CONTRADICTION AS THE WAY TO VISION IN ANSELM'S *PROSLOGION*

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ABSTRACT

In the *Proslogion*'s quest for God, reaching vision of God is not a matter of bridging subject and object, but of coming to see what is already present at the journey's beginning. The quest, as a single continuous explication of God as "that than which nothing greater can be thought", follows a pattern whereby the seeker finds God, loses vision, and finds God again under a new form. The treatise depends upon distinctions between three forms of apprehension: faith, reason, and intellect. Anselm establishes the necessity and limitations of reason, which is essential to seeking. Intellect's government of reason means that the contradictions, incomprehensibility, and loss of vision into which reason leads are not signs of the quest's failure, but essential moments constitutive of the journey into vision of God. The quest begins and ends in God who is indivisible unity and supreme good, inclusive of otherness and infinity.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

Pros.	*Proslogion*
Mono.	*Monologion*
CDH.	*Cur Deus Homo*
Conf.	*Confessiones*
VSA.	*Vita Sancti Anselmi*

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The *Proslogion* is a quest for union with God written from the perspective of one seeking God. Desire begins the search, and seeking, to which reason is essential, moves the quest's argument. However, reason, which divides and separates, functions in a way that leads to loss of vision and prevents the seeker from finding what he seeks. This makes reason dependent on other forms of knowing, namely, faith and intellect. Throughout the *Proslogion* argument, the work of discursive reason leads the quest through a series of movements which at certain points give understanding and at other places establish distinctions which prevent knowledge, as well as lead into contradiction and incomprehensibility. Because the journey takes place entirely within God who restores reason by the government of intellect, the contradictions, incomprehensibility, and loss of vision into which seeking leads are not signs of the quest's failure.

The *Proslogion* follows a cyclical pattern of seeking, finding God, losing vision, and subsequently finding God again under a new form. There is a primary instance of the pattern covering the course of the entire treatise, as well as smaller instances of the same form, including the *Prooemium*'s account of Anselm's attempt to find the one argument (*unum argumentum*) of the *Proslogion*. In order to understand how this pattern emerges, we must distinguish between the forms of apprehension on which the quest depends, namely, faith, reason and intellect. We find this distinction and its terms in the governing rule which is the *Proslogion*'s alternative title: "Faith Seeking Understanding" (*Fides Quaerens Intellectum*).[1] This introduction will provide important background considerations, as well as fundamentals for understanding the structure of the *Proslogion*, including a preliminary account of the three forms of apprehension: faith, reason, and intellect.

[1] *Proslogion*, *Prooemium*: "I gave to each its title, the first being called 'An Example of Meditation on the Meaning of Faith', and the sequel 'Faith Seeking Understanding'" (*Unicuique suum dedi titulum, ut prius Exemplum meditandi de ratione fidei, et sequens Fides quaerens intellectum diceretur*). Translations from Latin are my own, and are assisted by the translations listed in the bibliography.

1.1 Anselm's Life and Sources

Born in Aosta in 1033, Anselm left home around 1056 and, after three years of travel, was attracted to the Monastery at Bec by the reputation of Lanfranc.[2] For our purposes, Lanfranc's influence on Anselm teaches us two things. Lanfranc was a famous teacher of the liberal arts, responsible for growth and prosperity of the monastery. It is thanks to Lanfranc's work building the library at Bec that Anselm had access to his sources.[3] Secondly, Lanfranc was the chief ecclesiastical advisor to William Duke of Normandy. This is likely what put him in the position to become the main defendant, against Berengar, of the church's Eucharistic decision, which became doctrine in 1059.[4] The Eucharistic position Lanfranc defended is the substantial presence of Christ at the altar: "The question was whether the presence was real and substantial in something like the Aristotelian sense of substance, as Lanfranc and the Council maintained, or real but not substantial in the Aristotelian sense, as Berengar maintained." [5] Anselm arrives at Bec the year of Lanfranc's defence of the Church's doctrine. The substantial presence of Christ, the God-Man, is central to Anselm's teaching, and will be important for our consideration of the *Proslogion*. Hankey judges: "To be present body and soul by thought, sense, and feeling at and with the sacrifice of Christ: this is everything for Anselm."[6]

In his treatises, Anselm mentions only two sources by name. In his earliest work, *De Grammatico*, written not long after his arrival at the monastery at Bec, Anselm cites Aristotle eleven times. Subsequently, he cites Aristotle once more in *Cur Deus Homo*. Anselm mentions Augustine a total of three times, once in the *Monologion* and twice in *De Incarnatione Verbi*. Anselm's correspondences include references to Gregory the

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[2] Richard W Southern, *Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 3-11.
[3] For a list of Patristic works which Lanfranc quotes and likely had access to, see Southern, *Saint Anselm*, 57. For a far fuller account of Lanfranc's sources and his conflict with Berengar, see Wayne J. Hankey, "'Magis... Pro Nostra Sentencia': John Wyclif, his mediaeval Predecessors and reformed Successors, and a pseudo-Augustinian Eucharistic Decretal," *Augustiniana* [Institutum Historicum Augustianum Lovanii], 45, fasc. 3-4 (1995): 213-245.
[4] Southern, *Saint Anselm*, 22-24.
[5] *ibid*, 44.
[6] Hankey, "St. Anselm and the Mediaeval Doctors," in *Atonement and Sacrifice: Doctrine and Worship*, ed. G.E. Eayrs (Charlottetown: St. Peter Publications, 1991): 62. See George H. Williams, "The Sacramental Presuppositions of Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo*", *Church History*, xxvi (1957): 245-74.

Great, Bede, Lanfranc, and John Cassian.[7] Logan identifies textual evidence for Anselm's access to Boethius' first *Commentary on De Interpretatione, De Consolatione Philosophiae*, two commentaries on Porphyry's *Isagoge*, as well as his theological tractates *De Trinitate* and *Contra Eutychen et Nestorium*.[8]

The most important influences on Anselm's writings are the Bible and St. Augustine. The monastery at Bec was of the Order of St. Benedict and daily life of the monks was centered around the Divine offices and *lectio divina*. The monastic *Opus Dei* required the memorization of the Psalms, which were chanted in full every week.[9] Eadmer, Anselm's biographer, recounts Anselm's reading of Scripture: "He applied his whole mind to this end, that according to his faith he might be found worthy to see with the eye of reason those things in the Holy Scriptures which, as he felt, lay hidden in deep obscurity."[10] On Anselm's knowledge of the Psalms, Logan writes, "He imbibed them, and when he came to write, their imagery and language infused his thinking."[11] With this in mind, it is possible to see *Proslogion* II-IV as a meditation on Psalm 53:1 and 14:1, both of which recount the fool's denial of God.

In the *Prooemium* to the *Monologion*, Anselm defends himself against accusations of novelty and falsehood, and urges such an accuser to compare his work to Augustine's *De Trinitate*, saying that he cannot find in his work "anything inconsistent with the writings of the Catholic Fathers—especially with Blessed Augustine's writings."[12] Crouse comments:

> The comparison which Anselm invites, between his *Monologion* and the *De Trinitate*, reveals at once a striking difference in methodology. Both seek the

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[7] For a list of Anselm's named sources, in both his treatises and correspondences, as well as a list of texts Anselm likely had access to, see Ian Logan, *Reading Anselm's* Proslogion*: The History of Anselm's Argument and Its Significance Today* (Farnham & Burlington: Ashgate, 2009), 7-15.
[8] Logan, *Reading Anselm's* Proslogion, 15.
[9] See Southern, *Saint Anselm*, 94: The "repetition of the whole Psalter once a week, and of several additional Psalms once a day, was the central feature of the monastic *Opus Dei*."
[10] Eadmer, *The Life of St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury/ Vita Sancti Anselmi archiepiscopi Cantuariensis*, ed. & trans. R. Southern (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1963), 12: "Quapropter summo studio animum ad hoc intenderat, quatinus iuxta fidem suam mentis ratione mereretur percipere, quae in ipsis sensit multa caligine tecta latere."
[11] Logan, *Reading Anselm's* Proslogion, 2.
[12] Anselm, *Mono.*, *Prooemium*; In Epistle 77 to Lanfranc, Anselm provides the same defense of the *Monologion* against a letter from Lanfranc, now lost, which presumably challenges Anselm to name his sources.

> *intellectus fidei*; both seek to provide formal and convincing demonstrations of what is believed; but, in terms of method, the arguments are very different.[13]

While Anselm's method is *sola ratione*, Augustine insists that reasoning must take its starting point in biblical authority. Augustine's *De Trinitate*, whose first four books are an exegesis of sacred scripture, "is a continuous dialogue between the word of God, spoken *foris* in the Scripture and the Church, and the word of God *intus*, as the inner illumination of the reasoning Soul." For Augustine, Crouse explains, "no reasoning from nature, or from the nature of the soul, no rational attempt to transcend nature, can succeed without that *initium fidei*." [14] In contrast,

> Anselm certainly presupposes Scripture and the doctrine of the Christian creed, but, in terms of *method*, the argument is *sola ratione*, beginning from a consideration of those relative good which are the objects of human desire. The substance of the argument has precedents in Augustine, no doubt, especially in the early dialogues, but it is much more reminiscent of the Platonism of Boethius, in Book III of the *De consolatione philosophiae* and in the *Quomodo substantiae*. Yet the rational ambitions of the *Monologion* go far beyond the Boethian demonstration of the primacy of the providential Good, to prove the Trinity of Persons, even to those who do not know that truth, either because of not hearing it, or because of not believing it. [15]

Anselm's deep meditation on Augustine brought about a simplification and systematization of the teaching. The *Proslogion* provides the strongest example of this. We see the difference between Augustine and Anselm in the *Proslogion*'s use of the name for God, "that than which nothing greater can be thought", which has precedents in both Augustine and Boethius.[16] Crouse says that "the grounds of the [*Proslogion*] argument are thus present in the Augustinian tradition, but only Anselm draws out completely the implications of those presuppositions." [17] Crouse calls "highly problematic" the position of scholars who judge that Anselm is "deplatonising" Augustine. In my view Anselm brings out the Neoplatonic elements underlying Augustine's thought.

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[13] Robert Crouse, "Anselm of Canterbury and Medieval Augustinianisms," *Toronto Journal of Theology*, 3 (1987): 60–68 at 62.
[14] Crouse, "Anselm of Canterbury and Medieval Augustinianisms": 62.
[15] *ibid*: 63.
[16] *ibid*: 68, note 33.
[17] *ibid*: 63.

The influence of Neoplatonism on Anselm,[18] as well as apophatic elements of Anselm's thought,[19] have been well established. However, the extent of these influences on Anselm, as well as their importance for understanding Anselm's work, is still a matter of debate. While there is no evidence that Anselm had access to work of Plotinus, or that we must look beyond Augustine to account for the Neoplatonic elements of Anselm's thought, it is worth noting that the God of the *Proslogion* exhibits fundamental similarities to the One beyond being of Plotinus. For example, the *Proslogion* teaches that God is both intelligible as the supreme being, and beyond being and intelligibility as "unity itself, unable to be divided by any intellect."[20] We find too that God is "before and beyond all things" (*ante et ultra omnia*).[21] We may account for these Neoplatonic elements of Anselm's thought as a result of Anselm's deep assimilation of the thought of Augustine, for whose conversion, we know from the *Confessions,* Plotinus was essential. Sweeney describes the project which Anselm shares with Augustine:

> Anselm's corpus, from his earliest prayer to last treatise, is a single project in which knowledge of self and God are inextricably linked. These are not for Anselm, as they were not for Augustine, different projects but one and the same: the project (in a literal, etymological sense) is union of the self with God.[22]

1.2 Desire and Anxiety

The quest for union with God depends upon the excitement of desire. Anselm gives *Proslogion* I the heading "The arousing of the mind to contemplating God,"[23] a chapter which concludes with the prayer: "Let me seek you in desiring you, let me desire

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[18] See Alexandre Koyré, *L'idée de Dieu dans la philosophie de St. Anselme* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1923); Kurt Flasch, "Der philosophische Ansatz des Anselm von Canterbury im Monologion und sein Verhältnis zum augustinischen Neuplatonismus," *Analecta Anselmiana* (1970): 1-43; Katherin A Rogers, *The Neoplatonic Metaphysics and Epistemology of Anselm of Canterbury* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997); Dermot Moran, "Neoplatonic and Negative Theological Elements in Anselm's Argument for the Existence of God in the *Proslogion*," *Pensée de l'Un Dans l'Histoire de la Philosophie*, ed. J.-M. Narbonne and A. Reckerman (Paris: Vrin/Laval, 2004), 198-229.

[19] See Paul Evdokimov, "L'aspect apophatique de l'argument de saint Anselme", *Spicilegium Beccense* I, Vrin, (1959): 233-258; Jean-Luc Marion, "Is the Ontological Argument Ontological? The Argument According to Anselm and Its Metaphysical Interpretation According to Kant." *The Journal of the History of Philosophy* 30/2 (1992): 201-218.

[20] *Pros*., XVIII: "ipsa unitas, nullo intellectu divisibilis."

[21] *Pros*., XX: "tu es ante et ultra omnia"

[22] Eileen Sweeney, *Anselm of Canterbury and the Desire for the Word* (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2012), 7.

[23] *Pros*., *Prooemium*: "Excitatio mentis ad contemplandum deum"

you in seeking you."[24] Desire establishes the urgent expectation of finding its satisfaction. The entire course of the quest depends upon an intense desire which puts the seeker's being and well-being at stake in the success or failure of the quest. Anselm desires the total presence of God and the total satisfaction found only in God; he desires vision of God's face, knowledge of the Divine substance, and sensual experience of God everywhere and in everything.

With powerful desire comes intense anxiety and despair when the quest's goal appears unachievable. Seeking, in its course, leads to a heightened state of anxiety which culminates in a crisis that brings about the seeker's relinquishment of the self to God, and the restoration of the human by God. Anxiety plays a central role in Anselm's thought from his earliest works, the *Prayers and Meditations*: "Anselmian introspection led to increased anxiety, not to an increased understanding of human powers. Anxiety was the constant refrain of his earlier spiritual writings… The need first to intensify, and then to seek an escape from, anxiety was his primary message…"[25] Not long after completing his *Prayers and Meditations* in 1075, Anselm wrote the *Monologion* (1076) and *Proslogion* (1077/8).[26] Anselm's later theological treatises have their origin in *Prayers and Meditations*:

> The combination of these two activities, penitential self-abasement and the approach to a final state of contemplation through meditation…is, therefore, the starting point of his theology: the ascent towards contemplation cannot begin until self-abasement has obliterated self-will.[27]

Anxiety and despair are essential to the only way to vision: the relinquishment of the self to God. For Anselm, the human does not possess certainty grounded in a rational and indubitable self. Trego writes:

> Il n'y a pas chez Anselme de sphère d'intériorité pure jouissant d'un accès immédiat, et de ce fait indubitable, à soi. La structure de la substance, ainsi construite par exclusion de la notion de sujet, et reprise pour penser le soi de

[24] *Pros.*, I: "Quaeram te desiderando, desiderem quaerendo."
[25] Southern, *Saint Anselm*, 85.
[26] Southern, *Saint Anselm*, 109. According to Southern, 92: "the first notice we have of the existence of Anselm's *Prayers* is in a letter he wrote to Adelaide, a daughter of William the Conqueror, in about 1072."
[27] *ibid*, 104.

> l'homme, ne permet pas de penser un connaissance de soi spécifique par rapport à la connaissance des autres choses. [28]

The centrality of anxiety and despair teach us that the only way to union with God is through God's restoration of the human; the very attempts of the human to help himself intensify the problem. The incapacity to find God leads to anxiety and despair and shows the seeker his dependence on God. When the seeker, having discovered his dependence on God, asks for help, God establishes and preserves.

1.3 Faith

For Anselm, faith is both a form of apprehension, and has determinate content, as given by the catholic church. According to the formula *fides quaerens intellectum,* faith has priority in respect to intellect; one must begin in faith in order to reach intellectual understanding. *Proslogion* I sheds light on this formula: "For I do not seek to understand so that I may believe; but I believe so that I may understand (*credo ut intelligam*). For I believe this also, that 'unless I believe, I shall not understand."[29] The *credo ut intelligam* is a slight variant of Isaiah 7:9, which Augustine quotes as "Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis."[30] It teaches that the movement from faith to intellect is a movement from belief to intellect.

The temporal priority of belief over understanding is necessary because of the inadequacy of human knowing to Divine truth. Belief knows the indistinct whole which reason seeks to understand. The seeker recognizes that his intellect is "in no way" (*nullatenus*) comparable to God's truth, which he desires to understand "to some extent" (*aliquatenus*).[31] If the human does not begin with a preliminary knowledge of the whole, there is no object to understand *aliquatenus*. Divine truth exceeds complete comprehension, but by belief mind knows indistinctly the existence of God given by the

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[28] See Kristell Trego, "Saint Anselme ou le sujet hors le soi," ed. O. Boulnois, *Généalogies du sujet: de saint Anselme à Malebranche* (Paris : Vrin, 2007) : 19–42.
[29] *Pros*., I: "Neque enim quæro intelligere ut credam, sed credo ut intelligam. Nam et hoc credo: quia nisi credidero, non intelligam."
[30] Augustine takes this translation from the African Latin text. The Septuagint reads "Nisi permanebitis, non intelligetis." Augustine and Anselm understand both translations to teach the same thing. See H. Liebeshütz "Anselm of Canterbury: the philosophical interpretation of faith," *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval History,* ed. A.H. Armstrong, (Cambridge: University Press, 2007), 619.
[31] *Pros*., I.

content of faith. Belief thus provides a preliminary object about which something will become understood.

For Anselm, following Augustine, faith is a gift which has its basis in God's image created in us: "I acknowledge, Lord, and I give thanks that You have created Your image in me, so that I may remember You, think of You, love You."[32] In virtue of God's image in us, humans have an image of God and are capable of memory, thought, and love of Him. In the *Proslogion*, this gift of faith leads to intellect: "What I formerly believed by your gift, I now so understand by you illuminating (*intelligo te illuminante*), that if I were unwilling to believe you to be, I would not be able not to understand it."[33] As a result of *Proslogion* II-IV's proof of God's existence, what the seeker initially believes thanks to God's gift he subsequently understands by God's illumination. Once understanding is achieved, it no longer depends upon belief; it supplants the belief of the faithful seeker.

For Anselm, faith and reason, like philosophy and theology, are not opposed. On this point I differ from Ian Logan, who writes: "The God of this philosopher is no god of the philosophers, but is a God who forgives and saves in this world and in this life. It is the God of Catholic belief whom Anselm addresses and whom his dialectical argument seeks to prove."[34] While Logan is correct that Anselm addresses the God of Catholic belief, there is no distinction for Anselm between this God and that of the philosophers.[35] As we shall see, when the human reaches true knowledge of the Divine being, which is knowledge of necessary truth that is not subject to contingency, he knows what cannot be in conflict with the content of faith. In order to show how reason is not opposed to

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[32] *Pros.,* I: "Fateor, domine, et gratias ago, quia creasti in me hanc imaginem tuam, ut tui memor te cogitem, te amem."
[33] *Pros*., IV: "quod prius credidi te donante, iam sic intelligo te illuminante, ut si te esse nolim credere, non possim non intelligere."
[34] Logan, *Reading's Anselm's* Proslogion, 101.
[35] The polemical relation between Christianity and Pagan philosophy, which can be found in Augustine, disappeared in the 6th century. See Robert Crouse "*Semina Rationum*: St. Augustine and Boethius," *Dionysius* 4 (1980): 75–85 at 76: "there is a profound change of attitude, a change of fundamental importance for the subsequent history of Christian thought and European civilization. Gone are Augustine's misgivings about the Platonists." The identity of philosophy and Christianity is seen most completely in Eriugena; see Eriugena, see W. J. Hankey, "John Scottus Eriugena," (with Lloyd Gerson), *Cambridge History of Philosophy in Late Antiquity*, edited Lloyd Gerson (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010), vol. II, 829–840 at 831-33; See also Gilbert, in *Le Proslogion De S. Anselme* (Roma: Editrice Pontificia Università, 1990), 30, note 2: "La discussion sur la double vérité, philosophie et théologique, naît vers 1260 à Paris sous l'influence des arabes et de leur commentateurs."

faith, we must establish the distinction between reason and intellect. When reason is fallen from the realm of necessity, and has thus lost its government by the intellect, it does not have vision of the truth and remains in the realm of contingent reasoning. When reason is governed by intellect, we find necessary reasons, which cannot be opposed to the faith. Anselm maintains that reason is capable of leading to true knowledge of Divine things. In *Why the God-Man?* (*Cur Deus Homo*) Anselm proves "by rational necessity—Christ being removed from sight, as if there had never been anything known about Him—that no man can possibly be saved without Him." [36]

1.4 Reason

Reason, or *cogitatio*, is a uniquely human capacity. It separates and divides its objects, leads into contradiction, and, when it is not governed by faith or intellect, only leads to despair, anxiety, and loss of vision. As we shall see in chapter 2, this is the human nature which the Chalcedonian definition describes God wholly putting on, and through which God does his saving work. Christ is "of a rational (λογικῆς) soul and body."[37] Reason is discursive logical thinking. What reason knows, it knows contingently, not as necessary or true. Because the objects of reason are contingent, contradiction belongs to reason. While reason leads the loss of vision by establishing distinctions which separate the human from God, when it is governed by faith, it is also the means of moving beyond contingency into necessity, the realm of intellect. Southern describes the capacity of reason to lead the seeker either away from God or towards God:

> Both Augustine and Anselm called the central activity of disciplined spirits in this life either *cogitatio* or *meditatio*. Generally, the two words are interchangeable; but there is one important difference between them. *Cogitatio* can be, and often is, concerned with worldly things and even with corrupt aims, whereas *meditatio* is solely concerned with pure reflection on the essences of things, whether knowable from the empirical data of the senses or from the intuitive knowledge of the mind. When directed towards a virtuous end, *cogitatio* is the same as *meditatio*, and it has as its aim the ascent of the mind to God, the supreme aim of all human life.[38]

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[36] Anselm, *CDH*, *Prooemium*.
[37] Philip Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, v.2 (New York, Harper: 1877), 90: "ἐκ ψυχῆς λογικῆς καὶ σώματος."
[38] Southern, *Saint Anselm*, 79.

The government of *cogitatio* which makes it identical with *meditatio* is crucial to the ascent of the mind to union with God. It is important too that properly governed *cogitatio* is not clearly distinguished from prayer: "…prayer and *meditatio* likewise represent two closely related modes of mental effort. Indeed, their intermingling is a main feature of the Anselmian method."[39] The *Proslogion* is a quest, an address to God, as well as a prayer.

1.5 Intellect

The work of reason may move in two directions: away from or towards God. This means that it moves either towards contingency and contradiction or towards the necessary reasons which are not subject to contingency. Knowledge of necessity does not belong to reason but to intellect, which glimpses "la nécessité qui n'échappe pas à la contingence."[40] When Anselm speaks of necessity, proof, and necessary reasons, he depends on his reader's capacity for intellectual knowledge. Anselm adopts and develops the distinction between reason and intellect which he finds in Augustine:

> L'*intellectus* désigne l'aspect de la pensée qui est orienté vers la réalité transcendante; il exerce l'extase de l'esprit en sa fonction intellectuelle; la pensée s'y conjoint à la réalité en s'y intériorisant (le mot 'intelligence vient de *intus-legere*, lire-dedans), en s'y soumettant pour la faisant sienne; quant à la *cogitatio*, elle signifie la réflexion discursive de cette *intentio*, de sorte que l'esprit connaisse intérieurement l'étant objectif pour pouvoir en rendre compte ensuite rationnellement.[41]

It is by the work of reason that the seeker gets beyond reason and so becomes capable of receiving intellectual vision of transcendent reality. The mind intuits true realities when thought interiorizes truth by thinking through what surpasses the realm of contingency and receiving understanding of necessary truths through Divine illumination.

When reason moves towards necessity, or transcendent reality, the intellect becomes intuitive, and glimpses in that movement simple intelligible representations. An intellectual intuition is the reception of a truth by the mind. It is given as the result of the

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[39] *ibid*, 103.
[40] Gilbert, *Le Proslogion*, 88.
[41] *ibid*, 63.

capacity of discursive thought to lead the mind beyond reason. It depends upon the seeker's capacity to receive vision, a capacity which continues to increase with seeking. In the accounts of Anselm's search for the *unum argumentum,* his finding is an intellectual vision. Eadmer describes the finding as an illumination and Anselm himself describes it as something which forced itself upon him until he finally received it. The image of illumination is also used in *Proslogion* IV at the conclusion of the proof of God's existence.

Reason is interior to intellect, which means that it has its beginning and end in the intellect. In Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae* we find an ordered series of the forms of apprehension, where the higher forms contain the lower. These are sense, imagination, reason, and intellect.[42] Lady Philosophy explains reason's relation to intellect: "As ratiocination is to intellect (*ad intellectum ratiocinatio*), as what becomes is to what is, as time is to eternity, the circle to its centre, so the moving course of Fate is to the unmoving simplicity of Providence."[43] As rational, humans are able to go beyond reason and "possess the judgement belonging to the divine mind":

> …just as we have judged that imagination and sense ought to give way to reason, so we should think it most just that human reason should submit to the divine mind. Let us, then, if we can, raise ourselves up to the height of that supreme intelligence; for there reason will see that which she cannot intuit in herself.[44]

However, as we find in *Proslogion* I, reason is able to fall from its proper relation to the intellect. Reason must be restored in order for true knowledge to become the seeker's own possession. Faith enables the restoration of reason to its proper relation to intellect by providing a preliminary knowledge of what will become known intellectually and according to necessary reasons. For reason to re-establish its proper relation to intellect, the seeker must inwardly digest words it knows in a preliminary, unexamined, or external, form. In *Proslogion* II, Anselm shows that even the fool's denial of God, when subject to reasoning, is shown to presuppose God's existence. Through discursive

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[42] Boethius, *Consolatio*, V, pr. 4: "Ipsum quoque hominem aliter sensus, aliter imaginatio, aliter ratio, aliter intellegentia contuetur." See Wayne J. Hankey, "Placing the human: Reason as Participation in Divine Intellect for Boethius and Aquinas," *Res philosophica* 93, no. 4 (October 2018): 583–615 at 596-600.

[43] Boethius, *Consolatio*, IV, pr. 6.

[44] Boethius, *Consolatio*, IV, pr. 6.

reasoning, the seeker arrives at knowledge of what his thinking presupposes. The seeker is restored when the mind achieves intellectual vision of something of which it is not the measure and thereby establishes intellect's government of reason. Even though reason may be ungoverned and separated from the intellectual truth which is its ground, reason has its principle in the intellect and must come to see its interiority to it.

For discursive reason to lead to vision of a transcendent necessity which surpasses contingency, it must be governed by a higher form of knowing. Faith and intellect both govern reason, but under different forms. While faith and intellect have the same objects, the former knows them by belief and the latter knows them by necessary reasons. Without government, reason remains in the realm of logic and contingency, unable to make anything existent or true. As we shall see in *Proslogion* I, ungoverned reason leads to despair, loss of vision, and impasse. There, reason is closed on itself because its own activity makes it unable to see what is seeks. By its government, the intellect "intègre, anime, et limite la pensée."[45] The intellect does not provide a starting point for a movement which it abandons, but governs the entire movement by imposing limits on discursive reason. *Proslogion* III places such a limit when it concludes that God's nonexistence cannot be thought. Each discrete point of the journey is a manifestation of the principle animating the movement.

With these distinctions in mind, let us return to the matter of the *Proslogion*'s cyclical pattern of finding, losing vision, and finding again under a new form. Discursive reason separates out and establishes distinctions which transform the seeker's understanding of what God is and how He may be found. The quest's attempt to approach God, because it depends upon reason, necessarily establishes distinctions which create a distance between the seeker and God. By this activity, the seeker gradually narrows his vision and limits the form under which he may find God; he sees the limits of his knowledge and knows that what he seeks falls outside of them. Accordingly, anxiety over the inability to find God intensifies and produces a crisis where the seeker recognizes his inability to find what he seeks and demands God's help. The need for Divine help is also a need for a higher form of knowing to govern reason. [46]

[45] Gilbert, *Le Proslogion*, 92.
[46] This is also the pattern in Boethius' *Consolatio*. See Hankey, "Placing the human": 596-600.

As we shall see, the restoration of reason by faith and intellect depend upon God doing his Divine work in the seeker.

1.6 The *Proslogion*'s Origin

The *Proslogion*'s origin in the *Monologion* is important for our understanding of the former because Anselm wrote the *Proslogion* out of a dissatisfaction with the form of the *Monologion*. In the *Monologion*'s *Prooemium*, Anselm explains that certain brothers entreated him "to write out for them, in the form of a meditation, certain things which [he] had discussed with them regarding meditation on the Divine Being."[47] Anselm reports that, after much reluctance to attempt the task, and to the best of his ability, he wrote the treatise according to the form these brothers prescribed. He explains their request:

> For the writing of this meditation they prescribed…the following format: that nothing at all in the meditation would be argued on the basis of scriptural authority, but that in unembellished style and by unsophisticated arguments and with uncomplicated disputation rational necessity would tersely prove to be the case, and truth's clarity would openly manifest to be the case, whatever the conclusion resulting from the distinct inquiries would declare. [48]

After Anselm wrote the *Monologion* in response to the entreaties of others, his dissatisfaction with its form, here described as "distinct inquiries", led him to compose, of his own volition, a second treatise, the *Proslogion*, which would correct for a certain inadequacy of the first. This inadequacy he describes in the *Proslogion*'s *Prooemium*:

> After I had published, at the pressing entreaties of several of my brethren, a certain short tract as an example of meditation on the meaning of faith from the point of view of one seeking, through silent reasoning within himself, things he knows not—reflecting that this was made up of a concatenation of many arguments (*multorum concatenatione contextum argumentorum*), I began to wonder if perhaps it might be possible to find one single argument (*unum argumentum*) that required no other than itself alone for proving itself, and that by itself would suffice to prove that God truly exists, that He is the supreme good

[47] *Mono*., *Prooemium*.
[48] *Mono*., *Prooemium*.

> needing no other and is He whom all things have need of for their being and well-being, and also to prove whatever we believe about the Divine Being.[49]

Anselm desired to find "one argument" to replace the "concatenation of many arguments", and places two conditions on the argument which he seeks: firstly, it must require "no other than itself alone for proving itself" (*nullo alio ad se probandum quam se solo indigeret*), and secondly, by itself it must prove (*solum ad astruendum*) many things about God including "whatever we believe about the Divine being."

Unlike the *Monologion*, the *Proslogion* is not a series of distinct inquiries pieced together. The *Proslogion* is one continuous inquiry, or journey, into God. Anselm's great accomplished demand is to find an argument by which the journey into God and God Himself are one. The human, who is other than God, can only find God if what God is "through Himself" includes what is other. This is where the *Proslogion* journey takes us. The identity of God and the way to God is possible because the cyclical pattern of seeking conforms to the giving and receiving which belongs to the Trinity. Through God's word, the God-Man, the seeker becomes participant in the Divine life. Before taking this matter further, we must turn to Anselm's description of the origin of the *unum argumentum*.

Anselm describes his activity of finding the *unum argumentum* as a process of seeking, nearly grasping, losing sight, and then, after giving up, having the *unum argumentum* force itself upon him:

> But as often and as diligently as I turned my thinking (*cogitationem converterem*) to this, sometimes it seemed to me that I had almost grasped (*capi*) what I was seeking, sometimes it eluded (*fugeret*) the acute point of my mind (*mentis aciem*) completely, so that finally, in desperation, I was about to give up what I was looking for as something impossible to find. However, when I had decided to put aside this thinking (*cogitationem*) altogether, lest by uselessly occupying my mind it might prevent other thoughts with which I could make some progress, then, in spite of my unwillingness and my resistance to it, it began to force (*ingerere*) itself upon me more and more pressingly. So it was that one day when

[49] *Pros*., *Prooemium*: ""Postquam opusculum quoddam velut exemplum meditandi de ratione fidei cogentibus me precibus quorundam fratrum in persona alicuius tacite secum ratiocinando quæ nesciat investigantis edidi: considerans illud esse multorum concatenatione contextum argumentorum, coepi mecum quærere, 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 quia est summum bonum nullo alio indigens, et quo omnia indigent ut sint et ut bene sint, et quæcumque de divina credimus substantia, sufficeret."

> I was quite worn out with resisting its importunacy, it gave itself to me (*se obtulit*), in the very conflict of my thoughts (*in ipso cogitationum conflictu*), what I had despaired of finding, so that I eagerly embraced the thought (*cogitationum amplecterer*) which in my distraction (*sollicitus*) I had been rejecting.[50]

This account is a summary of the entire treatise. It contains the fundamental elements of desire, anxiety, relinquishment of self, discursive reason, and intellectual insight. The intellectual intuition is beyond the work of reason but given as a result of it. The seeking begins with reasoning when Anselm turns his thoughts (*cogitationem converterem*) to finding the *unum argumentum*. This thinking leads Anselm into desperation and relinquishment of his mode of reasoning in favor of one by which he might make progress. After giving up, what Anselm sought began to force itself upon him against his will, and eventually arrived in the very conflict of his thoughts. Once Anselm embraced the thought, he recognized that the thought was always present to his mind; he had been rejecting it because he was too distracted to find it. In this account, we can see that reason is both necessary and has limits: without reason there is no finding, but reasoning leads to despair and the relinquishment of the task. The task which reason begins and fails at is finally accomplished when what is sought gives itself to the seeker.

Eadmer's biography of St. Anselm describes the same process originating the *unum argumentum*, which Southern judges is "one of [Eadmer's] most valuable contributions to the history of Anselm's philosophical development," saying "it could only come from Anselm himself."[51] Eadmer writes:

> Afterwards it came into his mind to try to prove by one single and short argument (*uno solo et brevi argumento*) the things which are believed and preached about God….and to show how all these are in unity itself (*in ipso unum*). And this, as he himself would say, gave great trouble partly because thinking about it took away his desire for food, drink and sleep, and partly—and this was more grievous to him—because it disturbed the attention which he ought to have paid to matins and to Divine service at other times. When he has aware of this, and still could

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[50] *Pros.*, *Prooemium*: "Ad quod cum sæpe studioseque cogitationem converterem, atque aliquando mihi videretur iam posse capi quod quærebam, aliquando mentis aciem omnino fugeret: tandem desperans volui cessare velut ab inquisitione rei quam inveniri esset impossibile. Sed cum illam cogitationem, ne mentem meam frustra occupando ab aliis in quibus proficere possem impediret, penitus a me vellem excludere: tunc magis ac magis nolenti et defendenti se coepit cum importunitate quadam ingerere. Cum igitur quadam die vehementer eius importunitati resistendo fatigarer, in ipso cogitationum conflictu sic se obtulit quod desperaveram, ut studiose cogitationem amplecterer, quam sollicitus repellebam."
[51] Eadmer, *VSA.*, 29, note 3.

> not entirely grasp (*capere*) what he sought, he supposed that this line of thought was a temptation of the devil and tried to banish (*repellere*) it from his intention (*intentione*). But the more vehemently he tried to do this, the more this thought attacked (*infestabat*) him. Then suddenly one night during matins the grace of God illuminated his heart (*illuxit in corde eius*), the whole matter became clear to his mind, and a great joy and exultation filled his inmost being.[52]

We find here the same pattern of seeking, despairing, and openness to a gift. Eadmer describes Anselm's reception of the *unum argumentum* as a Divine illumination. Based on both accounts, it is clear that the illumination, or reception of the *unum argumentum*, indicates a form of knowing that is higher than discursive thinking. Anselm had to pass from thought to graciously given intellectual vision. Reason is essential, but as a form of apprehension it is insufficient and leads to loss of vision; the quest depends upon intellectual illumination, and the intellect's government of reason, in order to reach its goal.

1.7 The One Argument (*Unum Argumentum*)

The *Proslogion*'s *Prooemium*, as well as Anselm's biographer, tell us that Anselm decided to share the Divinely given *unum argumentum* with others. The *unum argumentum* is what underlies and unites the many demonstrations and stages of the quest which span *Proslogion* II-XXII. It has this unity as a single continuous explication of God as "that than which nothing greater can be thought." The *unum argumentum* begins in *Proslogion* II and concludes in *Proslogion* XXIII when it arrives at the "one thing necessary" (*unum necessarium*), which is the all-inclusive Trinity. The intervening chapters accomplish Anselm's goals set out in the *Prooemium*. *Proslogion* II-IV prove

[52] Eadmer, *VSA*, 29-30: "Post haec incidit sibi in mentem investigare utrum uno solo et brevi argumento probari posset id quod de Deo creditur et praedicatur…et quomodo haec omni in ipso unum sint. Quae res, sicut ipse referebat magnam sibi peperit difficultatem. Nam haec cogitatio partim illi cibum, potum et somnum tollebat, partim et quod magis eum gravabat intentionem eius qua matutinis et alii servitio Dei intendere debebat perturbabat. Quod ipse animadvertens, nec adhuc quod quaerebat ad plenum capere valens, ratus est huiusmodi cogitationem diabolic esse temptationem, nisusque est eam procul repellere a sua intentione. Verum quanto plus in hoc desudabat, tanto illum ipsa cogitatio magis ac magis infestabat. Et ecce quadam nocte inter nocturnas vigilias Dei gratia illuxit in corde eius, et res patuit intellectui eius, immensoque gaudio et jubilatione replevit omnia intima eius."

that "God truly exists,"[53] by demonstrating that God exists both in intellect and in reality, and that He "cannot be thought of as not existing." After this proof, it remains to demonstrate "whatever we believe about the Divine being", including that He is the "supreme good needing no other and is He whom all things have need of for their being and well-being."[54] Without going into detail here, we can see that by *Proslogion* XXII the argument has accomplished these goals:

> And you are life and light and wisdom and blessedness and eternity and many suchlike good things; and yet you are nothing save the one and supreme good, you who are completely sufficient unto yourself, needing nothing, but rather He whom all things need in order that they may have being and well-being.[55]

That to which the quest has led *Proslogion* XXIII calls the "one thing necessary" (*unum necessarium*) and the good (*bonum*), which is the all-inclusive Trinity. Based on Anselm's judgement that he has found a single argument which corrects for the *Monologion*'s concatenation, and the correspondence between what Anselm sets out to accomplish and what he achieves, we may conclude that there is a single unified argument underlying and uniting the many parts of the quest, beginning in *Proslogion* II and meeting up with the *unum necessarium* in *Proslogion* XXIII. In my judgement that there is a single argument which spans *Proslogion* II-XXIII, I am in agreement with Ian Logan.[56] However, I differ from Logan on the character of the *unum argumentum* and how it functions.

