion contains an adjunct to the argument in which Anselm seeks to prove that not only does God exist, but his existence is superior in degree and in kind to that of other beings:

> And indeed it exists so truly that it cannot even be thought not to exist. For it can be thought that there is something which cannot be thought not to exist; which is greater than what can be thought not to exist. Therefore, if that than which no greater can be thought can be thought not to exist: that very thing than which no greater can be thought is not that than which no greater can be thought; which cannot follow. There exists so truly, therefore, something than which a greater cannot be thought, that it cannot even be thought not to exist.[41]

This mode of existence (necessary existence, or the logical impossibility of non-existence) is seen by Anselm as con-

stituting a fuller degree of existence than that of all other things. In the same chapter he continues:

> You alone, then, most truly of all, and therefore to the greatest degree of all, have being; since whatever else there is has not such true being and therefore less being.[42]

For Anselm, God alone has necessary existence; the existence of everything else is contingent, that is, its non-existence is conceivable. The meanings of the terms 'necessary' and 'possible' or 'contingent' are discussed at length by Boethius in his commentaries on Aristotle's De Interpretatione. A necessary proposition, Boethius says, citing Philo, is one which can be seen to be true simply by examining the proposition itself, while a possible proposition is one whose truth or falsity is determined by factual circumstances.[43] Necessity, in Boethius' view, applies to beings as well as to propositions. Incorporeal beings are 'necessary' because they lack the capacity for change.[44]

The view that logically necessary statements somehow reflect an order of reality which is also 'necessary' can be traced back to Plato, who claimed that the objects of analytic statements (e.g. ethical and mathematical truths) have a fuller, immutable reality. In the Sophist he developed a theory of meaning according to which all discourse depends on 'the weaving-together of Forms'.[45] The science of dialectic consists in understanding the interrelations between Forms and knowing which can be meaningfully combined and which are incompatible with each other.[46] False statements are either combinations of incompatible Forms (e.g. 'Rest is motion'),

in which simply understanding the meaning of the terms is enough to show us that it is false, or else a combination of a particular with an inappropriate Form (e.g. 'Theaetetus flies').[47]

For Anselm, since God, as a unique being, is not a particular, which shares a common characteristic with others of the same class, (cf. Monologion ch. 27), the statement 'God exists' must refer to universals; and since God alone is Being in the full sense (cf. Monologion ch. 28), denial of his existence is self-refuting in the same way as the assertion that 'rest is motion'. It can, Anselm thinks, be seen to be false by anyone who understands the meaning of the terms. Understanding the meaning involves not merely hearing and repeating the words, as the Fool does, but an apprehension of the universal res.

The implications of the idea of a logically necessary being are brought out in Anselm's reply to Gaunilo's criticisms, in which he restates in various ways the argument for a necessary being. 'Necessary existence' is associated with not having a beginning or end,[48] with existence as a whole at every place and time, and therefore with timelessness and lack of composition.[49] These same characteristics were attributed by Plato in the Parmenides to the Parmenidean One.[50] He may well have meant this merely as a reductio ad absurdum of Parmenides' thesis of One Being (especially as he then goes on to prove the opposite conclusions). The passage was, however, taken very seriously by the Neoplatonist commentators,

who identified the One Being referred to with the Good of the Republic and made it the centre of their metaphysical system.[51] Elsewhere Plato applies these characteristics to Forms. In the Timaeus the world of Forms is timeless and unaffected by change.[52] In the Sophist the 'friends of the Forms' claim that Forms are eternal and immutable (Sophist 248A). In the Phaedo and Republic immutability is connected with indivisibility into parts.[53] This doctrine later reappears in the scholastic doctrine of the convertibility of the divine attributes (see above, ch. I pp.17-18). According to Thomas Aquinas, God's essence is identical with his attributes and likewise with his existence;[54] Anselm held the same view (cf. Monologion ch. 16, Proslogion ch. 12).

To Gaunilo's objection that we cannot form any idea of this 'greatest of all beings' since it is so remote from our experience, Anselm answers first by an appeal to Gaunilo's 'faith and conscience',[55] but later also by an argument that we can reason upwards from the lesser goods that we know to the greatest good, as in the proof of Monologion ch. 1. Everyone, Anselm says, should be able to understand that an everlasting good is better than a good which is temporally limited, and that a good which is not affected by change or time at all is better still.[56] This argument recalls the Platonic thesis that things in the world remind us of their eternal exemplars, and the description of dialectic in the Republic as a science which gradually leads the mind upwards to first principles.[57] In Plato's diagram of the Divided

Line, the mind moves by an upward process of reasoning to the ἀνυπόθετος ἀρχή,[58] the ultimate principle which needs no further suppositions to prove its existence but is the self-authenticating source of the truth and existence of everything else. From this first principle of truth and intelligibility, other 'necessary truths' such as those of mathematics can be deduced. But since the Form of Good is the first principle which depends on no others, its existence is uniquely 'necessary'.

This is similar to what Anselm says of God in the Proslogion and Author's Reply. Whereas in all other cases we can have false ideas about things, and our ideas, even if true, can be negated without self-contradiction, in the case of God and in this case alone, the statement that God exists guarantees its own truth. Since God is the basis of all knowledge and truth, as Anselm says in his dialogue De Veritate,[59] if he did not exist we should not be able to think either about him or about anything else, any more than we could see either the sun or anything else if the sun did not exist.[60] The existence of God, in Anselm's view, should be proved by reflection on the idea of God and should not need to be supported by a posteriori arguments; hence his intense delight at having invented an argument which he thought would prove God's existence without having to appeal to any external facts.[61] The proof is seen as a direct divine gift,[62] but without thereby ceasing to be valid as a piece of reasoning.

The characteristics ascribed by Plato to his Forms, and

above all to the Form of the Good - those of immutability, incomposition, timelessness, and of being the principles of all knowledge, truth and goodness, apprehensible by a gradual upward process of dialectical reasoning, are applied by Anselm, apparently without any sense of incongruity, to the God of Christianity, in a work in which philosophical exposition is interspersed with passages of emotional prayer (e.g. Proslogion 1, 9, 14). The being described by the abstract phrase quo maius cogitari nequit must, Anselm says in ch. 5, be personal and creative because it is 'better' for him to be so.[63]

The close association of 'being' with 'goodness' or 'greatness' is essential to Anselm's argument in Proslogion 2. The interpretation of the argument as being Platonic in character has the advantage of showing how chs. 2 and 3 are connected in Anselm's intention, so that ch. 2 can be seen as more than an unfortunate first attempt, as some modern writers have regarded it.[64] For the 'being' or res which is 'in the understanding' in ch. 2, must, by realism, be a pure form, which is known by a priori reasoning. If so, it is the subject of a necessary proposition and has 'necessary being', as in ch. 3. The 'necessary being' affirmed by analytic statements is for Anselm a fuller degree of being; it alone is being in the full sense. Augustine, like Plato, had also claimed that the beings described by analytic statements (e.g. logical, mathematical and ethical truths) have a superior mode of existence.[65]

The standard criticism that the argument involves an illegitimate transference from thought to being may be valid from a modern empiricist perspective, but Anselm himself would hardly have found it cogent. For Anselm there is no illegitimate move from thought to being, because pure thought apprehends being, and is in fact the only way in which one can apprehend being.[66] He would have thoroughly approved Plato's words in the Timaeus:

> That which is apprehensible by thought with a rational account is the thing that is always unchangeably real; whereas that which is the object of belief together with unreasoning sensation is the thing that becomes and passes away, but never has real being.[67]

St. Thomas rejected Anselm's a priori argument, just as Aristotle rejected Plato's transcendent Forms. God's existence, Thomas says, is self-evident 'in itself' but needs to be proved by argument from things which are evident 'to us', i.e. by the type of reasoning from observation of created things which Anselm had come to regard as inadequate.[68] In his belief in the power of 'pure thought' (or a priori reasoning) to apprehend reality, Anselm shows himself firmly rooted in the Platonic tradition of the Middle Ages.

Chapter III

Truth and Ethics: three dialogues of Anselm

In my final chapter I wish to consider three treatises, entitled De Veritate, De Libertate Arbitrii, and De Casu Diaboli, written by Anselm at some time during the period when he was at Bec. These treatises are written in the form of dialogues between an unnamed teacher and a student. Anselm says in his preface that, though he wrote them at different times, he grouped them together for publication because of their similarity in form and subject-matter. The group of dialogues begins with a discussion of the various aspects of truth and goes on to consider the ethical problems of justice, free will and the origin of moral evil. D.P. Henry[1] has shown the indebtedness of the dialogues to Boethian logic, particularly in regard to the analysis of the concept of power or possibility (potestas). However they also, especially De Veritate and De Casu Diaboli, shed significant further light on St. Anselm's Platonism.

i) De Veritate

The De Veritate begins by recalling an argument in Monologion 18, for the eternity of truth. Assuming that something exists, it must always have been true that it was going to exist, and after it has ceased to exist it will always be true that it has existed, and this eternal truth, Anselm says, is God.[2] Are we to say simply that truth is God, the student in

the De Veritate asks the teacher, (who is obviously Anselm himself[3]); and what is the relation between this single eternal truth and the multiplicity of things which we say are true?[4]

The ensuing discussion opens with a consideration of the truth of statements. The suggestion that the truth of a proposition is the same thing as the subject of the proposition is rejected:

> For nothing is true except by participating in truth, and therefore the truth of a true (statement) is in the true (statement) itself, but the subject of a proposition is not in a true proposition. Hence it is not to be called the truth of the proposition but the cause of its truth.[5]

This makes a valid logical distinction between the truth of a statement and the facts to which it refers; but it also presupposes that besides the facts of the case there is a metaphysical entity 'truth' by 'participation' in which true statements are true.

