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Aosta, Bec and Canterbury:
reconsidering the vocations of
St. Anselm (1033-1109)
as
scholar, monk and bishop

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June, 1990

A thesis submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts.

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Abstract

In recent years a controversy has arisen in the scholarship dealing with St. Anselm of Canterbury. Since R.W. Southern published his biography of Anselm, his views have been widely accepted. In his view, Anselm was a devout monk who spent his life contemplating, with clear insight, profound theological issues. Forced to accept the Archbishopric of Canterbury, Anselm was never content with his responsibilities and longed to return to the simple life of a monk. The result was that Anselm blundered his way through conflicts with the Kings of England, William Rufus and Henry I. Because of his inability to handle himself in political spheres, Anselm was forced into exile twice. Within the last decade, however, Sally N. Vaughn has challenged Southern's prevailing views with a re-examination of the sources. In her opinion, Anselm was an astute politician who determined, early on, that he was destined to be Archbishop of Canterbury. Vaughn tries to show that Anselm carefully orchestrated events so that he was in fact elected to the position. Sally Vaughn's Anselm is very different from the contemplative monk of Southern's book. The controversy now centres on whether or not a devout contemplative monk could also be an astute politician while still maintaining an other-worldly detachment. This is the view of Eadmer, Anselm's companion and first biographer. Southern and Vaughn's views, while defensible from the sources, both fail to recognise, unlike Eadmer, the compatibility of vocations as an archbishop and a monk. This thesis will re-examine the sources - Eadmer's biographies and Anselm's writings - to show that Eadmer's view is the correct one. Anselm clearly transferred his intellectual powers into his monastic vocation and from there used his principles as a guiding force of his episcopacy.

Abrégé

Ces dernières années, l'enseignement portant sur Saint-Anselme de Cantorbéry a été l'objet d'une controverse grandissante. Après avoir publié sa biographe d'Anselme, les opinions exprimées par R.W. Southern ont été reconnues un peu partout. Selon lui, Anselme était un moine fervent qui passa sa vie à contempler, avec perspicacité, de profondes questions théologiques. Forcé d'accepter l'Archevêché de Cantorbéry, Anselme n'était pas satisfait de ses responsabilités et souhaitait retourner à la vie d'un simple moine. En conséquence, par sa maladresse, Anselme eut de nombreux conflits avec les Rois d'Angleterre, William Rufus et Henri I. Cependant, au cours de la dernière décennie, Sally N. Vaughn remit en question les vues prédominantes de Southern en réexaminant les sources. D'après elle, Anselme, était un politicien astucieux qui avait réalisé, dès le début, qu'il était destiné à devenir Archevêque de Cantorbéry. Vaughn tente d'établir qu'Anselme orchestra les événements avec un tel soin qu'il fut éventuellement élu à ce poste. L'Anselme présenté par Sally Vaughn est bien différent du moine contemplatif dépeint dans le livre de Southern. Cette controverse est maintenant centrée sur la question à savoir si oui ou non un moine contemplatif fervent aurait pu être en même temps un politicien astucieux tout en restant détaché des biens temporels. Telle était l'opinion d'Eadmer, le compagnon d'Anselme et le premier à écrire sa biographie. Les opinions de Southern et de Vaughn, bien qu'elles soient défendables en vertu des sources, refusent de reconnaître, contrairement à Eadmer, la compatibilité de ces vocations en tant qu'archevêque et moine. Cette thèse réexamine les sources - les biographies d'Eadmer et les écrits d'Anselme - pour démontrer que le point de vue d'Eadmer est le bon. Anselme, de toute évidence, transmit tous ses pouvoirs intellectuels à sa vocation monastique et il s'appuya par la suite sur la force de ses principes pour diriger son épiscopat.

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Preface

This project started because of an interest in St. Anselm sparked several years ago while studying philosophy for my undergraduate degree. As is usual in a survey of medieval philosophy, Anselm's Ontological Argument came up. Even though my professor dismissed the argument, I was fascinated by Anselm's persuasiveness without really knowing why. I encountered St. Anselm again several times during the rest of my studies, this time in the Department of History. After reading Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* in a course on medieval theology, I began to ask why Anselm chose such unusual topics for his treatises: it struck me as odd that a monk, much less a saint, would ask questions so basic as "does God exist?" and "why did God become man?" Were these the questions of a monk with great faith? From there I began my research, the results of which I present here.