Thanks to the apparent diversity of argument within the *Proslogion*, identifying the *unum argumentum* has been a matter of debate since Evans[57] raised the issue of its identification. Gersh explains this shift in the scholarship:

> The most common interpretation of Anselm's statement is to maintain that the premiss defining God as 'something that which nothing greater can be thought' constitutes the single argument, yet the premiss on its own cannot adequately

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[53] *Pros*., *Prooemium*: "deus vere est"
[54] *Pros*., *Prooemium*: "quia est summum bonum nullo alio indigens, et quo omnia indigent ut sint et ut bene sint, et quæcumque de divina credimus substantia, sufficeret."
[55] *Pros*., XXII: "Et vita es et lux et sapientia et beatitudo et æternitas et multa huiusmodi bona, et tamen non es nisi unum et summum bonum, tu tibi omnino sufficiens, nullo indigens, quo omnia indigent ut sint, et ut bene sint."
[56] Logan, *Reading Anselm's* Proslogion, 125.
[57] Gillian Evans, *Anselm and Talking about God* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), at 39-49.

> explain the structure of the opening chapters, still less that of the treatise as a whole.[58]

As Gersh says, the primary candidate for the *unum argumentum* has been the formula, or name for God, introduced in *Proslogion* II: God is "something than which nothing greater can be thought."[59] The formula is the basis of the demonstration of God's existence in *Proslogion* II-IV, as well as further demonstrations about the Divine substance, with only slight variations in form, in *Proslogion* V, XIII, & XV. However, there are good reasons to judge that this formula is not itself the *unum argumentum*.

Firstly, there are a variety of formulas, or names for God, which Anselm uses to demonstrate the many things believed about God. *Proslogion* II-IV employ the formula that God is "that than which nothing greater can be thought" to demonstrate that God exists both in intellect and in reality, and that he "cannot be thought of as not existing." Subsequently, *Proslogion* V introduces a formula naming God "whatever it is better to be than not to be," which provides the basis for the discovery of many qualities of the Divine substance in *Proslogion* VI-XI. Anselm establishes that the Divine substance is sensible, omnipotent, and merciful on the basis that it is "whatever it is better to be than not to be"[60] and not on the basis that is it "something than which nothing greater can be thought." In *Proslogion* XIV the seeker discovers that God is "more than can be understood"[61] and, in *Proslogion* XV, that He is "something greater than can be thought."[62] The discovery that God is "something greater than can be thought" enables a reflection on God's "inaccessible light" and, subsequently, leads to *Proslogion* XVIII's conclusion that God is "unity itself not divisible by any mind."[63] The problem for identifying Anselm's *unum argumentum* is that these many demonstrations about the Divine substance, which are certainly included in the *unum argumentum*, do not appear to depend upon a single underlying argument.

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[58] Gersh, Stephen, "Anselm of Canterbury" reprinted in *Reading Plato, Tracing Plato: From Ancient Commentary to Medieval Reception*, ed. S. Gersh (Hampshire & Burlingon: Ashgate, 2005), XIV, 276.
[59] *Pros*., II: "aliquid quo nihil maius cogitari possit"
[60] *Pros*., V: "quidquid melius est esse quam non esse."
[61] *Pros*., XIV: "Certe plus quam a creatura valeat intelligi."
[62] *Pros*., XV: "Ergo domine, non solum es quo maius cogitari nequit, sed es quiddam maius quam cogitari possit."
[63] *Pros*., XVIII: "immo tu es ipsa unitas, nullo intellectu divisibilis."

When Evans raised this issue, she proposed that the *unum argumentum* is a single implicit axiom functioning as a "touchstone for a variety of demonstrations:"

> The content of Anselm's distinctive single axiom poses some difficulties of identification. A case might be made out for the view that it is not the principle, already adumbrated on several occasions by Augustine, that God is that than which nothing greater can be thought. That may be regarded as being merely the first statement of the argument's application. The axiom itself seems to amount to the idea that God is in some sense 'more than' whatever we can conceive of as a good. It could be stated crudely as the principle that, for whatever *a* we can imagine, God is $a + x$. This axiom is never explicitly stated by Anselm, but it underlies every piece of demonstration in the *Proslogion* in a way that 'God is that than which nothing greater can be thought' does not.[64]

While I agree with Evans that the formula "that than which nothing greater can be thought" cannot be identified with the *unum argumentum*, I disagree with her proposal that the more fundamental axiom is that God is "in some sense 'more than' whatever we can conceive of as a good." This axiom prioritizes the matter of God's goodness, and neglects to account for God's greatness. While the formula "whatever it is better (*melius*) to be than not to be" concerns God's goodness, "that than which nothing greater (*maius*) can be thought" concerns His greatness. The demonstration of God's existence in *Proslogion* III depends upon the latter formula, and on a comparison between degrees of greatness. In *Proslogion* II, God exists not only in intellect, but also in reality because what exists in reality also is greater. It is not in virtue of God's goodness, but his greatness, that He exists both in the intellect and in reality. Therefore, an axiom which accounts only for God's goodness is not sufficient.

Gersh, recognizing that Evans "definitely points in the right direction,"[65] proposes an alternative solution: "As a means of unifying the earlier and later parts of the text, I would therefore suggest that underlying its discussions is a further unstated premiss: 'when two terms are compared as greater and lesser, then God corresponds to the greater.'"[66] Gersh suggests that the underlying premise depends upon the comparative "greater" which includes matters of the quality, or goodness of the Divine

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[64] Evans, *Anselm and Talking about God,* 46.
[65] Gersh, "Anselm of Canterbury": 277, note 169.
[66] *ibid*: 276.

substance. He says that the many parts of the *Proslogion* are linked "through the recurrence of the underlying premiss in various guises."[67] I agree with Gersh that *unum argumentum* has its basis in something underlying which appears in various guises, and I will argue that what underlies is itself the primary formula naming God "that than which nothing greater can be thought." Before presenting my argument for this position, let us consider what Logan identifies as the *unum argumentum*.

Logan says that there is no "straightforward, easily recognizable account of [the *unum argumentum*] that anyone with a good knowledge of the *Proslogion* and its background would automatically accept."[68] However, he proposes what he believes "may be as close as it is possible to get to understanding what Anselm means by the term '*unum argumentum*.'"[69] Logan rejects three possibilities for the *unum argumentum*: It can neither be "equated with X [that than which nothing greater can be thought,]" nor with "the proof(s) of *P*2-3," nor with the treatise itself.[70] He proposes that the *unum argumentum* is a categorical syllogism whose two premises are established by separate arguments which must be regarded are internal to the *unum argumentum*.[71] The categorical syllogism takes the following form, where X is the formula "that than which nothing greater can be thought" and "F stands for 'existent *in re'* or any other attribute of God:"[72]

1. God is X (minor premise)
2. X is F (major premise)
3. Therefore, God is F (conclusion)[73]

Logan argues that this syllogism suffices to demonstrate the existence of "something than which nothing greater can be thought," which he calls X. He says that Anselm's

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[67] *ibid*: 277.
[68] Logan, *Reading Anselm's* Proslogion, 126.
[69] *ibid*, 127.
[70] *ibid*, 125.
[71] I will not reproduce Logan's argument here, which includes an analysis of Anselm's establishment of the minor and major premises in *Proslogion* 2-4. For Logan's argument, see Logan, *Reading Anselm's* Proslogion, 125-127.
[72] Logan, *Reading Anselm's* Proslogion, 125.
[73] *ibid*, 125.

great innovation is to employ X as the middle term connecting the minor and major premises, a form of argument inherited from Boethius:

> If, as Boethius stated, the *argumentum* is to be identified with the finding of the middle term, then this would explain what such a finding would be. To 'find' the middle term is not simply to come across it but to show that it is employed with justification in the major and minor premises of the syllogism. Finding the middle term is, then, the argument that the middle term is justifiably the predicate of the minor premise and the subject of the major premise. Once the middle term has been justified in this way, Anselm's proof is achieved, since the formally valid nature of the argumentation itself does not require further justification. Anselm's argumentum can be seen to fit his description of it as self-sufficient, since the justification of the middle term is internal to it.[74]

On this account, Logan appears to treat the proof of *Proslogion* II-IV as the *unum argumentum*. However, Logan also maintains that the *unum argumentum* is not accomplished until *Proslogion* XXIII. So how does the *unum argumentum* include *Proslogion* V-XXIII? Logan answers:

> Anselm has demonstrated by reason that there must exist something the non-existence of which cannot be thought. He has not as yet shown that there is only one such thing. The point now is to attach this demonstration to what is believed about God, including his uniqueness. Anselm starts out here on the path of showing the identity of God and this 'something' [than which nothing greater can be thought]. It takes him most of the *Proslogion* to establish it.[75]

Logan argues that his single syllogism shows that X exists, but not that God exists. Therefore, the role of *Proslogion* V-XXIII is to demonstrate that X is identical to the God of the Catholic faith. Therefore, according to Logan, the chapters following *Proslogion* IV are internal to the *unum argumentum* insofar as they serve to establish this identity.

I believe that this approach to identifying the *unum argumentum* is misguided because it does not satisfactorily treat the *Proslogion* as a journey, or *itinerarium*, and as a result does not provide an adequate explanation of the argument's unity. I agree with

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[74] Logan, *Reading Anselm's* Proslogion, 127.
[75] *ibid*, 96.

Evans, Gersh, and Logan that the *unum argumentum* is not the formula itself. However, we will not satisfactorily identify the *unum argumentum* according to a method which takes the demonstrations out of their context on the quest and attempts to identify a single logical form underlying them all.

We can achieve a better understanding of the *unum argumentum* through a close examination of the *Proslogion* as a unified quest of a seeker thinking through what belongs to God as "that than which nothing greater can be thought." The *unum argumentum* is the explication of this name for God, where the way to God and God Himself are one. This is the gift which Anselm despairs of finding and so happily receives. The unity of the argument depends upon the seeker, who is other than God, arriving at an understanding of God as infinity inclusive of otherness and the quest. The *unum argumentum* concludes in *Proslogion* XXIII when the seeker finds himself and his entire journey within the infinite giving and receiving of God to Himself. The journey, with its failures and successes, follows a cycle which begins and ends in God and conforms to the Trinitarian and Incarnational exchange. For Anselm following Chalcedon, this exchange unites the Trinity and the hypostatic union which is the incarnation. Unlike Logan's proposal for what constitutes the one argument, this enables us to make sense of how the seeker arrives at knowledge which he subsequently contradicts, and how repeated failure of reason to reach its object is essential to the *unum argumentum*.

On one hand, the unity of the *Proslogion* argument depends upon the primary formula or name for God, of which all the variations of the formula, and knowledge of God, are explications emerging in a particular place on the journey. On the other hand, it depends upon a single subject, or seeker, achieving knowledge of God, losing of vision, and finding God again under a new form. In this way, the *Proslogion*'s single argument gradually deepens the seeker's understanding of God as "that than which nothing greater can be thought" until the seeker finds that his entire journey has always been included within God who is inclusive of all otherness.

1.8 "That Than Which Nothing Greater Can Be Thought"

In this thesis, I argue that we need not look farther than the primary formula "that than which nothing greater can be thought" for what underlies the *unum argumentum* of the *Proslogion*. By tracing the journey of the seeker in *Proslogion* II-XXIII, we find that the many demonstrations and variety of formulas naming God, such as "whatever it is better to be than not to be"[76] and "something greater than can be thought,"[77] have their basis in the primary formula, "that than which nothing greater can be thought." In the fool's denial of the existence of "that than which nothing greater can be thought", thought for the first time takes its starting point in the formula from which it emerges when the rule begins to place limits on thought. This begins the formula's explication, which concludes in *Proslogion* XXIII when the seeker arrives at the *unum necessarium*, which is one, the supreme good, and the all-inclusive Trinity. The rational explication of the formula provides the basis for demonstration that God exists in reality, is supreme of all, and is sensible, merciful, omnipotent, etc.

When we treat the *unum argumentum* as an explication of God as "that than which nothing greater can be thought", three fundamentals of Anselm's thought emerge. In order to identify these fundamentals, we must consider, in a preliminary way, the nature of what the formula names. Doing so, we will glimpse how many distinct variations emerge from the single formula.

"That than which nothing greater can be thought" names both the supreme being, as what is identical with thought, and that which is beyond being known. This is the basis on which the *Proslogion* "enacts the dialectical tension between the immanence and transcendence of the Divine."[78] On one hand, God is the "supreme of all" [79] (*summum omnium*) because nothing greater than Him can be thought. Anselm says that "whatever is not this [supreme being] is less than that which can be thought of; but this

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[76] *Pros*., V: "quidquid melius est esse quam non esse."
[77] *Pros*., XV: "Ergo domine, non solum es quo maius cogitari nequit, sed es quiddam maius quam cogitari possit."
[78] Moran, "Neoplatonic and Negative Theological": 214-215.
[79] *Pros*., 5: "Sed quid es nisi id quod summum omnium solum existens per seipsum, omnia alia fecit de nihilo?"

cannot be thought about you."[80] From the perspective of *Proslogion* V, if God were not supreme, there would be something greater than God. On the other hand, as the seeker attempts to grasp the Divine substance and its operations, after some success, he discovers that the supreme being is also greater than can be thought. The occurs because the seeker tries to understand the Divine attributes and their relation to each other in a way that God cannot be known; he attempts to conceptually grasp "that than which nothing greater can be thought." However, this form of seeking which will fail is also on the way to finding God in a way that He can be known. Concepts possess limits which both establish their self-identity and distinguish them from what they are not. If conceptual limitations, when negated, produce an idea of something greater, then God cannot be identified with the known concept and must be that which is greater. In the *Proslogion*'s quest, the seeker discovers that, in order to adhere to the formula's rule, he must negate such conceptual limitations which the process of reason places on God. The conceptual limitations which must be denied of God multiply until we discover that God cannot be grasped, and thus cannot be known in the way that the seeker attempts to know Him.

This brings us to our first fundamental of Anselm's thought: the seeker receives knowledge of God in accordance with his place on the journey and capacity to receive knowledge. The formula cannot all at once confer on the seeker the nature of what it names. The quest makes the seeker more and less able to see God, which means that God gives Himself to the seeker in accordance with the necessities of reason. The seeker must discursively explicate the formula in order to gradually come to know God. Because the explication is gradual, there are certain paths not taken and matters left ambiguous. In *Proslogion* V-XVII, the seeker takes the path towards Divine intelligibility, and must discover, as he does in *Proslogion* XVIII, that God is also beyond intelligibility. Since God is both intelligible and beyond intelligibility, the seeker cannot travel only the path towards intelligibility. He must travel both paths, but cannot follow them at once.

The path towards intelligibility, taken in *Proslogion* V, leads eventually to the path not taken when the seeker discovers in *Proslogion* XVIII that God is beyond mind.

[80] *Pros.*, 5: "Quidquid enim hoc non est, minus est quam cogitari possit. Sed hoc de te cogitari non potest."

Proslogion V's demonstration that God is intelligible as the supreme being prevents the seeker from thinking that God is also beyond mind. The path towards intelligibility enables the seeker to find God as "whatever it is better to be than not to be"[81] and to understand many things about the Divine being. However, as the seeker follows this line of inquiry, strongly refusing the path of negative theology, he encounters contradiction and incomprehensibility. He discovers that the operation of God's goodness "certainly is not comprehensible by any reason" (*certe nulla ratione comprehendi*)[82] and that God cannot be known "in relation to us."[83] Until the seeker discovers what was neglected—God's transcendence of being and intelligibility—the incomprehensibility of God intensifies as a problem and leads to loss of vision accompanied by despair and anxiety. In *Proslogion* XIV, the seeker recognizes that the path taken, which has enabled vision, also closes him off from certain things "Tell my desiring soul what else (*aliud*) you are besides what it sees."[84] What falls outside of his vision is what was neglected in *Proslogion* V: that the intelligible God is also beyond being and intelligibility. God's transcendence gradually reasserts itself as the seeker discovers that God is "more than can be understood"[85] and "something greater than can be thought."[86] As despair, anxiety, and loss of vision intensify, the seeker does not stop seeking God. Finally, in *Proslogion* XVIII, the seeker relinquishes himself and places responsibility on God to relieve him. God restores the seeker to intellectual vision, by which he is able to understand that God is transcendent as "unity itself not divisible by any mind"[87] as well as intelligible and present to all things.

A second fundamental of Anselm's thought is that what is sought is already present at the beginning of the quest. This is represented by the fact that the entire quest is a single continuous explication of the primary formula first introduced in *Proslogion* II. The journey from faith into intellect is not a matter of bridging a subject and its

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[81] *Pros*., V: "Tu es itaque iustus, verax, beatus, et quidquid melius est esse quam non esse."
[82] *Pros*., X.
[83] *Pros*., XI: "Iustum igitur est secundum te, iuste et benigne deus, et cum punis et cum parcis."
[84] *Pros*., XIV: "dic desideranti animæ meæ, quid aliud es, quam quod vidit."
[85] *Pros*., XIV: "Quid puritatis, quid simplicitatis, quid certitudinis et splendoris ibi est! Certe plus quam a creatura valeat intelligi."
[86] *Pros*., XV: "Ergo domine, non solum es quo maius cogitari nequit, sed es quiddam maius quam cogitari possit."
[87] *Pros*., XVIII: "immo tu es ipsa unitas, nullo intellectu divisibilis."

object. I mean this in two senses: Firstly, God cannot be found as if He exists in a particular place or a time, so there is no distance to cover in order for the seeker to reach what he seeks. Secondly, God cannot be conceptually grasped, and there is no number of corrections to a concept which can bridge the distance between the seeker's conception of God and God Himself. Because the journey into God is not a matter of covering any distance, whether in space or in mind, we will conclude that the seeker can only achieve vision of what he already knows. What the seeker finds in the end is already present in the beginning under a form which is not yet seen, and, in consequence, the fundamental progress in the work is by changes in the form of knowing.

In *Proslogion* XIII-XVII, which continue to treat God as supreme within the realm of being, the quest establishes an opposition between God's distance from the seeker and the seeker's proximity to God. Many problems emerge in these chapters because the seeker attempts to find God as one being among others. So long as the seeker continues to treat God as a being, and not as "beyond all things" (*ultra omnia*),[88] the seeker is unable to understand how God both "cannot not exist in thought"[89] and is also "something greater than can be thought."[90] When the seeker discovers that God is not one among others, but is beyond being and knowing, he re-establishes the basis on which he is able to know God and develops the spiritual senses by which he can sense God who fills all things.

In *Proslogion* XIV, the supreme being becomes unthinkable in virtue of its excess: God is "more than can be understood."[91] *Proslogion* XVI identifies God with the sun. The seeker knows through (*per*) the sun and by its light, but what he knows he cannot look at in the sun itself (*in ipso sole nequit aspicere*), which is too much (*nimia*) for the seeker's eyes.[92] The seeker, treating God as one thing and not another, wants to

[88] *Pros*., XX: "…tu es ante et ultra omnia."
[89] *Pros*., IV: "Quod qui bene intelligit, utique intelligit id ipsum sic esse, ut nec cogitatione queat non esse."
[90] *Pros*., XV: "…es quiddam maius quam cogitari possit."
[91] *Pros*., XIV: "Certe plus quam a creatura valeat intelligi."
[92] *Pros*., XVI: "…sicut infirmus oculus quod videt per lucem solis videt, quam in ipso sole nequit aspicere."

know "what other (*aliud*) God is."[93] The distance of God is also understood in terms of the seeker's inability to sense God who is, in *Proslogion* XIII, "everywhere and always."[94] In *Proslogion* XVI & XVII the opposition reaches a climax and despair increases. God is everywhere and not seen; He is the source of all knowledge and not known. In *Proslogion* XVIII, a turning point in the quest, God relieves the seeker of the blindness into which the quest has led through an intellectual vision of God's indivisibility. God is not just the supreme within the mind, but is also beyond being itself.

A third fundamental of Anselm's *Proslogion* begins to emerge: Anselm's *unum argumentum* unifies the quest into God and God Himself. The relation between reason and intellect, which results in the *Proslogion*'s cyclical pattern, conforms to the self-reflexive Divine nature, which is Trinitarian. Reason, which separates and divides, establishes distinctions which create a distance between God and the human. As a result of discursive reasoning, the human loses vision of God and requires Divine help. God restores the human by giving Himself to the seeker through His Word in the form of intellectual understanding. Intellect restores and preserves reason so that seeking, governed by intellect, may continue to seek vision of God. It is in this way that Anselm belongs to Chalcedonian Christianity: both natures in their integrity are united within one Hypostasis. In chapter 2 we shall consider the Christological definition of Chalcedon and the relation of two nature in the God-Man in order to understand how, for Anselm, God restores and preserves the human through His Word, which is "two natures in one person," and the source of understanding in the human.

For now, we are able to recognize that, after the Divine restoration in *Proslogion* XVIII, the seeker finds himself within God, and identifies God with the self-reflexive Trinity. In *Proslogion* XIX-XXI's representation of God's simple indivisible eternity,

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[93] *Pros*., XVI: "Vere, domine, hæc est lux inaccessibilis, in qua habitas. Vere enim non est aliud quod hanc penetret, ut ibi te pervideat. Vere ideo hanc non video, quia nimia mihi est; et tamen quidquid video, per illam video, sicut infirmus oculus quod videt per lucem solis videt, quam in ipso sole nequit aspicere. Non potest intellectus meus ad illam. Nimis fulget, non capit illam, nec suffert oculus animæ meæ diu intendere in illam."

[94] *Pros*., XIII: "Quoniam ergo maius te nihil est, nullus locus aut tempus te cohibet, sed ubique et semper es."

discursive reason increases the transcendence of God, but because the seeker understands his interiority to God, who is indivisible unity, the increase in transcendence has a co-relative increase in immanence. The work of reason no longer separates God and the human nor leads to contradictions which prevent vision. Because rational seeking knows itself interior to God, its activity of separating and dividing, essential to the *Proslogion* as an "address" (*alloquium*), no longer establishes a distance between the seeker and what he seeks.

The cyclical pattern of the quest conforms to its object because God is self-reflexive unity, in whom there is an infinite giving and receiving of God to Himself. In *Proslogion* XXI God is "indivisible unity" and "interminable immensity" and in *Proslogion* XXII He is known as the "one and supreme good" (*unum et summum bonum*), which is the only thing which exists in a strict and absolute sense (*proprie et absolute*). As unity itself, as well as the infinite and diffuse good, God is inclusive of multiplicity and otherness. This establishes the basis for *Proslogion* XXIII to understand God as Trinity; God is a unity of three infinities. *Proslogion* XXIII concludes that the "one thing necessary (*unum necessarium*)," which is "all (*omne*) and one (*unum*) and totally (*totum*) and solely (*solum*) good,"[95] is equally the Father, His Word, the Son and Holy Spirit. God "utters" Himself in his Word, which is "the truth itself" (*est ipsa veritas*) and what God is. The reciprocal love between Father and Son is an infinite giving and receiving, which is "Holy spirit proceeding from both."[96] The human nature is united to God through His Word. In *Proslogion* XII it becomes a problem for knowledge that God exists and is known only "through Himself". The basis on which the seeker is able to know God, who exists only "through Himself" is that God's self-relation includes what is other. The process by which the seeker explicates the formula, resulting in the *Proslogion*'s pattern, is included in God's infinite giving and receiving of Himself in the Trinity.

The basis of the argument's unity, distinguishing it from the *Monologion*'s "concatenation of many arguments", is the unity of the quest and its object. Anselm

[95] *Pros*., XXIII: "'Porro unum est necessarium.' Porro hoc est illud unum necessarium, in quo est omne bonum, immo quod est omne et unum et totum et solum bonum."
[96] *Pros*., XXIII: "id est sanctus spiritus ab utroque procedens."

represents this principle by the formula which names God; the explication of the formula is the way to God, and what the formula names is God Himself. According to Eadmer, the *unum argumentum* is a Divine revelation which "illuminated [Anselm's] heart (*illuxit in corde eius*)." This intellectual revelation becomes the governing principle of the *Proslogion*. After the seeker loses vision attempting to seek God in *Proslogion* I, Anselm introduces the formula whose explication illumines the seeker to God's existence in reality. The formula continues to govern the quest until *Proslogion* XXIII, where the seeker finds Himself, and the entire quest, interior to God. The quest begins and ends in God.

This thesis follows the course of the *Proslogion*'s *unum argumentum* by tracing the cycles by which the seeker finds God, loses vision, and subsequently discovers God again under a new form. The structure of the thesis is justified by the quest's conclusion that God gives Himself continuously to the seeker according to the seeker's capacity to receive Him. By following the structure of the *Proslogion* argument, we witness the seeker's changing capacity to receive knowledge of God. In this thesis I will show that the *Proslogion* establishes both the necessity of reason and its limitations. The interiority of the seeker to God, and reason to intellect means that the contradictions, incomprehensibility, and loss of vision to which reason leads do not require the failure of the quest, but, in fact, are moments constitutive of a journey that achieves vision of God more and more fully. Reason is interior to God, who is unity itself beyond mind and the infinitely diffuse good inclusive of otherness, giving Himself eternally to the seeker in accordance with the necessities of reason.

CHAPTER 2: THE PROBLEMATIC

2.1 Proslogion I

2.1.1 Going into Mind

The quest for God takes place in the mind as the place in which everything is found.[97] The first exhortation of *Proslogion* I locates the entire quest and God within the mind. The words "Come now" (*Eia nunc*) begin the address to diminished man (*homuncio*), who represents the seeker in a state of distension and distraction. The exhortation commands *homuncio* to flee his tumultuous thoughts (*tumultuosis cogitationibus*), onerous cares (*onerosas curas*), and distracting labours (*laboriosas distentiones*), and then instructs: "Enter into the inner chamber of your mind, exclude all things except God and what may be of help in seeking Him, and when the door is closed, seek Him."[98] Once inside, the treatise does not again address *homuncio* until the conclusion of the treatise, where *Proslogion* XXV addresses *homuncio* as the one wandering through many things (*per multa vagaris*) and seeking the goods of the soul and the body.[99] Thus it appears that knowing what *homuncio* signifies is important. The exhortation to enter mind's inner chamber establishes the principal problem of the quest for God set up in this way. How does the seeker know what to exclude from mind's inner chamber unless he knows who God is and how God is to be identified? By this representation, where the seeker goes into his mind as if into a place, the language of presence and absence is established: God is present in the mind or absent as if outside the mind. If God is not in the mind, and the seeker never departs from mind's inner chamber, then God cannot be found. If God is found while the door to mind's inner chamber remains closed, then God is present in the mind.

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[97] This is the character of mind as Anselm finds it in Augustine. See, for example, *Conf*. 10.17.26: "Great is the power of memory, an awe-inspiring mystery, my God, a power of profound and infinite multiplicity. And this is mind, this is I myself." See Wayne Hankey, "Mind (*mens*)" *Saint Augustine through the Ages: an Encyclopedia*, ed. Allan Fitzgerald, Eerdmans, (1999), 563-67.

[98] *Pros*., I: "Intra in cubicilum' mentis tuae, exclude omnia parete deum et quae te iuvent ad quaerendum eum, et 'clauso ostio quaere eum."

[99] *Pros*., XXV: "Cur ergo per multa vagaris, ho- muncio, quærendo bona animæ tuæ et corporis tui?"

The problem is that the seeker's efforts do not lead him into vision of what he seeks. The opening exhortation establishes that if God is found, He is found because He is already in the mind when the inner chamber is closed and the quest begins. This beginning raises questions concerning the nature of seeking which this chapter will address. If what we seek is in the mind, why do we not know it as what it is, and how do we come to know it as it is? The seeker declares this problem: "Lord, you are my God and my Lord, and never have I seen You. You have created me and re-created me and You have given me all the good things I possess, and still I do not know You."[100] The seeker is not yet capable of seeing God. In the Platonic tradition there is a doctrine which says that the human achieves knowledge of that by which he knows through a guided journey into vision. This doctrine belongs to Anselm, who would have received it through Augustine, whose *De Magistro* teaches that we journey to God "by stages adapted to our faltering steps."[101] Plato's *Republic* teaches that education is not a matter of "putting knowledge into souls that lack it, like putting sight into blind eyes," because "the instrument with which each learns is like an eye that cannot be turned around from darkness to light without turning the whole body."[102] For Anselm, the journey into vision of God is an *itinerarium*; the fundamental problem is that the seeker does not see what is already present to his mind, and by seeking must discover the way in which vision is achieved.

2.1.2 Seeking God's Place and Habitation

Once the seeker enters mind's inner chamber and closes the door, the seeking begins with two further exhortations which establish a Divine-human reciprocity: the heart must seek God and God must teach the heart. The first exhortation stirs up "his

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[100] *Pros.*, I: "Domine, deus meus es, et dominus meus es, et numquam te vidi. Tu me fecisti et refecisti, et omnia mea bona tu mihi contulisti, et nondum novi te. Denique ad te videndum factus sum, et nondum feci propter quod factus sum."
[101] See Augustine's *De Magistro*, c. 8.21: "And yet, if I assert that there is a happy life, and one that is everlasting, and that I desire that we should be led to it by God, Who is Truth itself as our Guide, by stages adapted to our faltering steps, I fear I may seem ridiculous for having first embarked upon so long a course with a consideration of signs rather than of the realities they signify."
[102] Plato, *Republic,* 518b-c.

whole heart" (*totum cor meum*) to seek God: "Speak now, my whole heart, speak now to God: I seek your countenance, O Lord, your countenance I require."[103] The second commands God (*domine deus meus*) to teach his heart *(cor meum*) where and how to seek Him: "Come now, Lord my God, teach my heart where and how to seek You, where and how to find You."[104] These two commands establish a reciprocity between the desiring heart and the teaching God. The three exhortations to *homuncio, cor meum*, and *domine deus meus* preface a series of 26 questions in *Proslogion* I which move from one to another in a continuous line of investigation. The questioning begins with the same interrogatives, where (*ubi*) and how (*quomodo*), which the third exhortation uses to command the Lord to teach the heart.

The attempts to find God aim to close the distance between the seeker and God. He desires to know where God is and can be known, and the means by which he can bring himself there. The seeker poses three questions asking 'where' and three questions asking 'how' to seek God. The problem of 'where' is intensified with the recognition that God lives "in light inaccessible"[105] The seeker does not know how to approach light inaccessible, who will lead him into it, or by what sign or face (*faciem*) he may seek it. He concludes, "Never have I seen you, Lord my God, I do not know your face."[106] Reasoning operates in a way that gradually increases the distance between the seeker and his goal; the six questions intensify the seeker's knowledge of his distance from God and expose an opposition between the intense desire and God's inaccessibility. The seeker restates the same opposition six times in different ways. He is anxious with love (*anxius amore*); he yearns (*anhelat*), desires (*desiderat*), longs (*cupit*), and aspires (*affectat*) to see the inaccessible (*inaccessibilis*) habitation of God. The questions employ the language of presence and absence to seek God as if in a place. God's place is inaccessible, and the seeker's desire is not satisfied because he is ignorant of God's *locum* and *habitatio*; he has neither found, nor knows how to seek God. Reasoning is unable to cover the distance between the seeker and what he seeks so as to arrive at God.

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[103] *Pros*., I: "Dic nunc, totum cor meum, dic nunc deo: Quæro vultum tuum; vultum tuum, domine, require."
[104] *Pros*., I: "Eia nunc ergo tu, domine deus meus doce cor meum ubi et quomodo te quærat, ubi et quomodo te inveniat."
[105] *Pros*., I: "Sed certe habitas 'lucem inaccessibilem'."
[106] *Pros*., I: "Numquam te vidi, domine deus meus, non novi faciem tuam."

Instead, the reasoning intensifies the problem because its operation prevents access to what the quest seeks. The quest is able to proceed as the seeker intensifies and develops the opposition between his desire for God's habitation and the inaccessibility of that place. On the condition that the faithful seeker does not abandon the quest when he encounters what appears to be an impasse, the intensification of the problem will lead to a seeking under a new form.

2.1.3 Seeking That for Which We are Made

The scriptural account of the fall of humanity enables continued seeking when what was sought as if in a *locum* and *habitatio* becomes sought as that for which humans are made. Like Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo,* the *Proslogion* teaches that the human has a place and a role to fulfill in the cosmos. Anselm describes that to which human nature is ordained:

> …in the second book [of *Cur Deus Homo*]—likewise proceeding as if nothing were known of Christ—I show with equally clear reasoning and truth that human nature was created in order that the whole human, in both body and soul, would at a certain time enjoy blessed immortality. And I will show the necessity of man's attaining this end for which he was created…[107]

In the *Cur Deus Homo,* Anselm demonstrates the necessity that God restore human nature to that for which He made it. Michael Root, quoting Anselm, writes:

> Thus, if God has created humanity to be just and upright members of the Heavenly City who will thus honour and praise God, then it necessarily follows that this result will come about. "It is necessary [Necesse est ergo] that God will accomplish with human nature what He began." The assumption that God's original intention in creating humanity must be fulfilled introduces necessity into Anselm's argument.[108]

The *totus homo* is made to enjoy blessed immortality *in corpore et in anima*; if the human does not have the power to seek this place, then the cosmos and the Catholic faith

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[107] Anselm, *CDH, Praefatio*: "In secundo autem libro similiter, quasi nihil sciatur de Christo, monstratur non minus aperta ratione et veritate, naturam humanam ad hoc institutam esse, ut aliquando immortalitate beata totus homo i.e. in corpore et in anima frueretur; ac necesse esse ut hoc fiat de homine, propter quod factus est…"

[108] Michael Root, "Necessity and Unfittingness in Anselm's Cur Deus Homo", *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 40 (1987), 219.

exhibit contradiction. In *Proslogion* I, an opposition develops between fallen and miserable humanity and the total satisfaction of Adam, which humanity is made to know and enjoy. The seeker introduces features of the scriptural account of the fall in order to understand the misery he experiences as a result of the incompatibility between his heart's desire for God and God's inaccessibility. His misery becomes participant in a universal condition: "How wretched man's lot is when he has lost that for which he was made! Oh how hard and cruel was that fall!…He lost the blessedness for which he was made, and he found the misery for which he was not made."[109] The seeker makes six comparisons between prelapsarian Adam and the universal fallen state of humans. Adam was blessed, possessed "that without which nothing is happy," ate the bread of angels (*panem angelorum*), belched with satiety (*ructabat saturitate*), was prosperous, and in his happiness had possessions. This is total and sensual satisfaction: Adam possesses the one and only good in which is all good. This original human condition is lost. In its place, humankind finds misery, possesses that which by itself is only misery, eats the "bread of sorrows," "sighs with hunger," goes begging, and remains empty. The seeker's object of desire, from which he is separated, is now known as the original total satisfaction of Adam for which humanity is made. The question of where and how to find God's *locum* and *habitatio* has resolved into the question of how to become what humans are made to be. The garden of Eden is that from which we fall and to which we strive to return through work and prayer. The human condition in the garden is a state of both grace and nature; it is given by grace and sought by work. Benedictine monasteries, including Anselm's own abbey at Bec, illustrate the quest for Edenic total satisfaction in God by placing at the center of the monastery a garden representing Eden.

2.1.4 In My Own Way

The operation of reason which seeks God prevents the seeker from finding what he seeks. The seeker asks three pairs of questions, each of which compares what he has

[109] *Pros*., I: "O misera sors hominis, cum hoc perdidit ad quod factus est. O durus et dirus casus ille! (…) Perdidit beatitudinem ad quam factus est, et invenit miseriam propter quam factus non est."

intended to what he has accomplished.[110] The actions do not lead to their intended end. The seeker concludes: "I sought goodness, and behold, confusion. I reached for God, and I got in my own way (*offendi in me ipsum)*."[111] The seeking is the very thing which throws the seeker into confusion; the seeking itself gets in the way of finding. The seeker admits being unable to seek and find what he knows to be adequate to his yearning, and is in contradiction within himself because he can neither find God nor seek what he is made to be. The same contradiction implicates the Divine logic of the cosmos. God calls to us by desire in us, by His institution of the church catholic, and by scripture, to seek Him, but the human does not have the ability to seek.