A proposition is true, Anselm continues, when it signifies 'things as they are', or 'the facts as they are'. When it does this, it signifies 'as it ought' or 'rightly'. The words debet and recte obviously have moral connotations. Rectus, like 'right' in English, can mean 'correct', 'corresponding to the facts', or it can mean 'right' in the moral sense. Anselm, as we see later, makes a great use of this ambiguity.

Anselm distinguishes two kinds of propositional truth. A proposition is true in the first sense when it is meaningful (i.e. grammatically correct and not containing internal con-

tradictions). It is true in the more ordinary sense when it reflects an actual state of affairs. In analytic statements (e.g. 'man is an animal') these two sense of 'truth' coincide. Truth in the second sense is determined by the facts of the case. But what determines 'truth' in the first sense? Anselm promises to discuss 'at a later time, that other kind of truth which a proposition must always have'.[6]

As we have seen, truth in Anselm also has a moral aspect. In chs. 4 and 5 he discusses the truth of will and action. The truth of actions, like the truth of propositions, consists in 'rightness' (rectitudo). This connexion of moral 'rightness' to the realm of truth or reality is a point of similarity with Plato; for instance in the allegory of the Cave in the Republic and its explanation, the truly good man is the one who has come to know the essential Forms of justice, beauty and good.[7] Anselm distinguishes two kinds of rectitudo; the rightness of the voluntary moral actions of rational beings, and that of the actions of irrational beings, which also do 'rightly' and 'as they ought' when they behave in a way which is proper to their nature, for instance, fire heating.[8] The natural rightness, or 'truth' in the first sense (i.e. meaning) of a proposition falls into the second category:

> For just as when fire heats, it does truth because it has received the power to heat from him from whom it has its existence; so also the proposition 'It is day' does truth when it signifies that it is day, whether it is day or not, since it has received by nature the power to do this.[9]

Anselm here seems to be saying that propositions have a

'natural' signification, analogous to the properties of natural objects. He is quite well aware that ordinary linguistic usage is not always accurate from a logical point of view, and he frequently draws a distinction between the 'proper' or logical sense of a term and the 'improper' senses of of ordinary usage. For instance in De Casu Diaboli ch. 1, he says that God is not 'properly' said to be the cause of evil or non-being, despite the fact that expressions of this kind occur in scripture:

> We should not so much cling to inappropriate words which conceal the truth, as much as seek to discover the genuine truth which is hidden under many types of expression. [10]

A statement when expressed in its proper logical form need not be true (unless known to be true a priori), since its truth or falsity depend on external circumstances. But it is always meaningful or 'true' in the first sense which Anselm distinguished in ch. 2 (see above, p.42-3), irrespective of whether the facts to which it refers are actually the case. What then gives it its meaning? Anselm seems to imply that its meaning (or 'truth' in the first sense mentioned above), is guaranteed by a metaphysical entity 'truth', which is, as we see later, identified with God; so that just as fire receives from God its natural capacity to produce heat, a meaningful proposition has a 'natural' validity which it receives from 'truth'. This theory again recalls Plato's theory of meaning in the Sophist: that is, that all discourse depends for its meaning on being a description of the possible inter-

relations of Forms or the combinations of Forms with particulars. (See above, ch. II p.35-6) All statements which are meaningful and whose truth is therefore at least logically possible reflect possible connexions of Forms with Forms or Forms with particulars. Nonsensical statements (e.g. "Rest is motion') reflect an incompatibility between Forms. Statements therefore derive their meaning from a realm of higher reality.

In ch. 6 of the De Veritate, the student raises the question of the truth of sense-perception, which, he says, sometimes deceives us. Anselm answers, following Augustine,[11] that the supposed errors of the senses are not in the sensations themselves but in our judgment of them. It is true that an oar in water appears broken. The senses, in performing their natural functions, do 'as they ought' and therefore 'do rightness and truth'.[12] In ch. 7 the teacher asks:

> Do you think there is anything at any time or place which is not in the supreme truth and has not, insofar as it is, received its being from it, or that it can have any other being than the being it has there? [13]

The student replies in the negative, and the teacher concludes that nothing ought to be other than it is in the supreme truth, and therefore everything that exists 'is what it ought to be' and 'is rightly'.[14] The ambiguity of recte can be clearly seen here. If it is taken as equivalent to vere, the statement omne quod est, recte est is a tautology; but if recte is taken in the moral sense, it constitutes a remarkably optimistic statement of the basic goodness of the universe. This view that things are as they are because it

is good for them to be so has parallels in Plato; for instance Socrates' statement in the Phaedo that the real reason for a thing's being as it is is that it is best for it to be so,[15] and the statement in the Timaeus that the Demiurge wished to make everything 'as good as possible'.[16] It also reappears later in the Leibnizian theory that this is 'the best of all possible worlds'.[17]

The doctrine that this basic goodness of everything which exists lies in its being founded in a supreme truth or reality also has similarities with Plato. In the Timaeus, the world is described as good because it is modelled upon the intelligible Forms.[18] Plotinus, in his treatise against the Gnostics, who despised the material world as evil, also insists that the material world is the best possible image of the intelligible world.[19] Even the use of the word 'there' by Anselm to refer to a realm of higher being is reminiscent of Plotinian phraseology.[20] An immediate source for this theory can be found in Augustine, De Libero Arbitrio II, in which he says that all things are good because they derive their existence from a single unchanging truth, which is God.[21]

To the student's objection that many occurrences are evil, Anselm answers that the same event can be seen as good or evil from different points of view; for instance, if a criminal is punished by someone who has no authority to do so, the action is right in respect of the patient but wrong in respect of the agent. From the divine point of view, Anselm suggests, even actions which humanly speaking are wrong in every respect can be seen as right, since God permits them. Since according to

Anselm there is truth in actions and truth 'in the essence of things'[22] as well as in statements, there must also, he suggests, be true and false signification in these realms. People by acting in a certain way, he says, signify that they ought to act in this way, and the signification is true or false according to whether the action is morally right or wrong. He also claims that things, simply by existing, signify that they ought to exist.[23]

In ch. 10, Anselm says that the highest truth, God, is the cause of the truth (or reality) of objects, and these in turn are the cause of the truth of opinions and statements about them.[24] This arrangement, in which 'truer' or 'more real' beings are the cause of the truth of those which have a 'less real' being, recalls Plato's diagram of the Divided Line. In this the lower sections are described as 'images' of the higher, and hence the higher sections are the causes of the truth or reality of the lower, while all derive their truth and reality from the Good.[25] The question raised at the beginning of the De Veritate about the relation between the one eternal truth and the multiplicity of true statements and thoughts, is here answered, somewhat more clearly than it had been in the De Libero Arbitrio; the relationship is one of cause and effect.

Truth is finally defined, in ch. 11, as 'a rightness perceptible only by the mind' (rectitudo mente sola perceptibilis).[26] 'Perceptible only by the mind' is included to distinguish the rectitudo referred to from the 'straightness' of material objects, such as sticks, or of lines in mathematics. Later,

in ch. 12, Anselm says that 'truth, rightness and justice are definable in terms of each other'.[27] Truth is defined in terms of the moral notion of rectitudo, which is also used in ch. 12 to define justice. While even inanimate things can act rightly, that is, in accordance with their nature, only rational beings can act justly. A right action to be just must be voluntary and must be chosen for its own sake and not for some other motive such as reward or reputation. Justice, accordingly, is defined as 'a rightness of the will preserved for its own sake'.[28]

The conclusion in ch. 13 is that truth or rectitudo is not dependent upon there being true propositions, on the contrary, true propositions depend upon a single eternally existing truth which is 'in' all things and makes them true. Otherwise, if there were a plurality of 'truths' or 'rightnesses' corresponding to the plurality of actual facts, these truths would vary as the facts themselves change; but if the standard of truth or rightness varies this would make it impossible to judge anything to be true or right.[29]

Clearly this is very similar to Plato's arguments for the existence of unchangeable universal Forms. In Plato's view, without these it would be impossible for statements to be true or even to have a consistent meaning, since the particular things to which they refer are constantly changing.[30] Forms in Plato, as well as being metaphysical universals which guarantee the reality of particulars and the truth of statements about them, are principles of perfection of which

particular things are imperfect imitations. They also function as ethical standards,[31] and in fact the theory seems to have originated from Plato's interpretation of Socratic discussions of the 'essential nature' of ethical norms. This original twofold function of the theory, the ethical and the metaphysical, helps to explain why Anselm identifies the principle of truth with that of moral rightness. In this respect he is following a long tradition which originates in Plato.

ii) De Libertate Arbitrii

The discussion of propositional truth has led to a consideration of the moral concepts of 'rightness' and justice. Accordingly, the next dialogue in the group, the De Libertate Arbitrii, is devoted to the ethical problem of the freedom of the will, raised by Anselm's definition of justice as voluntary right action.