During my research I have been quite interested in the two views of Anselm that currently form the centre of debate, namely that Anselm was a monk, and therefore an inept politician, and that Anselm was really an astute and ambitious man who carefully orchestrated his political career. The latter view, put forth by Sally N. Vaughn, has answered many questions that seemed to linger after reading Sir Richard Southern's excellent biography of Anselm. But what struck me also, was the feeling that neither view accounted for the whole Anselm. Each was correct, in its own way; however, the middle area between these two seemingly divergent views had yet to be investigated.

It was with the intention of exploring a possible middle ground between Southern's and Vaughn's views on Anselm that I undertook this Master's thesis. Many thanks must go to my supervisor, Professor Faith Wallis. It was she who kept me going in times of discouragement at the sheer volume of material to cover. It was she who prodded me with a hot iron to get writing as deadlines approached. It was she who, in her great kindness, was understanding when other academic tasks had me frazzled. It was she who provided much insight and technical help. To her I owe a world of thanks, in way of which, I offer this work.

To my parents I give my gratitude for the financial help to undertake these studies and so much more besides. For the ugly task of proofreading this manuscript, I thank a long-time friend, my sister, Eileen. Thanks also to friends Nicholas Nero and Evan Mandery for providing me with comfortable, and free, accomodation for my lightning trips to Toronto and Boston for research purposes. To Bruno Cuoci, my one time mentor, go my thanks for providing much appreciated, although not always needed, distractions like movies and concerts. My thanks go also to Reader Services of Weidner Library, Harvard College, Boston for permission to use their facilities. Finally, to the patient staff of Inter-Library Loan, McLennan Library at McGill University, I give my thanks for the work they did in locating obscure books. They would see me coming and some days, I'm sure, would want to hide because I had another request.

When quoting a work of St. Anselm, only an English translation will be given. When no such translation is available (in the case of some of Anselm's letters), I will provide my own translation giving the Latin text in the footnotes. Citations will at all times be made to Schmitt's edition of the Latin text followed by the English translation, when used. For example, Chapter Two of the *Proslogium* will be cited as follows: Schmitt 1:101-102; *Proslogium*, pp. 53-54 - where Schmitt and *Proslogium* are abbreviations found in the table on pages iv-vi; 1 refers to Volume One of Schmitt's edition; 101-102, 53-54 are the page numbers of the various works.

Abbreviations

- ANS* *Proceedings of the Battle Conference on Anglo-Norman Studies*, edited by R. Allen Brown [Battle Conference on Anglo-Norman Studies: *Anglo-Norman Studies I - X*] (Woodbridge, Suffolk, England: The Boydell Press, 1979-89).
- AS 1* *Anselm Studies: An Occasional Journal*, Vol. 1 (Millwood, N.Y.: Kraus International Publications, 1983).
- AS 2* *Anselm Studies: An Occasional Journal*, Vol. 2 (White Plains, N.Y.: Kraus International Publications, 1988).
- Bates, Normandy* David Bates, *Normandy before 1066* (London and New York: Longman, 1982).
- CB* Anon. *Chronicon Beccensis abbatiae*, edited by J.A. Giles in *Beati Lanfranci Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, Opera quae supersunt omnia*, Vol. 1: *Epistolae etc.* (Oxford: Parker, 1844), Appendix pp. 1-32.
- CDH* St. Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, in *St. Anselm: Basic Writings*, translated by S.N. Deane (2nd ed.; LaSalle, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1962, reprinted 1988), pp. 191-302.
- Cantor* Norman F. Cantor, *Church, Kingship and Lay Investiture in England 1089-1135* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1958).
- DLB* Anon. *De libertate Beccensis monasterii*, translated by Sally N. Vaughn in her book, *The Abbey of Bec and the Anglo-Norman State 1034-1136* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, England: The Boydell Press, 1981), pp. 134-143. Cited by Vaughn's page numbers.
- GP* William of Malmesbury, *De gestis pontificum Anglorum*, edited by N.E.S.A. Hamilton [Great Britain Public Records Office: *Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland During the Middle Ages*, Vol. 52] (London: Longman & Co., 1870).
- HN* Eadmer, *History of Recent Events in England: Historia Novorum in Anglia*, translated by Geoffrey Bosanquet (London: The Cresset Press, 1964). Cited by Bosanquet's page numbers.
- Incarnatione Verbi* St. Anselm, *Epistola de Incarnatione Verbi*, translated by Jaspar Hopkins and Herbert Richardson in *Anselm of Canterbury*, (Toronto and New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1976), Vol. 3, pp. 7-37.
- Leclercq, LLDG* Jean Leclercq, O.S.B., *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, translated by Catharine Misrahi (3rd ed.; New York: Fordham University Press, 1982).
- Monologium* St. Anselm, *Monologium*, in *St. Anselm: Basic Writings*, translated by S.N. Deane (2nd ed.; LaSalle, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1962, reprinted 1988), pp. 81-190.