An examination of the logic which develops in *Proslogion* I shows that fallen reason prevents the quest from arriving at what it seeks. The problem is that the seeker wants to find something which cannot be found in the way he is looking for it. Crucially, it is the way he seeks that is the problem. The rational seeking develops a logic which excludes God from its vision because it closes itself to finding God in the way that He may be found. This logic develops in *Proslogion* I in terms of God's relation to finite things. God is that through which goodness exists, and without which there is no goodness. Anselm writes: "[Adam] lost that without which nothing is happy, and there remains to him that through which (*per* se) there is nothing except misery."[112] Anselm's logic depends on the assumption that things are not good through themselves, but through the source of goodness. What the seeker has is, through itself (*per* se), only misery. We remain empty (*vacui*) because we do not possess that through which things are good and without which no good thing can be had. At this point it is unclear whether the source of all goods is God as supreme good and one among other beings, or God as the transcendent source of all being and goodness. In either case, the absence is a problem: either because the supreme Good is yet unknown and must be found, or because God is not one among the good things that can be found. The quest cannot proceed because reason is fallen, has closed upon itself, and cannot provide a way

[110] *Pros*., I: "…quid incepi, quid effeci? Quo tendebam, quo deveni? Ad quid aspirabam, in quibus suspiro?"
[111] *Pros*., I: "Quaesivi bona et ecce turbatio!"
[112] *Pros*., I: "Abscessit sine quo nihil felix est, et remansit quod per se nonnisi miserum est."

forward. The logic and terms by which the quest seeks God prevent the seeker from finding what he seeks.

Following the first exhortation of *Proslogion* I, the seeker has gone into his mind to seek God there; he is seeking God as if He were one among other things that can be found. The aspect under which God is sought does not match the kind of thing the seeker understands God to be. On one hand, he seeks God as if He is in the mind as something 'present' and in a place. On the other hand, God is the source of all good things: "You have given me all of the good things that I possess, and still I do not know you."[113] The seeker understands God as that through which all goods exist, and that which they presuppose. The absence of God is a problem because the seeker expects to find Him as present. Because the seeker wants his possession of God to satisfy this understanding of what God is, and attempts to find God as if one among other things, it becomes conceivable that God cannot be found.

The possibility of not finding God justifies the seeker's despair. The seeker remains at the bottom of the cave: "Lord, bowed down (*incurvatus*) as I am, I can only look downwards; raise me up that I may look upwards."[114] Reason cannot bring itself out of the cave, and must receive help from the outside by what is capable of leading it out.[115] Another form of knowing must lead reason in order to restore it. The seeker prayers for sight: "Let me discern Your light whether it be from afar or from the depths."[116] He fears being cut off entirely from the light and having a "pit close its mouth over" him. Despair intensifies as the seeker strengthens the conclusion that he cannot escape the contradiction in which reason traps him.

Reason's intensification of its own incapacity leads to a demand for help from outside. When reason becomes closed on itself and the seeker sees no way for the quest to continue, the opposition intensifies into a contradiction which leads to the conclusion that God must give Himself to the seeker if the quest is to continue: "You call us, so help

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[113] *Pros.,* I: "…omnia mea bona tu mihi contulisti, et nondum novi te."
[114] *Pros.,* I: "Domine, incurvatus non possum nisi deorsum aspicere, erige me ut possim sursum intendere."
[115] In the analogy of the cave in Plato's *Republic,* 519a-b: "feasting, greed, and other such pleasures…like leaden weights, pull [the prisoner's] vision downwards"; 519e & 515e: "Through persuasion or compulsion…" the prisoner must be "dragged away from there by force, up the rough, steep path," by what does not "let him go until [it] has dragged him into the sunlight…"
[116] *Pros.,* I: "Liceat mihi suspicere lucem tuam, vel de longe, vel de profundo."

us."[117] The seeker places responsibility on God, and six times asks the Lord 'how long'[118] until He will give Himself. The despair develops into a desperate climax after the way God is sought lead to an impasse. The impasse requires the seeker to relinquish his will and wait upon Divine help:

> I beseech You, Lord, let me not go sighing hopelessly, but make me breathe hopefully again. My heart is made bitter by its desolation; I beseech You, Lord, sweeten it by Your consolation. I set out hungry to look for You; I beseech You, Lord, do not let me depart from You fasting.[119]

The way of seeking which has led to the impasse must break down in order for the quest to continue. The seeker's relinquishment of himself and his attempts to know God is the climax of a negative movement which is seen also as a positive movement insofar as it will enable a new form of seeking which restores reason. As the negative intensifies, the positive emerges. The intensification of anxiety and despair finally breaks down and relinquishes the logic of the closure which reason produced. The seeker relinquishes what prevents him from recognizing what is present to him, and he is prepared to see and receive what is already in his mind as the help which he seeks. As he waits to receive, help begins to emerge in the form of an articulation of what he wants from God: He wants his seeking to become Divine-human seeking. The seeker's demand for help which places responsibility on God anticipates Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo*, where reason leads to knowledge of the necessity of Divine help in the form of Christ as the God-Man (*Deus Homo*).[120]

2.1.5 Divine-Human Seeking

By the conclusion of *Proslogion* I, the seeker, who knows that his own attempts to know God have led to failure, demands and expects that God restore the seeker by

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[117] *Pros.,* I: "Invitas nos, adiuva nos."
[118] Three times the seeker asks *usquequo* and three times *quando*.
[119] *Pros.,* I: "Obsecro, domine, ne desperem suspirando, sed respirem sperando. Obsecro, domine, amaricatum est cor meum sua desolatione, indulca illud tua consolatione. Obsecro, domine, esuriens incepi quærere te, ne desinam ieiunus de te."
[120] *CDH., Praefatio*: "In secundo autem libro similiter, quasi nihil sciatur de Christo, monstratur non minus aperta ratione et veritate, naturam humanam ad hoc institutam esse, ut aliquando immortalitate beata totus homo i.e. in corpore et in anima frueretur; ac necesse esse ut hoc fiat de homine, propter quod factus est…"

giving Himself. Contradiction and impasse have taught the seeker that he is capable of neither seeking nor finding God; human nature is fallen and requires Divine restoration. As we have seen, it is imperative for the human to seek God, but the human is not capable of seeking God in a way that He may be found. Therefore, if the human is to seek God, it must be God, as Christ or God-Man, working in the human and enabling the seeking. The seeker asks: "When will you restore yourself to us?" (*quando restitues te nobis?*), and subsequently demands, "restore yourself to us" (*restitue te nobis*).

In order to shed light on the seeker's demand for God to restore the human at the conclusion of *Proslogion* I, we must turn first to the Chalcedonian definition of 451. This definition and its formula "two natures, one person" remains standard for Latin Christendom in the middle ages generally, and particularly for Anselm, whose teaching, according to Crouse, "assumes and rests firmly upon Chalcedonian Christology."[121] The Chalcedonian definition reads:

> Therefore, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body, of one substance with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from his sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form One *Prosopon* [Person]and One *Hypostasis* [Subsistence], not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ.[122]

The union of two natures, Divine and human, in the one person of Christ, the Word, provides the basis for God's restoration of the human. According to Crouse, the Chalcedonian definition "represents the culmination of a tradition of doctrinal development in which the basic considerations were always soteriological, that is,

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[121] Robert Crouse, "Christology: From Chalcedon to Anselm," in *Christology: The Mission and Person of Jesus Christ,* Atlantic Theological Conference 1997, ed. Greg Shepherd (Charlottetown: St Peter Publications, 1998).

[122] The Greek text, and the English translation which informs my own, is taken from Philip Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, v.2 (New York, Harper: 1877), 89-94.

always concerned with what the efficacy of the work of redemption must imply about the person of Christ."[123] Hankey explains: "The Christian doctrine of the incarnation as defined by Chalcedon understands God doing his saving work in man. It is both God's work and man's, because the personality in which the human nature of Christ subsists is the Divine Logos."[124]

Following the Chalcedonian definition and its definitive interpretation by Boethius,[125] Anselm brings out "more sharply the soteriological dimensions of that Christology."[126] The *Cur Deus Homo* explains how Christ freely shares the reward that follows from his death:

> It would be both just and necessary that the gift should be given by the Father to whomsoever the Son wished…Upon whom would he more properly bestow the reward accruing from his death, than upon those for whose salvation, as right reason teaches, he became man…? For surely in vain will men imitate him, if they be not also partakers of his reward… Or whom could he more justly make heirs of the inheritance, which he does not need, and of the superfluity of his possessions, than his parents and brethren?[127]

God's saving work is a Divine activity in the human. The imitation of Christ depends upon the Divine work done in the human, and the human receives the capacity to imitate Christ because he graciously becomes partaker in Christ's reward. Crucially, because God is immutable, "the change is in humans, not in God, the beginning and the end."[128] The Divine Word is the source of understanding in the human; it generates in the human, which is not its cause, but in whom it becomes subsistent.

Hankey defends against the criticism of Gustav Aulén and Albrecht Ritschl that Anselm makes God's redemption a human work: "Anselm would never say that the subject of the redeeming personality is not the God-Logos but man, indeed [Ritschl's] terrible problems about Christ's will come precisely from such a refusal…The problem

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[123] Crouse, "Christology: From Chalcedon to Anselm".
[124] Wayne Hankey, "St. Anselm and the Mediaeval Doctors," 50-51.
[125] According to Crouse, "Christology: From Chalcedon to Anselm", Boethius' interpretation of the Chalcedonian definition in *Contra Eutychen et Nestorium* "remains standard for Latin Christendom throughout the Middle Ages." Logan's comparison of the writing of Anselm and Boethius, aided by Anselm's correspondences and our knowledge of Lanfranc's sources, lead him to conclude that Anselm had access to "at least two of the theological tractates [of Boethius], *De Trinitate* and *Contra Eutychen et Nestorium*." Cf. Logan, *Reading Anselm's* Proslogion, 125.
[126] Crouse, "Christology: From Chalcedon to Anselm."
[127] Anselm, *CDH*., 2, xix.
[128] Hankey, "St. Anselm and the Mediaeval Doctors," 53.

is not in Anselm, but in this refusal [of Ritschl] to accept the Church's definition of the ontology of the incarnation." [129] Instead, "we must remember that Anselm's doctrine of satisfaction is intended to lead to a total following of Christ, a Christian discipline in our human condition, because Christ is the Divine Son working in the human."[130]

The Chalcedonian formulation, "two natures one person", sheds light on the character of the restoration which *Proslogion* I demands:

> Teach me to seek You, and reveal Yourself to me as I seek, because I can neither seek You if You do not teach me how, nor find You unless You reveal Yourself. Let me seek you in desiring you, let me desire you in seeking you. Let me find you in loving you, let me love you in finding you."[131]

For seeking to continue, God must restore the human through the God-Man, Christ the Logos, working in the human. The seeker can only seek and find if God teaches and reveals. The restoration of the human, a change which takes place through seeking and finding, depends upon the Divine work of teaching and revealing. Because the human must seek God and is unable to seek, the God-Man must do it in the human. The change takes place in the human, but the God-Man accomplishes the work. I call this Divine-human seeking, where the activity is Divine and takes place in the human, who experiences the effect. The prayer for Divine-human seeking makes explicit the reciprocity which the opening exhortations command: that the seeker's heart (*cor meum*) seek God's face (*vultum*) and Lord God (*domine deus*) teach the heart (*cor meum*). Without Divine activity in the human, the seeker's efforts remain fallen and in confusion.

The basis of Divine restoration through the God-Man working in the human is the nearly effaced image of God created in the human:

> I acknowledge, Lord, and I give thanks that You have created Your image in me, so that I may remember You, think of You, love You. But this image is so effaced and worn away by vice, so darkened by the smoke of sin, that it cannot do what it was made to do unless You renew it and reform it. I do not try, Lord, to attain Your lofty heights, because my understanding is in no way equal to it. But I do desire to understand Your truth a little (*aliquatenus*), that truth that my

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[129] Hankey, "St. Anselm and the Mediaeval Doctors," 52.
[130] *ibid*, 52.
[131] *Pros.,* I: "Doce me quærere te, et ostende te quærenti; quia nec quærere te possum nisi tu doceas, nec invenire nisi te ostendas. Quæram te desiderando, desiderem quærendo. Inveniam amando, amem inveniendo."

> heart believes and loves. For I do not seek to understand so that I may believe; but I believe so that I may understand. For I believe this also, that 'unless I believe, I shall not understand.[132]

God's image created in us is the basis of union with God. It enables memory, thought and love of the Creator (*memor te cogitem, te amem)*. In virtue of this image, the seeker is able to possess belief which subsequently becomes understanding. Following the *credo ut intelligam*, belief must lead the seeker into understanding. What is the content of this belief?

The seeker believes that God will restore the human through His teaching and revealing. This is a Divine work in the human, where the change takes place in the human and not in God. The change that occurs in the human is the seeking and finding, which is also the restoration of God's image in the strengthening of memory, thought, and love of God. The belief which will lead the seeker into understanding is the seeker's image of God as He who restores the human in, through, and as the activity of the seeker. The seeker no longer treats God as something that can be found in a place and as one thing among others. Instead, by belief, he knows God in a way that he may be found. Belief knows God indistinctly, not as one thing or another, but as the renewal of the seeker. Thus, at the conclusion of *Proslogion* I the seeker has arrived at the standpoint of faith from which the quest may properly begin. The quest takes its beginning in *Proslogion* II when Anselm introduces the formula naming God "that than which nothing greater can be thought." The explication of this formula, initiated by the fool's denial of the existence of what it names, leads into intellectual vision by *Proslogion* IV, where the seeker praises God for illumining him.

2.2 Proslogion II-IV

2.2.1 Setting up the Demonstrations

[132] *Pros*., I: "Fateor, domine, et gratias ago, quia creasti in me hanc imaginem tuam, ut tui memor te cogitem, te amem. Sed sic est abolita attritione vitiorum, sic est offuscata fumo peccatorum, ut non possit facere ad quod facta est, nisi tu renoves et reformes eam. Non tento, domine, penetrare altitudinem tuam, quia nullatenus comparo illi intellectum meum; sed desidero aliquatenus intelligere veritatem tuam, quam credit et amat cor meum. Neque enim quæro intelligere ut credam, sed credo ut intelligam. Nam et hoc credo: quia 'nisi credidero, non intelligam'."

The restoration of the human comes through the government of human reason. Faith and intellect both govern reason, but under different forms. According to the formula *fides quaerens intellectum*, faith is temporally prior to intellect, and must govern the rational seeking until it leads to the discovery of what transcends and governs reason. In *Proslogion* I, the seeker established distinctions by which he prevented himself from seeing God. He encountered an impasse because reason remained absolute and contradictory, not governed by a higher form of knowing. In *Proslogion* II, the seeker begins with the belief that God will be found as the activity of the seeker, and that God is "that than which nothing greater can be thought." The demonstrations proving God's existence in *Proslogion* II-IV are a journey by which intellect comes to govern reason, and so accomplish what the seeker prays for at the conclusion of *Proslogion* I. *Proslogion* IV concludes with the seeker praising God for the gift of faith which has enabled understanding by God's illumination: "What I formerly believed by your gift, I now so understand by you illuminating (*intelligo te illuminante*)."[133]

Proslogion II introduces as a matter of belief the formula, or name for God, out of which emerges the *unum argumentum*. Of the four demonstrations outlined in the *Prooemium*, *Proslogion* II-IV accomplish the first by showing that God truly exists (*deus vere est*). *Proslogion* II begins:

> Well then, Lord, You who give understanding to faith, grant me that I may understand, as much as You see fit, that You exist as we believe You to exist, and that You are what we believe You to be. Now we believe that You are something than which nothing greater can be thought. Or can it be that a thing of such a nature does not exist, since the Fool has said in his heart, there is no God?[134]

The seeker prays to understand what he believes, namely, that God exists and is "that than which nothing greater can be thought." Anselm puts these two beliefs together as what is denied by the fool in Psalm XIII. The fool's denial is a denial of the existence of something of such a nature (*aliqua talis natura*), namely, of "that than which nothing greater can be thought". Once the fool is said to understand *aliqua talis natura*, reason shows that he is in contradiction with himself:

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[133] *Pros*., IV: "quod prius credidi te donante, iam sic intelligo te illuminante."
[134] *Pros*., II: "Ergo, domine, qui das fidei intellectum, da mihi, ut quantum scis expedire intel- ligam, quia es sicut credimus, et hoc es quod credimus. 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'?"

> But surely, when this same Fool hears what I am speaking about, namely, 'something- than-which-nothing-greater-can-be thought', he understands what he hears, and what he understands is in his mind, even if he does not understand that it actually exists. For it is one thing for an object to exist in the mind, and another thing to understand that an object actually exists.[135]

By his denial, the *insipiens* exhibits foolish confidence; he presumes to have an understanding which does not first require belief. The fool's assertion reverses the *credo ut intelligam* by beginning not with belief but understanding. In his presumption, the fool opposes the conclusion of *Proslogion* I, repeated in *Proslogion* II, which says that belief must temporally precede understanding. He also opposes the teaching of the church on the temporal priority of faith over understanding.

When the fool denies the existence of what the formula names, he must admit of a certain understanding of what he denies. Let us consider the character of the 'understanding' which the fool possesses when he hears the formula. Schufreider describes this beginning of the demonstration as a "semiological starting point" because the formula is a "sign" of God and "the phrase itself that unlocks the *Proslogion* argument."[136] Shufreider argues that the argument begins "from an understanding of the words alone" which establish a "nominal foothold."[137] The fool knows the words of the formula in a preliminary and external way. He has not yet employed reason to examine his assertion. We shall subsequently learn that if the fool were to understand *aliqua talis natura* in the way that is subsequently developed in the remainder of *Proslogion* II-IV, he would not be able to deny the existence of "something greater than can be thought" as he is here able to do. He has an understanding which is not yet explicitly in contradiction with his denial of God's existence because it is an external, undeveloped, or *insipiens* understanding. Like *homuncio* in *Proslogion* I, the fool does not desire, believe, or seek God. He is distended in externals, which means that his knowledge is limited to outer linguistic sounds and has not entered the inner chamber of his mind. The fool has a

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[135] *Pros*., II: "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."
[136] Gregory Schufreider, *Confessions of a Rational Mystic* (Indiana, Purdue University Press, 1994), 119.
[137] Schufreider, *Confessions of a Rational Mystic*, 120.

perspective which is not that of the seeker who has passed through *Proslogion* I to seek God as something indistinct and as the very activity of the seeker.

The demonstration develops out of the fool's two positions in accordance with the functioning of the formula. The two positions are: 1) that what the formula names does not exist, and 2) that the formula exists in the mind. Schufreider explains that the formula "functions as a self clarifying expression insofar as this complex linguistic sign itself includes a built-in criterion that will allow us, working from the verbal formula alone, to determine what pertains and what does not pertain to its conception."[138] The demonstration works because the fool's positions include in them what leads beyond them: namely, the formula, or "self clarifying expression", which leads reason to necessary conclusions.

The formula functions through the comparison of terms. The demonstrations of *Proslogion* II and III follow the same pattern of comparison. In order for the formula to teach something about what it names, three things must be present:

(i) A belief that the formula names something.

(ii) A lesser term: A concept or limitation attributed to that same thing which the formula names.

(iii) A greater term: An idea of something which is thought to be greater than the lesser term.

In the two demonstrations of *Proslogion* II and III, the lesser terms of 'existence in mind' and 'ability to be thought not to be' are compared to the thought of that which is greater in virtue of not having the limitations belonging to those same terms. The formula requires that if one thinks something greater than the lesser term, then the lesser term is not attributed to God and the greater term is attributed negatively, as that which God cannot not be. The demonstrations establish what God is by determining that He cannot not be the greater term. The lesser term is denied of God and the higher conception is attributed to God by means of a negation of a negation.

2.2.2 Demonstration 1: God Exists in Reality and in Intellect

[138] Schufreider, *Confessions of a Rational Mystic*, 125.

On one hand, the standpoint of faith achieved at the conclusion of *Proslogion* I prepares the seeker to see God in the way He is here found: as what is found in and through the activity of seeking. God is present to faith as the activity of the one seeking, and not as something distinct. On the other hand, the demonstrations also force the unbelieving fool to recognize that God exists in reality. Therefore, while there are two subjects involved in the proof, for our purposes we will primarily focus on the faithful seeker rather than the fool. The first demonstration occurs at the end of *Proslogion* II:

> Even the Fool, then, is forced to agree that something-than-which-nothing-greater-can be thought exists in the mind, since he understands this when he hears it, and whatever is understood is in the mind. And surely that-than-which-a-greater-cannot-be-thought cannot exist in the mind alone. For if it exists solely in the mind even, it can be thought to exist in reality also, which is greater. If then that-than-which-a-greater-cannot-be-thought exists in the mind alone, this same that-than-which-a-greater-cannot-be-thought is that than-which-a-greater-can-be-thought. But this is obviously impossible. Therefore it is far from doubt that something-than-which-a- greater-cannot-be-thought exists both in the mind and in reality.[139]

The necessary conclusion that God be known as existing *in re* and *in intellectu* is a result of reason's comparison. Let us organize terms of the demonstration according to the functioning of the formula:

(i) A belief that the formula names something.

(ii) A lesser term: What is named exists in the mind only.

(iii) A greater term: What is named exists in the mind and in reality.

The conceptual limitations of existence *in solo intellectu* are negated because what is not restricted to mental existence, but exists in reality also, can be thought to be greater. God's existence *in solo intellectu* is denied and his nonexistence *in re* and *in intellectu* is denied. This leads to knowledge of God's existence by means of a negation of negation. The demonstration of God's existence denies his nonexistence in reality. The demonstration is a comparison by which reflexive reason moves from believing to

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[139] *Pros*., II: "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 intel- lectu. Si enim vel in solo intellectu est, potest cogitari esse et 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."

understanding something about what belief knows. The compulsion to accept the argument's conclusion comes from the exposure of self-contradiction, and the demand to move through it and away from it. The same activity is now a means to knowing.

2.2.3 Demonstration 2: God's Non-existence is Unthinkable

Proslogion III begins a second application of the formula which follows the same structure as the first and demonstrates that God's non-existence is unthinkable:

> For something can be thought to exist that cannot be thought not to exist, and this is greater than that which can be thought not to exist. Hence, if 'that than which a greater cannot be thought' can be thought not to exist, then 'that than which a greater cannot be thought' is not the same as 'that than which a greater cannot be thought', which is absurd. Something than which a greater cannot be thought exists so truly then, that it cannot be even thought not to exist.[140]

Let us outline the three criteria of the formula:

(i) A belief that the formula names something.

(ii) A lesser term: What is named can be thought not to exist

(iii) A greater term: What is named cannot be thought not to exist.

The lesser term is denied, and the greater term is negatively demonstrated: the non-existence of "that than which nothing greater can be thought" is unthinkable. The fool discovers that in contra-distinction from God's unthinkable non-existence, the non-existence of everything else is thinkable:

> And this is as it should be, for if some intelligence could think of something better than You, the creature would be above its creator and would judge its creator—and that is completely absurd. In fact, everything else there is, except You alone, can be thought of as not existing. You alone, then, of all things most truly exist and therefore of all things possess existence to the highest degree; for anything else does not exist as truly, and so possesses existence to a lesser degree.[141]

God's nature, according to the formula's explication, cannot be thought not to exist. The creature is not the judge of the creator, but vice-versa. Since the judge must possesses the

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[140] *Pros.,* III: "Quare si id quo maius cogitari nequit, potest cogitari non esse: id ipsum quo maius cogitari nequit, non est id quo maius cogitari nequit; quod convenire non potest."

[141] *Pros.,* III: "Et merito. Si enim aliqua mens posset cogitare aliquid melius te, ascenderet creatura super creatorem, et iudicaret de creatore; quod valde est absurdum. Et quidem quidquid est aliud præter te solum, potest cogitari non esse."

measure of what he judges, and the creature cannot be the measure of God. Shufreider helpfully clarifies what the demonstration concludes:

> Anselm is not claiming that there is something that can be thought to exist and cannot be thought not to exist; rather, he is claiming that it can be thought that something exists that cannot be thought not to exist, and that to think this is to think something greater than something else that can be thought, namely, what exists such that it can be thought not to exist.[142]

When Anselm establishes the unthinkability of God's nonexistence he is not also establishing that God can be thought. This is consistent with what faith knows at the conclusion of *Proslogion* I: it knows God as the activity of the one seeking. When the seeker passes from faith into understanding, he does not come to know God as something distinct which can be thought, but as what is sought in the activity of one who seeks God in accordance with the limits which the formula places on thought.

If God's nonexistence cannot be thought (c.III), then how is the fool able to assert that God does not exist (c.II)? In *Proslogion* IV Anselm makes explicit two kinds of knowledge at work in the demonstration: "For in one sense a thing is thought when the sound signifying it is thought (*cogitatur*), and in another sense when the very thing which it is, is understood (*intelligitur*)."[143] The former sense knows a thing externally, and does not know the thing itself to which the words refer, and the latter knows the thing itself (*id ipsum*) to which the words refer. For knowledge of the Divine, this is also the difference between thinking contingent things and understanding according to necessary reasons. We shall turn to a fuller consideration of this distinction in this chapter. The fool does not know God in terms of necessary, but of contingent being; he only knows the signifying sound (*vox significans*), not the things itself which it is (*id ipsum quod res*). The fool is capable of denying God's existence in *Proslogion* II because his knowledge of the formula's words is external and unexamined. The one who submits the formula, as self-clarifying expression, to discursive reasoning is unable to admit both that the formula names something and that what it names does not exist.

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[142] Schufreider, *Confessions of a Rational Mystic*, 150.
[143] *Pros*., IV: "Aliter enim cogitatur res cum vox eam significans cogitatur, aliter cum id ipsum quod res est intelligitur."

In his reply to Gaunilo, Anselm confirms that the fool is capable of an initial and external understanding of what the formula names even though the fool has not subjected to critical thought what he claims to understand:

> Do you not consider then that that about which we understand these things can to some extent be thought or understood, or can exist in thought or the mind? For if it cannot, we could not understand these things about it. And if you say that, because it is not completely understood, it cannot be understood at all and cannot be in the mind, then you must say that one who cannot see the purest light of the sun directly does not see the daylight, which is the same thing as the light of the sun.[144]

What the formula names can be thought and understood without being comprehended. In fact, this is necessary if the formula is to lead to any understanding at all. If complete comprehension were requisite for understanding, then one could never be said to understand, since what the formula names cannot be comprehended.

2.2.5 Illumination

Proslogion IV concludes with the seeker's thanksgiving for the illumination accomplished by the demonstrations: "I give thanks, good Lord, I give thanks to You, since what I believed before through Your free gift I now so understand by you illuminating (*intelligo te illuminante*), that if I did not want to believe that You existed, I should nevertheless be unable not to understand it."[145] The seeker's illumination comes in the form of intellectual vision of that which surpasses reason and upon which reason depends.

The seeker is illumined by God when the formula leads the seeker to discern the nature of discursive reason, specifically, that reason cannot be the ground and measure of its own existence. As we have seen, the proof establishes both the necessity of reason and its limitations. Only through discursive reasoning does the seeker discover reason's limitations. Reason is the means by which the seeker moves beyond contingency into

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[144] *Pros*., *Quid ad Haec Respondeat Editor Ipsius Libelli,* I: "Putasne aliquatenus posse cogitari vel intelligi aut esse in cogitatione vel intellectu, de quo hæc intelliguntur? Si enim non potest, non de eo possunt hæc intelligi. Quod si dicis non intelligi et non esse in intellectu quod non penitus intelligitur: dic quia qui non potest intueri purissimam lucem solis, non videt lucem diei, quæ non est nisi lux solis."
[145] *Pros*., IV: "Gratias tibi, bone domine, gratias tibi, quia quod prius credidi te donante, iam sic intelligo te illuminante, ut si te esse nolim credere, non possim non intelligere."

necessity, the realm of intellect, where truth is. Gilbert writes, "L'intellect comprend intuitivement; la pensée achève le savoir en complétant l'intuition par la réflexion et la vérification raisonée."[146]

The argument does not lead to knowledge of what has necessary existence in virtue of a capacity of reason to provide its own verifiable foundation, but in virtue of the intellect's principle: "Les représentation logiques sont fermées sur elles-mêmes, pensées sans engagement ontologique, *logos* sans être, incapable de se donner l'être qu'elles n'ont pas, bien évidemment."[147] For knowledge of truth and necessary being, mind depends upon intellect. *Proslogion* I exemplifies a reasoning that is closed in on itself because its own activity makes it unable to see what is seeks. Ungoverned discursive reason does not necessarily make the mind capable of intellectual intuition. Instead, the formula, governing reason, leads to the intellectual intuition. Crucially, in the demonstrations of *Proslogion* II-IV, thought completes a reasoned verification which leads to intellectual intuition of what surpasses reason as its measure and ground: when this happens, mind "n'est plus 'logique', mais spirituelle, et concerne l'alliance de l'être et de l'esprit, l'alliance onto-logique."[148]

The explication of the formula brings together discursive thought and its starting point in the intellect. God, as what the formula names, has the unique capacity of leading the seeker into knowledge of its being from the thought of its being. The proof

> montre que Dieu doit nécessairement être pensé, que cette nécessité est unique, et que penser autrement est contradictoire pour la pensée elle-même. C'est pourquoi le ch. 3 ne dira plus seulement que Dieu est *id quo maius*, mais qu'il est tel qu'il n'est pas possible de le concevoir comme non-existant.[149]

The formula makes the seeker capable of the intuition that there is something of which it is not the measure because its principle is to exceed what thought is able to measure. Gilbert writes, "la preuve dégage en effect un type de nécessité incontournable: la pensée doit acquiescer à sa capacité de penser ce qui n'est pas à la mesure de son immanence."[150]

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[146] Gilbert, *Le Proslogion*, 87.
[147] *ibid*, 98.
[148] *ibid,* 92.
[149] *ibid*, 84.
[150] Gilbert, *Le Proslogion*, 86.

By means of a distinction between mental existence and real existence, *Proslogion* II leads to the conclusion that God must exist both in the intellect and in reality. However, it is not until the second demonstration in *Proslogion* III that the seeker recognizes the necessity for reason to go beyond itself and achieve intellectual intuition. First, let us consider *Proslogion* II, which reads:

> For it is one thing for an object to exist in the mind (*intellectu*), and another thing to understand that an object actually exists. Thus, when a painter plans beforehand what he is going to execute, he has a certain thing in his mind, but does not yet understand that it actually exists because he has not yet executed it. However, when he has actually painted it, then he both has it in his mind and understands that it exists because he now made it.[151]

Here Anselm distinguishes between two kinds of thoughts. An image in the mind that is not yet painted is an object that has mental existence, but not existence in reality. In this case, the painter does not think that the object exists in reality. Once the painting is produced, the painter understands that it exists both in the mind and in reality. The opposition is between mental existence and actual existence, and movement from the former to the latter is given by mind's recognition of a given reality. We therefore find that the formula limits and governs the conclusions at which thought is able to arrive. In the case of "that than which nothing greater can be thought", the very thought of its mental existence leads reason to the given reality of God existence. While *Proslogion* II leads to the conclusion that God must possess real existence, the mind has not yet received an intellectual illumination.

The crucial moment in the proof which leads to illumination is *Proslogion* III's comparison between the thought of the possible, or contingent, and the thought of the necessary. This enables the movement from the merely logical to the ontological. Reason's ability to compare the thought of the possible and the thought of the necessary is what makes the demonstration possible. Reason must recognize that it is limited to the realm of contingency and contradiction, and, at the same time, that it has crossed these limits when it sees something that is not contingent. Intellectual vision is the form of apprehension reached when reason crosses its limits. Intellect sees that what is possible

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[151] *Pros*., II: "Aliud enim est rem esse in intellectu, aliud intelligere rem esse. Nam cum pictor præcogitat quæ 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."

cannot be the cause of what is necessary, but the reverse must be true. When the formula leads the reason to the thought of something necessary, the seeker no longer understands himself as the source of his power to think God, but that God is the cause of this power. What the intellect glimpses surpasses the objects of reason and are what these objects presuppose.

In *Proslogion* III, the formula leads thought into understanding of something of which it is not the measure. This is the point at which the seeker passes from reason to intellect. Intellectual knowledge is a gift which has its source in the Divine Word. The work of reason prepares the seeker for intellectual vision but is not the cause of that vision. In *Proslogion* III, knowledge of God escapes the contingency of reasoning because the intellect gathers from the movement of reason an intuition of something which is not subject to the contingency of reason and whose nonexistence is unthinkable. The seeker receives knowledge that his reasoning is not the measure of God, but God, as what the formula names, measures and governs thought.

Following Gilbert, let us consider the reflexive movement in *Proslogion* III between the thought of God as "that which cannot be thought not to be" and "that which can be thought not to be," where the former implies necessary existence and the latter possible existence. When the formula leads reason to a comparison of what is possible and what is necessary, the mind must compare the two and recognize what surpasses reason's objects. Gilbert distinguishes:

> deux niveaux de pensées objectives: d'une part la pensée d'une chose qu'on ne saurait concevoir non-existante et qu'on doit donc concevoir existante, et d'autre part la pensée d'une chose dont la conception de l'existence n'est pas necessaire; on dit que la première pensée est plus 'grande' que la seconde.[152]

In the comparison of the thought of possible and of necessary existence, the seeker finds in the latter not an object of reason, but an object of the intellect. It is not an object of reason because it possesses a kind of existence of which it is not the measure. Intellect, on the other hand, intuits something it cannot measure. Gilbert writes: "Il en va ainsi parce que la pensée, acquiesçant à ce que l'intellect voit necessaire, accomplit ce pour quoi elle est faite."[153] Thought functions in a way which requires it to be governed. The

[152] Gilbert, *Le Proslogion*, 87.
[153] Gilbert, *Le Proslogion*, 90.

reversal by which mind discovers that it cannot be the cause of its grasp of what the formula names makes the thought of the necessary greater than that of the possible. The seeker discovers that thought is interior and inferior to the intellect which grasps the necessary. Discursive thought here attains its starting point in the intellect when the seeker discovers the subordination of contingent reasoning to necessary truth.

When thought takes its starting point from the intellect in *Proslogion* III, the seeker understands that the creator is above the creature:

> And you are this, Lord our God. You exist so truly, Lord my God, that you cannot even be thought not to exist. And this is as it should be, for if some intelligence could think of something better than you, the creature would be above its creator and would judge its creator—and that is completely absurd.[154]

The necessary is above the contingent as the creator is above the creature. The creature cannot judge God because one cannot judge that of which he is not the measure. However, the God who is above the creature is also leading the creature to Himself through the formula.

Proslogion III identifies God as the object of the demonstrations: "And you are this, Lord our God."[155] The formula, which, as we have seen, Anselm received as a revelation, is a true name for God. *Proslogion* IV's *intelligo te illuminante* verifies that the formula's leading is Divine teaching.[156] The movement by which reason leads from what is known contingently to seen as necessary, resulting in illumination, brings about the Divine-human reciprocity prayed for at the conclusion of *Proslogion* I. There, faith knows God as what is sought in, through, and as the activity of the one seeking. God restores the human through His Word, the God-Man; He renews the human through the government of intellect. God is He who teaches by the formula, and shows Himself to the seeker. Intellect is the renewal of the seeker because it governs reason, which was closed in on itself and blind.

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[154] *Pros*., III: "Et hoc es tu, domine deus noster. Sic ergo vere es, domine deus meus, ut nec cogitari possis non esse. Si enim aliqua mens posset cogitare aliquid melius te, ascenderet creatura super creatorem, et iudicaret de creatore; quod valde est absurdum."
[155] *Pros*., III: "Et hoc es tu, domine deus noster."
[156] Compare to Augustine's *Conf*. 7.10.16, where God is He who leads and who is seen by the leading: "By the Platonic books I was admonished to return into myself. With you as my guide I entered into my innermost citadel, and was given power to do so because you had become my helper. I entered and with my soul's eye, such as it was, saw above that same eye of my soul the immutable light higher than my mind… It transcended my mind…It was superior because it made me…"

Logan argues that *Proslogion* II-IV do not demonstrate the existence of God, but of "that than which nothing greater can be thought." Commenting on *Proslogion* III, Logan writes:

> Anselm has demonstrated by reason that there must existence something the non-existence of which cannot be thought. The point now is to attach this demonstration to what is believed about God, including his uniqueness. Anselm starts out here on the path of showing the identity of God and this 'something'. It takes him much of the *Proslogion* to establish it.[157]

On the basis that Anselm's God is the God of the Catholic faith and not that of the philosophers,[158] Logan supposes that Anselm devotes most of the *Proslogion* to establishing the identity of God and the formula in order to complete the *unum argumentum*. *Proslogion* V-XXIII serve to establish the identity of God and the formula "by showing the identity of the attributes of God and X [what the formula names]."[159] In distinction from Logan, I am arguing that the seeker accepts and has no reason to question the identity of God and what the formula names. When the seeker is illumined to God's existence, he becomes open to a true reality which does not have its source in the seeker. Since Anselm's God is the God of the philosophers and of the Catholic faith, discursive reason leads to vision of the one God, than which nothing greater can be thought.

Bernard Wills helps us clarify the nature of the intellectual vision. Wills argues that in *Proslogion* III's demonstration of the unthinkability of God's non-existence, the seeker attains an "indefeasible intuition of the whole or unqualified unity" of knowing and being which is "prior to the duality of subject and object" and "cannot be brought into question by discursive reason because discursive reason in fact depends upon it."[160] Wills rightly argues that the formula depends upon and points towards a prior unity, and that the seeker achieves knowledge of something which is not subject to the contingency of discursive reasoning.