The straightforward definition of free will as 'power to choose good or evil' is rejected by Anselm on the theological grounds firstly that, according to the doctrine of original sin, we cannot choose good unless aided by grace, and secondly that if 'freedom' involves the capacity to do evil, God is not free since he cannot do evil.[32]

Anselm approaches these problems by means of a logical discussion of the verb posse and its cognates. He had already pointed out in De Veritate that a statement containing the verb 'can' does not always ascribe power or capability to the subject of the sentence. For instance, in the sentence

'Hector can be defeated by Achilles',[33] weakness or incapacity is being ascribed to Hector. Anselm suggests that statements that a person 'can' do evil are of this kind. They ascribe to him not power but weakness or incapacity. A man who chooses to do evil in fact places limitations on his own power and freedom. He becomes 'a slave of sin' and afterwards cannot escape from it by his own efforts. Hence 'the capacity to do evil is neither freedom nor a part of freedom'.[34] To claim that God can do evil, therefore, would be to place a limitation on his omnipotence rather than the reverse.[35]

The phrase 'slave of sin' is, of course, Biblical (John 8.34), but it is interesting to note that the idea that the 'power' to choose evil is actually weakness or servitude also occurs in the philosophical tradition. Boethius, in a passage in the Consolation of Philosophy which contains an allusion to Plato's Gorgias, argues that the good are strong and the evil weak because good men are able to achieve what is good (and thereby be happy) while evil men are not.[36] Similarly Plotinus says:

> The involuntary is motion away from a good and towards the enforced, towards something not recognized as a good; servitude lies in being powerless to move towards one's good.[37]

Since, Anselm believes, mankind by the Fall has placed himself in this position in which he cannot act rightly without divine help, in what sense is his will still free? Anselm answers this question by the use of the Boethian/Aristotelian distinction between a realised and an unrealised

potentiality.[38] Man still has the capacity (potestas) to act rightly, which is free will,[39] but this capacity is unactualised and needs to be actualised by something outside himself.[40]

iii) De Casu Diaboli

The De Casu Diaboli continues the discussion of moral evil by considering an individual extreme case, that of the fall of the devil. The dialogue begins with an emphatic statement that God is the source of all being and of all good, and only of being and good.[41] He is not 'properly' said to cause anything to cease to exist, but rather to cease to cause it to exist.[42] Since 'nothing is from God except good and being'[43] the question at once arises: what is the cause of evil?

The devil (who is supposed to have been originally good) must have received his will, like everything else, from God; but if he was given a will which was liable to become corrupt, the problem arises that God must be the cause of that evil will and therefore the source of evil. Anselm answers that neither the will nor its turning (conversio) by which it becomes corrupt can be intrinsically evil, since both are 'something'; that is, they are existent things, and everything which exists comes from God and is good.[44] The evil is the injustice or absence of justice (privatio iustitiae)[45] to which the will turns. This absence of justice is sheer nothingness or lack of being, which is absolute evil:

> When (the will) deserted this (rightness) it lost something of great value, and received nothing in exchange except its privation, which has no being and which we name injustice.[46]

The student then objects that evil and injustice must be existing things, since we have names for them. The same argument, the teacher replies, would show that 'nothing' is an existing thing, since it has a significant name.[47] Here as elsewhere, Anselm says, one must not be over-impressed by the puzzles of linguistic usage.[48] The word 'nothing' signifies 'not something'. It is meaningful because 'something' is meaningful, just as 'not-man' is meaningful because 'man' is meaningful. Similarly 'evil' can be construed as meaning 'not-good'.

Evil in the will, then, is nothing, but the will itself, 'insofar as it is a being, is a good'.[49] Anselm distinguishes two types of will: the natural will to happiness and advantage (commodum) which every conscious being has, and the will to justice, which a creature may or may not have and which it may voluntarily lose.[50] In this case it still has the natural will to happiness, which in itself is a good.[51] A being which is capable of justice and which has voluntarily abandoned it still ranks higher in the order of nature, and in that sense is better, than one which is incapable of moral action.[52] However, considered as a person (i.e. a morally responsible individual), the higher such a being is in the scale of nature the worse it can become morally.[53]

Clearly, these statements once more reveal a hierarchical

conception of nature. That concept is, of course, Platonic and Neoplatonic (see above, ch. I pp.13-4, 20-1), and in this connection it is notable that Plotinus envisages moral evil as a descent of the soul from contemplation of a higher sphere into involvement with material particulars. For Plotinus, everything is good insofar as it occupies its proper place in the natural order, and becomes evil by its abandonment of that position. The view that the aim of morality is life 'in accordance with nature' was also a Stoic doctrine;[54] but this concept of morality as the maintenance of a natural harmony in the soul, analogous to health in the body, can be traced back to Plato (Republic 444c1-445b4). Therefore, Anselm's view that things act 'as they ought' or 'rightly' when acting in accordance with their nature (De Veritate ch. 5) and that wrongdoing consists in acting contrary to nature, can be shown to have a Platonic and Neoplatonic origin.

The evil or injustice by which such creatures act has for Anselm no real existence; it is simply 'an absence of justice where justice ought to be',[55] that is, in the actions of morally responsible beings. This injustice, which is simply non-being, is absolute evil. Other things which are described as evil (evil men, evil actions, evil wills) are only relatively so, since they have an actual existence.[56] Since absolute evil is non-being, its source cannot be God, who is the cause only of being. This answer to the problem recalls Plotinus' theory that 'evil is situated in the realm of non-being',[57] and also his distinction between absolute

evil, which is identified with matter and non-being, and relative evil. In Plotinus, existing things (such as souls) can be relatively evil but not absolutely evil.[58]

To the student's final question: Why did the devil will injustice?, the teacher replies that there is no answer to this question; the devil 'willed because he willed'.[59] This seems at first sight like a rather blatant attempt to evade the issue, but Anselm in fact has a real point. For to speak of a willed action as being caused by something other than the will itself would imply that it is determined and therefore not free. Augustine, in the City of God,[60] says that no cause of an evil will can be found apart from the will itself. To try to find the cause of an evil will is like trying to see darkness, or hear silence.[61] Evil in the will is simply nothingness, and we can recognize it only as an absence of the good which ought to be there.

Elsewhere, in the Confessions,[62] Augustine describes evil as a 'corruption' which tends to reduce originally good things to non-existence, and claims that he gained this insight by reading the 'books of the Platonists'.[63] Therefore, if Augustine is the source of Anselm's doctrine of evil, and Plato is the source of Augustine, then once again the Platonic root of St. Anselm is patent. And, of course, the ultimate source is Plato. Not only do we have Augustine's explicit testimony, vague though his reference may be, but we can also find the source for ourselves. Thus Plato, in the Timaeus, ascribes the imperfections of the world to its being made of

a kind of indeterminate matter or 'space' which

> provides a situation for all things that come into being, but is itself apprehended without the senses by a sort of bastard reasoning, and is hardly an object of belief. [64]

Since reality and intelligibility are always closely connected in Plato,[65] that which is not even an object of the lower form of cognition known as belief must come very close to being completely non-existent. In a similar way, as we have noted, Plotinus identifies evil with non-being and both with a principle of formlessness and indeterminacy described as 'matter'.[66]

Anselm's treatment of the problem of evil, therefore, shows some similarity to these Platonic and Neoplatonic sources. But it would be foolish to deny that these are also significant differences. In Anselm, as in Augustine, evil (or non-being) is not identified with matter, and a much greater emphasis is placed on the will as the cause of evil actions.[67]

iv) Conclusion

In these three dialogues, as in the Monologion and Proslogion, God is regarded as the source of being, truth and good; to be is to be in some way good, and therefore evil is identified with sheer nothingness or non-being. The theory that every existing thing 'participates' in a single truth, which is also the source of its rightness and goodness can be traced back through Augustine[68] to Plato. Anselm's definition of truth in terms of rightness, and his unconcern over the

ambiguity of the word rectitudo, appear less strange when regarded as a legacy of the Platonic doctrine of Forms, which function both as metaphysical universals and as ethical norms, and especially of the doctrine of the Good, which in Republic VI-VII is both the aim of morality and the source of truth. His discussion of the problem of evil also, despite certain differences, shows clear signs of a Platonic and Neoplatonic origin.

Conclusion

The foregoing study has, I hope, successfully demonstrated that certain aspects of St. Anselm's thought, and in particular the identification of being with goodness, can be traced back to Platonic sources. This identification implies a belief in the universe as an ordered hierarchy in which things can be compared with one another in terms of both degrees of goodness and degrees of being, and in which things that rank higher in the scale of goodness also have a greater degree of being. Plato's doctrine of the Good as the source of all existence and intelligibility as well as of goodness reappears in Anselm's view of the universe, in which God is seen as the source and perfect exemplar of all being, truth, intelligibility and good.

Certain related doctrines have also been seen to be Platonic in origin; the attributes of indivisibility, immutability and timelessness ascribed by Plato to Forms (or, to go even further back, by Parmenides to his One Being[1]), reemerge as attributes of the Christian God. The theory that truth and meaning are guaranteed by a single supreme truth, the realist theory that knowledge depends upon the presence of universal forms in the mind, and the theory that the highest kind of knowledge is gained by a priori reasoning but is led up to by a gradual process which begins from the things in this world, are all strongly reminiscent of Plato.

In the tradition described in general terms as that of

medieval Platonism, several different currents of thought can be identified. The twelfth-century thinkers of the school of Chartres[2] were quite consciously Platonist and drew much of their inspiration from Plato's Timaeus, which they knew in Chalcidius' Latin version. Another current is that represented by the commentators upon the pseudo-Dionysius,[3] a fifth-or sixth-century Neoplatonizing Christian who derived most of his ideas from Proclus and Plotinus, but was believed throughout the Middle Ages to be Dionysius the Areopagite, the disciple of St. Paul. A third channel by which Platonism was transmitted to the Middle Ages was the works of Augustine and his interpretation of Platonic and Neoplatonic doctrines in Christian terms.