- OV Orderic Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, translated and edited by Marjorie Chibnall (6 vols.; Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1969-80). Cited by Chibnall's volume and page numbers.
- Porée, *Bec* A.A. Porée, *Histoire de l'abbaye du Bec* (2 vols.; Evreux, France: Charles Hérissey, 1901).
- Proessione Spiritus Sancti* St. Anselm, *De Proessione Spiritus Sancti*, translated by Jaspar Hopkins and Herbert Richardson in *Anselm of Canterbury* (Toronto and New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1976), Vol. 3, pp. 181-230.
- Prologium* St. Anselm, *Prologium*, in *St. Anselm: Basic Writings*, translated by S.N. Deane (2nd ed.; LaSalle, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1962, reprinted 1988), pp. 47-80.
- RR Robert L. Benson and Giles Constable, eds., *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1982).
- Robert of Torigni Robert of Torigni, *The Chronicle of Robert of Torigni, abbot of the monastery of St. Michael in Peril of the Sea*, edited by Richard Howlett in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I*, Vol. 4 [Great Britain Public Records Office: *Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages*, Vol. 82] (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1889).
- SB I *Spicilegium Beccense I -- Congrès International du IX^e Centenaire de l'arrivée d'Anselme au Bec* (Le Bec-Hellouin: Abbaye Notre-Dame du Bec et Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1959).
- SB II *Spicilegium Beccense II: Les mutations socio-culturelles au tournant des XI^e - XII^e siècles (Etudes Anselmiennes IV^e Session)*. Colloques Internationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1984).
- Schmitt *Sancti Anselmi Cantuariensis archiepiscopi opera omnia*, edited by F.S. Schmitt (6 vols.; Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1946-61). Anselm's letters will be referred to as *AEp.* followed by the number in Schmitt's edition.
- Southern, *Anselm* R.W. Southern, *Saint Anselm and His Biographer: A Study of Monastic Life and Thought 1059 - c.1130* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963).
- VA Eadmer, *The Life of St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury*, translated by R.W. Southern (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1962, reprinted 1979). Cited by Southern's page numbers.
- VH Gilbert Crispin, *Vita Herluini*, translated by Sally N. Vaughn in her book, *The Abbey of Bec and the Anglo-Norman State 1034-1136* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, England: The Boydell Press, 1981), pp. 67-86. Cited by Vaughn's page numbers.
- VL Anon. *Vita Lanfranci*, translated by Sally N. Vaughn in her book, *The Abbey of Bec and the Anglo-Norman State 1034-1136* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, England: The Boydell Press, 1981), pp. 87-111. Cited by Vaughn's page numbers.

Vaughn,
Anselm

Sally N. Vaughn, *Anselm of Bec and Robert of Meulan: The Innocence of the Dove and the Wisdom of the Serpent* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1987).

Ward

St. Anselm, *The Prayers and Meditations of St. Anselm with the Proslogion*, edited by Benedicta Ward (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1973, reprinted 1986).

One

Introduction

[When Anselm] was in a crowd of litigants and his opponents were laying their heads together, discussing the crafts and wiles by which they could help their own case and fraudulently injure his, he would have nothing to do with such things; instead, he would discourse to those who would listen about the Gospels or some other part of the Bible, or at least about some subject tending to edification. And often, if there was no-one to listen to such talk, he would compose himself, in the sweet quietness of a pure heart, to sleep. Then sometimes, when the frauds which had been prepared with intricate subtlety were brought to his notice, he would immediately detect and disentangle them, not like a man who had just been sleeping, but like one who had been wide-awake, keeping a sharp watch.¹

This anecdote, recounted by Eadmer of Canterbury in his biography of Saint Anselm, portrays a quality of the saint's character that is often ignored. It shows his ability to conduct affairs of business with great skill; it shows, too, his ability to maintain an other-worldly detachment at the same time. Anselm does not really sleep; rather, he concentrates on spiritual things until it is precisely the time to disentangle the snares of his opponents. He remains detached yet present. Eadmer wants to show the compatibility of affairs of the world and affairs of God in one man. But modern historians are reluctant to see Anselm in this way.

¹ *VA*, p. 46.

I

Anselm and Philosophers

Anselm's modern fame is due, for the most part, to what has become known as the 'Ontological Argument' in his *Proslogium*, in which he attempts to prove, through reason alone, the existence of God.² His attempt to discuss a theological truth without the aid of Scripture or the authority of the Church Fathers was innovative for the time. But the reason for the fame of the *Proslogium* in Anselm's day differs from the reason for its modern fame. Modern scholars see Anselm's rational method as much more philosophical than theological in nature. Most histories of medieval philosophy accord Anselm a prominent place in their pages because of his innovation. He is, more often than not, studied as a philosopher.³ Anselm's was one of the first, and one of the best attempts at proving a theological truth by rational argument.