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[157] Logan, *Reading Anselm's* Proslogion, 96.
[158] Cf. Logan, *Reading's Anselm's* Proslogion, 101.
[159] Logan, *Reading Anselm's* Proslogion, 98.
[160] Bernard Wills, "What's Different about Anselm's Argument? The Contemporary Relevance of the 'Ontological' Proof," *Analecta Hermeneutica* 4 (2010): 1-11 at 4.

However, the intuition which illumines the seeker in *Proslogion* III is not of this prior unity itself, but of something which presupposes it. The object of intuition is not a prior principle detached from the argument's terms. Rather, it is a principle relative to the argument and place of the seeker. It is important that the intellect's representations do not exist apart from the particular place of the seeker on his journey. For the intellect to glimpse something that has not fallen into contingency, discursive reason must be led into a reasoned verification of what, from its own perspective, it does not know will produce an intellectual insight. While objects of the intellect transcend the realm of contingency and contradiction, they are also known through it. Put in another way, intellect is a form of knowing that glimpses necessary things contingently. Because intellectual knowledge remains one as a single movement with the contingent thought, the intuition which brings together discursive reason and the necessity upon which it depends remains relative to the particular terms of the discursive reasoning.

Belief in God's existence passes into understanding when intellect glimpses the necessity to which reason following the formula leads. Belief knows contingently and indistinctly what intellect knows necessarily. Once God's necessary being is understood, the existence of that same being is not any longer a matter of belief, nor subject to the contingency of thought: "Whoever really understands this understands clearly that this same being so exists that not even in thought can it not exist. Thus whoever understands that God exists in such a way cannot think of Him as not existing."[161] Intellect exceeds the closed logical representations of reason by its knowledge of what is not able to be contradicted by reason. The one who understands that God's existence is unthinkable cannot think of God as not existing. The fool in *Proslogion* II is capable of denying God's existence because his knowledge has not left the realm of contingency and received its starting point in what is necessary.

2.2.6 Relative Knowledge

[161] *Pros*., IV: "Quod qui bene intelligit, utique intelligit id ipsum sic esse, ut nec cogitatione queat non esse. Qui ergo intelligit sic esse deum, nequit eum non esse cogitare."

Each successive application of the formula distances the seeker from a lesser conception of God and negatively attributes to Him the greater term. If mind becomes capable of the thought of something greater than what it understands God to be, then what was attributed to God becomes conceived under terms which require its denial. On one hand, the character of the formula suggests, and *Proslogion* XXVI confirms, that seeking in this life never ends. On the other hand, God is found and present in the understanding. The entire quest into God takes place in the middle between the time God is first present in the understanding and the complete comprehension of the incomprehensible God.

Dermot Moran suggests that the *Proslogion*'s formula "in a way enacts, the dialectical tension between the immanence and transcendence of the Divine."[162] He explains this tension in terms of a hierarchy of being: "Anselm uses the hierarchy of being, the great chain of being, to argue not only that God is the highest being in that chain, but in fact, that the Divine infinity transcends the very hierarchy itself."[163] As the highest being in the chain, God can be sought by means of comparison. As transcendent of the hierarchy, God is beyond thought. Insofar as the Divine is known by comparison, it is known 'relatively', because it is known relative to a lesser term and as a greater term, and both terms belong to the mind. Moran says:

> …being greater than something else does not express an essential feature of something, because if the thing to which it is compared did not exist, the entity itself would not be diminished in any way Something predicated "relatively" (*relative*) does not give us insight into nature.[164]

Knowledge of the immanent God is relative to the comparative terms belonging to the seeker's mind, and does not say something essential about the Divine Being itself. It does not overcome its starting point in the human and remains relative to the conditions of that mind's existence and knowledge.

The relativity of human knowledge of God does not prevent true understanding. As we have shown, the seeker attains understanding of God through contingent reasoning which is also relative to the particular terms present in the human mind. God

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[162] Moran, "Neoplatonic and Negative Theological Elements": 214-215.
[163] *ibid*: 211.
[164] Moran, "Neoplatonic and Negative Theological Elements": 213.

leads the seeker by the formula to glimpse the necessary Divine being in contingent terms. For Anselm, knowledge of God is never a complete understanding of God, but, it is true understanding. If there were no true understanding of God without complete comprehension, then God would be unknowable. As we have seen already, Anselm explains this in his reply to Gaunilo:

> Do you not consider then that that about which we understand these things can to some extent be thought or understood, or can exist in thought or the mind? For if it cannot, we could not understand these things about it. And if you say that, because it is not completely understood, it cannot be understood at all and cannot be in the mind, then you must say that one who cannot see the purest light of the sun directly does not see the daylight, which is the same thing as the light of the sun.[165]

The purest light of the sun represents a blinding vision of complete understanding of God. The sun is also the source of daylight, by which we are capable of sight of what is and is known. We know the sun not by direct vision, but by what daylight illuminates. Through what the daylight illuminates we may understand to some extent (*aliquatenus*) what cannot be completely understood. The sun is known through what it lights up as necessary existence is known as the source of the contingent through the contingent. In this analogy we once again we find ourselves in the middle between complete ignorance and complete understanding. In this middle, many kinds of knowledge are possible, including, as we have seen, the imagination of *homuncio* and *insipiens*, the belief of the seeker, discursive reasoning, and intellectual insight.

Proslogion II-IV have accomplished the first of the demonstrations outlined in the *Proemium* by showing *that* God necessarily exists. The demonstration of *Proslogion* II-IV leads into intellectual insight of God as necessary being. The seeker knows that God is, but not what God is. *Proslogion* V begins: "What then are you, Lord God, you than whom nothing greater can be thought?" The demonstration of *Proslogion* II-IV depends upon the presence of God who is above the mind to also be present in the mind. *Proslogion* V will make explicit the presence of God in the mind as the quest seeks to understand the attributes of the necessarily existent God.

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[165] *Pros*., *Quid ad Haec Respondeat Editor Ipsius Libelli,* I: "Putasne aliquatenus posse cogitari vel intelligi aut esse in cogitatione vel intellectu, de quo hæc intelliguntur? Si enim non potest, non de eo possunt hæc intelligi. Quod si dicis non intelligi et non esse in intellectu quod non penitus intelligitur: dic quia qui non potest intueri purissimam lucem solis, non videt lucem diei, quæ non est nisi lux solis."

CHAPTER 3: DIVINE INTELLIGIBILITY

Proslogion V is transitional; it introduces a new stage of the quest which depends on the same distinctions between forms of apprehension, and follows the same fundamental, "faith seeking understanding" (*fides quaerens intellectum*). *Proslogion* II-IV led the seeker from belief into understanding, which is a movement from indistinct and contingent knowledge to intellectual understanding of necessary reasons. What the seeker glimpsed in *Proslogion* II-IV as the necessary being of God, he understands to be what the formula names. By means of the formula, *Proslogion* V brings the indistinctly known God of *Proslogion* II-IV into the realm of being as the supreme of all (*summum omnium*). On this basis, *Proslogion* VI develops a new formula, God is "whatever it is better to be than not to be," which serves as the measure and goal of rational seeking, by which the seeker achieves knowledge of the Divine substance (*divina substantia*).

3.1 Transposing God into the Realm of Being as *Summum*

Proslogion V employs the *maius* formula, "that than which nothing greater can be thought" (*aliquid quo maius nihil cogitari potest*), to bring into mind the same being whose necessarily existence the seeker glimpsed. Following the outline of the treatise as given by the *Prooemium*,[166]and having demonstrated that God necessarily exists, *Proslogion* V begins an explication of the Divine substance (*divina substantia*), employing the *maius* formula to transpose God into the realm of being as the supreme of all (*summum omnium*):

> What then are you, Lord God, than whom nothing greater can be thought? But what are you except supreme of all, existing through yourself alone, who made all other things from nothing? For whatever is not this is less than can be thought. But this cannot be thought of you.[167]

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[166] *Pros., Prooemium*: "…coepi mecum quærere, 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 quia est summum bonum nullo alio indigens, et quo omnia indigent ut sint et ut bene sint, et quæcumque de divina credimus substantia, sufficeret. "

[167] *Pros*., V: "Quid igitur es, domine deus, quo nil maius valet cogitari? Sed quid es nisi id quod summum omnium solum existens per seipsum, omnia alia fecit de nihilo? Quidquid enim hoc non est, minus est quam cogitari possit. Sed hoc de te cogitari non potest."

The seeker employs the *maius* formula to provide a rational justification for the introduction of three Divine attributes taken from the content of faith. Let us organize the terms in accordance with the formula's functioning:

> (1) A belief that the formula names God.
> (2) A lesser term: What is less than supreme, does not exist through itself alone, and does not make all other things from nothing.
> (3) A greater term: What is supreme of all, exists through itself alone, and makes all other things from nothing.

The content of faith provides the greater term and the negation of the same content provides the lesser term. If the greater term is not attributed to God, than whom nothing greater (*maius*) can be thought, then God is less (*minus*) than can be thought. The demonstration does not conclude that God is supreme of all (*summum omnium*), but that He is not less than *summum omnium*.

As what is not less than supreme, God as *summum* is known indistinctly, and reason must explicate the nature of the *summum* in order to understand the Divine substance. The seeker attributes to the indistinctly known God what belongs to the content of faith: the Divine being is "supreme of all, exists through itself alone, and makes all other things from nothing." The seeker knows these attributes in a preliminary and indistinct way on the basis of faith and will understand them to some extent through reason's explication. Gilbert writes: "Quand Anselme dit Dieu *summum,* il applique la première désignation, en quelque sorte formelle, à des données de l'expérience. Celles-ci sont choisies dans le langage traditionnel de la foi; la justice et la miséricorde sont attribuées à Dieu par le croyant."[168] The designation *summum,* as well as the other attributes taken from the content of faith, are known in a formal sense, not yet understood through reason. They are, however, in the mind as true attributes of God whose explication will teach the seeker about the Divine substance (*divina substantia*). As *summum*, God is supreme within the hierarchy of being.

The transposition of God into the realm of being makes explicit the intelligibility of God on which the demonstrations of *Proslogion* II-IV depend. If God were exclusively beyond being and intelligibility, and not also intelligible, no demonstration

[168] Gilbert, *Le Proslogion*, 173.

of His existence would be possible and there would be no aspect under which He could be known. God is both above the mind and within the mind. Gilbert judges:

> De Dieu toujours plus grand, nous risquerions de ne pouvoir plus rien dire, même pas qu'il est 'plus grand'. C'est pourquoi il est nécessaire, pour penser positivement l'*id quo maius*, de le comprendre grâce au *summum* qui couronne la série des éléments et intègre chacun en particulier.[169]

The *maius* formula of *Proslogion* II-IV introduces an impossibility insofar as what it signifies cannot be thought. Without the positive necessity made explicit in the *summum*, Gilbert says, we risk even our capacity to speak of God as beyond thought, and we are lead into an atheism: "Cette règle [the *maius* formula] aboutirait à l'apophatisme ou à l'athéisme si elle ne pouvait intégrer une nécessité positive, que manifeste l'exigence dialectique du *summum*."[170] The presence of God in the mind as intelligible is the basis on which the seeker learnt of God's necessary being by means of the *maius* formula.

Gilbert explains that the seeker's reflection which explicates the *summum* "noue deux fils: l'un qui passe de manière continue de notre expérience à Dieu, et l'autre qui considère que Dieu, étant *maius*, ne peut pas être en continuité avec notre monde. Le *summum* conjoint ces deux fils."[171] As the rule governing seeking, to which reason is essential, the *summum* is the supreme limit of being and intelligibility which conjoins what is above and what is within the mind. Through reason's explication, the indistinct maximum term, *summum,* becomes known in a manner continuous with human experience. In this sense, the *summum,* identical to the transcendent God, submits to human knowing by extending into the realm of being and intelligibility.

3.2 The Explication of Divine Substance (*Divina Substantia*)

Out of the designation *summum,* the seeker explicates the Divine substance (*divina substantia*) and produces a new formula which replaces the comparative "greater" (*maius*) with the comparative "better" (*melius*), where the former term concerns greatness and the latter concerns goodness. The consideration of God under the

[169] Gilbert, *Le Proslogion*, 125.
[170] *ibid*, 145.
[171] *ibid*, 124.

aspect of his goodness, using the comparative *melius*, enables a reflection on the Divine substance. While the primary formula, "that than which nothing greater can be thought," requires the negation of all conceptual limitations, the new *melius* formula enables conceptual knowledge of God. This new *melius* formula takes many forms, and the principal form, in *Proslogion* V, says that God is "whatever it is better to be than not to be." I quote the remainder of *Proslogion* V, where the seeker begins his explication of the supreme being:

> For whatever is not this is less than can be thought. But this cannot be thought of you. Therefore what good is lacking to the supreme good, through which all good exists? You are therefore just, truthful, happy, and whatever it is better to be than not to be. For it is better to be just rather than unjust, and happy rather than unhappy.[172]

As we have seen, God is *summum* because that which the *maius* formula names cannot be less than supreme. The supreme of all (*summum omnium*) is identical to the supreme good (*summum bonum*). The seeker puts together the attributes "supreme of all" and "He who makes all things from nothing" (*omnia alia fecit de nihilo*), to ask: "What, therefore, lacks to the supreme good, through which all good exist?" ("Quod ergo bonum deest summo bono, per quod est omne bonum?") The indistinct maximum term "supreme good" (*summum bonum*) becomes multiple; all good things exist through the supreme good (*per quod est omne bonum*). On this basis, the seeker identifies God with all things which participate His goodness and are better to be than not to be: "You are therefore justice, truth, blessedness, and whatever is better to be than not to be."[173] The good (*bonus*) is the participated, and its participants include justice, truth, and blessedness (*iustus*, *verax*, *beatus*). The new formula for God, "whatever is better to be than not to be" (*quidquid melius est esse quam non esse*), determines that God is *summum bonum* in which all goods participate, where participant is defined as that whose existence is better than its nonexistence. The steps by which the seeker develops the qualitative *melius*

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[172] *Pros*., V: "Quidquid enim hoc non est, minus est quam cogitari possit. Sed hoc de te cogitari non potest. Quod ergo bonum deest summo bono, per quod est omne bonum? Tu es itaque iustus, verax, beatus, et quidquid melius est esse quam non esse. Melius namque est esse iustum quam non iustum, beatum quam non beatum. "

[173] *Pros*., V: "Tu es itaque iustus, verax, beatus, et quidquid melius est esse quam non esse."

formula can be listed as an explication of determinations of God's being, in which the lower participate the higher:

1) *summum omnium*
2) *summum bonum*
3) *omne bonum*
4) *iustus, verax, beatus* and *quidquid melius est esse quam non esse*

Through the transposition of the indistinctly known God into the realm of intelligible being as the *summum*, and the subsequent explication of the *summum*, the seeker knows God in a formal sense as justice, truth, and blessedness, as well as "whatever it is better to be than not to be." The predicates are also distinct attributes and true names for God. However, they remain true names for God only insofar as they are supreme forms of the attribute they name, and so do not contradict the supremacy of the Divine being from which they are derived. The *melius* formula provides the measure to which the seeker's understanding of each Divine attribute must accord: God is "whatever it is better to be than not to be." Therefore, if the seeker does not know how the Divine possesses each attribute in a supreme manner, his knowledge of each attribute is not correct. Knowledge of the God in accordance with the *melius* formula is the measure and goal of *Proslogion* VI-IX.

3.3 Givenness and Reason

Seeking is the explication of a givenness. What is given is only understood through reason's explication. In *Proslogion* VI-IX there are two forms of givenness: what the seeker receives from above and what he receives from below. From above, the seeker receives the *melius* formula, "whatever it is better to be than not to be", which names God as the supreme being. The formula functions as the rule by which the seeker corrects his preliminary knowledge of each attribute given from below. This second form of givenness is from experience, by which I mean generally accepted notions of certain attributes based on how they belong to humans.

This movement of reason which we find in Anselm, between what is given from below and what is given from above, matches the structure of knowing found in

Augustine. For Augustine, knowledge of God depends upon God's dwelling in the mind and abiding above the mind. Seeking God in physical things, Augustine writes:

> Which of these should I have questioned about my God, for whom I had already searched through the physical order of things from earth to heaven, as far as I could send the rays of my eyes as messengers? What is inward is better (*melius quod interius*). All physical evidence is reported to the mind which presides and judges of the responses of heaven and earth and all things in them, as they say 'We are not God' and 'He made us'.[174]

Not finding God in the physical order, Augustine turns inward:

> I entered into the very seat of my soul, which is in my memory, since the mind also remembers itself. But you were not there because…you are not the soul itself. For you are the Lord God of the soul. But you remain immutable above all things, and yet have deigned to dwell in my memory since the time I learnt about you.[175]

Insofar as God remains immutable above all things, Augustine cannot find God in his mind. Augustine knows the immutable God above the mind by learning about Him: "Why do I ask in which area of my memory you dwell, as if there were really places there? Surely my memory is where you dwell, because I remember you since I first learnt of you, and I find you there when I think about you, and always present to everyone…"[176] While knowledge of the immutable God above the mind requires learning of God from outside, God is also always present in the mind as the truth which teaches: "Truth, when did you ever fail to walk with me, teaching me what to avoid and what to seek after when I reported to you what, in my inferior position, I could see, and asked your counsel."[177] The same God who abides immutably above the mind is in the mind teaching His truth as that by which we judge. God is the "truth presiding over all things"[178] by which the seeker measures and judges what experience teaches. God makes Himself known through his teaching, and His truth, presiding above all things, cannot be comprehended. Were the seeker to comprehend, and so contain, God, he would be greater the God. The human does not contain God, but God contains the seeker. God's teaching becomes for the seeker knowledge from above and what is sought.

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[174] *Conf*., 10.6.9.
[175] *ibid*, 10.40.65.
[176] *ibid*, 10.40.65.
[177] *ibid*, 10.40.65.
[178] *ibid*, 10.41.66.

Anselm, following Augustine, maintains that God's truth is in the mind teaching the seeker, and innovates by bringing God's truth into the mind as the formula which judges what the seeker brings to it for comparison. The formula teaches; it names the same being which cannot be grasped and yet can be known by seeking. By the formula, the seeker is capable of true judgement about what he knows from below, and by his knowledge from below he comes to know what is above.

In *Proslogion* VI, on the basis of the *melius* formula, the seeker further explicates what participates the *summum omnium* when he attributes to God sensibility, omnipotence, mercy, impassibility and justice. While these attributes are predicated of God on the basis of the *melius* formula, they also belong to the content of faith. Insofar as the attributes are simply given, they are not yet understood, but known indistinctly in a preliminary form which reason must explicate. The seeker does not know how they belong to God or what they are as predicates of Him. Rather, he knows what they are based on his knowledge of how the attributes apply to humans. The temporal priority of faith over understanding follows the fundamental *credo ut intelligam*.

In *Proslogion* VI-IX, the Divine attributes become the meeting place between the two given sides. The seeker knows the attributes in two ways which must be reconciled. He knows what omnipotence, mercy, and justice are on the basis of how humans possess these virtues, and seeks to know what they are as attributes of God. As attributes of God, they must accord with the *melius* formula, *quidquid melius esse quam non esse*, which names the supreme being. Reason breaks down and reconstructs each attribute, excluding the conceptual elements which cannot be attributed to God's supreme being. The formula provides the measure and goal to which the idea must be adequate in order to be true knowledge of the supreme being. Seeking is imperative because what is given only becomes known by the completion of reason's circular movement. To reach understanding and so achieve theology, the seeker must elevate what experience teaches about each attribute so that it does not contradict what the rule that God is "whatever it is better to be than not to be."

The attributes are the *locus* of two forms of givenness which reason brings into accord by denying to God a human characteristic. The *locus* exhibits a tension between the knowledge from below and the knowledge from above, which produces the

dialectical movement propelling *Proslogion* VI-IX. The tension belongs to reason as the movement which compares the two sides; reason separates out what belongs to an idea formed from experience so as to exclude what does not accord with the formula, and then reconstructs the idea in a way that may be rightly attributed to God. In *Proslogion* VII and VIII, by the exclusion of what does not accord with the formula, the seeker denies to God something characteristic of the human possession of the attributes. We shall see, therefore, that in *Proslogion* VI-IX the seeker is raised to a knowledge of God which is also an increased ignorance insofar as it denies something to God.

Contradiction appears when the seeker's idea of a Divine attribute as taken from experience does not match what the formula teaches about God. The seeker moves from belief to understanding by identifying what he does not understand: how God possesses simultaneously what appear on the basis of experience to be opposed attributes. The seeker wants to make the supreme intelligible. He knows what each attribute names under a form given by experience, and desires to know what they are as possessions of the supreme being. This is a movement from faith to theology.

3.3.1 *Proslogion* VI: Capable of Sense and not a Body

Following the *melius* formula, *Proslogion* VI explicates further what belongs to God as *Summum*: "Since truly it is better to be sensible, omnipotent, merciful, and impassible than not to be, how are you sensible, if you are not body (*Pros*.VI); or omnipotent, if you are not capable of all things (*Pros*.VII); or merciful and at the same time impassible (*Pros*. VIII)?"[179] From the four attributes the seeker forms three questions, and to each question a chapter is devoted. Each question sets in opposition two Divine attributes which appear contradictory as predicates of the same being.

From experience, the seeker has a notion of how each attribute must apply to its subject. Each notion includes an assumption which cannot be true of the *summum*. This creates a tension which moves reason to separate out the conceptual parts belonging to the idea taken from below and combine them again to produce a new idea which applies

[179] *Pros*., VI: "Verum cum melius sit esse sensibilem, omnipotentem, misericordem, impas- sibilem quam non esse: quomodo es sensibilis, si non es corpus; aut omnipotens, si omnia non potes; aut misericors simul et impassibilis?"

to the *summum* without contradiction. The new idea excludes the assumption given by experience which prevents the seeker from attributing it to the *summum*. Each of the three chapters resolves the apparent contradictions through this process of correction. Let us make explicit the assumptions which each chapter will correct:

> (*Pros*.VI) How are you sensible, if you are not body?; Only corporeal bodies are capable of sense.
>
> (*Pros*.VII) How are you omnipotent, if you are not capable of all things?; The power to do all things includes the power to do even what one ought not to do.
>
> (*Pros*. VIII) How are you merciful and at the same time impassible?; Mercifulness is dependent upon suffering a feeling.

Underlying each question is an assumption taken from experience about how the attributes function. The assumption, based on experience of how they apply to humans, must be corrected in accordance with the *melius* formula, in order to understand how God's possession of the attribute does not contradict His supremacy.

Proslogion VI sets up an opposition between God's incorporeality and His capacity to sense; the seeker demands a rational account of how an incorporeal being, the supreme spirit (*summus spiritus*), is capable of sense. He must raise his conception of sensibility (*sensibilis*), which experience says must accompany bodies, to a conception which includes the way an incorporeal being possesses *sensibilis*. The seeker moves from the former conception to the latter by means of dialectical seeking. He compares what he knows from experience to the what the *melius* formula teaches about God. The *melius* formula is the basis for judging what the seeker knows from experience.

Anselm's solution to the opposition between God's incorporeality and His capacity to sense is to make the capacity to sense a general mode of perception, which includes various forms of knowing, the capacity for which the incorporeal God possesses supremely. The contradiction arises because experience teaches that the capacity to sense accompanies bodies, and the *melius* formula requires that God, who is incorporeal supreme spirit (*summus spiritus*), is capable of sense. Therefore, the seeker's idea of sensibility includes an opposition between corporeal and incorporeal bodies, which prompts the question "How is God sensible and not a body?" I quote the remainder of chapter VI in full:

> For if only corporeal bodies are capable of sense (*sensibilia*), since senses accompany corporeality and are in corporeal body, (*sensus circa corpus et in corpore sunt*) how are you capable of sense, when you are not corporeal body but supreme spirit, which is better than corporeal body? But if to perceive is nothing else than to know, or if it is directed to knowing (for he who perceives knows according to the appropriate sense, as, for example, colours are known by sight and flavours through taste), one can say not inappropriately that whatever in any way knows also in some way perceives. So it is, Lord, that although You are not a body You are supremely perceptive, in the sense that You know supremely all things and not in the sense in which an animal knows through a bodily sense-faculty.[180]

To resolve the apparent contradiction of *Proslogion* VI, the seeker must learn how God is both supreme spirit (*summus spiritus*) and sensible (*sensibile*). This is a problem for the seeker whose experience has formed the belief that the faculties of sense accompany the body only: "senses accompany the body and are in the body" (*sensus circa corpus et in corpore sunt*). What is required for a solution is already present in the statement of the problem: God as *summus spiritus* is not something other (*aliud*) than body but is better (*melior*) than body (*corpus*). This places *spiritus* on the same continuum as *corpus* as the supreme.[181] We will recognize this as a solution when Anselm makes the capacity to sense a capacity to perceive, of which God is supremely capable.

Anselm corrects the implicit assumption by which the attributes appear to stand in contradiction: "But if sensing is nothing except knowing and does not exist except for knowing—for (*enim)* he who senses knows according to the appropriate sense, as sight knows colours and taste knows flavours—whatever knows in a certain way is not unsuitably said to sense in a certain way."[182] Let us set out the terms of this conditional statement:

> Premise: To sense is to possess knowledge in accordance with the sense faculty employed.

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[180] *Pros*., VI: "Nam si sola corporea sunt sensibilia, quoniam sensus circa corpus et in corpore sunt: quomodo es sensibilis, cum non sis corpus sed summus spiritus, qui corpore melior est? Sed si sentire non nisi cognoscere aut non nisi ad cognoscendum est—qui enim sentit cognoscit secundum sensuum proprietatem, ut per visum colores, per gus- tum sapores—non inconvenienter dicitur aliquo modo sentire, quidquid aliquo modo cognoscit. Ergo domine, quamvis non sis corpus, vere tamen eo modo summe sensibilis es, quo summe omnia cognoscis, non quo animal corporeo sensu cognoscit."

[181] I borrow the idea of the "continuum" from Fournier, "Ring Structure," 135-136.

[182] *Pros*., VI: "Sed si sentire non nisi cognoscere aut non nisi ad cognoscendum est—qui enim sentit cognoscit secundum sensuum proprietatem, ut per visum colores, per gus- tum sapores—non inconvenienter dicitur aliquo modo sentire, quidquid aliquo modo cognoscit."

Protasis: Sensing is nothing except knowing and for knowing.
Apodosis: Knowing is not wrongly said to be a certain kind of sensing.

Between the protasis and apodosis of the conditional statement lies a premise underlying the protasis which reads: To sense is to possess knowledge in accordance with the sense faculty employed. Sight is knowledge of colour and taste is knowledge of flavour. This premise makes the capacity to sense a capacity a capacity to know, from which Anselm is able to include in the protasis that sensing is nothing except knowing and for knowing.

Fournier argues that by sensing (*sentire*) Anselm has in mind Augustine's use of the word perceiving (*percipere*).[183] In Augustine we find both senses of the word *sentire*: that *sentire* is nothing except knowing (*non nisi cognoscere*) and nothing except for knowing (*non nisi ad cognoscendum est*). Anselm's use of *sentire*, like Augustine's *percipere*, comprehends both perception by the senses and perception by the mind. The seeker overcomes the contradiction, which rests upon the conception that sense accompanies bodies, by acquiring a new understanding of sensing (*sentire*) as perception. The capacity to sense (*sentire*) is kind of perception which shares a continuum with the perception belonging to God. The seeker, therefore, understands how God, as incorporeal, possesses in a supreme way the capacity which humans possess in a lesser way.

The Divine submits to being known in relation to human experience and raises the seeker from faith to theology. Through the explication of God's attributes, the Divine submits itself to human knowing. In each attribute, the human knows God, but God does not cease to preside over the human. The seeker's understanding of God's sensibility (*sensibilis*) is established by the completion of reason's circular movement. Reason successfully divides and reconstructs the idea received from experience by correcting the assumption which prevents the idea applying to God as *summum*. The elevation of the seeker to higher knowledge depends on the Divine submitting to human knowing as the attribute about which reason establishes knowledge. The Divine elevates the human: on the side of the Divine, this appears as the *melius* formula judging that God is sensible (*sensiblis*) and supreme spirit (*summum spiritus*); on the side of the seeker, it appears as

[183] Michael Fournier, "Ring Structure in Chapters Six to Thirteen of Anselm's *Proslogion*," *Dionysius* 27 (2009): 127–44 at 134.

reason's completion of the circular movement, from the preliminary idea of the attribute to its supreme form.

3.3.2 *Proslogion* VII: Omnipotent, But not Capable of Many Things

Proslogion VII begins with a generally accepted conception of power (*potentiam*) which reason's circular movement raises to a conception of God's supreme form of the same attribute as omnipotent. The seeker begins with faith and a preliminary knowledge of the omnipotence (*omnipotentia*) of the Divine substance (*divina substantia*) and by reason establishes understanding. The difference between preliminary knowledge and understanding is here the difference between the way humans and God possess power. Faith, and the *melius* formula requiring God to be "whatever is better to be than not to be", are the forms of givenness, received from above, whose judgement provides the measure for reason. Experience provides the idea of power which reason must separate out into parts and reconstruct, correcting for what cannot be attributed to God according to the *melius* formula.

The seeker's preliminary conception of God's omnipotence (*omnipotentiam*) comes from the customary use of the words 'all' (*omni-*) and 'powerful' (*potentiam*). The seeker puts together *potentiam*, as the capacity to do a particular activity, with the prefix *omni-* to surmise that God is capable of all things. This construction of the concept presents problems for the seeker who is able to name things of which the supreme being is not capable: He is not able to be corrupted (*corrumpi*), to lie (*mentiri*), or to make truth untrue (*facere verum esse falsum*).[184] Employing these fundamentals, the seeker establishes an opposition between God's omnipotence and His inability to do certain things. If God is not capable of these and many other things (*et plura similiter*), how is He capable of all things? To find an answer, the seeker must raise his conception of *omnipotentiam* to a form adequate to his faith and to the *melius* formula, both of which require that God is incorruptible. The seeker will understand God's possession of the

[184] It is worth noting that these fundamentals of the First Principle are doctrines in the Platonic tradition found in Plato. Anselm receives these fundamentals from at least Augustine.See Plato, *Republic*, 381a: "…but then, would anyone, whether man or God, desire to make himself worse? Impossible. Then it is impossible that God should ever be willing to change; being, as is supposed, the fairest and best that is conceivable, every god remains absolutely and forever in his own form."

attribute when he judges that God's inability to perform certain actions does not contradict His omnipotence. He establishes understanding by the circular movement of reason which explicates his customary conception of omnipotence to produce a new conception which can apply to God without contradicting the *melius* formula.

The solution is that the capacity to be corrupted, to lie, or to make truth untrue, is not a *potentia* but an *impotentia*: "For he who can do these things can do what is not good (*expedit*) for himself and what he ought not to do."[185] The result is that the supremely powerful God would be less powerful were he capable of these things: "the more he can do these things, the more power adversity and perversity have over him and the less he has against them."[186] This is a problem with language. Language is capable of deception because there is a difference between the meaning of words spoken externally, and their meaning as understood internally. This is the problem of the fool in *Proslogion* II: his lack of understanding makes him capable of asserting what he does not understand. Reason must establish the necessary distinctions in order not to elide the difference between how the Divine and humans possess power. The seeker establishes a distinction which corrects the inaccurate use of language: certain things we call abilities (*potentia*) are actually inabilities (*impotentia*). The capacity to be corrupted, lie, or make truth false is an incapacity because it is not brought about by a capacity (*potentiam)* but through an incapacity (*impotentiam)* which enables adversity and perversity to have power over the subject of the actions. Correcting the customary use of language, *Proslogion* VII concludes that God's *omnipotens* makes him capable of doing nothing *per impotentiam*.

As with *Proslogion* VI, the seeker begins with a Divine attribute known under two forms of givenness: the formula from above and experience from below. The formula provides the measure and goal which leads the seeker to knowledge of what faith knows God to be. Reason divides and reconstructs the idea of power received from experience by correcting the assumption which prevents the idea from applying to the

[185] *Pros.,* VII: "Nam qui hæc potest, quod sibi non expedit et quod non debet potest."
[186] *Pros.,* VII: "Quæ quanto magis potest, tanto magis adversitas et perversitas possunt in illum, et ipse minus contra illas."

supreme being. When the idea from experience no longer contradicts the *melius* formula, the seeker judges that he understands.

God, who is above and in the mind, submits to human knowing first as what faith knows in a preliminary way, and then as what the seeker comes to understand. The content of faith gives the attribute and knowledge of how the attributes belong to humans provides a preliminary conception of the attribute which the judgement of the *melius* formula subsequently corrects. The seeker's understanding of the Divine substance (*divina substantia*) remains relative to his conceptions of human attributes, as corrected by what the seeker knows from above. The correction denies to God the capacity to act out of impotence but does not identify the basis on which God acts. The *melius* formula governing reason thus elevates the seeker to higher knowledge of God by denying to God something characteristic of humans.

3.3.3 *Proslogion* VIII: Merciful and Impassable

Proslogion VIII begins with two Divine attributes which belong to faith and appear, on the basis of experience, to be incompatible as attributes of the same being. The seeker resolves the problem by separating out what belongs to his conception of mercy (*misericordem*) and establishing a distinction between the way humans are merciful and the way God is merciful. Experience teaches the seeker that to be merciful (*misericordia*) is to have a miserable heart out of compassion for the miserable (*miserum cor ex compassione miseri*). God's impassibility, which requires that He does not suffer compassion, appears to make God incapable of mercy, which, the seeker believes, depends upon suffering compassion. The problem is that the *melius* formula and the faith require God to be both merciful and impassible. The solution is that God is merciful "according to our sense" (*secundum nostrum sensus*) of mercy and not according to His. The seeker explains: "Because when you look upon us in our misery we feel (*sentimus*) the effect of your mercy, but you do not experience the feeling (*non sentis affectum*)."[187]

[187] *Pros*., VIII: "Etenim cum tu respicis nos miseros, nos sentimus misericordis effectum, tu non sentis affectum."

The solution establishes a difference between that upon which human and Divine mercy depend; the Divine mercy does not depend upon suffering feeling.[188]

The seeker comes to understand God by way of a solution which says what God is not. He reaches understanding of God's mercy not by identifying the principle governing the Divine mercy, but by denying that Divine mercy is governed by a feeling of compassion. The solution depends upon the seeker explicating his conception of mercy given from experience to recognize that it includes a notion which cannot belong to God. In accordance with the *melius* formula and faith which teach that God is impassable, the seeker attributes to humans the idea that compassion originates mercy and denies this origin to Divine mercy. The seeker understands God's mercy not by introducing a positive content to his conception of mercy, but by taking something away. He does not provide an account of that on which God's mercy depends but establishes that it must not depend on God suffering compassion.

Proslogion VII and VIII identify certain characteristics of the human possession of power (*potentiam*) and mercy (*misericordiam*) which must be denied of God in order to achieve understanding. The seeker denies something specific, belonging to the conception received from experience, which prevents him from attributing the attribute to God in accordance with the *melius* formula. Therefore, what is given from above raises the seeker to knowledge, but this knowledge is also an increased ignorance insofar as it denies something to God. In distinction from these two chapters, *Proslogion* VI, does not explicitly deny something to God. It corrects the human understanding of the capacity to sense, making it a general capacity to perceive, so that it can be attributed to God. Knowledge of God is relative to the knowledge given from below and elevated in accordance with the *melius* formula. The elevation to knowledge in *Proslogion* VII and VIII is by way of negation. *Proslogion* VII concludes that God "can do nothing through impotence." The conclusion is not stated positively to say that 'God does everything through power' but leaves undetermined the principle of God's actions. Similarly,

[188] Fournier convincingly argues that Anselm takes the problem and solution from Seneca's advice for the Prince in *De Clementia*. See Fournier, "Ring Structure": 141: "As in chapter 8, both the problem and the solution with respect to God are presented in terms which recall Seneca's advice for the prince in De clementia. There Seneca opposes pardon, which is unjust, to its equivalent meted out by the clemency of the wise man, whose justice and mercy both emanate from the good."

Proslogion VIII concludes that God's mercy is not determined by Him suffering compassion, "you are not merciful because you are affected by any feeling of compassion for misery,"[189] but does not identify the principle of God's mercy. The questions of *Proslogion* VIII and VIII are formed in such a way that they can be resolved without providing an account of the principle of God's actions. As a result, the seeker achieves knowledge of God.

3.3.4 *Proslogion* IX: He Justly Spares the Wicked

Proslogion VIII concludes that Divine mercy does not depend on the experience of compassion, but it does not provide an account of the source and operation of God's mercy, a task which *Proslogion* IX takes up. *Proslogion* IX begins with the conception of mercy achieved in *Proslogion* VIII and a conception of justice based in a notion of how humans act justly towards each other. Based on these conceptions, mercy and justice appear to require opposed actions: justice is retributive and must repay each according to their merits; mercy is beneficent towards those who do not merit what they receive. The seeker wants to understand how God possesses these two attributes without contradiction. How is God supremely (*summe*) and totally (*totus*) just if His mercy requires him to undermine his justice by pardoning offences?