We find that the most important source for Anselm's Platonism was quite clearly Augustine. Anselm may possibly have read the Latin version of the Timaeus, of which there was a copy at Bec in the twelfth century,[4] but his works show no sign that this was a significant influence on his thought. Nor are there any elements in his thought which can be shown to be derived from the 'Dionysian' tradition. The belief that to be is to be good and that evil is non-being, the hierarchical conception of the universe, the theory that all truth is guaranteed by a single supreme truth, and the doctrine of the superior existence of the objects of a priori knowledge, have all been shown to have parallels in Augustine.

Besides Augustine, an additional source for Platonism in Anselm may well have been Boethius, from whom much of Anselm's

logic is derived. Besides the logical works, whose language often reflects the Platonic doctrine that logical terms refer to metaphysical realities, the Consolation of Philosophy may have had some influence, since several points of similarity between it and Anselm's works have been noted.[5] Also, the tradition of medieval realism which Anselm accepted takes its starting-point from Boethius' interpretation of Porphyry's Isagoge.

The differences which separate Anselm and Augustine from Plato and the pagan Neoplatonists are those which one might expect to result from a 'translation' of Platonic and Neoplatonic theories into Christian terms. Thus a personal God replaces the impersonal Good or One, and creation 'out of nothing' replaces the necessary process of emanation of other things from the One. God, in Augustine and Anselm, is distinguished as the cause of all other things and more sharply distinguished from them than is the One in Neoplatonism. In the sphere of ethics, there is a greater emphasis on the freedom of the will and the moral responsibility of rational creatures; and it is a misused freedom of the will, rather than an unavoidable 'imprisonment' in matter, which is seen to be the cause of moral evil.

The main difference between Anselm and Augustine lies in Anselm's more systematic approach and in his preference for logical (or quasi-logical) arguments over the methods of scriptural exegesis or rhetorical persuasion. Anselm seeks to establish his points by formal proofs, and often uses

linguistic and logical considerations as a means of solving theological or ethical problems. The germs of certain Anselmian ideas are to be found implicit in Augustine, for instance the definition of God as 'greatest conceivable being' and the doctrine of God as pure being and pure form, from which Anselm developed his ontological proof. Whereas Anselm was concerned to find formal proofs of God's existence, Augustine did not consider such proofs were needed, since he regarded God's existence as sufficiently obvious from the fact of his creation.[6] This difference in approach perhaps reflects a revival of interest in logic in the eleventh century. In spite of Anselm's strictures against contemporary 'heretics of dialectic', it is probable that he owed more than he realised to them and to their willingness to apply logical methods to theological questions.[7]

Despite these influences of Boethian and contemporary logic, Anselm remains basically an Augustinian Platonist. It is true that his Platonism, unlike that of some other medieval writers, is never acknowledged or made explicit, and hence is easily ignored. But this, I suggest, is because it so thoroughly conditions his whole outlook that he is not even aware of his debt to it. Others who, whether they are imaginary 'fools' or real opponents like Gaunilo or Roscelin, refuse to accept assumptions of his which we recognize as Platonic, he treats as people who wilfully deny what should be intuitively obvious to them; they are, he thinks, denying the claims of their own reason. Much of the modern reader's

puzzlement in reading Anselm lies in the fact that assumptions which to the reader are suspect are to Anselm so obvious that they need not be argued for; and the origin of these assumptions, I have suggested, is to be traced to Anselm's inheritance of a Platonic tradition.

Notes: Chapter I

N.B. References to Anselm's works are to the edition of F.S. Schmitt, by volume, page and line number. The abbreviation PL refers to the Patrologia Latina ed. J.P. Migne.

1. The Irish monk John Scotus Erigena (c.810-875) knew Greek, was familiar with the Greek Fathers and developed a complex theological system based on Neoplatonism. (Works: PL 122; De Divisione Naturae, ed. I.F. Sheldon-Williams [Dublin, 1968].)

2. See L.D. Reynolds and N.G. Wilson, Scribes and Scholars (Oxford, 1974) ch. 4. pp.109-46.

3. The translation of the Meno and Phaedo was made by Henricus Aristippus, (died c.1162), archdeacon of Catania in Sicily, where there was a large Greek-speaking population and some cultural contact with the Byzantine Empire, (see C.H. Haskins, Studies in the history of mediaeval science [New York, 1927] pp.141-3, 165-8).

4. Porphyry had deliberately left aside the question whether universals exist outside the mind. (Isagoge 1.9-14). Boethius attempted to answer it; universals, he says, exist only 'in' sensible particulars, but are understood by the mind apart from particulars. As a commentator on Aristotle, he adds, he has expounded Aristotle's opinion; but he does not wish to make a judgment between Plato and Aristotle on this question. (In Porphyrium Commentariorum I [PL 64 pp.82B-86A].) Elsewhere he uses the Platonic metaphor of participation to describe the relation of particulars to universals (In Categorias I [PL 64 .168A]).

5. See F. van Steenberghen, Aristotle in the West (Louvain, 1955), pp.89-94.

6. Cf. Anselm, Ep. 23 & 25, (vol. III pp.130-33) in which he refers to his inability to obtain some works by Ambrose and Jerome, and the difficulty of finding a suitable scribe to make a copy of a manuscript of Gregory the Great. A twelfth-century library catalogue from Bec survives and is printed in Gustav Becker, Catalogi bibliothecarum antiqui (Bonn, 1885) pp.257-66. It contains an impressive collection of one hundred and sixty-four volumes, including almost all the important works of Augustine, some other patristic works, Chalcidius' version of the Timaeus, and works of classical Latin writers such as Cicero, Seneca, Quintilian, Suetonius and Ovid. But since the manuscripts in question are mostly lost it cannot be determined with any certainty how many of these were at Bec in Anselm's time.

7. See R.W. Southern, St. Anselm and his biographer, pp.17-20.

8. vol. I p.8 L.8-14
vol. II p.20 L.13-16
vol. II p.35 L.10-14.

9. ... quatenus auctoritate scripturae penitus nihil in ea persuaderetur, sed quidquid per singulas investigationes finis assereret, id ita esse plano stilo et vulgaribus argumentis simplicique disputatione et rationis necessitas breviter cogeret et veritatis claritas patenter ostenderet. Vol. I p.7 L.7-11.

10. See Anselm's reply to Lanfranc's criticisms, Ep. 77 (vol. III p.199).

11. Fides quaerit; intellectus invenit, propter quod ait propheta; nisi credideritis non intelligetis. Augustine, De Trinitate XV 2. (PL 40 p.1058). See also De Libero Arbitrio I.4 (PL 32 p.1224).

12. vol. I p.100 L.18-19.

13. ... disputant contra eiusdem fidei a sanctis patribus confirmatam veritatem. velut si vespertiliones et noctuae non nisi in nocte caelum videntes de meridianis solis radiis disceptent contra aquilas ipsum solem irreverberato visu intuentes. Vol. ii p.81.3-6.

14. There has been some discussion on the meaning of 'necessary reasons' in Anselm, and on whether the 'necessity of reason' is supposed to operate independently of faith. Karl Barth (Fides Quaerens Intellectum, London, 1960 [first published 1931] pp.48-59), argued that the role of reason in Anselm is confined to clarification of the articles of faith and explanation of their inner consistency, and therefore his arguments are not intended to be valid against those who do not accept the Christian faith. J. McIntyre (St. Anselm and his critics, Edinburgh, 1954, ch. 1) claimed that the arguments are intended to have an independent validity; i.e. they start from premisses which Anselm, rightly or wrongly, thought to be commonly acceptable and are meant to convince unbelievers as well as to lead believers to a fuller understanding. But whether these arguments are to be thought of a logically 'necessary' deductions or as attempts at persuasion is not always clear. See below, note 19.

15. Quapropter quoniam gratia dei praeveniente fidem nostrae redemptionis sic puto me tenere, ut etiam si nulla possum quod credo ratione comprehendere, nihil tamen sit quod ab eius firmitate me valeat evellere, a te peto mihi aperire quod, ut scis, plures mecum petunt. Vol. II p.48 L.19-22.

16. Sufficere namque debere existimo rem incomprehensibilem indaganti, si ad hoc ratiocinando pervenerit ut eam certissime esse cognoscat, etiamsi penetrare nequeat intellectu quomodo ita sit; nec idcirco minus iis adhibendam fidei certitudinem, quae probationibus necessariis nulla alia repugnante ratione asseruntur, si suae naturalis altitudinis incomprehensibilitate explicari non patiantur. Vol. I p.75 L.1-6.