Anselm is often credited as the originator of the famous method of enquiry of the schools of the High Middle Ages - Scholasticism. Most theological training in Anselm's time took place in monasteries. It was heavily based on unsystematic private study of Scriptural texts or commentaries on them by the Church Fathers. Scholastic theology, on the other hand, applied logical analysis to theological subject matter in a systematic way

² Schmitt 1:101-102; *Proslogium*, pp. 53-4.

³ Frederick Copleston, S.J., *A History of Philosophy*, Book One, Vol. II: *Augustine to Scotus* (New York: Image Books, 1950, reprinted 1962-3, 1985), pp. 156-165; Stephen Gersh, "Anselm of Canterbury," *A History of Twelfth-Century Western Philosophy*, edited by Peter Dronke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 255-278; Etienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (New York: Random House, 1955), pp. 128-139, esp. p. 139; David Knowles, *The Evolution of Medieval Thought* (Baltimore, Maryland: Helicon Press, 1962), pp. 98-106. While most scholars are quick to recognise that modern distinctions between philosophy and theology were not made in Anselm's day, at least one discusses what he sees as Anselm's purely philosophical work. See John Marenbon *Early Medieval Philosophy (480-1150): an introduction* (London: Routledge, 1983), pp. 94-110. The one major exception is Michael Haren, *Medieval Thought: The Western Intellectual Tradition from Antiquity to the Thirteenth Century* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), pp.96-104, esp. p. 96 "The theological treatises are the principal source for his distinctive contribution to the intellectual tradition."

and in a context of public instruction. Inasmuch as it gives a prominent role to reason, Anselm's theological method resembles the later Scholastic method; however, the resemblance is tenuous and analogous, at best. Scholasticism was only in its infancy in Anselm's day, and did not reach its peak until the thirteenth century Scholastics such as Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure. Be that as it may, modern historians view Anselm's method as Scholastic in nature. They praise Anselm as a "forerunner of the thirteenth century scholastics,"⁴ and even the, "Father of Scholasticism."⁵ But this interpretation is open to question, considering both Anselm's theological purpose, and the nature of Scholastic theology itself.

By contrast, contemporaries considered Anselm as a spiritual writer,⁶ and even the Scholastics did not see Anselm as a Scholastic.⁷ To be sure, Anselm's former teacher, Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury noticed his deviation from the accepted standards of theological enquiry. Lanfranc criticised Anselm's *Monologium* for a lack of references to

⁴ Gilson, *Op. cit.*, p. 139.

⁵ Gordon Leff, *Medieval Thought: St. Augustine to Ockham* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1958), pp. 98-103. It is interesting to see on the back cover of a famous collection of Anselm's basic works in translation this description: "Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) was one of the originators of medieval scholastic philosophy. This collection of his best-known philosophical works contains, among other things, the *Proslogium*, in which Anselm first put forward the famous ontological argument for the existence of God." *St. Anselm: Basic Writings*, translated by S.N. Deane (LaSalle, Illinois: Open Court Publishing Company, 2nd ed., 1962, reprinted 1988).

⁶ AEp 28, 70, 172, 325 in which people are requesting, or Anselm is responding to requests for, the prayers of Anselm which are gaining fame.

⁷ For example, Anselm is not mentioned in Peter Abelard's *Sic et Non*, edited by Blanche B. Boyer and Richard McKeon (Chicago, IL and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1977); St. Thomas Aquinas makes only a brief reference, without naming Anselm, to an argument similar to the *Cur Deus Homo*; see *Summa Theologica*, III, Q. 1, a. 3. A short and incorrect summary of the 'Ontological Argument' is given at I, Q. 2, a. 1 and other brief mentions of less famous works are given at I, Q. 34, a. 2; II-II, Q. 161, a. 6, Q. 162, a. 4 among others. See also Peter Lombard's *Libri IV Sententiarum*, edited by PP. Collegii S. Bonaventurae (2nd ed.; Florence, Italy: Claras Aquas, 1916), p. 410, 484 where there are only two citations for Anselm.