Proslogion IX makes four attempts at solving the problem. The first half of *Proslogion* IX seeks to demonstrate the necessity of God' mercy by showing Divine goodness requires mercy. This leads to the incomprehensibility of God's goodness when the *ratio* according to which God pardons some and punishes others remains unseen. The second half of the chapter puts aside the problem of the incomprehensibility of God's goodness and attempts three solutions to the problem which do not require knowledge of God's goodness. The third attempt will provide a solution to the question of the chapter without resolving the problem of incomprehensibility which emerges in the first half. *Proslogion* IX does not pass beyond the opposed conceptions of justice and mercy but solves the problem in a roundabout way by means of an additional and more fundamental conception of justice as rectitude of order, which enables the seeker to

[189] *Pros*., VIII: "…et misericors non es, quia nulla miseriæ compassione afficeris."

demonstrate that the two attributes cannot be opposed because justice requires mercy. Crucially for the chapters that follow, the new conception of justice does not replace the first but is added, resulting in two distinct but related conceptions of justice. The solution is satisfying insofar as it produces an account of why justice, understood in its more fundamental sense as "rectitude of order," requires mercy, and so provides an answer to the chapter's title: "How the all-just and supremely just One spares the wicked and justly has mercy on the wicked." The solution leaves undetermined what will reassert itself in *Proslogion* X: It does not provide an account of how the juridical conception of justice does not oppose mercy.

3.3.4.1 Attempt 1: Divine Goodness requires Mercy

The seeker attempts to understand the character of Divine goodness and comes to know it as the source of Divine justice and mercy. *Proslogion* IX begins with the seeker's attempt to elevate his notion of goodness to account for the apparently contradictory operations of mercy and justice. The seeker wants to make the good itself, the principle of the *melius* formula, an object of his thought. *Proslogion* IX opens with a statement of the incomprehensibility of this principle, but like *Proslogion* I, the seeker refuses to stop seeking when what he seeks is hidden in light inaccessible (*lucem inaccessibilem*):

> How then, O good God, good to the good and to the wicked, how do you save the wicked if this is not just and You do not do anything which is not just? Or, since your goodness is incomprehensible (*incomprehensibilis*), is this hidden in the inaccessible light in which you dwell? Truly in the deepest and most secret place of your goodness is hidden the source whence the stream of Your mercy flows.[190]

The seeker traces the *ratio* of both God's mercy and justice to their common principle in the *fons* of God's goodness:

> You would, in fact, be less good if you were not beneficent to any wicked man. For he who is good to both good and wicked is better than he who is good only

[190] *Pros.*, IX: "Unde ergo, bone deus, bone bonis et malis, unde tibi salvare malos, si hoc non est iustum, et tu non facis aliquid non iustum? An quia bonitas tua est incomprehensibilis, latet hoc in luce inaccessibili quam inhabitas? Vere in altissimo et secretissimo bonitatis tuæ latet fons, unde manat fluvius misericordiæ tuæ."

> to the good. And he who is good to the wicked by both punishing and sparing them is better than he who is good to the wicked only by punishing them. You are merciful, then, because you are all good and supremely good.[191]

The seeker employs the *melius* formula to judge that one who both punishes (*puniendo*) and spares (*parcendo*) the wicked is better than the one who only punishes. On the basis of God's goodness, the seeker elevates his notion of justice as retribution to include a notion of justice as pardoning, which is understood as an act of mercy. Therefore, Divine goodness requires both justice and mercy. However, the seeker is not satisfied with this conclusion as an answer because it does answer the question of the chapter, which asks how (*quomodo*) God's justice allows Him to be merciful.

By recourse to the *melius* formula, which has its basis in God's goodness, the seeker understands that God must be merciful, but he does not understand how Divine mercy is not opposed to a juridical notion of justice. Because Divine goodness requires God to possess both justice and mercy, which appear contradictory, Divine goodness becomes inscrutable:

> O God, how profound is your goodness! It is apparent (*videtur*) whence your mercy comes, and yet it is not seen thoroughly (*pervidetur*). And though perhaps it is apparent why you should reward good to the good and bad to the bad (*cur bonis bona et malis mala*), what is indeed to be wondered at is why you, the all-just One who wants to nothing, should bestow good things on your wicked and guilty creatures.[192]

The seeker does not understand how the Divine substance possesses virtues which seem to require opposed actions: God's justice rewards the good and punishes the wicked in accordance with their merit, and His mercy spares the wicked. The *fons* of mercy is God's goodness, but the *fons* itself is not clearly seen (*pervidetur*) because the seeker does not understand the reason (*ratio*) why out the plenitude of God's goodness (*plenitudine bonitatis*) He is dutiful (*pius*) to sinners, when this appears to contradict his justice. The seeker understands *that* God is merciful, but not *why*: "I understand that (*quia*) the supreme good wills to do this, but why (*cur*) supreme justice is able to will

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[191] *Pros.*, IX: "Minus namque bonus esses, si nulli malo esses benignus. Melior est enim qui et bonis et malis bonus est, quam qui bonis tantum est bonus. Et melior est qui malis et puniendo et parcendo est bonus, quam qui puniendo tantum. Ideo ergo misericors es, quia totus et summe bonus es."
[192] *Pros.*, IX: "O altitudo bonitatis tuæ, deus! et videtur unde sis misericors, et non pervidetur."

this is to be wondered at (*mirum est cur summe iustus hoc velle potuit*)."[193] The seeker wants to know the logic of Divine goodness, the reasons according to which a just God is able to will mercy on a sinner. As we saw in *Proslogion* V, the *melius* formula derives from the *summum omnium* by way of the *omne* and *summum bonum*. The demand to understand "why God is able to will this" is a demand to understand God's goodness itself, the principle of the *melius* rule which compels him to conclude that what he knows as two opposed attributes belong to the same God. This is a demand to understand what was left undetermined in *Proslogion* VIII where the seeker discovered that the feeling of compassion is not the principle God's mercy, but did not discover what is. Encountering incomprehensibility and unable to grasp the depth of Divine goodness (*altitudo bonitatis*), the seeker makes three further attempts to solve the problem of the apparent contradiction between Divine mercy, putting aside the path which requires knowledge of Divine goodness.

3.3.4.2 Attempt 2: God's Justice and Mercy do not Apply Universally

The seeker attempts to solve the problem of how the supremely just God mercifully spares the wicked by separating God's attributes from His simple substance. He supposes that justice and mercy apply in different ways for different people:

> For you save the just whom justice commends, but you free those whom justice condemns. The former are saved by the aid of their merits and the latter despite their merits. The former are saved by you regarding the good things you have given; the latter by you disregarding the bad things which you hate.[194]

On this account, God's justice saves those who merit saving, and His mercy saves those who do not merit saving and whom justice condemns. By making God's mercy and justice act differently according to each person, and not both act on all people, the seeker finds a solution which saves the two attributes from contradiction without denying either to God. The solution does not resolve the attributes into a simplicity and so requires the

[193] *Pros*., IX: "…et scitur quia summe bonus hoc facere voluit, et mirum est cur summe iustus hoc velle potuit."
[194] *Pros*., IX: "Iustos enim salvas iustitia comitante, istos vero liberas iustitia damnante. Illos meritis adiuvantibus, istos meritis repugnantibus. Illos bona quæ dedisti cognoscendo, istos mala quæ odisti ignoscendo."

separation of God's attributes from his simple substance. Neither does the solution answer the question; the seeker is not satisfied with this account because he wants to know the *ratio* governing the principle which determines who experiences God's mercy and who God's justice. Not knowing the *ratio,* the seeker, for the third time in *Proslogion* IX, praises the incomprehensibility and hiddenness of Divine goodness: "O boundless goodness which so surpasses all understanding, let that mercy come upon me which proceeds from Your so great abundance! Let that which flows forth from You flow into me! Forbear through mercy lest you take vengeance through justice!"[195] The seeker refuses to allow this inscrutability to prevent him from reaching understanding. He does not know what determines whether he is subject to God's mercy or justice and continues to regard them as opposed. The inadequacy of attempt 2 is the result of discursive reasoning leading the seeker astray down a path where he will not find an answer; he will not resolve the problem by separating out God's attributes from His simple substance. Attempt 3 will begin with belief, a new form of knowing, in order to give a new beginning to the reasoning which went astray.

2.3.4.3 Attempt 3: Mercy Derives from Goodness, Goodness Coincides with Justice

The second attempt to solve the problem of *Proslogion* IX demonstrates that God's goodness requires His mercy, and results in a conception of God's possession of two necessary but opposed attributes of mercy and justice. Discursive reasoning led the quest astray, and the seeker requires belief to provide reason with a new starting point. The seeker denies the supposition of attempt 2 which requires that God's attributes do not resolve into a simplicity, and returns to his conclusion from attempt 1, that mercy and justice both derive from Divine goodness. The seeker places a new emphasis on the accord between justice and mercy which is necessary in virtue of their common source in Divine goodness:

> Even if it is difficult to understand (*intelligere*) how your mercy is not apart (*absit*) from your justice, it is, however, necessary to believe (*credere*) that justice in no way opposes (*adversatur*) what flows from goodness, which is

[195] *Pros.*, IX: "Parce per clementiam, ne ulciscaris per iustitiam!"

> nothing without (*nulla est sine*) justice, and indeed really coincides (*concordat*) with justice.[196]

The seeker corrects the error of attempt 1 by introducing the belief that mercy and justice are not opposed in virtue of their common source in Divine goodness, and thus are not separate from the Divine simplicity. This has its basis in a belief about the unity of the Divine being. The seeker denies the opposition between mercy and justice and establishes a vague conception of the two attributes, articulating their relation in three matters of belief: (1) justice does not oppose (*nequaquam adversatur*) goodness, (2) goodness is nothing without (*nulla sine*) justice, and (3) goodness truly coincides (*vere concordat*) with justice. This belief maintains as a fundamental what attempt 2 denied of God for its solution: that God's attributes resolve into a simplicity.

The three matters of belief together provide the basis for the premise of the subsequent conditional statement which concludes that God's mercy derives from his justice: "Truly, if you are merciful because you are supremely good, and you are not supremely good unless it is because (*non es nisi quia es*) you are supremely just, truly then you are merciful precisely because you are supremely just."[197] Let us outline the conditional sentence:

> Protasis: God is merciful because He is supremely good. (*si misericors es quia es summe bonus*)
> Protasis 2: God is not supremely good unless it is because he is supremely just. *(summe bonus non es nisi quia es summe iustus*)
> Apodosis: God is merciful because he is supremely just. (*vere id circo es misericors, quia summe iustus es*)

The seeker attempts to demonstrate that mercy derives from justice on the basis that mercy derives from goodness which derives from justice. For this to work, the premise ought to read, 'Divine goodness derives from Divine justice,' but instead it provides a qualified way (*non es nisi quia*) in which goodness derives from justice. Attempt 1 provided the conclusion that mercy and justice both derive from goodness; this answer is not satisfying because the chapter, in accordance with the title, wants to know how

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[196] *Pros*., IX: "Nam etsi difficile sit intelligere, quomodo misericordia tua non absit a tua iustitia, necessarium tamen est credere, quia nequaquam adversatur iustitiæ quod exundat ex bonitate, quæ nulla est sine iustitia, immo vere concordat iustitiæ."
[197] *Pros*., IX: "Nempe si misericors es quia es summe bonus, et summe bonus non es nisi quia es summe iustus: vere id circo es misericors, quia summe iustus es."

(*quomodo*). On the approach taken by attempt 1, a satisfying account of *quomodo* would require knowledge of the operation of Divine goodness. Attempt 3 avoids providing an account of the principle of Divine goodness by making justice the principle of goodness. The conclusion that mercy derives from goodness, which derives from justice, would satisfy the *quomodo* insofar as it provides a reason why the supremely just God mercifully spares the wicked without requiring an account of the inscrutable Divine goodness.

Belief justifies the premise that "God is not supremely good unless it is because He is supremely just" by providing a vague sense of why goodness must derive from justice: what flows *(exundat*) from Divine goodness is nothing without justice (*nulla sine iustitia*), and accords with justice (*condordat iustitiae*), which is in no way opposed (*nequaquam adversatur*) to Divine goodness. By belief the seeker has a preliminary sense that nothing comes from goodness without justice, and thus goodness is in some sense nothing without justice. This belief provides the basis on which the seeker can produce the heavily qualified premise: "You are not supremely good unless it is because (*non es nisi quia es*) you are supremely just."[198] The seeker does not have positive knowledge of the co-relation between goodness and justice. Divine goodness is incomprehensible, but the seeker understands something about goodness on the basis of what the *melius* formula requires: that God must be merciful. He knows that what comes from goodness must be just, but not that goodness derives from justice. Therefore, the seeker is unsatisfied by this account: he twice repeats his petition for help (*adiuva me*), saying: "help me so that I may understand what I am saying. (*Adiuva…ut intelligam quod dico*)." The seeker does not understand his vague conclusion about how God's mercy relates to His justice. Attempt 4 will introduce a new and more fundamental notion of justice which enables the seeker to understand how mercy derives from justice.

3.3.4.4 Attempt 4: Mercy Derives from Justice

The first half of *Proslogion* IX attempts to resolve the opposition of justice and mercy in relation to God's inscrutable goodness. There, the seeker wants to know the

[198] *Pros*., IX: "...summe bonus non es nisi quia es summe iustus."

principle of the *melius* rule which compels the conclusion that apparently opposed attributes must belong to the same God. That is, he wants to understand God's goodness. Attempt 4 now achieves a solution by making Divine goodness derive from its principle in Divine justice. This allows the seeker to explain how justice requires mercy without having to explain why God's incomprehensible goodness requires both justice and mercy. This solution involves a more fundamental understanding of justice as the principle in accordance with which all is what it ought to be. On this basis, justice and mercy are not opposed because Divine justice, the principle in accordance with which God is what he ought to be, requires Divine mercy. Crouse explains that Anselm's concept of justice (*justitia*) is not "legal" or "juridical", but the more fundamental theological meaning of justice as universal rectitude of order," which is the "will of God."[199] Other senses of justice, including juridical and legalistic, are contained within this more fundamental meaning:

> The essential content of the term for him (as, indeed, for other Patristic and Medieval authors) is rectitude of order, which has its source in God Himself, and embraces the whole order of creation, regulating the relation of man to God, of man to man, and mutual relations within the interior being of man.[200]

This notion of justice underlies the *Proslogion* VII, which concludes that Divine omnipotence does not include the ability to do all things, but only those things which God ought to do. God's justice requires that He not do what does not accord with His proper being. This more fundamental sense of justice will resolve *Proslogion* IX's opposition between justice and mercy, but, as we shall see, it does so in a way which re-emerges as a problem.

By means of the notion of justice as rectitude of order, the seeker establishes justice as the principle of God's goodness: Divine rectitude of order requires God to be "whatever it is better to be than not to be" (*quiquid melius esse quam non esse*). The seeker arrives at the notion of justice as rectitude by seeking understanding of the same premise which he does not understand in attempt 2 when he says "help me so that I may understand what I am saying. (*Adiuva…ut intelligam quod dico*)." The threefold belief

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[199] Robert Crouse, "The Augustinian Background of St. Anselm's Concept of *Justitia,*" *Canadian Journal of Theology* IV (1958): 111-119 at 114.
[200] Crouse, "St. Anselm's Concept of *Justitia*": 114.

that (1) God's justice does not oppose His Goodness, (2) which is nothing without justice, and (3) which coincides with justice, first reappears in the premise of attempt (ii) which says that "God is not supremely good unless it is because (*non es nisi quia*) He is supremely just," and now reappears in a series of questions which, by the third question, make justice the principle of God's goodness:

> Is your mercy not then derived from your justice? Do you not then spare the wicked because of justice? If it is so, Lord, if it so, teach me how it is so. Is it because it is just that you are so good that You cannot be understood (*intelligi*) to be better, and that you act with so much power that You cannot be thought (*cogitari*) to be more powerful? For what is more just than this?[201]

The questions lead to the more fundamental notion of justice, and arrive there when the seeker makes justice the principle of God's goodness: "is it because it is just that you are so good that You cannot be understood (*intelligi*) to be better?" By beginning in belief, what the seeker is given from above raises the seeker to higher knowledge of what he seeks: an understanding of justice as the principle of God's goodness. God is the "universal rectitude of order" and He cannot be, nor be understood to be, opposed to that order in any of his attributes. The seeker arrives at precisely the relation between justice and goodness which his previous reasoning lacked, that God is supremely good because He is supremely just. This enables the seeker to resolve the problem without providing an account of the character of God's goodness as the rule according to which justice punishes and mercy pardons.

This solution does depend upon knowledge of God's goodness received from the *melius* formula. Since the principle of the *melius* formula is as incomprehensible as God's goodness itself, the reason why God's goodness requires mercy is not given. For now, in *Proslogion* IX, the seeker is able to avoid this as a problem, but in *Proslogion* X & XI this matter will re-emerge. Here, the seeker achieves a resolution on the basis that justice requires goodness, which requires mercy. This satisfies the seeker's demand to know how (*quomodo*) Divine justice requires mercy, and the title of the chapter no longer exhibits a contradiction: "How, as totally and supremely just, does He spare the

[201] Pros., IX: "Ergone misericordia tua nascitur ex iustitia tua? Ergone parcis malis ex iustitia? Si sic est, domine, si sic est, doce me quomodo est. An quia iustum est te sic esse bonum, ut nequeas intelligi melior, et sic potenter operari, ut non possis cogitari potentius? Quid enim hoc iustius?"

wicked and have mercy on the wicked?" The conclusion of *Proslogion* IX provides this solution:

> Finally, what is done unjustly ought not to be done; and what ought not to be done is done unjustly. If, then, it is unjust that you should have mercy on the wicked, you ought not to be merciful; and if you ought not to be merciful it is unjust of you to be merciful. But if it is improper to say this, then it is proper to believe that it is just of you to have mercy on the wicked.[202]

The demonstration relies on three premises, where the third is assumed in the final sentence: (1) justice is doing what ought to be done; (2) God is supremely just; (3) God is supremely merciful. After establishing the notion of justice in premise (1), the seeker makes an argument on the basis of premises (1) and (2): if God ought not to be merciful, it is on the basis of justice that He ought not to be so. Whether God is merciful or not, He is so in virtue of doing what He ought to do, and so, in virtue of justice. Divine justice is the basis on which God acts. Because the *melius* formula teaches that God is merciful, premise (3) appears as an implicit assumption when the seeker says that it is 'improper' to say that God is not merciful, and the seeker must conclude that justice requires mercy. Because God ought to perform acts of mercy, and justice requires Him to do what He ought to do, justice requires mercy. The how (*quomodo*) in the title of *Proslogion* IX is now understood: "How the all-just and supremely just One spares the wicked and justly has mercy on the wicked?" The seeker understands how Divine mercy and justice are not in contradiction, and how God justly has mercy on the wicked, because he understands how justice as "rectitude of order" requires God to be merciful.

3.4 The Refusal of Negative Theology

The solution to *Proslogion* IX provides an answer which satisfies the chapters question by introducing a more fundamental notion of justice. The first part of *Proslogion* IX finds Divine goodness to be inscrutable; the seeker understands that (*quia*) God is both just and merciful but not why (*cur*) He is able to be. Attempt 1 leads

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[202] *Pros.*, IX: "Denique quod non iuste fit, non debet fieri; et quod non debet fieri, iniuste fit. Si ergo non iuste malis misereris, non debes misereri: et si non debes misereri, iniuste misereris. Quod si nefas est dicere, fas est credere te iuste misereri malis."

to the problem of the incomprehensibility of Divine goodness, a path which the seeker chooses not to take, with the intention of achieving understanding by another means which does not require an account of the operation of Divine goodness. By this refusal the seeker continues down the path of intelligibility and refuses the conclusion of negative theology, that God cannot be known. However, the incomprehensibility of goodness will reassert itself in *Proslogion* X where the seeker once again demands to know the principle of the operation of mercy and justice, this time seeking to understand how Divine justice, which requires mercy, also retains its power to punish the wicked. The strength of *Proslogion* IX's solution is that, unlike attempt 2, God's attributes are not separate from His simplicity. However, the seeker resolves mercy and justice into a simplicity in a way that does not provide an account of how justice punishes the wicked. While *Proslogion* IX demonstrates that Divine justice requires mercy, *Proslogion* X must establish the opposite in order to save juridical justice: God's justice is capable of punishing the wicked.

Proslogion VI-IX fall strongly on the side of God's intelligibility. This part of the quest provides knowledge of the Divine substance which is crucial for what follows. When the seeker loses sight of God in *Proslogion* XIV, he recalls the true and certain knowledge he has achieved: "If you have not found your God, how is He this which you have found, and which you have understood with such certain truth and true certitude?"[203] The transposition of God into the realm of being shows that the God above the mind is also intelligible as supreme on the hierarchy of beings. The supreme God submits to being known as His Divine attributes, which the seeker comes to understand in relation to his notions about the human possession of the same attributes. The *melius* formula naming God is "whatever it is better to be than not to be" governs the questing as its measure and goal. The seeker begins with the attributes known on the basis of faith, and reason breaks up the preliminary conception and excludes from it what cannot be attributed to God. The completion of this circular movement establishes understanding of that which was known indistinctly prior to the work of reason. The seeker comes to know God through these attributes and in relation to his knowledge

[203] *Pros*., XIV: "Nam si non invenisti deum tuum: quomodo est ille hoc quod invenisti, et quod illum tam certa veritate et vera certitudine intellexisti."

from below. In *Proslogion* VI-IX, the correction from above of what the seeker takes from below prevents the conclusion of negative theology because it requires God be present in the mind judging and correcting what the seeker knows from experience.

Jean-Luc Marion does not want to recognize God's intelligibility which is made explicit in *Proslogion* VI-IX, and on which *Proslogion* II-IV depend upon for their demonstrations. He rejects what Gilbert calls the *nécessité positive* belonging to God, as what the formula names, that prevents us from falling into atheism. Marion neglects the positive necessity on the basis that, by *Proslogion* XV, the seeker determines that God is a certain thing greater than can be thought (*quiddam maius quam cogitari possit*). He reinterprets the *Proslogion* II in light of what succeeds it:

> First, there is being in the understanding only and not in reality (for example, the painter who has in understanding a pattern of that which does not yet exist outside, on his canvas). Then, there is the being of that which is in understanding and also in reality ("in intellectu et in re"). And finally, the last moment is when something is in reality, without being in understanding ("in re et non in intellect").[204]

The "last moment," existence *in re* and not *in intellectu,* is not in *Proslogion* II, but is Marion's addition. As we have seen, *Proslogion* II concludes that God exists both *in intellect* and *in re*. However, Marion says that the demonstration in *Proslogion* II works precisely because God is beyond the understanding and not also in the mind: "Further, he is in reality because he is not in understanding. And this is the last and highest degree of being."[205] Marion neglects the fact that both God's existence *in intellectu* and *in re* are included in the greater term, which says that God exists *in intellectu* and *in re,* and by which the seeker discovers God's necessary existence. Marion justifies this reading:

> In chapter 15, the theme of the highest possible thought achieves its final determination: "Ergo domine, non solum es quo maius cogitari nequit, sed es quiddam maius quam cogitari possit." …That is: if God is to be thought only insofar as our thought reaches its transcendental limits, God remains beyond the power of thought, ie., is transcendent to it, surpasses it, and, in sum, is not in our understanding. To think about God does not mean only to admit that he exists, but to admit precisely that he remains beyond and outside our understanding.

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[204] Jean-Luc Marion," Is the Ontological Argument Ontological? The Argument According to Anselm and Its Metaphysical Interpretation According to Kant." *The Journal of the History of Philosophy* 30/2 (1992): 201-218 at 212.
[205] Marion, "Is the Ontological Argument Ontological?": 212.

> Therefore God exists *in re* in a very special way—not because he is in understanding, but despite the fact that he is not.[206]

However, Marion does admit that there is a sense in which God is in our understanding: "God begins exactly where and when the concept stops short."[207] Further, he says that "the only evidence that thought might really deal with the question of God and his supposed essence consists in this: it can transcend all conceivable concepts, and, more, it can experience the limits of its conceiving power."[208] In *Proslogion* XI-XII the seeker does encounter the limits of the seeker's conceiving power, and these limits are made explicit in *Proslogion* XIV. However, in *Proslogion* V-IX, as we have seen, the seeker explicitly refuses the path of negative theology and insists on God's intelligibility. The understanding of the Divine attributes achieved here is not lost to the seeker as the quest proceeds, and in fact, plays an essential role in the quest going forward. For example, as we shall see, the seeker's understanding of God's sensibility plays a crucial role in his judgement in *Proslogion* XIV, where, on the basis that he does not sense God, the seeker concludes that what he has discovered about God is limited, and that there is more to know. This means that what the seeker learns in *Proslogion* V-IX, although it is based in experience, is true knowledge of God.

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[206] *Ibid*, 212.
[207] *ibid*, 209.
[208] Marion, "Is the Ontological Argument Ontological?": 208.

CHAPTER 4: THE CLOSURE OF REASON

In *Proslogion* IX-XII, while the seeker insists on the path towards intelligibility, the quest leads to the discovery that God cannot be known through comparison with and in relation to human experience. *Proslogion* VI-XI attempt to reach knowledge of God through the gradual correction of conceptions of the Divine attributes taken from experience. This way of seeking treats God as something external which can be found. In *Proslogion* X & XI, by the very corrections required in order to stay on the path towards intelligibility, the seeker establishes conceptual distinctions which place God outside of what can be known in relation to human experience. By *Proslogion* XII, the seeker discovers that no quantity of corrections can bridge the distance between himself and God. The discovery that God cannot be known "in relation to us" and our experience, which is "through another" than God, is the breakdown of the mode of seeking governing *Proslogion* VI-XI: the seeker cannot know God through any number of corrections to his conception of the Divine substance. The quest for God is not a matter of bridging subject and object, or one thing and another. If God can be found after *Proslogion* XII, it is by the seeker coming to know God "through Himself", which is only possible if what is "other" than God is already included in God "through Himself".

This chapter will show how knowledge of God passes beyond human knowing as a result of distinctions established for the purpose of making the Divine substance intelligible. Through seeking knowledge of God, reason establishes distinctions which place God beyond knowing, and the seeker loses vision of what he previously understood. This will be crucial for understanding the seeker's renewed despair in *Proslogion* XIV, where God is "seen and not seen" and something "more than can be understood by any creature".

Fournier has demonstrated that *Proslogion* VI-XIII follow a ring structure. In *Proslogion* VI-IX God's sensibility, omnipotence, mercy, and justice, are supreme forms of attributes which share a continuum with human attributes, whereas in *Proslogion* X-XIII, the "attributes which belong to God differ no longer in degree but in kind from

their human forms."[209] The difference between "degree" and "kind" is a difference between what is understood in relation to human forms of the attributes, and what cannot be known by comparison with human experience. *Proslogion* IX & X, both treating Divine justice, are the center of the ring structure, where knowledge of Divine justice passes beyond what is known in comparison with human experience because it no longer differs in degree but in kind from its human form. The difference in kind means that God's attributes do not share a continuum with their human forms and are unknowable in comparative terms. Our concern in this chapter is to understand how the seeker's establishment of a difference in kind between Divine justice and human justice, leading to a distinction between "in relation to God" and "in relation to us", is a solution which keeps the seeker on the path towards intelligibility. Doing so, we shall see that the very attempts to understand God is the activity which places Him beyond intelligibility.

Proslogion X introduces a distinction between God's substance "in relation to Himself" (*secundum te)* and "in relation to us" (*secundum nos*), which, in *Proslogion* XII, becomes a distinction between God "through Himself" (*per se*) and "through another" (*per aliud*). This is fundamentally a distinction between two human perspectives: one which knows God by comparison with and in relation to human experience and the other which knows God as He who acts in accordance with the necessity that belongs to His proper nature. From the second perspective, God acting in accordance with His own nature does not necessarily exclude Him acting in ways that can be understood on the basis of human experience.

I will use the term 'comparative relation' for knowledge of God's attributes and their operations that is relative to human experience and has become known through comparison with generally accepted notions of the same attributes and their operations in humans. Insofar as the seeker knows what God is in *Proslogion* VI-IX, a line of questioning introduced in *Proslogion* V,[210] he knows His attributes on the basis of a comparative relation to human experience, in terms of a difference in degree from their human forms. In *Proslogion* X, the operation of God's justice falls beyond human knowing when the seeker can no longer understand Divine justice on the basis of a

[209] Fournier, "Ring Structure," 129.
[210] *Pros*., V: "What then are You, Lord God, You than whom nothing greater can be thought?"

comparative relation. Moran describes this as a failure of comparative terms to grasp God's essence:

> The definition, *id quo maius nihil cogitari potest* (and its variants), is in the form of a comparison, not just a comparison with anything that exists but with anything that could or might exist. Eriugena of course sees God as beyond all things that are and are not. For Anselm, God is beyond all existing things and all things that can be thought of as good or perfect. Anselm recognizes the failure of comparative terms to reach the essence.[211]

The distinction fundamental to the failure of comparative terms is between the Divine substance as it is known "in relation to us" on the basis of a comparative relation, and "in relation to God", as what cannot be understood on the basis of a comparative relation. When God acts "in relation to Himself" He does what His goodness and proper being require. Employing Fournier's terms, this is a distinction between the Divine attributes differing "in degree" and "in kind" from their human form. The seeker introduces this distinction as a means of making the operation of God's justice intelligible. In order to understand how the quest establishes this distinction, we must first recall how, in *Proslogion* VI-IX, God becomes known by means of comparison and in relation to a preliminary conception taken from experience.

Proslogion VI-IX comes to understand, to some extent, the Divine attributes taken from the content of faith, including sensibility, mercy, and omnipotence. The seeker begins with a preliminary conception of each attribute based in a generally accepted notion of how it functions as a human attribute. The preliminary conception must be corrected for the seeker to rightly predicate the attribute to God as the supreme being. The *melius* formula, "whatever it is better to be than not to be", like the *maius* formula of which it is a variation, functions as a comparison. It provides the measure by which discursive reason elevates the preliminary understanding to knowledge of God's supreme possession of the same attribute. If the seeker can think of something better than what he understands God to be or of something operating in a way that is better than the way he understands God to operate, then he must correct his preliminary conception of God's substance and operation. The corrected understanding, representing the supreme form of the attribute, departs from the preliminary conception while retaining a

[211] Moran, "Neoplatonic and Negative Theological Elements," 212-213.

comparative relation to it. The successful correction signifies that the attribute does not differ in kind but in degree. The Divine form of the attribute shares a continuum with that of the human and can be understood as supreme relative to its human form.

This structure of seeking treats God, the supreme being, as an object external to the seeker who approaches it through gradual correction. The seeker's ability to understand God's attributes depends upon him correcting his preliminary conception for what cannot belong to the supreme being and arriving at an understanding of the Divine substance and its operations under a form which cannot be thought to be better. If the seeker is unable to correct his preliminary conception in order to arrive at a conception which the *melius* formula judges to be adequate to the supreme being, then the seeker does not arrive at knowledge of God. This is what happens relative to the conception of justice in *Proslogion* X-XII, leading to the discovery that no quantity of corrections will bring him to knowledge of God's substance.

Proslogion IX establishes two distinct conceptions of justice, which, in *Proslogion* X, become the operation of justice "in relation to us" and "in relation to God". The first conception, based in experience, regards justice as the payment to each person of what is owed. I will call this "retributive" justice because it demands punishment for the wicked. Attributing this conception of justice to the supreme being, the seeker judges that God is supremely capable of returning to each what is owed. This excludes God's capacity to return something other than what is owed, and therefore excludes His capacity for mercy and the underserved gift of pardon. However, since God must be merciful, which it is "better to be than not to be", *Proslogion* IX wants to understand how God justly shows mercy. After the seeker makes three unsatisfying attempts to correct this preliminary understanding of retributive justice to explain how God is capable of pardoning the wicked, *Proslogion* IX establishes a second distinct conception of justice which excludes and replaces the first.

Proslogion IX introduces a second distinct conception of justice, understood as "universal rectitude of order", in order to explain how God is just when he acts mercifully. Whatever God does, He does justly, because He always and necessarily acts in accordance with His "rectitude of order", which is justice itself. This conception of justice is more fundamental than retributive justice because it is the basis of all God's

being and doing. It underlies and contains what belongs to retributive justice. Whenever God punishes or pardons the wicked, He does so on the basis of His "rectitude". Divine justice, in this sense, is the necessity belonging to God's proper being. When God does what befits His goodness, including show mercy, He acts in accordance with His proper being. Therefore, if God's goodness requires Him to act mercifully, such an action cannot contradict His justice. On the basis of this conception, the seeker establishes that God is merciful because He ought to be: His mercy is in accord with His proper being.

By means of justice as "rectitude", the seeker establishes what the first conception cannot: the necessity of Divine mercy. This conclusion satisfies the goal of *Proslogion* IX, and the more fundamental conception of justice replaces the first. God does not act according to a logic of retribution, which establishes the necessity of God's punishment, but, insofar as the conclusion of *Proslogion* IX is concerned, operates more fundamentally according to the logic of justice as rectitude, which establishes the necessity of His mercy. While *Proslogion* IX introduces two distinct concepts of justice, the conclusion which accounts for how justice requires mercy makes justice as rectitude more fundamental. God cannot act, at least exclusively, according to a logic of retributive justice if His goodness and justice requires His mercy. Within *Proslogion* IX, the conditions under which God retains his capacity to punish is left ambiguous. This ambiguity brings us to *Proslogion* X.

The two distinct conceptions of justice inherited from *Proslogion* IX become in *Proslogion* X two modes by which God's simple justice operates: "in relation to us" and "in relation to God". The *melius* formula, determining that it is more just for God also to punish the wicked, makes the conclusion of *Proslogion* IX inadequate. The seeker recognizes that God cannot exclusively spare the wicked and must therefore also have the capacity to punish. In order to explain how God both punishes and pardons, the seeker does not exclude either of the two conceptions of justice, and so he makes them two modes of the same Divine justice, one operating "in relation to us" and the other "in relation to God". This is what establishes the distinctions that lead Divine justice beyond human knowing. Each mode, taken by itself, excludes what the other requires: retributive justice establishes the necessity of punishment and excludes mercy; justice as rectitude establishes the necessity of God's pardon and does not account for God's capacity to

punish. The problem is that each of the two distinct modes establishes a conclusion about Divine justice which does not account for the other, and neither mode includes an account of the difference between the two which would determine which mode is operative.

The modes are mutually exclusive, and neither can account for the difference between the two. One operates "in relation to us", and specifically, in relation a human conception of retributive justice, and the other operates "in relation to God" and His proper being and goodness. The way in which the seeker establishes the necessity of God's mercy in *Proslogion* IX depends upon knowledge of God's goodness. This knowledge is given by the *melius* formula. However, when *Proslogion* IX establishes that God's justice requires mercy, it does not provide a reason why God's goodness requires his mercy. Indeed, it cannot provide this because the reason is hidden in God's incomprehensible goodness: "Truly in the deepest and most secret place of Your goodness is hidden the source whence the stream of Your mercy flows."[212] The reason why His goodness requires mercy is "in relation to God". Because the seeker does not have an account of why God's goodness requires His mercy, which is the basis on which His justice requires His mercy, the two modes of justice operate according to incommensurable logics. In *Proslogion* X, because God neither mode includes the difference between the two, a third principle is required to determine in accordance with which mode God acts. As a result, the principle determining which mode of justice governs God's actions becomes inscrutable.

The establishment of two modes of Divine justice, and their operation "in relation to us" and "in relation to God", is a solution by which the seeker may understand how Divine justice does not contradict God's supremacy. Were Divine justice to operate exclusively according to either of the two modes it would not necessarily pass beyond human knowing, because each mode provides an account of how justice operates. However, since the *melius* formula establishes that God has the capacity both to punish and to pardon the wicked, neither of the two modes, taken by itself, provides an adequate account of Divine justice, and therefore both are required. Since neither mode includes

[212] *Pros*., IX: "Vere in altissimo et secretissimo bonitatis tuæ latet fons, unde manat fluvius misericordiæ tuæ."

an account of the difference between the two, the principle determining which mode is operative becomes inscrutable.

The seeker makes the two conceptions of justice two modes of the same Divine attribute in order to correct an inadequate conception in accordance with the judgement of *melius* formula, and with a view towards understanding the true character of God's justice in a way that does not contradict his supremacy. However, because the modes are incommensurable, the operation of Divine justice becomes inscrutable. The principle determining which mode decides God's actions does not fall within either of the two modes, but outside of them both.

Proslogion XI establishes that the principle determining which mode is operative, and thus whether God will punish or pardon the wicked, is "in relation to God". The determination of which mode is operative proceeds from God's goodness and belongs to His proper being. Because God's goodness is incomprehensible, so too is the operation of his justice. Because God's proper being is not "in relation to us" and knowable on the basis of comparative terms, the operation of Divine justice, and subsequently God's substance, becomes unknowable.

4.1 The Inscrutability of Justice

4.1.1 Divine Justice Punishes "In Relation to Us" and Spares "In Relation to God"

Proslogion X inherits from *Proslogion* IX the two distinct conceptions of justice, one which is based in experience and establishes that God must punish the wicked, and the other which is based in the necessity belonging to God's goodness and establishes that God must pardon the wicked. Since *Proslogion* IX makes the latter conception more fundamental than the former, it leaves ambiguous how God retains His power to punish the wicked. To resolve this ambiguity, in *Proslogion* X, the *melius* formula judges that God must retain His capacity to punish: "But it is also just that you punish the wicked. For what is more just than that the good should receive good things and the bad receive bad things? How then is it just both that You punish the wicked and that You spare the

wicked?"[213] The seeker establishes God's capacity to both punish and pardon by maintaining his conception of justice as "rectitude of order" and reintroducing his preliminary conception of retributive justice. The former is based in a logic which accounts for God's capacity to pardon, and the latter, His capacity to punish. The seeker could resolve the problem by demonstrating that God's "rectitude" requires that He both punish and pardon, on the basis that it is better for God to have the ability to both punish and pardon than only to pardon. This is what the seeker will conclude in *Proslogion* XI, but he does not do so here. By not drawing this conclusion until it is required in *Proslogion* XI, he temporarily preserves the intelligibility of the two distinct logics which account for God's capacity to punish and to pardon.