17. Cf. F. van Steenberghen, op. cit. p.60, p.175.

18. See F.S. Schmitt, Latin/German edition of the Monologion (1964), introduction p.9.

19. Si quis unam naturam, summam omnium quae sunt, solam sibi in aeterna sua beatitudine sufficientem, omnibusque rebus aliis hoc ipsum quod aliquid sunt aut quod aliquomodo bene sunt, per omnipotentem bonitatem suam dantem et facientem, aliaque perplura quae de deo sive de eius creatura necessarie credimus, aut non audiendo aut non credendo ignorat: puto quia ea ipsa ex magna parte, si vel mediocris ingenii est, potest ipse sibi saltem sola ratione persuadere. Vol. I p.13 L.5-11.
Note that the verb used here is persuadere not demonstrare or equivalent. See also ch. 6, (p.19 L.19) si cui forte quod speculor persuadere voluero, and ch. I, (P.14 L.1-4): si quid dixero quod maior non monstret auctoritas: sic volo accipi ut, quamvis ex rationibus quae mihi videbuntur, quasi necessarium concludatur, non ob hoc tamen omnino necessarium, sed tantum hic interim videri posse dicatur.
'If I say anything that does not appear in a greater authority, I wish it to be understood in such a way that, although it is a more or less necessary conclusion from the arguments I shall approve; it should not be considered as altogether necessary but only as an interim judgment.'
In this work rationis necessitas (see note 4, above) seems to mean 'plausible' or 'convincing' argument rather than strictly logical proof. Unlike the Proslogion the Monologion does not begin from a precise definition of God but from a list of attributes to which is added the vague phrase 'and whatever else we of necessity believe about God or about his creation'. A priori demonstration of these attributes, therefore, cannot be expected.

20. Nihil ergo et non esse non est ab illo, a quo non est nisi bonum et essentia. vol. I p.235 L.4-5.

21. Nam quaecumque iusta dicuntur ad invicem, sive pariter sive magis vel minus, non possunt intelligi iusta nisi per iustitiam, quae non est aliud et aliud in diversis. Ergo cum certum sit quod omnia bona, si ad invicem conferantur, aut aequaliter aut inaequaliter sint bona, necesse est, ut omnia sint per aliquid bona, quod intel-

ligitur idem in diversis bonis, licet aliquando videantur bona dici alia per aliud. vol. I p.14 L.13-18.

22. vol. I p.14 L.19-28.

23. vol. I p.15 L.4-12.

24. καὶ τοῖς γιγνωσκομένοις τόινυν μὴ μόνον τὸ γιγνώσκεσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ παρεῖναι, ἀλλὰ καὶ το εἶναί τε καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν ὑπ' ἐκείνου αὐτοῖς προσεῖναι, οὐκ οὐσίας ὄντος τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ, ἀλλ' ἔτι ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας πρεσβείᾳ καὶ δυνάμει ὑπερέχοντος. Republic 509b. 6-10.

25. ... si potueris sine illis quae participatione boni bona sunt, perspicere ipsum bonum cuius participatione bona sunt .... si ergo potueris illis detractis per se ipsum perspicere bonum, perspexeris Deum. Augustine, De Trinitate VIII.15 (PL 42 p.950).

26. At quidquid est per aliud, minus est quam illud per quod cuncta sunt alia, et quod solum est per se. quare illud quod est per se, maxime omnium est. vol. I p.16 L.19-22.

27. 'Is most real' would be an alternative translation of maxime est but here, too, it would be stretching normal language to use the word 'real' as though it admits of degrees, e.g. 'X's hair is more real than Y's' (if Y wears a wig). One would be more likely to say that X's hair is real hair and Y's is not (i.e. not hair in the proper sense, though it is a real wig). However we do think that truth admits of degrees, i.e. that some statements can be partially true or half true. It is notable that Anselm's theory of truth, which will be discussed in a later chapter, extends the notion of truth beyond the realm of propositions to that of ethics and metaphysics.

28. vol. I p.16 L.23-28. Cf. p.3 above on Plato's Republic.

29. Non enim ibi maior est, quae verior non est, ubi est ipsa veritas magnitudo. quia in essentia veritatis, hoc est verum esse quod est esse; et hoc est esse quod est magnum esse; hoc est ergo magnum esse, quod verum esse. Augustine, de Trinitate VIII.2 (PL 42 p.948).

30. vol. I p.17 L.1-2.

31. Cum igitur naturarum aliae aliis negari non possint meliores, nihilominus persuadet ratio aliquam in eis sic supereminere, ut non habeat se superiorem. Vol. I p.17 L.3-5.

32. See Boethius, In Porphyrium Dialogus I (PL 64 p.43D-44A). For Aristotle's rejection of an actually existing infinity (as opposed to a conceptual infinity, e.g. an infinite series of numbers) see Physics III 4-8 (202b 30ff.).

33. Invenitur enim in rebus aliquid magis et minus bonum, et verum, et nobile; et sic de aliis huiusmodi. sed magis et minus dicuntur de diversis, secundum quod appropinquant diversimode ad aliquod quod maxime est; .... quod autem dicitur maxime tale in aliquo genere, est causa omnium quae sunt illius generis; sicut ignis, qui est maxime calidus, est causa omnium calidorum, ut in eodem libro dicitur. ergo est aliquid quod omnibus entibus est causa esse, et bonitatis, et cuiuslibet perfectionis; et hoc dicimus deum. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica I II 3.

34. ... πρῶτον μὲν ἐξ ἀνάγκης ὄντος αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐκ λογισμοῦ γενομένου, ἀλλὰ φύσεως ἀμείνονος γεννώσης κατὰ φύσιν ὅμοιον ἑαυτῇ· ἔπειτα οὐδ' εἰ λογισμὸς εἴη ὁ ποιήσας, αἰσχυνεῖται τῷ ποιηθέντι· ὅλον γάρ τι ἐποίησε πάγκαλον καὶ αὔταρκες καὶ φίλον αὐτῷ καὶ τοῖς μέρεσι τοῖς αὐτοῦ τοῖς τε κυριωτέροις καὶ τοῖς ἐλάττοσιν ὡς αὐτῷ προσφόροις· Plotinus, Ennead III 2.3.L.3-9.

35. καὶ τὰ μὲν τοῦ εἶναι μετέχειν δοκεῖ μόνον, τὰ δὲ τοῦ ζῆν, τὰ δὲ μᾶλλον ἐν τῷ αἰσθάνεσθαι, τὰ δὲ ἤδη λόγον ἔχει, τὰ δὲ πᾶσαν ζωήν· Ibid. L.36-8.

36. Cf. vol. I p.14 L.19 - p.15 L.3, in which Anselm uses utilitas as a criterion for judging the goodness of a thing.

37. Quis enim non domi suae panem habere quam mures, nummos quam pulices malit? Augustine, City of God XI 16. (PL 39 p.331).

38. Sed tantum valet in naturis rationalibus quoddam veluti pondus voluntatis et amoris, ut cum ordine naturae angeli hominibus, tamen lege iustitiae boni homines malis angelis praeferantur. Augustine, City of God XI 16. (PL 39 p.331).

39. Augustine, De libero arbitrio II 54 L.6. (PL 32 p.1269).

40. Voluntas autem aversa ab incommutabili et communi bono, et conversa ad proprium bonum, aut ad exterius, aut ad inferius, peccat .... ita fit ut neque illa bona quae a peccantibus appetuntur, ullo modo mala sint, neque ipsa voluntas libera, quam in bonis quibusdam mediis numerandam esse comperimus; sed malum sit aversio eius ab incommutabili bono, et conversio ad mutabilia bona. Ibid. ch. 53.

41. Ita, detracto penitus omni bono, omnino nihil remanebit. Ibid. ch. 54 (PL 32 p.1270). See also Confessions VII 18. (PL 32 p.743).

42. vol. I. p.20 L.13-18.

43. περίλαμψιν ἐξ αὐτοῦ μὲν, ἐξ αὐτοῦ δὲ μένοντος, οἷον ἡλίου τὸ περὶ αὐτὸν λαμπρὸν φῶς περιθέον, ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἀεὶ γεννώμενον μένοντος. Plotinus, Ennead V 1.6. L.28-30.

44. Republic 507a-509b 10 and 517a 8-c5.

45. Augustine, Confessions XII 7. (PL 32 p.828). See also the De anima et eius origine Bk. II 6 in which Augustine reacts indignantly to the suggestion that the soul is a part of God's substance, on the ground that souls are capable of change and evil, whereas God is not. (PL 42 pp.497-8).

46. Cf. Augustine, De Genesi ad litteram IV 22 (PL 34 p.304).

47. Et inspexi cetera infra te, et vidi nec omnino esse nec omnino non esse: esse quidem, quoniam abs te sunt, non esse autem, quoniam id quod es non sunt. id enim vere est, quod incommutabiliter manet. Augustine, Confessions VII 17. (PL 32 p.742).

48. See also De Trinitate V 3. and VII 10 (PL 42 p.912 and 942). It appears that the Hebrew verb usually translated by the verb 'to be' can have quite different connotations from those of unchanging being by which Augustine, who knew only the Latin version, interprets it. The verb, according to modern editors, may mean 'he causes to be', and 'does not indicate God's eternal being but his action and presence in historical affairs'. (Oxford Annotated Bible note ad loc.)
In the same chapter (City of God VIII 11.) Augustine refers to Plato's account of creation in the Timaeus, which suggests that he knew the Timaeus directly. (PL 39 pp. 235-6).

49. vol. I p.24 L.10-19.

50. vol. I p.29 L.26-31.

51. On the doctrine that God is not a substance of which accidents are predicable, see Augustine, De Trinitate VII 10. (PL 40 p.942) and also Boethius, Liber de persona et duabus naturis ch. 3. (PL 64 p.1345).