Church authorities.⁸ Anselm replied to Lanfranc that everything he wrote was in perfect accord with the Church Fathers and even cited St. Augustine's *De Trinitate* as his model.⁹ He then published the work without any changes. This incident may have contributed to the modern view of Anselm as an innovator; however, in Anselm's time, Lanfranc's criticism seems to be unique. The *Monologium* and *Proslogium* were famous because they were considered as spiritual works, as meditations on the faith. Their purpose was not to prove the faith to atheists, nor to enlarge a body of technical knowledge for its own sake; rather, the treatises were meant to increase the faith of believers.¹⁰

In contrast to Anselm, Lanfranc was famous for his Scriptural exegesis and his skills as a dialectician.¹¹ Indeed, it might even be said that Lanfranc was the Scholastic, for his dialectical style involved analysis of authoritative texts. Lanfranc's fame brought students from all over Europe to study at the fledgling Norman monastery of Bec.¹² One of these students was Anselm.¹³ But Anselm did not follow Lanfranc's Scholastic pattern. For example, he did not write Scriptural commentaries, although some of his treatises were

⁸ *AEp.* 77; Anselm R. Pedrizetti, O.S.B., "Letters of Saint Anselm and Archbishop Lanfranc," *The American Benedictine Review*, Vol. 12 (December, 1961), pp. 455-6.

⁹ *AEp.* 77; Pedrizetti, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰ "I have written the following treatise, in the person of one who strives to lift his mind to the contemplation of God, and seeks to understand what he believes." Schmitt 1:93-4; *Proslogium*, p. 48.

¹¹ *OV* 2:297; also Margaret Gibson, *Lanfranc of Bec* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1978), p. 39.

¹² A.J. MacDonald, *Lanfranc: A Study of His Life, Work & Writing* (2nd ed.; London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1944), pp. 26-7; also Porée, *Bec*, Vol. 1, p. 53, 103; Christopher Harper-Bill, "Herluin Abbot of Bec and His Biographer", *Religious Motivation: Biographical and Sociological Problems for the Church Historian*, edited by Derek Baker [The Ecclesiastical History Society, *Studies in Church History*, Vol. 15] (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978), pp. 19-22. One recent article re-affirms Lanfranc's fame in view of some scholarship which tends to diminish his reputation. See Sally N. Vaughn, "Lanfranc at Bec: A Reinterpretation," *Albion*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (Summer, 1985), pp. 135-148.

¹³ *VA*, p. 8.

explorations of Scriptural themes. Of Anselm's thirteen major works, three are based on Scriptural themes or passages - *Proslogium*, *Cur Deus Homo*, *De Casu Diaboli*; three were written in response to an immediate challenge or heresy - *De Grammatico*, *Epistola de Incarnatione Verbi*, *De Processione Spiritus Sancti*; two are devotional in nature - the collection of prayers, the three meditations; and five discuss doctrines of faith, such as the Trinity or Original Sin, that are not directly inspired from Scripture - *Monologium*, *De Veritate*, *De Libertate Arbitrii*, *De Conceptu Virginali et de Originali Peccato*, *De Concordia Praescientiae et Praedestinationis et Gratiae Dei cum Libero Arbitrio*.¹⁴

In spite of the variety of Anselm's literary productions, succeeding generations have tended progressively to concentrate on only one of his treatises, the *Proslogium*; indeed, it can be argued that by focusing so narrowly on the *Proslogium*, they have misinterpreted even that work. Only recently has this view been re-examined. Benedicta Ward has written much about the "revolution"¹⁵ of Anselm's spirituality,¹⁶ and has correctly included Anselm's *Proslogium* in her collection of Anselm's prayers and meditations.¹⁷ Jaroslav Pelikan has

¹⁴ Jean-Robert Pouchet in his article "Saint Anselme lecteur de Saint Jean," *SB II*, pp. 457-468 suggests that the three dialogues, *De Veritate*, *De Libertate arbitrii*, *De Casu diaboli* are actually commentaries on the Gospel of St. John.

¹⁵ Southern, *Anselm*, pp. 42-47.

¹⁶ Ward; Benedicta Ward, *Anselm of Canterbury, a monastic scholar: an expanded version of a paper given to the Anselm Society, St. Augustine's College, Canterbury in May 1973* (Oxford: S.L.G. Press, 1977); "Anselm of Canterbury and His Influence," *Christian spirituality: Origins to the Twelfth Century*, edited by Bernard McGinn and John Meyendorff [Ewert Cousins, ed., *World Spirituality: An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest*, Vol. 16] (New York: Crossroad, 1986), pp. 196-205; "Inward Feeling and Deep Thinking: The Prayers and Meditations of St. Anselm Revisited," *AS I*, pp. 177-183. Small mention is made of Anselm's spirituality in Jean Leclercq et al., *The Spirituality of the Middle Ages* [Louis Bouyer et al., eds., *A History of Christian Spirituality*, Vol. 2] (New York: Desclée Company, 1968), pp. 162-168.