The two distinct conceptions of justice become two modes of Divine justice: "Or do you with justice in one mode *(alio modo*) punish the wicked and with justice in another mode (*alio modo*) spare the wicked?"[214] The two distinct modes are a solution to what the *melius* formula judges a problem in the seeker's understanding. God's supremacy requires that He is capable of both punishing and pardoning, but neither mode by itself provides a basis for understanding what the other requires. As we saw in *Proslogion* IX, the conception of retributive justice cannot be corrected to include God's capacity to pardon, and the conception of justice as "rectitude of order", because it is a limited determination about what God's "rectitude" requires, does not account for God's capacity to punish. The two modes are a solution which preserves the intelligibility of the supreme being because they are a means of understanding how God is what the *melius* formula judges Him to be.

Proslogion X places the two distinct conceptions of Divine justice from *Proslogion* IX, which are now two modes by which justice operates, within *Proslogion* VIII's perspectival structure distinguishing God's activity "in relation to us" and "in relation to Himself". Both are human perspectives on the operation of Divine justice, one of which understands God's justice to operate according to a logic of retributive justice, and the other which understands God's justice to operate according to His proper being

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[213] *Pros*., X: "Sed et iustum est, ut malos punias. Quid namque iustius, quam ut boni bona et mali mala recipiant? Quomodo ergo et iustum est ut malos punias, et iustum est ut malis parcas?"
[214] *Pros*., X: "An alio modo iuste punis malos, et alio modo iuste parcis malis?"

and incomprehensible goodness. When God spares the wicked He is just in relation to Himself and when He punishes the wicked He is just in relation to our sense of the punishment due for human wickedness:

> For when you punish the wicked it is just, since it agrees with their merits; however, when you spare the wicked it is just, not because of their merits but because it is befitting to your goodness. For in sparing the wicked you are just in relation to yourself (*secundum te*) and not in relation to us (*secundum nos*), just as you are merciful in relation to us (*secundum nos*) and not in relation to yourself (*secundum te*). Thus it is, as you are merciful (in saving us whom you might with justice lose) not because you experience any feeling, but because we experience the effect of your mercy, so you are just not because you give us our due, but because you do what befits you as the supreme good. Thus, then, without inconsistency justly do you punish and justly do you pardon.[215]

On one hand, the seeker says that when God punishes the wicked, "it is just because it agrees with their merits" (*quia illorum meritis convenit*), and on the other hand, when God spares the wicked it is just "not because He gives us what is due" (*iustus es non quia nobis reddas debitum*) but because He does what befits Him as supreme good (*decet te summe bonum*). God's punishment is understood in terms of the logic of retribution, requiring God to give each their due. God's pardon operates according to a fundamentally different logic; it neither depends upon, nor is determined by human merit. It is what God does in accordance with His supreme goodness. What God does out of His goodness, including pardoning the wicked, he does justly. This is the basis on which God's "rectitude" requires His pardon. His punishment is "in relation to us" because it operates according to a logic by which the human, acting wickedly, determines God's action. His pardon is "in relation to God" Himself because it is not determined, at least primarily, by human actions, but by His incomprehensible Divine goodness.

The seeker borrows from *Proslogion* VIII the perspectival structure into which he places the two modes of justice. *Proslogion* VIII concludes that God's mercy does not

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[215] *Pros*., X: "Cum enim punis malos, iustum est, quia illorum meritis convenit; cum vero parcis malis, iustum est, non quia illorum meritis, sed quia bonitati tuæ condecens est. Nam parcendo malis ita iustus es secundum te et non secundum nos, sicut misericors es secundum nos et non secundum te. Quoniam salvando nos quos iuste perderes, sicut misericors es non quia tu sentias affectum, sed quia nos sentimus effectum: ita iustus es non quia nobis reddas debitum, sed quia facis quod decet te summe bonum. Sic itaque sine repugnantia iuste punis et iuste parcis."

operate according to a human logic by which feeling originates mercy: "For when you look upon us in our misery it is we who feel the effect of your mercy, but you do not experience the feeling."[216] The seeker discovers that God's mercy operates in relation to Himself, not in a way that accords with the human perspective on what originates mercy. From our perspective, because those in misery experience the feeling of God's mercy, God's mercy appears as a compassionate response to our suffering. On the basis that God's impassability requires that He not be affected by our suffering, *Proslogion* VIII concludes that God's mercy does not operate in relation to our perspective on what originates mercy, but in relation to God Himself. Like the principle of God's mercy in *Proslogion* VIII, the principle originating God's capacity to pardon in *Proslogion* X is not "in relation to us".

Because neither mode contains the difference between the two, the operation of Divine justice is inscrutable. Reasoning according to the logic of one mode, the seeker understands how God is capable of punishing, and according to the other, he understands how God is capable of pardoning. The justice of the supreme being is intelligible insofar as the seeker knows why God's proper being requires His mercy, and why God's retributive justice requires punishment. However, neither mode contains an account of the reason why one mode would take precedence over the other in respect to the judgement of a particular wicked person. Because neither contains the difference between the two, for the seeker to understand which mode is operative, a third principle is required. This principle must contain the difference between the two and provide a basis for determining which is operative in a particular instance. However, since God's goodness is the basis of His mercy, the third principle containing the difference between the two modes must be incomprehensible. It has to contain God's incomprehensible goodness, the very basis of the *melius* formula. In *Proslogion* XI we will discover that the principle which contains the difference between the two modes is God's goodness itself.

[216] *Pros*., VIII: "Etenim cum tu respicis nos miseros, nos sentimus misericordis effectum, tu non sentis affectum."

4.1.2 Justice Punishes and Spares "In Relation to God"

Proslogion XI preserves the perspectival structure distinguishing God "in relation to us" and "in relation to Himself" and establishes that both modes by which Divine justice operates are "in relation to God". As a result, neither mode of justice is known "in relation to us"; when God punishes or spares, He does what befits His supreme goodness. This is a solution which keeps the seeker in *Proslogion* XI on the path towards intelligibility insofar as it corrects the understanding of justice achieved in *Proslogion* X to accord with the judgement of the *melius* formula. The *melius* formula judges that punishment for sinners must be just in relation to God's goodness and proper being: "But is it not also just in relation to yourself, Lord, that you should punish the wicked?"[217] Because God's activity cannot be opposed to His goodness, His punishment for sinners, like His pardon, must in accordance with His goodness. Both modes of justice operate "in relation to God".

In *Proslogion* XI, the problem of understanding the operation of Divine justice deepens; both modes of justice are "in relation to God" because God's punishment cannot be opposed to His goodness and proper being.:

> But is it not also (*etiam*) just in relation to yourself, Lord, that you should punish the wicked? It is just inasmuch as you are so just that you cannot be thought to be more just. But you would in no wise be so if you only returned good to the good and did not return bad to the bad. For he is more just who rewards the merits of both the good and the bad than he who rewards the merits of the good alone. Therefore it is just in relation to you, O just and benevolent God, both when you punish and when you pardon.[218]

Because it is more just (*iustior*) for God to punish the wicked than for Him not to do so, it must be in accordance with His proper being that He punishes the wicked. The Divine punishment which operates "in relation to us" must proceed from God's "rectitude", which is the necessity belonging to God's proper being and goodness. If God operates "in relation to us", it is because He determines to do so. The difference between the two

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[217] *Pros.,* XI: "Sed numquid etiam non est iustum secundum te, domine, ut malos punias?"
[218] *Pros.,* XI: "Sed numquid etiam non est iustum secundum te, domine, ut malos punias? Iustum quippe est te sic esse iustum, ut iustior nequeas cogitari. Quod nequaquam esses, si tantum bonis bona, et non malis mala redderes. Iustior enim est qui et bonis et malis, quam qui bonis tantum merita retribuit. Iustum igitur est secundum te, iuste et benigne deus, et cum punis et cum parcis."

modes is not understood "in relation to us"; it is contained on the side of God's proper being. Because God contains the difference between the two modes, He determines whether He will punish or pardon and whether His action "in relation to himself" will also be "in relation to us".

Both modes of God's justice fall beyond human comprehension because the principle determining both when God punishes and when He spares is in relation to Himself. *Proslogion* XI returns to the conception of justice as "rectitude of order" to establish the adequacy of this resolution:

> Truly, then, all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth and yet the Lord is just in all His ways. And [this is so] without any inconsistency at all, since it is not just for those to be saved whom You will to punish, and it is not just for those to be damned whom you will to pardon. For that alone is just which You will, and that is not just which you do not will. But if it can in some way be grasped (*utcumque capi potest*) why you can will to save the wicked, it certainly cannot be comprehended by any reason (*certe nulla ratione comprehendi*) why from those who are alike in wickedness you save these rather than those through your supreme goodness, and damn those rather than these through your supreme justice.[219]

Gilbert comments that "le vouloir prend ici un forme transcendante, qui nous est inaccessible et que nous exprimons, balbutiant, en le disant arbitraire. 'On ne peut comprendre par aucune raison.'"[220] God's will, determined only by His proper being, is the inscrutable principle judging when to punish and when to pardon. There is no reason (*nulla ratio*) determining God's justice which is within the seeker's grasp. The capacity of Divine justice to pardon the wicked "can in some way be grasped" (*utcumque capi potest*) but is beyond any *ratio* that is completely comprehensible to us. The seeker's knowledge of Divine justice is a partial grasp of what cannot be completely comprehended. But this partial grasp is insufficient; the seeker knows to some extent that God "can will to save the wicked" but he has no knowledge of the basis on which God

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[219] *Pros*., X: "Vere igitur 'universæ viæ domini misericordia et veritas', et tamen 'iustus dominus in omnibus viis suis'. Et utique sine repugnantia; quia quos vis punire, non est iustum salvari, et quibus vis parcere, non est iustum damnari. Nam id solum iustum est quod vis, et non iustum quod non vis. Sed si utcumque capi potest, cur malos potes velle salvare: illud certe nulla ratione comprehendi potest, cur de similibus malis hos magis salves quam illos per summam bonitatem, et illos magis damnes quam istos per summam iustitiam."
[220] Gilbert, *Le Proslogion,* 138.

wills to punish or pardon the wicked. For the purpose of understanding whom God saves, an urgent matter in *Proslogion* IX, God's justice is unknowable.

In *Proslogion* XI, God's justice no longer operates on the basis of a comparative relation, which is "in relation to us". The seeker can only understand Divine justice from the perspective of what God is "in relation to Himself". However, the reason (*ratio*) determining what God does "in relation to Himself" is incomprehensible. The seeker has received what he desired and requested at the conclusion of *Proslogion* I: "I do not try Lord, to penetrate your depths (*penetrate altitudinem tuam*), because my understanding is in no way (*nullatenus*) equal to it. But I do desire to understand your truth to some extent (*aliquatenus*), that truth that my heart believes and loves." [221] The seeker understands God's truth to some extent: he has achieved relative knowledge of the Divine substance in *Proslogion* V-IX; he has understood that God is capable of both punishing and pardoning; and he knows that God acts in relation to Himself.

By pressing onwards towards intelligibility, he discovered that Divine justice falls outside of what can be known in relation to human experience. Each of *Proslogion* IX-XI has established distinctions correcting the seeker's conception of justice in order to account for what the *melius* formula judges to be true about God. As the seeker develops his conception of justice through gradual corrections, he establishes distinctions which place the operation of Divine justice outside of what is comprehensible by any reason. This is positive knowledge insofar as the seeker understands that God acts "in relation to Himself". If God can be known, it is not "in relation to us" but "in relation to Himself". There are indications that the path towards knowledge of God "in relation to Himself" is not completely closed. To name one such indication, the seeker's discovery that God's goodness requires His mercy is knowledge of what God is "in relation to Himself". This will be important moving forward. The seeker will no longer attempt to understand God in relation to conceptions taken from human experience, but in *Proslogion* XIII he will try to understand God in relation to Himself when he uses the *maius* formula to understand God's relation to space and time.

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[221] *Pros*., I: "Non tento, domine, penetrare altitudinem tuam, quia nullatenus comparo illi intellectum meum; sed desidero aliquatenus intelligere veritatem tuam, quam credit et amat cor meum."

4.2 The Failure of Comparative Terms for Knowing God

Proslogion XII is the culmination of the attempts in *Proslogion* V-XI to understand the Divine being. It establishes the impossibility of finding the self-identical God through comparison and in relation to human experience, which is knowledge of God "in relation to us" and "through another" than Himself. *Proslogion* XII deepens the conclusion of *Proslogion* XI to establish that not only Divine justice, but also the Divine substance and its operations cannot be known through comparative relation. The Divine substance has its basis in the necessity belonging to God's "rectitude of order". The centrality justice has as the necessary and proper order of God's being means that justice is the basis of everything God is and does. Because Divine justice falls outside of comparative relation, and nothing of God is apart from His justice, the Divine substance falls outside of comparative relation:

> But clearly, whatever (*quidquid*) you are, you are not that through another (*per aliud*) but through your very self (*per teipsum*). You are therefore the very life by which you live, the wisdom by which you are wise, the very goodness by which you are good to both good men and wicked, and the same holds for like attributes.[222]

The quest for God by means of comparative relation is the perspective on God's being "in relation to us", which in *Proslogion* XII becomes what God is "through another". Ultimately, what is "through another" will be included in what God is "through Himself". The quest to know God through comparative terms is an attempt to know God through what is other than Him. *Proslogion* XII brings to an end the possibility of seeking God through comparative terms and from the perspective of one who treats God as something 'other' which he must go out to find.

The second perspective from *Proslogion* X and XI, knowledge of God "in relation to Himself", which becomes knowledge of God "through Himself", indicates the way forward for the quest. Because God cannot be understood through what is other than and external to Him, if He is known, it is because what He is "through Himself" includes what is "other". At this point on the quest, the seeker's inability to know God "through

[222] *Pros*., XII: "Sed certe quidquid es, non per aliud es quam per teipsum. Tu es igitur ipsa vita qua vivis, et sapientia qua sapis, et bonitas ipsa qua bonis et malis bonus es; et ita de similibus."

another" is a problem insofar as, in the distinction between God "through Himself" and "through another", the seeker recognizes himself on the side of what is 'other'.

While the seeker does achieve relative knowledge of God in *Proslogion* VI-IX, the continued seeking progressively excludes God from vision. The *melius* formula governing the journey in *Proslogion* VI-XI as its measure and goal requires the seeker to establish distinctions which gradually place the God outside of what the seeker can know on the basis of relative knowledge. The gradual corrections which are intended to lead to knowledge of God, lead instead to knowledge that God cannot be known in relation to human experience. Because God is not known "in relation us" and through relative terms, the seeker cannot arrive at God if he starts with a conception based in experience. No amount of correction to the preliminary conceptions of the Divine attributes can bridge the distance between the seeker and what he seeks; the path to God which begins outside of God is broken down. So long as we posit a distance between the seeker and what he seeks, there is no means of bridging the distance. If God is to be found, it is because the seeker is not in fact separate from God. The attempt to seek God as something other is itself the origin of the externality of the seeker to God.

This brings us to a fundamental of the *Proslogion*: we cannot get anywhere that we are not already or know anything which is not already present to our mind. The form of reason which goes out in search of what it does not already possess has closed in on itself. If God is knowable, the seeker must already know Him under a form which he does not see, because there is no place to which he must advance in order to find God. The journey of the *Proslogion* is not a matter of bridging a knower and a knowable object, but of bringing the seeker to vision of what he already knows. *Proslogion* VI-XII is a crucial step on the journey towards this discovery; it teaches that we do not come to vision of God by going out in search of Him as something other.

The seeker no longer expects to find God in comparative terms and by a reasoning which goes out in search of what he does not already possess. Because this way of seeking is closed, the seeker does not know how to proceed, and falls into despair. *Proslogion* XIV begins a reflection on why the seeker cannot see God whom he previously saw. In *Proslogion* XIV the seeker concludes that God's is "more than can be

understood by any creature" and, in *Proslogion* XV, that God is "something greater than can be thought".

There are two fundamental problems carried forward into the subsequent chapters: Firstly, how was God known by comparative relation in *Proslogion* VI-IX if, as *Proslogion* XII teaches, God cannot be known in this way? Secondly, what kind of knowing makes the seeker capable of knowing God "in relation to Himself" and "through Himself"? In *Proslogion* XVIII, the seeker will reach intellectual vision of God's indivisible unity and reach an understanding of the basis on which God is knowable to some extent. What is other than God must be included in what God is "through Himself". In *Proslogion* XXIII, the quest itself is included within the infinite Trinitarian giving and receiving. Before discovering this new foundation, the seeker in *Proslogion* XIII-XVII will pass through loss and despair associated with the breakdown of his mode of seeking operative in *Proslogion* VI-XI.

CHAPTER 5: THE RENEWAL OF MIND

In this chapter, which traces the movement of *Proslogion* XIII-XXII, the way of seeking God which has enabled the discovery of many true things about God now prevents the seeker from finding God. In *Proslogion* V, the quest began a mode of seeking which treated God as one among beings and insisted on His intelligibility. This way of seeking God remains until *Proslogion* XVIII, where mind's renewal enables the seeker to find God under a new form. *Proslogion* XIV & XV discover that the supreme being is unthinkable in virtue of His excess, and *Proslogion* XVI and XVII intensify the despair of seeker who neither knows nor senses the very God in whom he moves and has being.[223] Relief comes in *Proslogion* XVIII when the seeker discovers that God is "unity itself not divisible by any mind."[224] By this intellectual vision, the seeker discovers what belongs to the *maius* formula and was neglected in *Proslogion* V: that God is also beyond being and intelligibility. After *Proslogion* XVIII, God is no longer one being among others, but the transcendent basis of all being and knowing. In *Proslogion* XXII, this transcendent God is identified with the supreme good, making God both the supreme within the realm of being, and transcendent of that same realm.

5.1 Three Fundamental Variations on the Formula

The formula, or sign for God, whose explication leads the seeker through the *unum argumentum* of the *Proslogion* and provides demonstrations of "whatever we believe about the Divine substance", has three fundamental formulations, introduced in *Proslogion* II, V, and XV: "that than which nothing greater (*maius*) can be thought"[225], "whatever is better (*melius*) to be than not to be"[226] and "a certain thing greater (*quiddam maius*) than can be thought"[227].

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[223] *Pros*., XVI: "In te moveor et in te sum."
[224] *Pros*., XVIII: "immo tu es ipsa unitas, nullo intellectu divisibilis."
[225] *Pros*., II: "aliquid quo maius nihil cogitari potest"
[226] *Pros*., V: "quidquid melius esse quam non esse"
[227] *Pros*., XV: "es quiddam maius quam cogitari possit"

The first formulation, the "*maius* formula", requires the negation of all conceptual limitations belonging to knowledge of God, and thus has "le rôle d'une régle négative pour la pensée."[228] By itself, Gibert judges, the *maius* formula "aboutirait à l'apophatisme ou à l'athéisme si elle ne pouvait intégrer une nécessité positive."[229] It leads to the idea that God, greater than anything conceivable, transcends being and knowing. Insofar as the *maius* formula does not include a "nécessité positive" of being and intelligibility, this transcendence is by defect and not excess. What is the relation of this "positive necessity" to that which the *maius* formula names, and from where does it emerge? When *Proslogion* II-IV demonstrate the necessary existence of God by means of the *maius* formula, they depend upon this positive necessity as God's intelligibility. When *Proslogion* V develops the second formulation, it makes explicit the positive necessity belonging to what the *maius* formula names.

The second formulation has its basis in the first; intelligibility emerges by the power of the *maius* formula:

> What then are you, Lord God, than whom nothing greater can be thought? But what are you except supreme of all, existing through yourself alone, who made all other things from nothing? For whatever is not this is less than can be thought. But this cannot be thought of you.[230]

In response to the question, "What then are you?", the seeker introduces three designations for God: "supreme of all", "existing through yourself alone" and "made all other things from nothing." On the basis of these designations, the seeker will subsequently explicate many names for God, including His existence as "whatever it is better to be than not to be." The question before us is whether the seeker introduces the three designations for God by the power of the supreme being, or by the power of the transcendent God (i.e., beyond being and knowing). If the transcendent God confers intelligibility, then the indivisible unity beyond thought, made explicit in *Proslogion* XVIII, can be seen as governing the movement by which God becomes intelligible. If it is by the power of the supreme being that God becomes intelligible to the seeker, then

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[228] Gilbert, *Le Proslogion,* 145.
[229] Gilbert, *Le Proslogion,* 145.
[230] *Pros*., 5: "Quid igitur es, domine deus, quo nil maius valet cogitari? Sed quid es nisi id quod summum omnium solum existens per seipsum, omnia alia fecit de nihilo? Quidquid enim hoc non est, minus est quam cogitari possit. Sed hoc de te cogitari non potest."

the discovery of God's indivisible unity need not be more than a moment belonging to the life of mind.

In order to see whether the intelligibility of God emerges by the power of the transcendent, we must first consider the ambiguity belonging to the first formulation: "that than which nothing greater can be thought." The *maius* formula names both an indistinct supreme term, as the limit of what can be thought, and what is beyond the supreme, as what cannot be thought because it transcends knowing. We must draw out the implications of this ambiguity relative to the argument in *Proslogion* V by which God becomes intelligible: "For whatever is not this is less than can be thought. But this cannot be thought of you." For the purpose of explicating the argument, I will substitute the three designations for X. According to the argument, "whatever is not X is less than can be thought. But this cannot be thought of you." If God is not X, then He is less than can be thought. What does it mean to be "less than can be thought?" Herein lies the ambiguity. Based on the fact that the *maius* formula names both the supreme being, and that which is beyond being, it can mean either "not greater than can be thought" or "not the greatest that can be thought". If the former, then God is X on the basis that He is greater than can be thought, i.e., he transcends knowing. If the latter, then God is X on the basis that He is the greatest that can be thought, i.e., the supreme being. Let us set out these two options:

Option 1: If God is not X, He is not greater than can be thought.

Option 2: If God is not X, He is not the greatest that can be thought.

The same options, without the double negation, read:

Option 1: If God is X, He is greater than can be thought.

Option 2: If God is X, He is the greatest that can be thought.

We are interested in whether the argument depends upon God being greater than can be thought, or whether the argument functions on the basis that God is the greatest that can be thought.

Option 1 is valid on the basis of a logic which treats God's transcendence as the basis of His being and intelligibility. In *Proslogion* XIV-XVII, where the seeker treats God as one among others, he falls into despair and loss of vision because he cannot understand how God is the source and preserver of all others. The solution comes when

the seeker understands that God is not one among others, but the transcendent source and preserver of all otherness. As we shall see, the seeker receives vision and despair ceases when the seeker discovers that God is not only "greater than can be thought" but is also beyond being itself. This gives us the underlying logic according to option 1: One among others cannot be the basis of all others if it is not also beyond them, and therefore God is not one among others, but the transcendent source conferring being on all.

According to this option, God may be understood as the basis of all things and as present to all in virtue of His transcendence of all beings. Therefore, the validity of the argument does not depend on what X is. This sheds light on the conclusion of *Proslogion* IV: "Whoever understands this well understands clearly that this same being so exists that it cannot not exist in thought."[231] There is no thought in which God is not present as its basis. Moran judges:

> Anselm uses the hierarchy of being, the great chain of being, to argue not only that God is the highest being in that chain, but in fact, that the Divine infinity transcends the very hierarchy itself. Cusanus' reflections in the same domain have been credited with breaking with the medieval hierarchy of being and preparing the ground for the radical rethinking of the infinity of the universe in modernity. As Cusanus will put it, God is the mysterious conjoining of the *posse* and *esse*, in *De possest*. God is not just the actualised possibility, but the actualisation of all possibilities.[232]

Option 2 is essentially a tautology. It does not depend upon the same logic as option 1, and is valid only if X is a supreme term. If X is something other than a supreme term, then the conclusion does not follow. For example, it does not follow that "if God is not a particular good, then He is not the greatest that than can be thought". In *Proslogion* V, X is a supreme term, or, more specifically, a list of attributes which are understood to belong to the supreme being: "supreme of all", "existing through Himself alone" and "having made all other things from nothing." Option 2 is valid only if X is what can rightly be attributed to the supreme being.

From the standpoint of *Proslogion* V, both options are valid, but for different reasons and according to different logics. Option 1 makes God's transcendence the basis

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[231] *Pros*., IV: "Quod qui bene intelligit, utique intelligit id ipsum sic esse, ut nec cogitatione queat non esse."
[232] Moran, "Neoplatonic and Negative Theological Elements": 211.

of his intelligibility, and option 2 makes God the supreme being (*summum omnium*) through which the particular goods, explicated in *Proslogion* VI-IX, participate. When the seeker discovers that God is a "unity unable to be divided by any mind" in *Proslogion* XVIII, we must bear in mind that the emergence of mind by the power of the transcendent is an option in *Proslogion* V.

In *Proslogion* VI-XIII, the *melius* formula governs the quest as its measure and goal. The seeker treats God as something intelligible that is found through the gradual correction of His conceptions. In *Proslogion* XII, the mode of seeking governing the quest closes itself off from what it seeks. God is intelligible "through himself" and not "through another". The seeker discovers that no quantity of corrections can bring him to the very being of God. If God is in the mind as intelligible, and correction will not bring us to knowledge of Him, then why does the seeker not see God already? The answer is that he does not see God because, until *Proslogion* XVIII, he treats God as one thing among others; the seeker sees only what is other than God and maintains the distinction between what God is "in relation to Himself" and what He is thought to be "in relation to us", who are other.

Crucially, the seeker does not deny the truth of what he has learnt about God "in relation to us". After the seeker has discovered God's necessary being and understood many things about the Divine substance, including its sensibility, he faces the question in *Proslogion* XIV of whether he is satisfied with what he has found, and subsequently, why he is not. The seeker's articulation of his dissatisfaction depends upon what he learnt in *Proslogion* VI: incorporeal perception is superior to corporeal perception and included in human intellectual knowledge. The seeker's inability to sense God indicates an inadequacy with his knowledge of God. Since the seeker has "understood [God] with certain truth and true certitude,"[233] he should be able to sense God; the inadequacy of the quest is articulated in terms of the inability to sense God who is everywhere and always. In *Proslogion* XIV, the seeker is unsatisfied, and does not sense God, because he has achieved only a partial (*aliquatenus*) vision of God. He wants to know "what else (*aliud*) God is."[234] God exceeds the limits of the seeker's thought in virtue of His fullness

[233] *Pros*., XIV: "…certa veritate et vera certitudine…"
[234] *Pros*., XIV: "dic desideranti animæ meæ, quid aliud es, quam quod vidit."

(*amplitudine tua*) and immensity (*immensitate*). Remaining within the logic of the supreme (*summum*) being among others, the seeker concludes that God is "more than can be understood by any creature".[235]

The third formulation, the *quiddam maius* formula, is the result of combining the intelligibility of God made explicit in the *melius* formula with the negative rule of the *maius* formula. It names God as what exceeds knowing in virtue of His excess. Having discovered the incomprehensibility of the Divine goodness and justice in *Proslogion* IX-XII, it becomes conceivable that there is one being, the supreme being, who is greater than can be thought. The seeker arrives at this conclusion on the basis of the *maius* formula: It is greater to be something greater than can be thought.

How is it true of the same God that He is both "something greater than can be thought" and, as *Proslogion* IV discovers, something that "cannot not exist in thought"?[236] The discovery that God is "greater than can be thought" is the result of a seeking which expects to find God as one being and not another, and specifically, as supreme. This discovery is a step on the journey towards the transcendent foundation of being and knowing, but in *Proslogion* XV, the seeker regards the God who is greater than can be thought as one among others. Because God is unthinkable in virtue of His excess, but His transcendence of mind is not yet understood as the basis of His intelligibility, God's sensibility and presence to all thought becomes a problem. The seeker despairs in *Proslogion* XIV-XVII because he has not yet discovered the logical foundation by which God's transcendence makes him present to all thought.

Proslogion XIII-XVII are transitional. They have their place in overcoming one logic and anticipating the foundation of another, which emerges in *Proslogion* XVIII. They overcome the form of seeking, governed by the *melius* formula, which treats God as one supreme being among others. Because God is known as supreme, and also, in *Proslogion* XV, as "something greater than can be thought", the seeker does not know how the many true things he knows about God truly belong to the God who cannot be thought. These transitional chapters thus anticipate a new logic, which is also what the

[235] *Pros*., XIV: "Certe plus quam a creatura valeat intelligi."
[236] *Pros*., IV: "…nec cogitatione queat non esse."

maius formula fundamentally depends upon for God's intelligibility: God's transcendence as the basis of His presence in the mind.

5.2 Including the Other (*Aliud*) in God Through Himself (*Per Se*)

Prior to *Proslogion* XVIII, the seeker treats God as one being among others. Evidence of this is that the seeker distinguishes God from what He is not. He does this consistently throughout *Proslogion* V-XII when he uses the *melius* formula to discover that God is one kind of thing and not another. In *Proslogion* XIV & XV, the discovery that God is "greater than can be thought" is a discovery that the supreme being, as distinct from other beings, is greater than can be thought. The seeker does not yet understand the relation of the supreme being to other beings. God's existence "through Himself" and not "through another" means that He is not intelligible "in relation to another" but only "in relation to Himself". The seeker does not know how God relates to what is other than Him.

Proslogion XVI employs the image of the sun, God's "inaccessible light", to establish the interiority of the seeker and mind to God. Through intellectual vision, the seeker glimpses the sun, above the mind, and insofar as he knows anything, he knows it through the sun (*per illam video*). The intellect can turn towards (*intendere*) the sun, but not for long (*diu*). Even though it can turn towards the sun for some amount of time, it cannot see what it knows in the sun itself (*in ipso sole nequit aspicere*). The problem which intensifies despair is that God, the source of knowing and being, is not seen by the seeker who moves around within Him, and whose knowledge is through His inaccessible light. God is other than what exists through Him. The seeker has not yet established a logic for understanding the relationship between God and what, while existing through God, is other than Him. *Proslogion* XVI reads: "For truly there is nothing other (*aliud*) which can penetrate through it so that it might discover You there."[237] The seeker is interior to what he cannot see and other than what he knows and moves through.

In *Proslogion* XVI, the seeker says that he is only able to look at God (*intendere*) for a short time (*diu*). This looking signifies an intellectual vision by the power of what

[237] *Pros*., XVI: "Vere enim non est aliud quod hanc penetret, ut ibi te pervideat."

is beyond mind. The seeker requires renewed vision in order that he may understand how God relates to all that is interior to Him and exists through Him, and so find God in what he already sees. In *Proslogion* XVIII, the seeker strives once again to look at God (*intendere*) in this way: "Let my soul gather its strength again and with all its understanding strive (*intendere*) once more towards You, Lord."[238]

In *Proslogion* XIV and XV, God's excess of intelligibility makes him unthinkable. However, it is not a matter of doubt that the seeker has thought and understood things about God. So how has he thought about one who is greater than can be thought? The question may be posed in terms of the language used in *Proslogion* XVI: what is the relation between the sun, representing the source of knowing and being, and that which is known through the sun? The problem is overcome, and the answer given, only once the seeker stops treating God, the source of knowing and being, as one being among others.

When the seeker receives intellectual understanding of God as an indivisible unity beyond mind, he establishes a new relation between God and that which is other than Him: thought of God receives its origin by the power of what is beyond intelligibility. The quest has its origin in God and, through reasoning, immediately begins dividing what is in itself indivisible. By dividing, the seeker departs from his origin and eventually, after losing vision, requires God's restoration. God restores the seeker through intellectual understanding, which unites what is divided. This is the basis on which what is "other" than God becomes included in what God is "through Himself". The fact that God is "greater than can be thought" remains a problem so long as God is understood as one among others and not as transcendent of being and knowing.

The structure of knowing by which thought takes its beginning in what is indivisible explains how God is both "something greater than can be thought" and something which "cannot not exist in thought."[239] Thought originates by the power of what is beyond mind, and in the act of thinking, divides what is in itself. The act of thinking depends upon the prior unity from which it emerges; the capacity to divide depends upon what it divides. It is here that we must recall that when God's

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[238] *Pros*., XVIII: "Recolligat vires suas anima mea, et toto intellectu iterum intendat in te, domine."
[239] *Pros*., IV: "nec cogitatione queat non esse."

intelligibility, on which the proof of *Proslogion* II-IV depends, first emerges explicitly in *Proslogion* V, it emerges by the power of the *maius* formula. The matter is no longer left ambiguous: intelligibility emerges by the power of the transcendent.

5.3 Divine Sensibility

The same problem and solution which is present with respect to God's intelligibility is present with respect to His sensibility. The problem in terms of intelligibility is that the seeker does not know how he has thought God, and discovered many true things about Him, including that He "cannot not exist in thought,"[240] if God is "something greater than can be thought". The solution, which emerges in *Proslogion* XVIII, is that God is a unity unable to be divided by any mind and is not to be found as a being among others because He transcends being. This is a solution because it makes the transcendent God the basis of God's intelligibility and presence to all thought; God can be the source and preserver of all otherness. The discovery of God's undivided unity is also a solution with respect to the seeker's capacity to sense God. We can see this in the difference between two chapters dealing with the matter of God's relation to space and time, which lie on either side of *Proslogion* XVIII's discovery of God's undivided unity.

Proslogion XIII & XX both establish God's presence to all place and time, but do so according to different logics. *Proslogion* XIII establishes God's presence "everywhere and always" as a capacity of the supreme being whom, unlike others, "no law of place or time confines."[241] *Proslogion* XIII falls short of saying that God's transcendence is the basis of his presence everywhere and always, and instead concludes that God is eternal and unlimited in a singular way (*singulariter*) which distinguishes Him from the eternity and unlimitedness of incorporeal creatures. Having concluded that God is present everywhere and always, the seeker, in *Proslogion* XIV, despairs over his inability to sense God.

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[240] *Pros*., IV: "Quod qui bene intelligit, utique intelligit id ipsum sic esse, ut nec cogitatione queat non esse."
[241] *Pros*., XIII: "Sed omne quod clauditur aliquatenus loco aut tempore, minus est quam quod nulla lex loci aut temporis coercet. Quoniam ergo maius te nihil est, nullus locus aut tempus te cohibet, sed ubique et semper es."

In *Proslogion* XIX, following the discovery of God's indivisible unity, the basis of God's presence is His transcendence. God is not only, as in *Proslogion* XIII, "that which no law of place or time constrains", but is "simply outside all time."[242] As a result of the discovery of God's undivided unity, enabling the understanding of God's transcendence as the basis of His presence in space and time, the seeker subsequently becomes capable of sensing God. This is a capacity for the spiritual senses, which in *Proslogion* XXV is the enjoyment of all things in God, and God in all things. The seeker does not develop the capacity to sense God after *Proslogion* XIII's discovery that God exists everywhere and always, but only after discovering God's transcendence.

5.4 Divine Eternity

In the reflection on Divine eternity in *Proslogion* IXX-XXI, the seeker attempts to represent in terms of time the indivisible unity beyond knowing and being. This unity is the source of all and is what knowing and being presuppose. While it transcends reason, it is also the source and origin of reason, which is divisible and divides. The quest, which depends upon the divisibility of mind, constitutes the seeker through an activity wherein mind is separated from its origin. Seeking, the rational activity which separates mind from its origin, is also means of returning to that origin. The seeker attempts to return to his origin, and in intellectual vision, glimpses what most closely approximates God's indivisible unity.

The mind is doubly constituted. On one hand, mind has its origin and source in the indivisible unity which transcends mind. Every discrete moment on the quest presupposes this prior unity. *Proslogion* III demonstrates that God cannot be thought not to exist because thinking presupposes "that than which nothing greater can be thought". The fool's denial of God's being presupposes the existence of a transcendent being of which the human is not the measure. On the other hand, the seeker is constituted by the multitude of perspectives on the quest. Reason is interior to intellect which governs the movement achieving these many perspectives.

[242] *Pros*., XIX: "Immo nec heri nec hodie nec cras es, sed simpliciter es extra omne tempus."

By means of dialectical seeking, the seeker surmounts to an intellectual vision which is a gift received from God. This vision of God's eternity, achieved in virtue of mind's capacity to reflect on itself, unifies the discrete moments of the quest as they exist in memory. This vision gathers up the many the discrete moments of the journey which exist dividedly in memory. By this surmounting, the seeker rises above the divisions belonging to mind and glimpses their unity, which is also the unity which each discrete moment presupposes. However, while the intellect is nearest to glimpsing God's undivided unity when it grasps in a single vision what exists dividedly in memory, the transcendent unity itself, as the source of intellect, is also beyond what the intellect sees.

5.5 Eternal (*aeternus*) and Unlimited (*incircumscriptus*)

Proslogion XIII introduces the consideration of God's relation to space and time, which will ultimately, in *Proslogion* XIX-XXI, become the framework for representing the relation of the transcendent unity, indivisible by any mind, to what is immanent. *Proslogion* XIII does not make God's presence everywhere and always dependent upon His transcendence of place and time. Rather, God's presence is dependent upon His supremacy as that which "no law of place or time confines."[243] It is important for my argument that not until *Proslogion* XVIII does the seeker stop treating God as the supreme being; not until after *Proslogion* XVIII does he arrive at an understanding of God as beyond being, and only then does he receive rest from anxiety and despair. However, *Proslogion* XIII does establish that God is present everywhere and always, and thereby provides a basis on which the seeker expects to sense God. The seeker's inability to sense God whom he knows to be everywhere subsequently plays an important role as a measure of the quest's success. In *Proslogion* XIV, the inability to sense God establishes the inadequacy of the seeker's understanding and leads to an intensifying despair which contributes to the need for the new logical foundation to come *Proslogion* XVIII.