52. Cf. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica 1a:13:4 and 1a:13:12.

53. Quoniam igitur summa natura non proprie dicitur quia habet iustitiam, sed existit iustitia: cum dicitur iusta, proprie intelligitur existens iustitia, non autem habens iustitiam. Vol. 1 p.30 L.22-24. 'Since therefore it is not properly said of the highest being that it has justice, but that it is justice; when it is called just, it is properly understood as being just and not as having justice.' Anselm realises that this involves using words of God in a different sense from that in which they are normally used (see vol. I p.28 L.5-8) and later, in ch. 65, asks himself whether, if we are using words of God in some different sense, and applying them to something which is by definition beyond our comprehension, we really know what we mean

by them. He concludes that it is possible to use language metaphorically and mean something by it, just as it is possible to find what someone looks like by looking at his reflection in a mirror.

54. Verum quomodo est summe incommutabilis, si per accidentia potest non dicam esse, sed vel intelligi variabilis? Vol. I p.43 L.4-6.

55. Cf. Nelson Pike, God and Timelessness (London, 1970) ch. 2 p.17-28.

56. Videtur ergo consequi ex praecedentibus quod iste spiritus, qui sic suo quodam mirabiliter singulari et singulariter mirabili modo est, quadam ratione solus sit, alia vero quaecunque videntur esse, huic collata non sint. Vol. I p.45 L.25 - p.46 L.1.

57. For the timelessness of God as opposed to created things, used as an argument for his truer existence, see Augustine, Tractatus in Joannis Evangelium 38.10 (PL 35 p.1679ff.). For a modern discussion, see N. Pike, God and Timelessness.

58. Quemadmodum enim illud natura praestantius est, quod per naturalem essentiam propinquius est praestantissimo: ita utique illa natura magis est, cuius essentia similior est summae essentiae. Vol. I p.49 L.21-23.
It will be noted that in this sentence Anselm shifts from talking about 'things' to talking about 'natures'. The word 'nature', according to Boethius (Liber de persona et duabus naturis ch. 1, PL 64 p.1341-2) can be used in several ways, either as a synonym of 'substance' or of 'corporeal substance', or in a broader sense of 'anything which can be said in any way to be'. Another definition of 'nature' is 'the specific difference which gives form to each thing'. Possibly, since the idea of lower beings as likenesses to or imitations of the highest being is prominent in this chapter, Anselm has the last sense of the word 'nature' in mind, with the idea that form inherent in a substance makes it resemble a higher being.

59. Vol. I p.49 L.24 - p.50 L.5.

60. Vol. I p.50 L.7-12.

61. Republic 509d6-511d5.

62. Quid enim maius in creaturis quam vita intelligens, aut quid minus potest esse quam corpus? Quae quantumlibet deficiant, et eo tendant ut non sint, tamen aliquid formae illis permanet, ut quoquo modo sint. Augustine, De Libero Arbitrio II 46 (PL 32 p.1265).

63. Nam qui mali sunt eos malos esse non abnuo; sed eosdem esse pure atque simpliciter nego.

Nam ut cadaver hominem mortuum dixeris, simpliciter vero hominem appellare non possis, ita vitiosos malos quidem esse concesserim, sed esse absolute nequeam confiteri. Est enim quod ordinem retinet servatque naturam; quod vero ab hac deficit, esse etiam, quod in sua natura situm est, derelinquit. Boethius, Consolatio Philosophiae IV, prose II. 102-113. See also Augustine, City of God XII 6. (PL 39 p.353).

64. Consequi itaque videtur quia rationalis creatura nihil tantum debet studere quam hanc imaginem sibi per naturalem potentiam impressam per voluntarium effectum exprimere. Vol. I p.78 L.14-16.

65. See F.S. Schmitt, op. cit. pp.19-22.

Notes: Chapter II

1. It was accepted, in a modified form by Descartes (Meditation III), and by Leibniz, in New Essays concerning Human Understanding; reprinted in Alvin Plantinga (ed.) The Ontological Argument (New York 1965) pp.30-49, 54-56.

2. Schopenhauer referred to it as 'a charming joke'. (Plantinga, The Ontological Argument, p.66).

3. E.g. Kant's attack on Descartes' version of the argument. (Plantinga, op. cit. pp.57-64).

4. The prevailing modern view is that Kant's criticisms are fatal to the argument. J.N. Findlay claimed that it actually constitutes a disproof of God's existence. ('Can God's Existence be Disproved?', Mind 1948, reprinted in Plantinga pp.111-22.) More recently, however, the argument, in the form in which it appears in Proslogion 3, has been defended by Norman Malcolm ('Anselm's Ontological Arguments', Philosophical Review 1960, reprinted in Plantinga, pp.136-59), and by Charles Hartshorne (Anselm's Discovery; a re-examination of the ontological proof for God's existence, La Salle 1965).

5. Karl Barth, Fides Quaerens Intellectum, (first published 1931, translated 1960).

6. Anselm Stolz, 'Anselm's Theology in the Proslogion', (Catholica 1933) translated in J. Hick and A. McGill, The Many-Faced Argument (New York 1967), pp.183-206.

7. ... considerans illud esse multorum concatenatione contextum argumentorum, coepi mecum quaerere, si forte posset inveniri unum argumentum, quod nullo alio ad se probandum quam se solo indigeret, et solum ad astruendum quia deus vere est, et quaecumque de divina substantia credimus, sufficeret. Vol. I p.93, 4-10.

8. Vol. I p.93, 10-19. See also Eadmer, Vita Anselmi I ch. 25-26 (PL 158-9, p.63).

9. Et quidem credimus te esse aliquid quo nihil maius cogitari possit. An ergo non est aliqua talis natura, quia 'dixit insipiens in corde suo: non est deus?' Sed certe ipse idem insipiens, cum audit hoc ipsum quod dico: 'aliquid quo maius nihil cogitari potest' intelligit quod audit; et quod intelligit in intellectu eius est, etiam si non intelligat illud esse. Aliud enim est rem esse in intellectu, aliud intelligere rem esse. Nam cum pictor praecogitat quae facturus est, habet quidem in intellectu, sed nondum intelligit esse quod nondum fecit. Cum vero

iam pinxit, et habet in intellectu et intelligit esse quod iam fecit. Convincitur ergo etiam insipiens esse vel in intellectu aliquid quo nihil maius cogitari potest, quia hoc cum audit intelligit, et quidquid intelligitur in intellectu est. Et certe id quo maius cogitari nequit non potest esse in solo intellectu. Si enim vel in solo intellectu est, potest cogitari esse in re, quod maius est. Si ergo id quo maius cogitari non potest, est in solo intellectu, id ipsum quo maius cogitari non potest, est quo maius cogitari potest. Sed certe hoc esse non potest. Existit ergo procul dubio aliquid quo maius cogitari non valet, et in intellectu et in re. Vol. I p. 101 L.4 - p.102 L.3.

10. Barth, Fides quaerens intellectum, pp.73-89, and Part II, passim.

11. Étienne Gilson, 'Sens et nature de l'argument de Saint Anselme', in Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge 1934, pp.5-51. See pp.25-7.

12. Augustine, De Libero Arbitrio II 47. (PL 32 p.1266).

13. Hunc plane fatebor Deum, quo nihil superius esse constiterit. Ibid. II 14 (PL 32 p.1248).

14. ... nec quisquam inveniri potest qui hoc Deum credat esse quo melius aliquid est. Itaque hoc omnes Deum consentiunt esse, quod caeteris rebus omnibus anteponunt. Augustine, De Doctrina Christiana I 7. (PL 35 p.22).
Cf. also Confessions VII 6. Neque enim ulla anima umquam potuit, poteritve cogitare aliquod quod sit te melius, qui summum et optimum bonum es. (PL 32 p.735).

15. Deum rerum omnium principem bonum esse communis humanorum conceptio probat animorum. Nam cum nihil deo melius excogitari queat, id quo melius nihil est bonum esse quis dubitet? Boethius, Consolatio Philosophiae III, prose X, L.23-27.

16. The argument for God's existence from the general consensus of mankind was a favourite of the Stoics. Cf. E. Vernon Arnold, Roman Stoicism (London, 1911) pp.143, 223-4.

17. Quid est deus? Mens universi. Quid est deus? Quod vides totum et quod non vides totum. Sic demum magnitudo illi sua redditur, qua nihil maius cogitari potest, si solus est omnia, si opus suum et intra et extra tenet. Seneca, Naturales Quaestiones I, pref. 13. See Schmitt, note on Proslogion 2 (vol. I, p.102).

18. Cf. Arnold, op. cit. pp.218-20.

19. Vol. I, p.101 L.15. Cf. also Responsio Editoris ch. 2 (Vol. I, p.132 L.14-21).

20. Realism was being advocated in the ninth century by Fridugis, a monk at the court of Charlemagne, who claimed that every word, to be significant, must refer to some one substance (Epistola de nihilo et tenebris, PL 105, p.751-6, translated in John F. Wippel and Allan B. Wolter, Medieval Philosophy (New York, 1969, p.104-8), and by Remigius of Auxerre (see Maurice de Wulf, History of Medieval Philosophy (6th ed. London, 1951), vol. I, p.144). Anselm's use of the term moderni to describe its opponents (Epistola de incarnatione verbi ch. 4 [vol. II p.17 L.22]), indicates that realism was a well-established theory in the eleventh century. It tended to be identified with the cause of theological orthodoxy; a younger contemporary of Anselm, Odo of Tournai (d.1113), used the theory that there is one substance 'man' in which all men share as a justification for the doctrine of original sin. (De Wulf, op. cit. p.146-7.)

21. ... Roscelinus clericus dicit in deo tres personas esse tres res ab invicem separatas ... et tres deos vere posse dici, si usus admitteret. Anselm, Ep. 136 (vol. III p.279 L.4-7).