¹⁷ Ward

shown how Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* changed the theology of the Incarnation.¹⁸ G.R. Evans and Jean Leclercq have demonstrated that Anselm was interested in teaching and that there was definitely a 'school' of moral formation at Bec under Anselm.¹⁹ For the most part, however, these exceptions to the rule are too recent to attract notice from any except the specialists; Anselm continues to be classified as a philosopher, and discussion of his work continues heavily weighted towards the *Proslogium's* 'Ontological Argument'. In short, the general modern view of Anselm has been limited by a restrictive preoccupation with the *Proslogium*; in my view, this distorts the essential character, both of the *Proslogium's* theological project and of Anselm himself.

Reinforcing this one-sided view of Anselm's writings is a one-sided view of his personality and career which focuses on his activity as a scholar to the exclusion of virtually all else. The earliest record of the life of Saint Anselm of Aosta, Bec and Canterbury is that of Eadmer, a monk of Canterbury Cathedral and constant companion of Anselm in his later life.²⁰ Eadmer met Anselm for the first time in 1079 while Anselm, as the new abbot of the Abbey of Our Lady of Bec in Normandy, was visiting Bec's English estates.²¹ Fourteen years later, when Anselm became Archbishop of Canterbury, Eadmer was once again in the company of the saint. During this time, he began to record the personal life

¹⁸ Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, Vol. 3: *The Growth of Medieval Theology (600-1300)* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 139 ff.; see also G.R. Evans, *Anselm* [Brian Davies, O.P., ed., *Outstanding Christian Thinkers Series*, Vol. 1] (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1989), pp. 71-83 and *Anselm and Talking About God* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1978); Jasper Hopkins, *A Companion to the Study of St. Anselm* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1972), pp. 186-212.

¹⁹ G.R. Evans, "St. Anselm and Teaching," *History of Education*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (February 1976), pp. 89-101; Jean Leclercq, O.S.B., "Une doctrine de la vie monastique dans l'école du Bec," *SB I*, pp. 477-88.

²⁰ *VA*.

²¹ *VA*, pp. 48-50.

of St. Anselm from his birth in Aosta in 1033, and he continued to Anselm's death in 1109. Several years after the death of Anselm, Eadmer was still making corrections and additions to his work. During this time, probably beginning after the death of Anselm, Eadmer began a second biography of the Archbishop.²² The *Historia Novorum in Anglia* was a record, not of the personal life of Anselm, but of his affairs as Archbishop of Canterbury. It is from Eadmer's records that most of the information about Anselm's life is derived.²³ Unfortunately, important aspects of it have remained obscure.

II

Anselm and Historians

For centuries after Eadmer's biographies appeared, philosophers and theologians alone took an interest in Anselm as they debated, and re-wrote, Anselm's famous proof for the existence of God.²⁴ Only within the last century, however, has St. Anselm stirred any great interest as an historical figure. Martin Rule was perhaps the first to complete a modern account of the life of St. Anselm, followed closely by a French biography by Father Ragey, and Adolph Porée's still magisterial work on the history of the Abbey of Bec, where

²² *HN*; for the dating of the *VA* and the *HN* see Southern, *Anselm*, pp. 298-309, 314-320.

²³ Other accounts of Anselm and the history of Bec were written during this time; however, most of them are heavily based on Eadmer's account. See *CB*, *VL*, *VH*, Robert of Torigni, *GP*.

²⁴ Schmitt 1:101-102; *Proslogium*, pp. 53-54. Gaunilo, St. Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, William of Ockham, Descartes, Locke, Leibnitz, Kant, and Hegel have all written on the famous 'Ontological argument'. For modern studies see: Karl Barth, *Anselm, Fides Quaerens Intellectum: Anselm's Proof of the Existence of God in the Context of His Theological Scheme* (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Pickwick Press, 1975); Robert Brecher, *Anselm's Argument: The Logic of Divine Existence* (Aldershot, England: Gower Publishing Company, 1985, reprinted 1986); M.J. Charlesworth, *St. Anselm's Proslogium* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1965).