Proslogion XIII operates according to the logic of the *melius* formula which treats God as one being among others. Like *Proslogion* VI-XI, the seeker wants to

[243] *Pros*., XIII: "…nullus locus aut tempus te cohibet…"

understand Divine eternity and unlimitedness in a way that does not contradict God's supremacy. Since incorporeal spirits are also said to be unlimited and eternal (*incircumscripti et aeterni*), the seeker must understand how God's possession of these attributes is superior to that of the incorporeal spirits. The conclusion is that incorporeal spirits, unlike God are in fact limited. The basis of God's presence everywhere and always is not that God is beyond being, and thus outside of all laws of place and time. Instead, God is present everywhere and always because He is the being that is, to the highest degree, unconfined by all laws of place and time. In *Proslogion* XIII, the seeker refers to this as God's singular way (*singulariter*) of being eternal and unlimited.

In *Proslogion* XIII the exigencies of the *melius* and *maius* formulas establish two aspects of God's unlimitedness. In virtue of the *melius* formula, treating God as the supreme being, God does not transcend place and time, but becomes the supremely unlimited being within place and time. God's presence within the order of being and intelligibility, required by the logic of the *melius* formula, means that His exemption from all laws of place and time, established by the *maius* formula, does not exclude Him from but include Him in all space and time.

Unlike *Proslogion* VI-XI, the seeker does not proceed by correcting an idea of eternity and unlimitedness taken from experience. He has learnt in *Proslogion* IX-XII that God's justice, identical to the Divine substance, does not operate by any reason comprehensible to the seeker, and falls beyond comparative relation. Therefore, in *Proslogion* XIII, knowledge of God's supreme eternity and unlimitedness is not understood in relation to a concept taken from experience, but in relation to God's own being as given by the *maius* formula, "that than which nothing greater can be thought": God is greater than anything that can be thought to have temporal and spatial limitations. Therefore, while the seeker operates according to the *melius* formula, seeking knowledge of the supreme being, he attempts to understand what God is "in relation to Himself" by means of the *maius* formula.

God's unlimitedness with respect to laws of place and time has important implications for the seeker's ability to see and know God. On one hand, God exists within the realm of space and time, and on the other hand, He surpasses all limitations. Because limits are indispensable to conceptual knowledge, even though God is

everywhere, the seeker cannot conceive of Him, the supreme being, existing in any particular place or under any form. God's presence to any particular place becomes inconceivable in virtue of his exemption from all limits. Therefore, while on one hand *Proslogion* XIII makes a positive movement towards knowledge of God in discovering that He exists everywhere and always, there is also a corresponding negative movement resulting in the seeker's inability to conceive of God's presence under any form. This contributes to the despair present in the reflection of *Proslogion* XIV.

By means of a variation of the *maius* formula, *Proslogion* XIII establishes God's exemption from every "law of place and time" as the basis of His presence "everywhere and always". If there were spatial or temporal limitations which confine God, He would be to some degree limited, and therefore not present everywhere and always:

> But all things which are in some way enclosed by place and time (*clauditur aliquatenus loco aut tempore*) is less that what is enclosed by no law of place or time. Since, then, nothing is greater than you (*maius te nihil est*), no place or times confines you but you exist everywhere and always. And because this can be said of you alone, you alone are unlimited and eternal.[244]

As that than which "nothing is greater", God is greater than anything which can be thought to have spatial or temporal limitations. Because He is not enclosed by time, God exists always and is eternal; because He is not enclosed by space, God is everywhere and unlimited.

Because the seeker, in accordance with the rule of the *melius* formula, conceives of God as existing within the realm of being and intelligibility, God's eternity and unlimitedness are not radically different from that of incorporeal spirits. Indeed, God shares a continuum with incorporeal spirits insofar as they are both in a certain way unlimited. God is "wholly everywhere simultaneously" and they are "wholly somewhere else but not everywhere". The way in which God differs from incorporeal spirits is the "singular" (*singular*) character of His eternity and unlimitedness. The more radical character of this singularity does not emerge until *Proslogion* XX, where God, transcending space and time, no longer shares a continuum with incorporeal spirits.

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[244] *Pros*., XIII: "Sed omne quod clauditur aliquatenus loco aut tempore, minus est quam quod nulla lex loci aut temporis coercet. Quoniam ergo maius te nihil est, nullus locus aut tempus te cohibet, sed ubique et semper es. Quod quia de te solo dici potest, tu solus incircumscriptus es et æternus."

Proslogion XIII first establishes a distinction between God's eternity and that of incorporeal spirits. Like God, incorporeal spirits do not have an end, but unlike God, they have a beginning as created beings: "How then are other spirits also said to be unlimited and eternal? Now, you alone are said to be eternal because, alone of all beings, you will not cease to exist just as you have not begun to exist."[245] The matter of eternity is then put aside in favour of distinguishing God's unlimitedness from that of incorporeal spirits and bodies:

> But how are You alone unlimited (*incircumscriptus*)? Is it that compared with You the created spirit is limited, but unlimited with respect to a body? Certainly that is absolutely limited which, when it is wholly in one place, cannot at the same time be somewhere else. This is seen in the case of bodies alone. But that is unlimited which is wholly everywhere at once; and this is true only of You alone. That, however, is limited and unlimited at the same time which, while wholly in one place, can at the same time be wholly somewhere else but not everywhere; and this is true of created spirits. For if the soul (*anima*) were not wholly in each of the parts of its body it would not sense wholly in each of them. You then, O Lord, are unlimited and eternal in a unique way and yet other spirits are also unlimited and eternal.[246]

The seeker establishes two fundamental distinctions, one which separates God and incorporeal spirits from bodies, and the other which separates God from incorporeal spirits. The first is an absolute distinction between bodies, on one side, and God and incorporeal spirits, on the other. The second is a distinction between the singular (*singulariter*) way in which God is unlimited as "wholly everywhere simultaneously", and the unlimitedness of incorporeal spirits which are "wholly somewhere else but not everywhere". Like God, incorporeal spirits are distinct from and unlimited in relation to bodies, but unlike God, they are not present to every place. The basis of God's presence everywhere, distinguishing Him from incorporeal spirits, is His exemption from spatial

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[245] *Pros*., XIII: "Quomodo igitur dicuntur et alii spiritus incircumscripti et æterni? Et quidem solus es æternus, quia solus omnium sicut non desinis, sic non incipis esse."

[246] *Pros*., XIII: "Sed solus quomodo es incircumscriptus? An creatus spiritus ad te collatus est circumscriptus, ad corpus vero incircumscriptus? Nempe omnino circumscriptum est, quod cum alicubi totum est, non potest simul esse alibi; quod de solis corporeis cernitur. Incircumscriptum vero, quod simul est ubique totum; quod de te solo intelligitur. Circumscriptum autem simul et incircumscriptum est, quod cum alicubi sit totum, potest simul esse totum alibi, non tamen ubique; quod de creatis spiritibus cognoscitur. Si enim non esset anima tota in singulis membris sui corporis, non sentiret tota in singulis. Tu ergo, domine, singulariter es incircumscriptus et æternus, et tamen et alii spiritus sunt incircumscripti et æterni."

and temporal limits. The crucial element of this comparison is the determination that incorporeal spirits do, in fact, possess limitations which must be denied of God.

In *Proslogion* XIII, God's exemption from all laws of place and time become the basis of His capacity to sense everywhere. Like the soul, which must be present "in each of the parts of its body" in order to "sense wholly in each of them", so too God must be present everywhere in order to sense wholly in every place. On the same basis that God is able to sense in every place, the seeker should be able to sense God everywhere.

5.6 Reflection and Despair

Proslogion XIV is pivotal, initiating the second half of the treatise's twenty-six chapters, and prompting a decline into despair. In it the seeker turns away from what he seeks and towards himself in reflection on his own soul. While in *Proslogion* II-XIII the seeker addresses the "Lord" (*Domine*), "God" (*Deus*), and "Lord God" (*Domine Deus*), *Proslogion* XVI adopts an additional perspective from which the seeker examines and questions his soul as if it were something other than he who examines it. He addresses his own soul (*anima mea*), and also speaks of his soul in the third person while addressing "Lord God". We shall find this changed address in the quotations which follow. Insofar as *Proslogion* XIV is an inward turn, it is a reflection on memory, and specifically, on the relation between the perspectives achieved in *Proslogion* II-IX and *Proslogion* X-XII. The seeker reflects on an apparent contradiction between his perspectives: If God is known "in relation to Himself" and not "in relation to us", as *Proslogion* XI & XII conclude, how has the seeker achieved true and certain knowledge God's existence and Divine attributes in *Proslogion* II-IX?

The opening question addressed to the soul establishes the goal of the reflection: "Have you found, O my soul, what you were seeking?"[247] The question emerges out of a sense that the seeking has not brought the seeker to what he desires and has sought. The reflection establishes oppositions, the most fundamental of which is between "finding" and "not finding", which is also a matter of "seeing" and "not seeing" God. The "not seeing" is surprising insofar as an incapacity to see God has not explicitly emerged as a

[247] *Pros*., XIV: "An invenisti, anima mea, quod quærebas?"

problem since the conclusion of *Proslogion* I. Even *Proslogion* XI's discovery that there is no comprehensible reason (*ratio*) by which the seeker can understand the operation of Divine justice is the result of a solution which, in fact, makes intelligible the character of Divine justice. In *Proslogion* IV the seeker praises God for the gift of understanding achieved through Divine illumination (*te illuminante*), and in each subsequent chapter until *Proslogion* XIII, he achieves knowledge of God relative to the question asked. So what prompts the seeker's turn towards his own soul, and from where does the "not seeing" arise?

Proslogion XIV's fundamental opposition between "seeing" and "not seeing" takes three forms. The first, "finding" (*invenire*) and "not sensing" (*sentire*), resolves into the second, partial (*aliquatenus*) vision of God and vision of God just as He is (*sicuti es*), and subsequently into the third, the seeker's narrowness (*angustia*) and God's boundlessness (*immensa*). The first indication of why "not seeing" has become a problem is the opposition between finding and not sensing God:

> If you have not found your God, how is He this which you have found, and which you have understood (*intellexisti*) with such certain truth and true certitude? But if you have found [Him], why is it that you do not sense (*sentis*) what you have found? Why, O Lord God, does my soul not sense You if it has found You?[248]

Proslogion VI provides the basis for the seeker's expectation that he should be able to sense God if He has seen God:

> But if to perceive (*sentire*) is nothing else than to know (*cognoscere*), or if it is directed to knowing (for he who perceives knows according to the appropriate sense, as, for example, colours are known by sight and flavours through taste), one can say not inappropriately that whatever in any way knows (*cognoscit*) also in some way perceives (*sentire*).[249]

Fournier explains why the forms of knowing of which the human is capable, reason and intellect, should on the basis of *Proslogion* VI include incorporeal perception:

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[248] *Pros*., XIV: "Nam si non invenisti deum tuum: quomodo est ille hoc quod invenisti, et quod illum tam certa veritate et vera certitudine intellexisti? Si vero invenisti: quid est, quod non sentis quod invenisti? Cur non te sentit, domine deus, anima mea, si invenit te?"

[249] *Pros*., VI: "Sed si sentire non nisi cognoscere aut non nisi ad cognoscendum est—qui enim sentit cognoscit secundum sensuum proprietatem, ut per visum colores, per gustum sapores—non inconvenienter dicitur aliquo modo sentire, quidquid aliquo modo cognoscit."

> Anselm has made God and animals the extremes of a continuum. If God is *summe sensibilis*, and by implication the animal *minime sensibilis*, then the human is more properly said to be on the side of God. While not *summe sensibilis*, the human knows rationally and intellectually, not through the senses. Thus, God is merely the summit of incorporeal perception, with the human as an expression of a lower degree of, but not a different kind of, incorporeal perception.[250]

Therefore, if the seeker has achieved understanding of God, and, as *Proslogion* XIII establishes, God is wholly present everywhere always, then he should also to some degree possess incorporeal perception of God.

The seeker's demand to sense God provides a measure of the quest's success. Since the seeker does not sense God he must be capable of a vision and understanding that he has not yet achieved. It is crucial that what the seeker learnt on the basis of comparative relation, including that God is sensible, is not lost or denied when he discovers that he cannot know what God is "in relation to us." This distinguishes my argument from that of Marion, who rejects God's intelligibility, and gives priority to the variation on the formula which says that God is "something greater than can be thought."[251] The seeker's understanding that God is sensible provides a measure of the quest's success. It is because the seeker does not sense God that he knows that his knowledge of God is only partial and that the quest must continue.

The first opposition, between certain and true (*certe veritate*) intellectual understanding and the incapacity to sense God, resolves into the second opposition, between partial vision and vision of God just as He is (*sicuti es*):

> Or has it not found that which it has found to be the light and the truth? But then, how did it understand this save by seeing the light and the truth? Could it understand anything at all about you save through 'your light and your truth'? If, then, it saw the light and the truth, it saw you. If it did not see you, then it did not see the light or the truth. Or is it that it saw both the truth and the light, and yet it did not see you because it saw you only partially but did not see you as you are?[252]

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[250] Fournier, "Ring Structure": 136.

[251] Marion," Is the Ontological Argument Ontological?": 212.

[252] *Pros*., XIV: "An non invenit, quem invenit esse lucem et veritatem? Quomodo namque intellexit hoc, nisi videndo lucem et veritatem? Aut potuit omnino aliquid intelligere de te, nisi per 'lucem tuam et veritatem tuam'? Si ergo vidit lucem et veritatem, vidit te. Si non vidit te, non vidit lucem nec veritatem. An et veritas et lux est quod vidit, et tamen nondum te vidit, quia vidit te aliquatenus, sed non vidit te sicuti es?"

The seeker reasons that what he has found and understood, he saw by God's light and truth (*lucem et veritatem*), and that his vision of God does not include the capacity to sense because he has seen God only partially (*aliquatenus*) and not just as He is. This matches what the seeker prayed for in *Proslogion* I: "I do not try, Lord, to attain Your lofty heights, because my understanding is in no way equal to it. But I do desire to understand Your truth a little (*aliquatenus*), that truth that my heart believes and loves."[253] The seeker has learnt much about God on the basis of comparative relation in *Proslogion* V-IX. What he learnt there, he knows through God's "light and truth", but his knowledge is partial, and because he cannot sense God, he knows that there is more to see than what he has seen.

The seeker sees the limits of his own vision, saying that his soul "sees that it cannot see more."[254] He judges that this is because his vision is narrow (*angustia*) and he is trying to understand the boundlessness (*immensa*) God. God is intelligible, but He is also more than can be seen by the narrow seeker overcome by God's vastness (*amplitudine*). The seeker's blindness is in virtue of God's excess of intelligibility; the seeker concludes that the supreme being surpasses knowledge in virtue of its excess. The boundlessness of the supreme being means that God is more than can be understood: "What purity, what simplicity, what certitude and splendour is there! Truly it is more than can be understood by any creature."[255]

The seeker's vision of God is restricted by the way he expects to find God. He wants to finds God, the truth and source of light, as the one among others. He says: "tell my desiring soul what else (*aliud*) you are."[256] The seeker sees God narrowly as one being, and wants to know what *aliud* God is. The has, as Gilbert judges, enclosed itself within its horizons:

> L'âme marche dans les ténèbres et s'y enfonce en courbant son chemin vers elle-même, en se contentant de la forme rationnelle de ses preuves et de la nécessité qu'elle y voit; ne voulant pas aller au-delà d'elle-même, elle n'accède pas au

[253] *Pros*., I: "Non tento, domine, penetrare altitudinem tuam, quia nullatenus comparo illi intellectum meum; sed desidero aliquatenus intelligere veritatem tuam, quam credit et amat cor meum."
[254] *Pros*., XIV: "…videt se non plus posse videre."
[255] *Pros*., XIV: "Quid puritatis, quid simplicitatis, quid certitudinis et splendoris ibi est! Certe plus quam a creatura valeat intelligi."
[256] *Pros*., XIV: "dic desideranti animæ meæ, quid aliud es"

> fondement de la nécessité transcendantale. L'âme dans les ténèbres enferme son horizon dans les limites de sa dialectique.[257]

By turning towards himself to reflect on the journey, the seeker has stopped seeking, and has closed himself off from finding God under a form which does not match his seeking thus far. He is not prepared to find God except as the supreme intelligible being. Having discovered that the supreme being is something "more than can be understood" and learnt that finding God is not a matter of correcting conceptions of God, there is no clear direction for the quest to take. Because the seeker has not stopped insisting on God's intelligibility as one being, and now reasons that this supreme being exceeds thought in virtue of his excess of intelligibility, the seeker falls into despair. The deepening of the problem in *Proslogion* XV-XVII is crucial to the solution which will come in *Proslogion* XVIII as an intellectual vision.

5.7 The Sun as Source of Knowing and Being

The discovery that God is beyond thought is the result of a necessity belonging to the dialectical movement. In light of *Proslogion* XIV's conclusion that God is "more than can be thought", it becomes conceivable that there is something greater than can be thought. If God is not this being, then there would be something greater than Him. The quest's movement has made it thinkable that it is greater to be something greater than can be thought:

> Therefore, Lord, not only are you that than which a greater cannot be thought, but you are also something greater than can be thought. For since it is possible to think that there is such a one, then, if you are not this same being something greater than you could be thought—which cannot be.[258]

The discovery that God is greater than can be thought demonstrates that God, as what the formula names, gives Himself to the seeker according to his capacity to receive knowledge of Him. Since it has become conceivable that something is greater than can be thought, the seeker must conclude that God is this. The conclusion that God is

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[257] Gilbert, *Le Proslogion*, 166.
[258] *Pros*., XV: "Ergo domine, non solum es quo maius cogitari nequit, sed es quiddam maius quam cogitari possit. Quoniam namque valet cogitari esse aliquid huiusmodi: si tu non es hoc ipsum, potest cogitari aliquid maius te; quod fieri nequit."

"something greater than can be thought" does not yet arrive at God's transcendence as the basis of his immanence because the seeker continues to treat God as one thing among others. Only now, the one supreme being, distinct from others, is also "greater than can be thought" in virtue of his excess of intelligibility.

In *Proslogion* XVI, the seeker identifies the supreme being unthinkable in virtue of its excess with the sun. God is the "supreme and inaccessible light."[259] Anselm uses the image of the sun to represent the inaccessible source of all light, which God inhabits. The sun itself is "too much" (*nimia*) for the seeker, but all that he knows, he knows through the sun (*per illam*). The interiority of the seeker to God is also represented in spatial terms: "In you I move and in you I exist."[260] The seeker is interior to a God whom he cannot sense, and his knowing is through the God's inaccessible light which he cannot see. This brings us back to the fundamental problem of the treatise: How do we come to see what is already present to our sight?

The problem which characterizes the oppositions of *Proslogion* XVI is the relation between God and what is other than Him. What is other than God is now understood to exist through and interior to Him. In *Proslogion* XII, which established the distinction which says that God exists "through Himself" and not "through another", the seeker found himself external to God. Now, in *Proslogion* XVI, the seeker recognizes himself and his knowledge to be through God. However, he is interior to a God whose excess of being and intelligibility is blinding. The seeker recognizes himself interior to God, but what is interior to God remains other than the supreme and inaccessible God. What is other than God is contained in God, but the seeker does not know the relation of what is 'other' to God Himself. This is the source of the anxiety which intensifies until God restores the seeker through intellectual vision in *Proslogion* XVIII.

The first half of *Proslogion* XVI reflects on the relation between the seeker's true knowledge and its source, where latter is interior to the former:

> Truly (*vere*), Lord, this is the inaccessible light in which You dwell. For truly (*vere*) there is nothing else (*aliud*) which can penetrate through it so that it might discover You there. Truly (*vere*) I do not see this light since it is too much for me; and yet whatever I see I see through it (*per illam*), just as an eye that is weak sees what it sees by the light of the sun which it cannot look at in the sun itself.

[259] *Pros*., XVI: "summa et inaccessibilis lux"
[260] *Pros*., XVI: "In te moveor et in te sum."

> My understanding is not able [to attain] to that [light]. It shines too much and [my understanding] does not grasp (*capit*) it nor does the eye of my soul allow itself to be turned towards (*intendere*) it for very long (*diu*).[261]

Gilbert notes the importance of repetition of "truly" (*vere*) in the first three lines: "Comment comprendre ce *vere*? En général, il conclut moins une argumentation qu'il n'en souligne la vérité rationnelle."[262] The seeker emphasizes the truth of the discovery that nothing other (*aliud*) can penetrate God's inaccessible light to see Him there. However, this inaccessible light is also the source of all truth, and what the seeker knows he knows through (*per*) it. The seeker's knowledge of true things is not knowledge of the source of truth itself, which is inaccessible. He does not see God in what he sees.

In *Proslogion* XVI, God, represented by the sun, is the inaccessible source of knowing and being. Because the seeker treats God as one among and distinct from others, he does not know the relation between the source and what exists through it. The seeker will surmount the problems for his knowledge which lead to despair in *Proslogion* XVI & XVII when he discovers in *Proslogion* XVIII that the sun, the source of knowing and being, is beyond being and knowing as its inclusive origin. Presently, we must consider the relation between the seeker's knowing and the sun understood as the source of light.

What the seeker knows has its source in the sun, which the "eye of the soul" is able to turn into (*intendere in*) for only a short time (*diu*). This "turning into" (*intendere in*) implies intellectual vision. The seeker will repeat this turning, and again use the words *intendere in,* when he glimpses God's indivisible unity that cannot be divided by any mind in *Proslogion* XVIII. The most obvious place to look for an example of the seeker turning into (*intendere in)* the sun is *Proslogion* II-IV, which leads to illumination. There, the intellect glimpses through a contingent movement what surpasses and governs the realm of contingency when he has an intellectual vision of the

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[261] *Pros*., XVI: "Vere, domine, hæc est lux inaccessibilis, in qua habitas. Vere enim non est aliud quod hanc penetret, ut ibi te pervideat. Vere ideo hanc non video, quia nimia mihi est; et tamen quidquid video, per illam video, sicut infirmus oculus quod videt per lucem solis videt, quam in ipso sole nequit aspicere. Non potest intellectus meus ad illam. Nimis fulget, non capit illam, nec suffert oculus animæ meæ diu intendere in illam."

[262] Gilbert, *Le Proslogion,* 176.

unthinkable of God's non-existence, and subsequently discerns that God "cannot not exist in thought."[263]

What the seeker sees through (*per*) the light of the sun he cannot see in the sun itself: "just as an eye that is weak sees what it sees by the light of the sun which it cannot look at in the sun itself". The intellect knows the realm of necessity and God's inaccessible light through contingent terms, and not in itself. Seeking, to which reason is essential, moves through contingent terms. The seeker glimpses through a contingent movement what surpasses and governs the realm of contingency.

Why has the seeking, which took its origin from intellectual vision by the power of the transcendent God, led the seeker into darkness? According to *Proslogion* XVIII, this is how seeking proceeds:

> I strove to ascend (*conabar assurgere*) to God's light and I have fallen back into my own darkness. Indeed, not only have I fallen back into it, but I feel myself enclosed within it…In him (who easily possessed and wickedly lost it for himself and for us), we all lost that which, when we wish to look for it, we do not know; that which, when we look for it, we do not find; that which, when we find it, is not what we are looking for.

The quest has led to reason's closure and to darkness precisely because the movement employs particular and contingent terms. What the intellect glimpses already takes a particular character in virtue of the distinct terms through which intellect glimpses its object. But further, each subsequent determination, or step on the quest, also advances through contingent terms, and by taking one path, excludes an alternative which would also lead to true knowledge insofar as it would also be governed by the intellect. Each step of the rational seeking further separates the seeker from its origin. Even as the *melius* formula governs the inquiry into the Divine substance, reason closes in on itself as it introduces distinctions in order to remain on the path towards intelligibility. In order for the quest to discover certain true things about God, it separates out and divides what exists at the beginning in a united form.

The conclusion of *Proslogion* XVI leaves the seeker desperately close to the God who is far from him:

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[263] *Pros*., IV: "Quod qui bene intelligit, utique intelligit id ipsum sic esse, ut nec cogitatione queat non esse."

> O supreme and inaccessible light; O whole and blessed truth, how far you are from me who am so close to you! How distant you are from my sight while I am so present to Your sight! you are wholly present everywhere and I do not see you. In you I move and in you I have my being and I cannot come near to you. You are within me and around me and I do not sense you.[264]

The simultaneous proximity and distance brings us back to the problem that the seeker cannot sense God. He wants to see God whom he knows is present to his sight. The seeker moves around within the God whom he does not sense and knows what he knows through the sun which he cannot grasp or see in itself. The seeker will neither be satisfied, nor understand God's relation to what is interior to Him, until he discovers that God is not a being among others.

Proslogion XVII expresses the seeker's dissatisfaction:

> Still you hide away, Lord, from my soul in your light and blessedness, and so it still moves around (*versatur*) in its darkness and misery. For it looks all about, and does not see Your beauty. It listens, and does not hear Your harmony. It smells, and does not sense Your fragrance. It tastes, and does not recognize Your savour. It feels, and does not sense Your softness.[265]

The incapacity to sense God indicates an inadequacy with the seeker's understanding. If he knows God, he should be able to sense God. The seeker must have yet to understand something about God. Because reason has closed in on itself, the seeker does not know the way forward, and like *Proslogion* I, he places the responsibility on God to help him.

5.8 'Relieve Me of Myself'

The discovery of God's indivisible unity is a turning point in the quest, by which the path not taken in *Proslogion* V emerges. In *Proslogion* V, it is ambiguous whether the intelligibility of God emerges by the power of the transcendent, or by the power of the supreme being. *Proslogion* V-XVII subsequently treat God as the supreme being and

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[264] *Pros*., XVI: "O summa et inaccessibilis lux, o tota et beata veritas, quam longe es a me, qui tam prope tibi sum! Quam remota es a conspectu meo, qui sic præsens sum conspectui tuo! Ubique es tota præsens, et non te video. In te move- or et in te sum, et ad te non possum accedere. Intra me et circa me es, et non te sentio."

[265] *Pros*., XVII: "Adhuc lates, domine, animam meam in luce et beatitudine tua, et idcirco versatur illa adhuc in tenebris et miseria sua. Circumspicit enim, et non videt pulchritudinem tuam. Auscultat, et non audit harmoniam tuam. Olfacit, et non percipit odorem tuum. Gustat, et non cognoscit saporem tuum. Palpat, et non sentit lenitatem tuam."

one among others; and, as a result, the seeker is unable to understand how God relates to what is other than Him and exists through Him. God's transcendence gradually emerges as the *melius* formula governing the quest leads to the basis of God's intelligibility. The ambiguity of *Proslogion* V allows the seeker to understand God's intelligibility to emerge by the power of the supreme being, and not by the power of the transcendent. However, God's transcendence of mind, neglected in *Proslogion* V, reemerges in *Proslogion* XVIII. Because God is unable to be divided by any mind, He is also beyond mind. Because God cannot be found as one being among others, he must be beyond otherness. God's indivisibility does not exclude His intelligibility but is the origin from which thought emerges. What the seeker learns about God, and knows with "true certainty", has its origin in God.

The seeker prays that God relieve him of himself and then makes a new beginning which matches that of *Proslogion* V:

> Raise me up from my self to You (*releva me de me ad te*). Purify, heal, make sharp, illumine the eye of my mind (*oculum mentis*) so that it may glimpse (*intueatur*) you. Let my soul gather its strength again and with all its understanding turn once more into you (*intendat in te*), Lord. What are you, Lord, what are you; what shall my heart understand you to be?[266]

The seeker must be relieved of, or raised up (*releva*) from, himself to God in order to achieve vision of the God in whom he moves and through whom he knows all he knows. The seeker must be relieved of his mode of seeking God which determines how he expects to find God: as supreme and distinct from other beings. He desires to once again turn into (*intendere in*) God, a turning which, as we learn in *Proslogion* XVI, the seeker is only able to do for a short time (*diu*). Three times he asks "what are you?", the same question repeated twice at opening of *Proslogion* V. Relieved of himself, the seeker achieves vision of what he was previously unable to see:

> You are, assuredly (*certe*), life, You are wisdom, You are truth, You are goodness, You are blessedness, You are eternity, and You are every true good. These are many things, and my limited understanding cannot see them all in one single glance so as to delight in all at once. How then, Lord, are You all these things? Are they parts of You, or rather, is each one of these wholly what You

[266] *Pros*., XVIII: "Releva me de me ad te. Munda, sana, acue, 'illumina' oculum mentis meæ, ut intueatur te. Recolligat vires suas anima mea, et toto intellectu iterum intendat in te, domine. Quid es, domine, quid es, quid te intelliget cor meum?"

> are? For whatever is made up of parts is not absolutely one, but in a sense many and other than itself, and it can be broken up either actually or by the mind (*vel actu vel intellectu dissolvi potest*)—all of which things are foreign to You, than whom nothing better can be thought. Therefore there are no parts in You, Lord; neither are You many, but You are so much one and the same with Yourself (*es unum quiddam et idem tibi ipsi*) that in nothing are You dissimilar with Yourself. Indeed You are unity itself (*ipsa unitas*) not divisible by any mind (*nullo intellectu divisibilis*).[267]

As a result of turning into (*intendere in*) God's light once again, the seeker discovers that God not only belongs to the realm of intelligibility, but also and ultimately is a unity beyond mind.

How is this a solution to the problem that the seeker can neither know nor sense the God to whom he, in *Proslogion* XVI-XVII, is interior? It provides a new basis for understanding mind's relation to its source. God is beyond mind, and this transcendence is the basis of a radical immanence. In Augustine's *Confessions* we also find the ambiguity of God being both in the mind and beyond it: "I entered [into my innermost realities] and with my soul's eye, such as it was, saw above that same eye of my soul the immutable light higher than my mind."[268] Further, Augustine writes:

> It was not the everyday light, but a different thing, utterly different from all our kinds of light. It transcended my mind, not in the way that oil floats on water, nor as heaven is above earth. It was superior because it made me, and I was inferior because I was made by it.[269]

Here I am using the language and way of thinking that belongs to Anselm, and finding precedents in Augustine, however, this could also be expressed in the language of Plotinus as a relation between the unity prior to intellect. Since the relation of Plotinus to

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[267] *Pros*., XVIII: "Certe vita es, sapientia es, veritas es, bonitas es, beatitudo es, æternitas es, et omne verum bonum es. Multa sunt hæc, non potest angustus intellectus meus tot uno simul intuitu videre, ut omnibus simul delectetur. Quomodo ergo, domine, es omnia hæc? An sunt partes tui, aut potius unumquodque horum est totum quod es? Nam quidquid partibus est iunctum, non est omnino unum, sed quodam modo plura et diversum a seip- so, et vel actu vel intellectu dissolvi potest; quæ aliena sunt a te quo nihil melius cogitari potest. Nullæ igitur partes sunt in te, domine, nec es plura, sed sic es unum quiddam et idem tibi ipsi, ut in nullo tibi ipsi sis dissimilis; immo tu es ipsa unitas, nullo intellectu divisibilis."

[268] *Conf*., 7.10.16: "intravi [in intima mea] et vidi qualicumque oculo animae meae supra eundem oculum animae meae, supra mentem meam, lucem incommutabilem."

[269] *Conf*., 7.10.16: "non hoc illa erat, sed aliud, aliud valde ab istis omnibus. nec ita erat supra mentem meam, sicut oleum super aquam, nec sicut caelum super terram; sed superior, quia ipsa fecit me, et ego inferior, quia factus ab ea."

Augustine as well as Anselm's relation to the developments in Platonism in late antiquity and the middle ages is a matter of dispute, I only note this translatability.

While God transcends intelligibility, He is also the many true things that, through the course of the quest, the seeker has found God to be, including "every true good". God's indivisibility requires that these goods, which the seeker knows to some extent (*aliquatenus*) through God's light (*per illam*), are not other than God, or parts of God, but wholly what God is (*totum quod est*):

> Life and wisdom and the other [attributes], then, are not parts of You, but all are one and each one of them is wholly what You are and what all the others are. Since, then, neither You nor Your eternity which You are have parts, no part of You or of Your eternity is anywhere or at any time, but You exist as a whole everywhere and Your eternity exists as a whole always.[270]

5.9 Double Negation

The discovery of God's indivisibility enables the seeker to understand how God, about whom he has discovered many true things, and who "cannot not exist in thought,"[271] is also "something greater than can be thought". God is not only the supreme of all beings, but He is the transcendent origin of all that exists in the realm of otherness and distinction. The indivisible unity of what transcends mind is the basis of our thinking about God and His presence in the mind. The otherness between God and what has its source in Him is no longer a problem because God is not one among the others.

As a result of the discovery of God's indivisible unity, the seeker is able to understand God under the form of a double negation. The first negation is present in the seeker's journey where the *melius* formula governs the seeker's changing concepts of God and His attributes in *Proslogion* VI-XI. On this level of negation, God is one being and not another. The *melius* formula, judging that God is "whatever it is better to be than not to be," determines that God is not one thing but another which is better. This first

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[270] *Pros*., XVIII: "Ergo vita et sapientia et reliqua non sunt partes tui, sed omnia sunt unum, et unumquodque horum est totum quod es, et quod sunt reliqua omnia. Quoniam ergo nec tu habes partes nec tua æternitas quæ tu es: nusquam et numquam est pars tua aut æternitatis tuæ, sed ubique totus es, et æternitas tua tota est semper."

[271] *Pros*., IV: "Quod qui bene intelligit, utique intelligit id ipsum sic esse, ut nec cogitatione queat non esse."

level of negation occurs repeatedly as the formula requires the negation of successive determinations about God and His attributes.

Proslogion XVIII introduces the second negation, which means that God is no longer one among others, but beyond all otherness as its source. This is the crucial turning point by which the seeker is able to understand the relation between God and what is other than Him. God originates and sustains all 'others' because He is not one among them.

God is not one being or another in a way that His existence as one being excludes His being another. For example, each of the many things which God is, which the seeker has understood to some extent (*aliquatenus*), are, as *Proslogion* XVIII discovers, wholly what God is: "Are they parts of You, or rather, is each one of these wholly what You are?"[272] God is many things in mind because He transcends mind.

5.10 Contradiction as the Way to Knowledge

The Divine-human seeking, as a Divine activity taking place in the human, depends upon mind as rational. Humans have the capacity to divide thanks to discursive reason, which is essential to seeking and operates in the realm of contingency and contradiction. Because reason divides and separates, God becomes more distant through the seeker's attempts to grasp God. This occurs in *Proslogion* VI-XI each time the seeker distinguishes between the character of a Divine attribute and its human form.

The seeking which makes God more distant also leads into contradictions. In *Proslogion* IX-XII, the attempts to understand Divine justice gradually establish distinctions which place God outside of what the seeker is able to know through comparative terms. This contradicts the understanding on which his seeking depended when it treated God as something that is one among others and knowable through comparative terms.

Throughout the treatise, Anselm establishes the limits of reason: Reasoning creates distance between the seeker and what he seeks; it leads to impasses from which it must be relieved and closes itself off from vision. However, the treatise also affirms

[272] *Pros*., XVIII: "An sunt partes tui, aut potius unumquodque horum est totum quod es?"

reason and the contradictions into which it leads as necessary to the quest for vision of God. Without reason, the seeker cannot arrive at vision of God in what is present to his sight. The limitations of discursive reason do not lead to the quest's failure because reason is interior to and governed by the intellect. God renews the seeker whose reason has led to the loss of vision, a help which comes in the form of intellectual vision.

As we saw in *Proslogion* I, the basis of the union between the human and Divine is God's image created in us, by which we are capable of memory, thought, and love of God. This is the basis on which human seeking becomes Divine-human seeking, which is a Divine activity taking place in the human. The seeker prays: "Let me seek you in desiring you, let me desire you in seeking you. Let me find you in loving you, let me love you in finding you."[273] The seeker prays that he find God as what is sought in the activity of seeking; his image of God is Divine intellect in the human.

The relationship between reason and intellect is reciprocal. While reason forces intellect to explicate what belongs to God so that the seeker may come to know God under a new form, intellect renews reason when the explications lead to contradictions which prevent vision. Loss of vision and intensifying anxiety and despair prepare the seeker to relinquish himself to God's saving work in the human. Because reason is interior to and governed by intellect its failures and closures which prevent vision do not mean that the quest fails. Ungoverned reason cannot reach what it seeks. Divine help, given as an intellectual vision which unifies what is divided, is the condition on which seeking may be fruitful. When intellect governs the quest, what the seeker discovers is true and is, as *Proslogion* XVI says, known "through" (*per*) God's light.

5.11 Knowledge Measured to the Capacity of the Seeker

The seeker discovers many true things about God in *Proslogion* V-XIII, and *Proslogion* XVIII teaches that each of these is not in any way dissimilar from God. The perspectives differ and contradict each other because the knowledge received is measured to the seeker's capacity for knowledge of God at each place on the quest. The *maius* formula gradually discloses the character of what it names according to the

[273] *Pros*., I: "Quaeram te desiderando, desiderem quaerendo. Inveniam amando, amem inveniendo."

capacity of the seeker to receive it. For example, in *Proslogion* XV the *maius* formula establishes that God is beyond thought when it becomes conceivable that the supreme being, in virtue of its supremacy, is something "more than can be thought". Through the process by which the seeker attempts to conceptually grasp the supreme being, he discovers that what the *maius* formula names is incomprehensible and cannot be known through comparative relation. Seeking is essential for disclosing what belongs to the *maius* formula, and for bringing the seeker into being and God into mind.