22. ... illi utique nostri temporis dialectici, immo dialecticae haeretici, qui non nisi flatum vocis putant universales esse substantias, et qui colorem non aliud queunt intelligere quam corpus, nec sapientiam hominis aliud quam animam, prorsus a spiritualium quaestionum disputatione sunt exsufflandi. In eorum quippe animabus ratio, quae et princeps et iudex debet omnium esse quae sunt in homine, sic est in imaginationibus corporalibus obvoluta, ut ex eis se non possit evolvere, nec ab ipsis ea quae ipsa sola et pura contemplari debet, valeat discernere. Qui enim nondum intelligit quomodo plures homines in specie sint unus homo: qualiter in illa secretissima et altissima natura comprehendet quomodo plures personae, quarum singula quaeque perfectus est deus, sint unus deus? Et cuius mens obscura est ad diiudicandum inter equum suum et colorem eius: qualiter discernet inter unum deum et plures relationes eius? Vol. II, p.9 L.21 - p.10 L.9.

23. Vol. I, p.101 L.10-13.

24. Cf. De Libero Arbitrio II 45 (PL 32 p.1265), and Sermo 117 ch. 3 (PL 37, p.662). See also Boethius, Liber de Trinitate ch. 2 (PL 64, p.1250).

25. Liber Pro Insipiente ch. 3 (vol. I, p.126, L.14-28).

26. Tractatus in Johannis Evangelium I 17 (PL 35, p.1387).

27. Liber pro insipiente ch. 4 (vol. I, p.126, L.29 - p.127, L.24). P.127, L.13 '... secundum vocem, secundum quam solam aut vix aut numquam potest ullum cogitari verum.'

28. Aliter enim cogitatur res cum vox eam significans cogitatur, aliter cum id ipsum quod res est intelligitur. Vol. I, p.103, L.18-19.

29. Gaunilo, Liber pro insipiente ch. 4 (vol. I, p.127, L.16).

30. Vol. II, p.9, L.22.

31. Peter Abelard, Glosses on Porphyry, trans. in R. McKeon, Selections from medieval philosophers vol. I, pp.208-58. Cf. M.T. Beonio-Brocchieri Fumagalli, The Logic of Abelard (Dordrecht, 1969) p.52-60.
See also the comments of the twelfth-century writer John of Salisbury, who distinguishes among contemporary dialecticians those who describe universals as voces and those, like Abelard, who describe them as sermones, (Metalogicon Bk. II, ch. 17, ed. J.A. Giles, Oxford, 1848 [reprinted 1969] vol. 5, p.90).

32. Illo itaque modo potest cogitari deus non esse, isto vero minime. Nullus quippe intelligens id quod deus est, potest cogitare quia deus non est, licet haec verba dicat in corde, aut sine ulla aut cum aliqua extranea significatione. Vol. I, p.103, L.20 - p.104, L.2.

33. See Responsio Editoris ch. 9 (vol. I, p.138 L.15-27).

34. e.g. by Kant, who said that existence is not a real predicate; hence it cannot confer value on an object. (Plantinga, The Ontological Argument pp.57-64).

35. Republic 509d6-511d5.

36. ἔχει δέ τι αὐτοῦ τῷ ἕν πως καὶ τῷ ὄν πως ἕκαστον εἶναι, καὶ μετέχει δὲ καὶ εἴδους, ὡς οὖν μετέχει τούτων, οὕτω καὶ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ. Plotinus, Ennead I, 7.2.2-4.

37. εἰ δὴ τοιαῦτα ἔστι τὰ ὄντα καὶ τὸ ἐπέκεινα τῶν ὄντων, οὐκ ἂν ἐν τοῖς οὖσι τὸ κακὸν ἐνείη, οὐδὲ ἐν τῷ ἐπέκεινα τῶν ὄντων· ἀγαθὰ γὰρ ταῦτα· λείπεται τοίνυν, εἴπερ ἔστιν, ἐν τοῖς μὴ οὖσιν εἶναι οἷον εἶδός τι τοῦ μὴ ὄντος ὄν ... Plotinus, Ennead I 8.3.1-5.

38. Timaeus 50a4-51b6, 52a9-52d1.

39. Ergo si omni bono privabuntur, omnino nulla erunt: ergo quamdiu sunt, bona sunt· ergo quaecumque sunt, bona sunt, Confessions VII 18. (PL 32, p.743).

40. City of God XII 3 (PL 39, p.350).

41. Quod utique sic vere est, ut nec cogitari possit non esse. Nam potest cogitari esse aliquid, quod non possit cogitari non esse; quod maius est quam quod non esse cogitari potest. Quare si id quo maius nequit cogitari, potest cogitari non esse: id ipsum, quo maius cogitari nequit, non est id quo maius cogitari nequit; quod convenire non potest. Sic ergo vere est aliquid quo maius cogitari non potest, ut nec cogitari possit non esse. (Vol. I, p.102, L.6-p.103, L.2.)
It has been recently argued that this passage constitutes a separate proof independent of that of Proslogion 2 (see D.P. Henry, The Proslogion Proofs, Philosophical Quarterly 1955, pp.147-52). Malcolm and Hartshorne (see note 4 above) take this as the definitive statement of the proof, and ch. 2 as an unsuccessful first attempt. However, though the passage can be seen as a logically independent argument, there is nothing to indicate that Anselm intended it as such; he considered that he had found one single argument to prove God's existence and attributes (see Prologue, vol. I, p.93, L.6-19).

42. Solus igitur verissime omnium, et ideo maxime omnium habes esse: quia quidquid aliud est non sic vere, et idcirco minus habet esse. Vol. I, p.103, L.7-9.

43. Boethius, In Librum De Interpretatione II, Bk. III (PL 64, p.510D-511A.)

44. Ibid. Bk. VI (PL 64, p.617-9).

45. Plato, Sophist 259e5-6.

46. Ibid. 253c6-253e1.

47. Ibid. 263a8-263d8.

48. Vol. I, p.131, L.2-5, p.133, L.15-20.

49. Vol. I, p.131, L.18 - p.132, L.2. Cf. also Proslogion ch. 18 and 22 (Vol. I, p.114, L.18-115, L.4, p.116, L.15-p.117, L.2.)

50. Parmenides 137c-142a.

51. See F.M. Cornford, Plato and Parmenides (London, 1939) preface p.v-vi, pp.151-4. Cf. Plotinus, Ennead V 1.8.

52. Timaeus 37c-38c.

53. Phaedo 80b, Republic 611b5-7.

54. Summa Theologica 1a:3:4; 1a:13:11.

55. Vol. I, p.130, L.12-16.

56. Vol. I, p.137, L.11-30.

57. Republic 532d1-535a1.

58. Ibid. 509d1-511d5, 510b6, 511b6-7.

59. De Veritate ch. 7. (Vol. I, p.185-6).

60. Vol. I, p.132, L.5-7. Cf. Plato, Republic 507a-509b10.

61. See note 8, above.

62. Vol. I, p.101, L.3, p.104, L.5-7.

63. Vol. I, p.104, L.11-17.

64. Cf. Hartshorne, Anselm's Discovery, pp.99-106.

65. De Musica Bk. VI (PL 32, pp.1162-94), Contra Academicos III 37-43 (PL 32, pp.954-8), De Libero Arbitrio II 20-39 (PL 32, pp.1251-62).

66. Cf. the passage quoted from the Epistola de Incarnatione Verbi: ... Ratio ... sic est in imaginationibus corporalibus obvoluta, ut ex eis se non possit evolvere, nec ab ipsis ea quae ipsa sola et pura contemplari debet, valeat discernere. (See above, pp.27-8 and note 22).

67. τὸ μὲν δὴ νοήσει μετὰ λόγου περιληπτόν, ἀεὶ κατὰ ταὐτὰ ὄν, τὸ δ'αὖ δόξῃ μετ' αἰσθήσεως ἀλόγου δοξαστόν, γιγνόμενον καὶ ἀπολλύμενον, ὄντως δὲ οὐδέποτε ὄν. Plato, Timaeus 27d6-28a4.

68. Summa Theologica 1a:2:1.

Notes: Chapter III

1. D.P. Henry, The Logic of St. Anselm (Oxford, 1967), ch. 5 pp.134-80.

2. Vol. I pp.33 L.9-23.

3. ... tu quoque in Monologio tuo ... (vol. I p.176 L.6). Haec tu in Monologio tuo (Ibid. 1.19).

4. Vol. I p.176 L.4-20.

5. Quia nihil est verum nisi participando veritatem; et ideo veri veritas in ipso vero est, res vero enuntiata non est in enuntiatione vera. Unde non eius veritas, sed causa veritatis dicenda est. Vol. I p.177 L.16-18. For the subject of a proposition being described as the cause of its truth, see Boethius, In Categorias Aristotelis IV (PL 64, p.285ff.).

6. De illa autem veritate, quam (oratio) non habere non potest, postea dicemus. Vol. I p.179 L.27-28.

7. Plato, Republic 514a1-521b10. See also Theaetetus 172c3-177c1.

8. Vol. I p.181 L.30 - p.182 L.5.

9. Sicut enim ignis cum calefacit veritatem facit, quia ab eo accepit a quo habet esse: ita et haec oratio, scilicet 'dies est' veritatem facit, cum significat diem esse, sive dies sit sive non sit; quoniam hoc naturaliter accepit facere. Vol. I p.183 L.3-6.