Anselm was a monk, written at the turn of the century.²⁵ It was not until 1962 that Sir Richard Southern completed a scholarly biography of the saint.²⁶ At the same time the final volume of the definitive corpus of Anselm's writings was edited by Dom Schmitt; Schmitt's edition of Anselm's work removed several spurious works that previously circulated under Anselm's name and collected almost five hundred of Anselm's letters in three of the six volumes.²⁷

Since the publication of *St. Anselm and His Biographer*, Southern has been considered the authority on Anselm, and his translation of Eadmer's *Life of Saint Anselm* has provided a much needed addition to the scholarship on Anselm.²⁸ However, *St. Anselm and His Biographer* tends to confirm the view that Anselm was a monk rapt in the pleasures of scholarly pursuits and contemplation of divine things. For instance, the biography is ordered according to the chronology of Anselm's writings as if they were, as G.R. Evans suggests, a sort of intellectual autobiography.²⁹

²⁵ Martin Rule, *The Life and Times of St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of the Britains* (2 vols.; London: Degan Paul, Trench, & Co., 1883); Philbert Ragey, *Histoire de Saint Anselme, Archeveque de Cantorbéry* (2 vols., Paris and Lyon, France: Delhomme et Bruguet, 1889); Porée, *Bec*. For more condensed accounts see A.A. Porée, *Saint Anselme à l'abbaye du Bec 1060-1092* (Bernay, France: Imprimerie v° Alfred Lefèvre, 1880) and John Bourget, *The History of the Royal Abbey of Bec near Rouen in Normandy* (London: J. Nicholls, 1779); Anon. *St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury* (London: Sands & Company, 1911); Joseph Clayton, *Saint Anselm: A Critical Biography* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1933).

²⁶ Southern, *Anselm*

²⁷ Schmitt 3-5

²⁸ VA

²⁹ G.R. Evans, *Anselm and Talking About God, Op. cit.*, p. 3.

In the remaining years much has been written about Anselm, as a monk, as a scholar, as an archbishop and as a reformer.³⁰ However, amid the storms and controversies surrounding the details of Anselm's life, which the contemporary record often has left vague, the general picture painted by Southern has remained authoritative. Southern portrays Anselm as a devout monk who enjoyed his scholarly activities. Upon the death of Lanfranc, Anselm, in Southern's opinion, was forced to accept the position of Archbishop of Canterbury. It was during his episcopacy, especially, that Anselm displayed his natural dislike of and unsuitability for secular and political affairs.

He was no politician and he had no political views of a systematic kind. As a monk he had turned his back on the world...Anselm therefore was not only unpractised in the ways of the world; he dissociated himself from them on principle...he did not in general see through the details of practical affairs, as he saw through the details of theology.³¹

Anselm was forced into exile twice because of what Southern sees as his political blunders in his relationships to the Kings of England. Because of Southern's dismissal of his episcopate as virtually ineffective, Anselm remains known only as a monk and great thinker.

Since the beginning of the last decade, however, an astute and intelligent scholar has attempted to challenge the prevailing views on Anselm. Sally N. Vaughn, in her study on the Abbey of Bec and in her biography of St. Anselm and Robert of Meulan, delivered a

³⁰ *SB I; SB II; AS I; AS 2; ANS* each contains a considerable amount of articles on Anselm. Jaspar Hopkins, *Op. cit.*, has an extensive bibliography. See also G.R. Evans' books *Anselm and Talking about God*, *Op. cit.*, *Anselm and a New Generation* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1980), and *Anselm, Op. cit.* Anselm has even been analyzed as a possible homosexual on more than one occasion; see John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 218-220; Brian Patrick McGuire, "Love, Friendship and Sex in the Eleventh Century: The Experience of Anselm," *Studia Theologica*, Vol. 28, No.2, 1974, pp. 111-152, esp. 146-150; Glenn W. Olsen, "St. Anselm and Homosexuality," *AS 2*, pp. 93-141.

³¹ Southern, *Anselm*, pp. 122-23.

serious challenge to Southern by re-examining the sources.³² Vaughn began her career of research on St. Anselm with an interesting study of the Abbey of Bec. In this work she examines the special status and fame that Bec had from the time of its foundation, an issue largely ignored by Southern. From the beginning, the special status of Bec has elicited an interest, for example in the twelfth century on the part of a writer who composed the treatise *On the Liberty of the Abbey of Bec*.³³ Because Bec had many political connections and an influential 'network', Vaughn argues in her biography of Anselm that he had determined early on that he was destined to be Archbishop of Canterbury. He therefore directed all his efforts towards that end. By acting out traditional topoi associated with the episcopal office, using ties of friendship, and cultivating a public image, Anselm used the see of Canterbury as a means of implementing his own ideal of co-rule of the English Church with the King. Vaughn's view of Anselm is of a man who was politically astute and worldly, as well as a devout monk and intelligent scholar.

These are the battle lines in present day Anselmian scholarship. Recently, Southern and Vaughn responded to each other's criticisms.³⁴ Vaughn criticises Southern for portraying Anselm as an inept politician, while Southern castigates Vaughn for leaving out any analysis of Anselm's monastic vocation and for portraying his administrative dealings in too much of a secular light. According to Southern, in Vaughn's portrayal of Anselm, the saint appears as nothing other than a politician in the most pejorative modern sense of

³² Sally N. Vaughn, *The Abbey of Bec and the Anglo-Norman State 1034-1136* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, England: The Boydell Press, 1981); Vaughn, *Anselm*.