God, in giving Himself to the seeker as intellect, submits to being known according to the seeker's capacity. When reason leads into contradictions, the seeker becomes less capable of knowing what he previously knew. The seeker praises God for illumining him in *Proslogion* IV and realizes in *Proslogion* XIV that he has fallen back into darkness. Intellect governs the reasoning which gradually distances the seeker from God and closes him off from vision of God. Reason leads into a crisis which becomes, by means of the intellect's renewal, the basis for the seeker's relinquishment of himself to God and the reception of intellectual vision. God continuously gives Himself according to the seeker's capacity to receive knowledge of Him. The capacity to receive knowledge is determined on one hand by reason's work of dividing and on the other hand by intellect's government of reason.

5.12 God's Singular Eternity: United and Immense

In *Proslogion* XIX-XXI the seeker attempts to represent what most closely approximates God's indivisible unity. He does so in virtue of mind's divisibility and capacity to divide, as well as intellect's capacity to unify what exists dividedly in memory through reflection on itself. Gilbert writes:

> Le thème de l'éternité Divine exprime ce schème de la simplicité en synthétisant les temps de la dispersion créée; l'imagination qui représente et divise en représentant, est dès lors invitée à laisser le champ à une nouvelle instance du savoir; il ne s'agit plus de *cogitare*, mais de voir selon l'intellect.[274]

[274] Gilbert, *Le Proslogion*, 193.

The representation of God's eternity establishes the unique character of God's transcendence by distinguishing Him from created things which have no end. God is present to all time because, as we shall see, He is beyond all things (*ultra omnia*). The distinctions make God more transcendent, and this increased transcendence makes Him more immanent. Therefore, even though reason establishes distinctions which make God increasingly distant, the increased distance is not a problem for knowledge of God because its co-relative is the increased proximity of God as immanent. Because the seeker understands God's transcendence as the basis of immanence, and reason remains interior to intellect, the reasoning does not in *Proslogion* XIX-XXI establish distinctions which create problems for knowledge.

Because God is an indivisible unity, He has no parts and everything He is is wholly (*totum*) what He is. The conclusion of *Proslogion* XVIII applies this principle to God's eternity: "Since, then, neither you nor your eternity which you are have parts, no part of you or of your eternity is anywhere or at any time, but you exist as a whole everywhere and your eternity exists as a whole always."[275] The goal of the *Proslogion* XIX-XXI is to represent the relation of God's indivisible unity to time and space. These chapters use the language of presence, and present existence, to express the character of the transcendent God's relation to space and time. Presence to all things does not suggests any kind of containment or limitations relative to those things.

Thanks to *Proslogion* XIII establishing the necessity of God's existence within time and space, God's indivisible unity does not exclude but includes all time and space. Insofar as time and space have parts, the indivisibility of God places Him beyond both: He is "absolutely outside all time". However, because *Proslogion* XIII, seeking God as supreme within space and time, established the necessity that God is "everywhere and always", which is the basis of His sensibility established in *Proslogion* VI, God's indivisible unity cannot exclude time. In this way, the positive necessity of *Proslogion* XIII requires that God's transcendence of place and time establish His immanence in place and time. God's transcendence establishes His total and simultaneous eternal presence.

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[275] *Pros*., XVIII: "Quoniam ergo nec tu habes partes nec tua æternitas quæ tu es: nusquam et numquam est pars tua aut æternitatis tuæ, sed ubique totus es, et æternitas tua tota est semper."

God's eternity cannot be broken up into parts: "Or is there nothing past in Your eternity, so that it is now no longer; nor anything future, as though it were not already? You were not, therefore, yesterday, nor will You be tomorrow, but yesterday and today and tomorrow You are."[276] In God's eternity there is nothing past and nothing yet to come; God is eternally present to every point in time. This places God's eternity outside of time:

> Indeed You exist neither yesterday nor today nor tomorrow but are absolutely outside all time. For yesterday and today and tomorrow are completely in time; however, You, though nothing can be without You, are nevertheless not in place or time but all things are in You. For nothing contains You, but You contain all things.[277]

Because He transcends time, God contains all time. In *Proslogion* XX, this containing of all things is the basis on which He fills all things with His presence. *Proslogion* XX concludes: "You therefore fill (*imples*) and embrace (*complecteris*) all things, you are before and beyond all things (*ultra omnia*)"[278] God fills all things with His presence because He is not one among other beings; He is *ultra omnia*. God's radical transcendence of and presence to all things is the basis on which the seeker will subsequently achieve the spiritual senses.

Proslogion XX revisits the matter, first introduced in *Proslogion* XIII, of the distinction between God's eternity and that of creatures which have no end. There is a fundamental difference between the means by which the two chapters establish this distinction. The difference is given by the logic established in the intervening chapters; the discovery of God's indivisibility in *Proslogion* XVIII provides the basis for *Proslogion* XIX's understanding God's transcendence of all things as the basis of His omnipresence. In *Proslogion* XIII God's presence everywhere and always depends on Him, in virtue of His supremacy, being unconfined by all spatial and temporal limits. In *Proslogion* XX, God's presence depends upon Him transcending place and time as

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[276] *Pros*., XIX: "An de æternitate tua nihil præterit ut iam non sit, nec aliquid futurum est quasi nondum sit?"
[277] *Pros*., XIX: "Non ergo fuisti heri aut eris cras, sed heri et hodie et cras es. Immo nec heri nec hodie nec cras es, sed simpliciter es extra omne tempus. Nam nihil aliud est heri et hodie et cras quam in tempore; tu autem, licet nihil sit sine te, non es tamen in loco aut tempore, sed omnia sunt in te. Nihil enim te continet, sed tu contines omnia."
[278] *Pros*., XX: "Tu ergo imples et complecteris omnia, tu es ante et ultra omnia."

existing "beyond all things" (*ultra omnia*). God's transcendence of being is the basis of a greater immanence than *Proslogion* XIII was able to establish.

Proslogion XX provides three ways in which God's eternity is distinct from that of the creatures which do not have an end. The seeker qualifies the first two ways, saying that the distinction holds "in a certain mode" (*quodam modo*). The first distinction is that God's existence is in no way diminished (*nullo modo minus es*) if any else returns to nothingness (*redeunt in nihilium*) and the second is that everything except God can be thought to have an end. No qualification accompanies the third difference:

> Is it also in this way that You surpass even all eternal things, since your eternity and theirs is wholly present to You, though they do not have the part of their eternity which is yet to come just as they do not now have what is past? In this way, indeed, are You always beyond those things, because You are always present at that point (or because it is always present to You) which they have not yet reached.[279]

This third way exhibits a radical difference between God's eternity and that of creatures in terms of the logic established in *Proslogion* XIX. Because God transcends and contains time, He is wholly present to all time simultaneously. In contrast, since all creatures are within time, they are not present to their past and future. The basis of the difference between God and creatures, by which God's eternity is different in kind from creatures which have no end, is His transcendence.

God's eternity is His simultaneous and total presence to all time which He contains and is beyond. *Proslogion* XXI establishes two aspects of God's eternity:

> Is this, then, the 'age of the age' or the 'ages of the ages'? For just as an age of time contains all temporal things, so Your eternity contains also the very ages of time. Indeed this [eternity] is an 'age' because of its indivisible unity, but 'ages' because of its interminable immensity.[280]

Proslogion XXI introduces the second of two instances in the treatise where the seeker refers to God's indivisibility. The first instance of God's indivisibility, in

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[279] *Pros*., XX: "An hoc quoque modo transis omnia etiam æterna, quia tua et illorum æternitas tota tibi præsens est, cum illa nondum habeant de sua æternitate quod venturum est, sicut iam non habent quod præteritum est? Sic quippe semper es ultra illa, cum semper ibi sis præsens, seu cum illud semper sit tibi præsens, ad quod illa nondum pervenerunt."

[280] *Pros*., XXII: "An ergo hoc est 'sæculum sæculi' sive 'sæcula sæculorum'? Sicut enim sæculum temporum continet omnia temporalia, sic tua æternitas continet etiam ipsa sæcula temporum. Quæ sæculum quidem est propter indivisibilem unitatem, sæcula vero propter interminabilem immensitatem."

Proslogion XVIII, is the basis for understanding God's eternity as His simultaneous and total presence to all time which He contains and is beyond. Gilbert judges that "Anselme suggère un rythme immanent à Dieu, à la fois unité et immensité; son unité signifie l'indivisibilité ou la simplicité radicale de son *intensio* ('siècle' au singulier); par contre, son immensité accueille les siècles (pluriel) dans la *dispersio*."[281] God's eternity is both an indivisible unity and an interminable immensity, where the former is God's simple *intensio* and the latter is the dispersed multiplicity, *dispersio*, which God's simplicity contains. The former is represented as the "age of the age", where God contains all temporal things. The latter is represented by the "ages of ages", where God's infinite eternity exceeds even the multiplicity of infinities which it contains. God unites all in His eternity, but His eternity also infinitely exceeds all that it unites and contains.

5.13 One and Supreme Good (*Unum et Summum Bonum*)

Proslogion XXII establishes the identity of the indivisible unity, beyond being, and the supreme good, within the mind. Gilbert refers to this as the *intensio* and *dispersio*, where the *intensio* is the unity and the *dispersio* is the dispersion of the many things that belong to the supreme good.[282] This one and supreme good, inclusive of otherness, is the only thing which can strictly be said to exist.

Proslogion XXII articulates the character of the existence belonging to the creatures that are interior to God, who alone exists in a strict and absolute sense (*proprie et absolute*). This recalls *Proslogion* III which says: "In fact, everything else there is, except you alone, can be thought of as not existing."[283] *Proslogion* XXII provides six characteristics of creatures which distinguish creatures from God who contains them:

> For what is one thing as a whole and another as to its parts, and has in it something mutable, is not altogether what it is. And what began [to exist] from non-existence, and can be thought not to exist, and returns to non-existence unless it subsists through some other; and what has had a past existence but does

[281] Gilbert, *Le Proslogion*, 190.
[282] Gilbert, *Le Proslogion*, 187-192.
[283] *Pros*., III: "Et quidem quidquid est aliud præter te solum, potest cogitari non esse."

> not now exist, and a future existence but does not yet exist—such a thing does not exist in a strict and absolute sense.[284]

God makes all things out of nothing, and insofar as they have existence, they subsist through Him, than whom they are other. Everything except God is divisible, and everything divisible does not possess being in the absolute sense: "And you are the being who exists in the strict and absolute sense". God contains what is other than Him, which does not, strictly speaking, exist.

What Gilbert calls the "rythme immanent à Dieu", here appears under a new form. God's indivisible unity is identical to the many things which He is in virtue of His supreme goodness:

> And you are life and light and wisdom and blessedness and eternity and many suchlike good things; and yet you are nothing except one (*unum*) and the supreme good (*summum bonum*), you who are completely sufficient unto yourself, needing nothing, but rather he whom all things need in order that they may have being and well-being.[285]

While the first half of *Proslogion* XXII names what God is in virtue of His indivisibility, the second half names the many things God is in virtue of His supreme goodness. As indivisible unity, God is identical to the supreme good. This brings together the indivisible unity beyond mind and God as supreme being within the mind.

Governed by the *maius* formula, the quest uncovers the rhythm immanent to God. *Proslogion* V-XIII develop the positive necessity, *Proslogion* XIV-XVII develop the negative necessity, and *Proslogion* XVIII-XXII bring them together to make God's transcendence the basis of His immanence. God is an indivisible unity beyond mind identical to the supreme being and the many other things which God is. In *Proslogion* XXII God is "nothing except one (*unum*) and the supreme good (*summum bonum*)".

Proslogion XXII has accomplished what Anselm set out in the *Prooemium* as the goal of the treatise:

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[284] *Pros*., XXII: "Nam quod aliud est in toto et aliud in partibus, et in quo aliquid est mutabile, non omnino est quod est. Et quod incepit a non esse et potest cogitari non esse, et nisi per aliud subsistat redit in non esse; et quod habet fuisse quod iam non est, et futurum esse quod nondum est: id non est proprie et absolute."

[285] *Pros*., XXII: "Et vita es et lux et sapientia et beatitudo et æternitas et multa huiusmodi bona, et tamen non es nisi unum et summum bonum, tu tibi omnino sufficiens, nullo indigens, quo omnia indigent ut sint, et ut bene sint."

> I began to wonder if perhaps it might be possible to find one single argument that for its proof required no other save itself, and that by itself would suffice to prove that God really exists, that he is the supreme good needing no other and is he whom all things have need of for their being and well-being, and also to prove whatever we believe about the Divine being.[286]

The formula has led the seeker through a single argument (*unum argumentum*) and not, as Anselm describes the *Monologion*, a concatenation of arguments (*concatenatione contextum argumentorum*). The single argument has led the seeker to a single principle inclusive of otherness: the one and supreme good inclusive of all goods and the only thing existing in the strict and absolute sense. The *unum argumentum* reaches its end in *Proslogion* XXIII when meets up with the *unum necessarium*, the Trinity.

5.14 The Trinity

The unity of the one and supreme good from *Proslogion* XXII as well as the indivisible unity and interminable immensity from *Proslogion* XXI, provide the basis for understanding the Trinity. The Trinity names the God who is inclusive of difference and otherness: "You are this good, O God the Father; this is your word, that is to say, your Son. For there cannot be any other than what you are, or anything greater or lesser than you, in the word by which you utter yourself."[287] God speaks Himself and is wholly identical to what He speaks. There is both otherness and identity.

The "one and supreme good" is a simplicity which contains each of the trinitarian persons as interminable immensities. Each is an infinity equal to the others, and together they are one:

> And You are so simple that there cannot be born of You any other than what You are. This itself is the Love, one and common to You and to Your Son, that is the Holy Spirit proceeding from both. For this same Love is not unequal to You or to Your Son since Your love for Yourself and Him, and His love for You and Himself, are as great (*quantus*) as You and He are. Nor is that other than You and

[286] *Pros*., *Prooemium*: "coepi mecum quærere, 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 quia est summum bonum nullo alio indigens, et quo omnia indigent ut sint et ut bene sint, et quæcumque de divina credimus substantia, sufficeret."
[287] *Pros*., XXIII: "Hoc bonum es tu, deus pater; hoc est verbum tuum, id est filius tuus. Etenim non potest aliud quam quod es, aut aliquid maius vel minus te esse in verbo quo te ipsum dicis."

> than Him which is not different from You and Him; nor can there proceed from Your supreme simplicity what is other than that from which it proceeds.[288]

The three persons, each of which is an infinity, are not other than the supreme simplicity:

> Thus, whatever each is singly, that the whole Trinity is altogether, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; since each singly is not other than the supremely simple unity (*summe simplex unitas*) and the supremely unified simplicity (*summe una simplicitas*) which can be neither multiplied nor differentiated.[289]

Anselm concludes that the Trinity, as the principle of equal infinities inclusive of otherness, is the one thing necessary: "Moreover, one thing is necessary. This is, moreover, that one thing necessary in which is all good, or rather, which is all (*omne*) and one (*unum*) and totally (*totum*) and solely (*solum*) good."[290] By the conclusion of the *Proslogion* XXII, the *unum argumentum* accomplishes what the seeker set out to demonstrate and in *Proslogion* XXIII meets up with the *unum necessarium*, which is the Trinity as the principle inclusive of otherness. This unites the way to God and God Himself, as the one and supreme good, inclusive of otherness.

The Trinity is, for Anselm, the basis for understanding how what is 'other' than God is what God is 'through Himself'. There is no journey of the human into the Divine unless the human, as 'other', is already included in God who exists "through himself". The entire journey must take place in God. The cycle by which the seeker finds God, loses vision, and finds God again under a new form takes place in God. The seeker's renewal is the reception of Christ's divinity, a reception included in the Trinitarian exchange. The arrival at the Trinity in *Proslogion* XIII concludes the *unum argumentum* because it brings us back to our beginning in God as the basis of our seeking and finding God. The quest for God depends upon God's inclusion of otherness.

Questing establishes otherness within God, but this otherness does not separate the human from his origin in God. Seeking is essential, because without it the seeker will

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[288] *Pros*., XXIII: "…et sic es tu simplex, ut de te non possit nasci aliud quam quod tu es. Hoc ipsum est amor unus et communis tibi et filio tuo, id est sanctus spiritus ab utroque procedens. Nam idem amor non est impar tibi aut filio tuo; quia tantum amas te et illum, et ille te et seipsum, quantus es tu et ille; nec est aliud a te et ab illo quod dispar non est tibi et illi; nec de summa simplicitate potest procedere aliud quam quod est de quo procedit."

[289] *Pros*., XXIII: "quoniam singulus quisque non est aliud quam summe simplex unitas et summe una simplicitas, quæ nec multiplicari nec aliud et aliud esse potest."

[290] *Pros*., XXIII: "'Porro unum est necessarium.' Porro hoc est illud unum necessarium, in quo est omne bonum, immo quod est omne et unum et totum et solum bonum."

not explicate, and so come to know, what God is and how he has his origin in God. As reason comes to know its origin by separating and dividing what is united, the quest establishes distinctions which prevent the seeker from recognizing its undivided origin. As we witnessed in *Proslogion* I and then again, in *Proslogion* IX-XIV, the very activity of seeking separates us from what we seek. Because seeking is essential and the human is also unable to seek without Divine help, God must provide help.

God's Word is the source of intellectual understanding in the human. God restores the human through the God-Man, His Word, working in the human. When reason leads to loss of vision, God restores the human by the gift of intellect, whose vision unites what is divided. The failure of reason does not lead to the failure of the quest because the quest has its beginning and end in God, who infinitely gives Himself through His Word; God does his work in the human and effects a change in the human. The interiority of reason to intellect, which restores and governs the quest, is the basis on which the human seeks and finds God. The success of the quest despite the failure of reason depends upon the immanence of what is absolutely transcendent. Only because the transcendent God gives Himself to the human and is present to the mind is the quest able to succeed.

The Trinity is an infinite giving and receiving of God to Himself. In this exchange, the human, by imitating Christ, receives divinity. We see in the *Cur Deus Homo* that in this exchange, Christ deserves a reward for his death which he gives away:

> It would be both just and necessary that the gift should be given by the Father to whomsoever the Son wished…Upon whom would he more properly bestow the reward accruing from his death, than upon those for whose salvation, as right reason teaches, he became man…?[291]

Christ gives his reward to those who seek Him, and they become partakers of the reward by seeking. Through this gift, the human is included in the infinite giving and receiving within the Trinity, and so becomes Divine: "Indeed, they will be called sons of God and gods and will in fact be so; and where the Son will be there also they will be, heirs

[291] *CDH*., 2, xix.

indeed of God and co-heirs of Christ."[292]

[292] *Pros*., XXV: "immo 'filii dei' et dii 'vocabuntur' et erunt; et ubi erit filius eius, ibi erunt et illi, 'heredes quidem dei, coheredes autem Christi'."

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The final three chapters of the *Proslogion* are a meditation on the goodness and greatness of the one and supreme good which is inclusive of otherness and infinity. This brings us back the monastic context of the *Proslogion*, which is written for his fellow monks. The seeker contemplates this good in its unity and in its dispersion. Every good may be enjoyed in and through the one simple good. The return of the "diminished man" (*homuncio*), last seen in *Proslogion* I, suggests that the cycle of finding, losing vision, and finding God again under a new form will not end in this life (*in hac vita*). After considering the *Proslogion*'s conclusion, I shall provide a conclusion for this thesis.

The final three chapters of the *Proslogion* are an exhortation to meditate on the goodness and greatness of the all, single, total and only good, identified with the Trinity in *Proslogion* XXIII. *Proslogion* XXIV meditates on this good as the single good and source of all goods, and *Proslogion* XXV meditates on the good in its dispersion as many goods. The final chapter of the treatise, *Proslogion* XXVI, establishes the interiority of the seeker to the one supreme good and exhorts the seeker to gradually increase in knowledge and love of God in this life (*hac vita*) until he comes to fulness in that life (*illa vita*) which is promised.

Proslogion XXIII rouses the soul to consider the quality and quantity of the one good. The exhortation to consider the quality, or kind (*quale*), recalls the *melius* formula, which names God's supremacy and supreme goodness, and the consideration of quantity (*quantum*) recalls the *maius* formula naming God's greatness. This is a speculation on the one and supreme good (*unum et summum bonum*) into which the formula, and its multiple variations, have led the seeker:

> Now, my soul, rouse (*excita*) and lift up (*erige*) your whole understanding (*intellectum*) and think as much as you can on what kind and how great (*quale et quantum*) this good is. For if particular goods are enjoyable, consider carefully how enjoyable is that good which contains the joyfulness of all goods; not [a joy] of such a kind (*qualem*) as we have experienced in created things, but as different from this as the creator differs from the creature.[293]

[293] *Pros*., XXIV: "Excita nunc, anima mea, et erige totum intellectum tuum, et cogita quantum potes, quale et quantum sit illud bonum. Si enim singula bona delectabilia sunt, cogita intente quam delectabile sit illud bonum, quod continet iucunditatem omnium bonorum; et non qualem in rebus creatis sumus experti, sed tanto differ- entem quanto differt creator a creatura."

Particular goods are as different from the good itself as the creature is from the creator. The good to which the seeker raises his mind is the source of all which contains all otherness and multiplicity. The seeker, who enjoys particular goods in the realm of otherness, must set his vision on that through which every good exists and is beyond all goods.

The particular goods are not good except insofar as they are known and enjoyed in that through which they exist, the simple good itself. In *Proslogion* I, the seeker is unable to enjoy the particular goods because he does not know their source: "[Adam] lost that without which nothing is happy, and there remains to him that through which (*per* se) there is nothing except misery."[294] The one argument (*unum argumentum*) of the *Proslogion* has elevated the seeker to vision of that one good without which nothing is happy.

When the seeker sets his vision on the good itself in *Proslogion* XXV, he finds the dispersion of many goods:

> Oh he who will enjoy this good, what will be his and what will not be his! Whatever he wishes will certainly be his and whatever he does not wish will not be his. In fact, all the goods of body and soul will be there such that 'neither eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived'. Why, then, do you wander about so much, O diminished man (*homuncio*), seeking the goods of your soul and body? Love the one good in which all good things are, and that is sufficient. Desire the simple good which contains every good, and that is enough. For what do you love, O my flesh, what do you desire, O my soul? There it is, there it is, whatever you love, whatever you desire.[295]

The diminished man (*homuncio*) is one who wanders in external things without his vision set on the good itself, through which all goods exist. What is sought as good can only be found if it is sought and found in the "one good in which all good things are". When the seeker treats particular goods as if they exist outside of that in which they have

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[294] *Pros*., I: "Abscessit sine quo nihil felix est, et remansit quod per se nonnisi miserum est."
[295] *Pros*., XXV: "O qui hoc bono fruetur: quid illi erit, et quid illi non erit! Certe quidquid volet erit, et quod nolet non erit. Ibi quippe erunt bona corporis et animæ, qualia 'nec oculus vidit nec auris audivit nec cor hominis' cogitavit. Cur ergo per multa vagaris, ho- muncio, quærendo bona animæ tuæ et corporis tui? Ama unum bonum, in quo sunt omnia bona, et sufficit. Desidera simplex bonum, quod est omne bonum, et satis est. Quid enim amas, caro mea, quid desideras, anima mea? Ibi est, ibi est quidquid amatis, quidquid desideratis."

their being, as something external to God, he will not find the joy he seeks in them. This brings us back to the fundamental that the seeker is not external to the God whom he seeks, but must achieve vision of God in what he knows and experiences already.

Proslogion XXV, the longest chapter after *Proslogion* I, speculates on fifteen goods which may only be truly enjoyed when they are enjoyed through the one and supreme good. In each case, the difference between the good in itself and its enjoyment in God is as great as the difference between creature and creator. The capacity to enjoy the many goods depends upon them being known and enjoyed through the simple good. The enjoyment of strength will become the enjoyment of a spiritual body whose strength is not natural (*potestate utique non natura*); the enjoyment of wisdom will become vision of "the very wisdom of God" (*ipsa dei sapientia*); enjoyment of a long and healthy life will become "healthy eternity and eternal health" (*sana aeternitas et aeterna sanitas*). When any good is known in the simple good, its enjoyment becomes Divine, and the human will become a god: "Indeed, they will be called sons of God and gods and will in fact be so; and where the Son will be there also they will be, heirs indeed of God and co-heirs of Christ."[296]

The seeker possesses the spiritual senses when he knows and enjoys all things through God, and God through them. The demand to sense God has served as a measure of the quest's success. *Proslogion* VI establishes God's sensibility and the seeker's capacity to sense and *Proslogion* XIII discovers that God is "everywhere and always," but the seeker does sense God. This incapacity is crucial to the seeker's conclusion in *Proslogion* XIV that he has only seen God partially (*aliquatenus*), and returns in *Proslogion* XVII as the seeker despair intensifies over God's distance from the seeker who is so close to Him. The seeker now knows God not as something other than the many goods, but as the one and infinitely diffuse Good which includes all goods.

Because the joy is through God, it is so great that it cannot be grasped (*capere possit*). Anselm writes: "If it is friendship, they will love God more than themselves and one another as themselves, and God will love them more than they love themselves because it is through Him that they love Him and themselves and one another, and He

[296] *Pros*., XXV: "immo 'filii dei' et dii 'vocabuntur' et erunt; et ubi erit filius eius, ibi erunt et illi, 'heredes quidem dei, coheredes autem Christi'."

loves Himself and them through Himself."[297] Because the seeker will love all others through God, whom they love more than themselves and others, the love for others and oneself will be greater than can be grasped. Because the joy of friendship is through the simple and infinite good which is inclusive of all goods, the love for friends multiplies and is immeasurable:

> Indeed, to the degree that each one loves some other, so he will rejoice in the good of that other; therefore, just as each one in that perfect happiness will love God incomparably (*sine comparatione*) more than himself and all others with him, so he will rejoice immeasurably (*absque existimatione*) more over the happiness of God than over his own happiness and that of all the others with him.[298]

Love that is through God becomes a love and joy for God that cannot be compared (*sine comparatione*) to one's love for oneself and others. However, when one loves others and himself through God, he loves others as he loves God. Therefore, love for others, and friendship with others, becomes, through God, a love that is incomparably greater than that which humans are capable of without God.

Because the seeker is interior to God, he is completely filled with joy and there remains joy beyond measure (*supra modum*). The seeker is entirely contained within and filled by a joy which is infinite: "For I have discovered a joy that is complete and more than complete."[299] The seeker asks whether there is more to be found than what he now knows:

> Speak, Lord, tell Your servant within his heart if this is the joy into which Your servants will enter who enter 'into the joy of the Lord'. But surely that joy in which Your chosen ones will rejoice is that which 'neither eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man'. I have not yet said or thought, then, Lord, how greatly your blessed will rejoice.[300]

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[297] *Pros*., XXV: "Si amicitia: diligent deum plus quam seipsos, et invicem tamquam seipsos, et deus illos plus quam illi seipsos; quia illi illum et se et invicem per illum, et ille se et illos per seipsum."
[298] *Pros*., XXV: "Et utique quoniam quantum quisque diligit aliquem, tantum de bono eius gaudet: sicut in illa perfecta felicitate unusquisque plus amabit sine comparatione deum quam se et omnes alios secum, ita plus gaudebit absque existimatione de felicitate dei quam de sua et omnium aliorum secum."
[299] *Pros*., XXVI: "Inveni namque gaudium quoddam plenum, et plus quam plenum."
[300] *Pros*., XXVI: "Dic, domine, dic servo tuo intus in corde suo, si hoc est gaudium, in quod intrabunt servi tui, qui intrabunt 'in gaudium domini' sui. Sed gaudium illud certe quo gaudebunt electi tui, 'nec oculus vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascendit'. Nondum ergo dixi aut cogitavi, domine, quantum gaudebunt illi beati tui."

The seeker's representation of the joy that exists in and through the one and supreme good does not adequately express the joy God gives. The seeker emphasizes this by repeating a second time the words of I Corinthians II.9: "Certainly, neither eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man in this life (*hac vita*), how much (*quantum*) they will know you and love you in that life (*illa vita*)."[301]

Anselm concludes the treatise with the prayer that he may gradually progress towards the joy with belongs to that life (*illa vita*):

> And if I cannot do so fully in this life may I progress (*proficiam*) gradually until it comes to fullness. Let the knowledge of you grow in me here, and there be made complete; let your love grow in me here and there be made full, so that here my joy may be great in hope, and there be full in reality (*in re*).[302]

The seeker's journey is not complete and the fulness of joy to be found in God is not known. This brings us back to the seeker's address to diminished man (*humuncio*) in *Proslogion* XV, which suggests that the seeker who has found the one and supreme good is able to return into externals and lose sight of the supreme simplicity which is inclusive of all goods. In *Proslogion* XXVI the seeker prays that he may continue to progress daily until he comes to fulness. He must continue the quest in order to achieve the fulness which God gives:

> I ask, Lord, as You counsel through our admirable counsellor. May I receive what You promise through Your truth so that my 'joy may be complete'. God of truth, I ask that I may receive so that my 'joy may be complete'. Until then let my mind meditate on it, let my tongue speak of it, let my heart love it, let my mouth preach it. Let my soul hunger for it, let my flesh thirst for it, my whole being desire it, until I enter into the 'joy of the Lord', who is God, Three in One, 'blessed forever. Amen.[303]

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[301] *Pros*., XXVI: "Certe 'nec oculus vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascendit' in hac vita, quantum te cognoscent et amabunt in illa vita."
[302] *Pros*., XXVI: "Et si non possum in hac vita ad plenum, vel proficiam in dies usque dum veniat illud ad plenum. Proficiat hic in me notitia tui, et ibi fiat plena; crescat amor tuus, et ibi sit plenus: ut hic gaudium meum sit in spe magnum, et ibi sit in re plenum."
[303] *Pros*., XXVI: "Deus verax, peto accipiam, 'ut gaudium' meum 'plenum sit'. Meditetur interim inde mens mea, loquatur inde lingua mea. Amet illud cor meum, sermocinetur os meum. Esuriat illud anima mea, sitiat caro mea, desideret tota substantia mea, donec intrem 'in gaudium domini' mei, 'qui est' trinus et unus deus 'benedictus in sæcula. Amen'.

The conclusion of the *Proslogion* is not the conclusion of the quest for God. There is infinitely more to know and to enjoy through the excitement of desire and seeking to know and enjoy more.

This thesis has followed the course of the *Proslogion*'s single argument (*unum argumentum*) by tracing the pattern of finding, losing of vision, and the subsequently finding again under a new form. The interiority of reason to intellect means that the contradictions, incomprehensibility, and loss of vision, do not signify the failure of the quest. In *Proslogion* I, when reason closes in on itself and prevents vision of God, the seeker discovers that ungoverned reason cannot reach what it seeks. The seeker must seek but is unable to seek; God Himself must restore the seeker. God will give Himself to the seeker through his Word, which is the source of understanding in the human. The basis of this restoration is the image of God created in the human, which, as we have seen, depends upon the immanence to us of the transcendent God. At the conclusion of *Proslogion* I, this is an image of God as the intellectual renewal of the seeker. The formula "that than which nothing greater can be thought" leads the seeker into intellectual vision. Discursive reason emerges from the formula when the fool denies God's existence. By denying God's existence, the fool asserts understanding and so reverses the necessary order belonging the principle "faith seeking understanding" (*fides quaerens intellectum*). The denial of God's existence as what the formula names leads into contradictions and through a movement of contingent reasoning which arrives at intellectual understanding of necessary reasons for God's existence.

Proslogion V brings God, whom he now knows to necessarily exist, into the realm of being and intelligibility as supreme. While "that than which nothing greater can be thought" names what is both beyond being and the supreme among beings, when thought emerges from the *maius* formula in *Proslogion* V, the seeker begins treating God as the supreme being among other beings, and does not also know Him as transcendent of thought and being. Accordingly, *Proslogion* V establishes the *melius* formula, "whatever it is better to be than not to be", which is the rule governing the quest for God within the realm of being in *Proslogion* VI-XI.

This rule enables the seeker to think and know God as many good things in *Proslogion* VI-IX, including sensible, omnipotent, and merciful. The seeker comes to

know the Divine substance through a process of correcting his conceptions of certain attributes known on the basis of how they belong to humans. He corrects his conception in accordance with the principle that God is "supreme of all" and "whatever it is better to be than not to be." In *Proslogion* X-XII, the seeker is unable to correct his conception so as to understand the God's justice: "it certainly cannot be comprehended by any reason (*certe nulla ratione comprehendi*) why from those who are alike in wickedness you save these rather than those through your supreme goodness."[304] Because God is and does nothing that does not accord with His inscrutable justice, understood as "rectitude of order", the Divine substance passes beyond what can be known "in relation to us" and on the basis of a comparative relation to our experience. By seeking to understand God, reason gradually establishes distinctions which place God beyond our knowledge. In *Proslogion* V-XII the seeker sets out to find God as something that can be found, and discovers that questing is not a matter of correcting his conceptions so as to bridge the gap between knowledge of a human attributes and those of God, but of coming to see under a new form what is already seen.

In *Proslogion* XIV-XV the seeker discovers that God, as the supreme being, is unthinkable in virtue of His excess; He is "more than can be understood"[305] and "something greater than can be thought."[306] This remains a problem until the seeker discovers what his mode of seeking prevents him from seeing: that God is beyond being. In *Proslogion* XIV, the seeker has achieved a partial (*aliquatenus*) vision of God and but is unable to see God just as He is (*sicuti es*); his vision is narrow (*angustia*) and God is boundless (*immensa*). The discovery that God is unthinkable in virtue of His excess is both a solution explaining why the quest has lost sight of God and a problem for how to proceed.

Proslogion XVI & XVII establish the interiority of the seeker to the God whom he does not know and cannot sense. What is interior to God is other than God, and the seeker wants to see God Himself, understood as one among others. Everything the seeker

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[304] *Pros*., X: "illud certe nulla ratione comprehendi potest, cur de similibus malis hos magis salves quam illos per summam bonitatem, et illos magis damnes quam istos per summam iustitiam."
[305] *Pros*., XIV: "Quid puritatis, quid simplicitatis, quid certitudinis et splendoris ibi est! Certe plus quam a creatura valeat intelligi."
[306] *Pros*., XV: "Ergo domine, non solum es quo maius cogitari nequit, sed es quiddam maius quam cogitari possit."

knows he knows through God's light, but he cannot see what he knows in the source of that light. Similarly, the seeker knows that in God he moves and has his being, but he cannot sense that through which he moves. According to the mode of seeking, God, as the supreme being and source of all, is something other than what is interior to Him. The solution comes in *Proslogion* XVIII when the seeker is relieved of mind's structure and discovers that God is "unity itself not divisible by any mind."[307] As a solution to the problem of God's unknowability, inability to sense God, and the despair which accompanies them both, we are able to discern the logic at work: God's transcendence of being and knowing is the basis of His immanence.

Proslogion XIX-XXI represent God's indivisibility in terms of His simultaneous eternal presence. According to mind's new governing structure, the work of reason in *Proslogion* XIX-XXI does not establish a distance between God and the seeker which is not also an increase in presence. The seeker establishes distinctions which increase God's transcendence, and this increase of transcendence establishes the basis for a greater immanence. The seeker's meditation on God's relation to time and space in *Proslogion* XXI represents a rhythm immanent to God: God is both "indivisible unity" and "interminable immensity". *Proslogion* XX identifies God as both the unity itself beyond mind and the supreme good, which is the dispersion of many goods. This is the "one and supreme good" (*unum et summum bonum*), the only thing which exists in a strict and absolute sense (*proprie et absolute*), and that which includes otherness. This provides the basis for understanding the Trinity. God, as the one good, is the unity of multiple infinities, and He includes otherness and infinity in His simplicity.

The transcendent God governs the whole work; He is immanent to us as intellect's restoration and government of reason. The failure of reason does not lead to the failure of the quest because what transcends being and knowing is also immanent and present to us as intellect. This is given to us by the formula "that than which nothing greater can be thought", which governs the *unum argumentum*. The formula names what is both existent and intelligible as well as, ultimately, beyond being. Crucially, the formula is the rule by which God becomes intelligible, and God's intelligibility depends

[307] *Pros*., XVIII: "immo tu es ipsa unitas, nullo intellectu divisibilis."

upon His transcendence of the form under which He is intelligible. In this way, God's intelligibility is interior to and governed by His transcendence. Therefore, the restoration of reason by intellect depends upon the immanence of what transcends being and knowing.

This thesis has traced the *Proslogion*'s single argument (*unum argumentum*) which concludes with the rational seeker interior to God as Trinity inclusive of otherness and infinity. The formula, "that than which nothing greater can be thought", is the linguistic tool governing the single continuous movement into God. It governs the journey in which the seeker reaches vision of God who has been present to him from the beginning of the quest. The formula, as a name for God, represents the way that God gives Himself continuously and in accordance with the seeker's capacity to receive. The single argument has led the seeker through cycles of finding and losing vision. The interiority of reason to intellect means that the failure of reason, leading to contradiction, incomprehensibility, and loss of vision, is not also the failure of the quest. Seeking is an explication of God and is the only means of finding God. The *Proslogion* concludes with a unity of the way to God and God Himself. The journey into God, with its failures and restorations, are included in the infinite Trinitarian giving and receiving. What is other can never reach God unless God already includes otherness in Himself.

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