10. Sed non tantum debemus inhaerere improprietati verborum veritatem tegenti, quantum inhiare proprietati veritatis sub multimodo genere locutionis latenti. Vol. I p.235 L.10-12.
See also De Casu Diaboli chs. 11 and 12 (esp. vol. I p.250 L.21 - p.251 L.18, p.253 L.18 - p.254 L.9) and Cur Deus Homo II 17 (vol. II p.122 L.25 - p.124 L.2).

11. Augustine, Contra Academicos II 26 (PL 32 p.947-8).

12. ... hoc faciunt quod debent, et ideo rectitudinem et veritatem faciunt. Vol. I p.185 L.1-2.

13. an putas aliquid esse aliquando aut alicubi quod non sit in summa veritate, et quod inde non acceperit quod est inquantum est, aut quod possit aliud esse quam quod ibi est? Vol. I p.185 L.11-13.

14. Vol. I p.185 L.22-30.

15. Plato, Phaedo 97b8-99d1.

16. Timaeus 29d7-30a8.

17. Cf. Leibniz, Discourse on Metaphysics 19-20: Monadology 53-55.

18. Timaeus 28a6-29b1.

19. Plotinus, Ennead II 9., esp. chs. 4 and 8.

20. e.g. Ennead I 6.2.11, V 1.11.15.

21. De Libero Arbitrio II chs. 33 and 49 (PL 32 p.1259, 1267). Cf. also Sermo 141 ch. 1 (PL 37 p.776).

22. ... veritatem quae est in rerum essentia ... Vol. I p.188 L.29.

23. In rerum quoque existentia est similiter vera vel falsa significatio, quoniam eo ipso quia est, dicit se debere esse. Vol. I p.189 L.24-25.

24. Ut cum veritas quae est in rerum existentia sit effectum summae veritatis, ipsa quoque causa est veritatis quae cogitationis est, et eius quae est in propositione; et istae duae veritates nullius sunt causa veritatis. Vol. I p.190 L.8-12. See above, note 5.

25. Plato, Republic 509d1-511d5.

26. Vol. I p.191 L.19-20.

27. Et quoniam de rectitudine mente sola perceptibili loquimur, invicem sese definiunt veritas et rectitudo et iustitia. Vol. I p.192 L.7-8.

28. 'rectitudo voluntatis propter se servata'. Vol. I p.192 L.7-8.

29. Vol. I p.198 L.31-4.

30. Republic 478d7-480a13.

31. Cf. Phaedo 74d4-75a2; Republic 484c6-484d8.

32. Augustine had accepted the definition of free will as 'power to do good or evil' in the De Libero Arbitrio (Bk. I 35, PL 32 p.1240), but raised the same problems in his later works (e.g. Contra Julianum opus imperfectum I 81-82, PL 45 pp.1103-4).

33. Vol. I p.188 L.18-22.

34. Denique nec libertas nec pars libertatis est potestas peccandi. Vol. I p.208 L.11-12.

35. Cf. Proslogion ch. 7 (vol. I p.105 L.9 - p.106 L.2); De Casu Diaboli ch. 12 (vol. I p.253 L.28 - p.254 L.2); Cur Deus Homo II 17 (vol. I p.122 L.25 - p.124 L.2).

36. Boethius, Consolation of Philosophy IV, prose II; Plato, Gorgias 507b8-c5; cf. the description of the despotic man in the Republic (577c1-580a7).

37. τὸ γὰρ ἀκούσιον ἀπαγωγὴ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἠναγκασμένον, εἰ πρὸς τοῦτο φέροιτο, ὁ μὴ ἀγαθὸν αὐτῷ, καὶ δουλεύει τοῦτο, ὁ μὴ κύριόν ἐστιν ἐπὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἐλθεῖν ... Plotinus, Ennead VI 8.4. pp.15-18.

38. Potestas in Boethius usually means an unrealised potentiality, while possibilitas can mean either a realised or an unrealised possibility. Cf. In Librum De Interpretatione II, Bk. VI (PL 64 pp.616-7).

39. potestas servandi rectitudinem voluntatis propter ipsam rectitudinem (Vol. I p.225 L.10).

40. De Libertate Arbitrii chs. 3 and 4 (vol. I p.210 L.25 - p.214 L.12).

41. Vol. I p.233 L.6-18, p.234 L.29 - p.235 L.7.

42. Vol. I p.234 L.6-28. Cf. Augustine, De Genesi ad litteram IV 22 (PL 34, p.304). See the discussion above (p.44) on 'proper' and 'improper' uses of language.

43. Aperte nunc video quia sicut bonum et esse non est nisi a deo, ita non est a deo nisi bonum et esse. Vol. I p.235 L.6-7.

44. Vol. I p.245 L.21 - p.246 L.17. This constitutes a departure from Augustine's answer to the problem in the De Libero Arbitrio. Augustine had said that neither the will itself nor the objects it desires can be bad, and that moral evil consists in the 'turning' (conversio) of the will from a greater to a lesser good. (De Libero Arbitrio II 53, PL 32, p.1269.) Cf. above ch. I, p.14, note 40.

45. Vol. I p.246 L.26. The description of evil as privatio boni, and hence as an absence of being, occurs in Augustine, (Confessions III 12, PL 32, p.688; City of God XI 22, PL 39, p.335). In the logic of Boethius, 'privative' statements ascribe to people qualities such as injustice, which are considered to be negative qualities. (In Librum de Interpretatione I, Bk. I, PL 64, pp.344B-345A.)

46. Quam cum deseruit, magnum aliquid perdidit, et nihil pro

ea nisi privationem eius quae nullam habet essentiam, quam iniustitiam nominamus, suscepit. Vol. I p.247 L.1-3.

47. Vol. I p.247 L.17 - p.248 L.30.

48. Vol. I p.250 L.21 - p.251 L.2.

49. Ergo in quantum (voluntas) essentia est, bonum aliquid est ... Vol. I p.257 L.30.

50. Vol. I p.255 L.2-15.

51. Vol. I p.264 L.3-18.

52. Cf. Augustine, De Libero Arbitrio III 15 (PL 32 p.1278).

53. Vol. I p.260 L.5-17.

54. Cf. E. Vernon Arnold, Roman Stoicism pp.282-3.

55. Sufficienter video iniustitiam non esse nisi absentiam iustitiae, ubi debet esse iustitia. Vol. I p.262 L.5-6.

56. Vol. I p.265 L.26 - p.266 L.2, cf. p.264 L.13-18.

57. Plotinus, Ennead I 8.3. 1-5.

58. Ennead I 8. 3-5 and 8.

59. Vol. I p.275 L.30-31.

60. City of God XII 6-7 (PL 39 pp.353-5).

61. Cf. Plotinus, Ennead I 8.4.28-32 and 9.19-26.

62. Confessions VII 18 (PL 32, p.743). See ch. II above, p.32-4.

63. Confessions VII 13-15 (PL 32, p.740-2). For a discussion of the evidence for identifying these 'books of the Platonists' with certain treatises of Plotinus, see Paul Henry, Plotin et l'occident (Louvain, 1934) ch. 3 (pp.63-120).

64. τρίτον δὲ αὖ γένος ὂν τὸ τῆς χώρας ἀεί .... ἕδραν δὲ παρέχον ὅσα ἔχει γένεσιν πᾶσιν, αὐτὸ δὲ μετ' ἀναισθησίας ἁπτὸν λογισμῷ τινι νόθῳ, μόγις πιστόν... Plato, Timaeus 52a8-b2. Cf. Theaetetus 176a5-b1.

65. Cf. Timaeus 29b-c; Republic 476e6-480a13.

66. Plotinus, Ennead I 8.

67. Plotinus seems uncertain over the question of whether the 'fall' of souls into involvement with matter is a willed action and therefore blameworthy, or the result of an

inevitable process. E.G. Ennead IV 8.5.

68. Cf. Augustine, De Trinitate VIII 2-5 (PL 40, pp.947-51).

Notes: Conclusion

1. H. Diels and W. Kranz, (ed.) Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker (Dublin/Zürich, 6th ed. repr. 1968) vol. I pp.217-46.

2. Cf. De Wulf, History of mediaeval philosophy, vol. I pp.173-88.

3. Patrologia Graeca Latine vol. II, ed. Migne, Paris, 1856. The works of this writer first became known in the west in the ninth century. Translations or commentaries were made by John Scotus Erigena, Hugh of St. Victor, Robert Grosseteste, Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, and others. (cf. De Wulf, op. cit. vol. I p.104.)

4. Cf. G. Becker, Catalogi bibliothecarum antiqui (Bonn, 1885) pp.257-66.

5. On the Platonic and Neoplatonic sources of the Consolation of Philosophy, see Pierre Courcelle, 'Neuplatonismus in der Consolatio Philosophiae' in W. Beierwaltes (ed.) Platonismus in der Philosophie des Mittelalters (Darmstadt, 1969) pp. 73-109.

6. Cf. Confessions X 6.8-10 (PL 32, pp.782-3).

7. The 'modern dialecticians', attacked by Peter Damian (De divina omnipotentia, PL 145 pp.595-622, trans. in part in Wippel & Wolter, Medieval Philosophy pp.143-52), as well as by Anselm, may have included, besides Roscelin, Berengar of Tours, who had been involved in a controversy with Lanfranc over transubstantiation, (cf. R.W. Southern, St. Anselm and his biographer pp.20-6). See also De Wulf, op. cit. vol. I p.151.

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