³³ *DLB*; see also *VH*, pp. 71,76 *passim*; *VL*, pp. 89; John Bourget, *Op. cit.*, pp. 3, 9, *passim*; Poréc, *Bec*, pp. 30-45.

³⁴ R.W. Southern, "Sally Vaughn's Anselm: An Examination of the Foundations," and Sally N. Vaughn, "Anselm: Saint and Statesman," in *Albion*, Vol. 20 (Summer 1988), pp. 181-204 and 205-220 respectively.

the word.³⁵ There is, as Southern says, an "insensitivity to the nature of Anselm's view of the universe, and the vast differences which separated him not only from Henry I and Robert of Meulan, but also from most of his episcopal colleagues."³⁶ Southern challenges historians to trace, to the roots, the differences between Anselm and his secular colleagues.³⁷ This thesis attempts to answer that challenge.

The views of Southern and Vaughn are defensible from evidence in the sources; however, neither is complete. Southern seems to think it impossible that a truly devout monk could deal effectively in the world without being tainted by it. Vaughn tries to show that is not the case but ends up blurring the distinctions between monk and secular in such a way that Anselm becomes "a man of the world in monk's clothing."³⁸ It is my contention that it is possible to see Anselm at one and the same time as a monk devoted to God and his vocation, despising the world, and as a monk accepting the responsibility of a leadership role within the Church, and fulfilling that role astutely and effectively without losing his other-worldly detachment. This thesis merits investigation, if only because Eadmer saw Anselm this way, as exemplified by the anecdote quoted at the outset of this introduction.

³⁵ Part of the difficulty of modern Anselmian scholarship is the failure of either Southern or Vaughn to clarify their views on what a 'politician' is. Southern says that Anselm is not a politician because he had no formal plan to implement; rather, he was reactive. Vaughn, while trying to uphold the good intentions of Anselm's political activities, nonetheless, seems to suspect Anselm of ulterior motives. See Ch. 4 for a fuller discussion of this problem.

³⁶ Southern, "Sally Vaughn's Anselm," *Op. cit.*, p. 203.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

* * *

Throughout both of his biographies of Anselm, Eadmer portrays Anselm as a prophet sent to fulfil a divinely ordained task - restoring to Canterbury its rightful possessions and glory.³⁹ Of course, it must be admitted that this view, coloured by Eadmer's biases and political leanings, was a bit of propaganda, and that it is likely that Anselm did not see his mission in life as so exclusively centred on the see of Canterbury (although Vaughn certainly thinks so).⁴⁰ However, if Eadmer saw in Anselm a prophet with a political mission, it must be because he saw Anselm as both holy and wise (as prophet) and effective (as politician). I intend to show that Eadmer's balanced view of Anselm makes the best sense of his personality, his career and even of his literary production.

To do this it is necessary to know something of the historical background of Anselm and his life at Bec. In Chapter Two, a brief history of the Church in Normandy and England in the tenth and eleventh centuries will be given. Monasticism was transformed and re-invigorated during this period. As part of the Gregorian Reform, an ascetic renewal in Normandy was taking place at the time of Bec's foundation. It will be shown how the Abbey of Bec became a center for reform and embodied the ideals of monasticism and religious fervour. Under Lanfranc, Bec opened a great school where people from all over Europe came to study.

Chapter Three will examine the life and writings of Anselm in view of his careers as a scholar and monk. Anselm left his hometown of Aosta and spent three years travelling in France visiting various schools. After studying at Bec as a secular student, Anselm

³⁹ *VA*, pp. 12-14,27-28,35-36,41-43; *HN*, pp. 3-10 *passim*.

⁴⁰ Vaughn, *Anselm*, pp. 14, 121.

reoriented his life towards God and salvation by becoming a monk there. Under Anselm, the school at Bec changed its focus to become a training ground for monks. I intend to show that Anselm sought, not intellectual fame, but religious conversion. He sought to instill in his monk-students a true love of God through an increased understanding of their faith, and it was towards that end that he directed his life and writings. Anselm, as both a product and a driving force of the Norman religious revival, was a perfect candidate for the see of Canterbury. He was respected for his fervour and learning but also for his ability to handle affairs of the world. At Bec, he was the prior and abbot of the most flourishing abbey in Normandy and England, both in terms of the number of monks and the amount of revenues received. As such he had the necessary experience to be archbishop. That is to say, even at Bec Anselm had no difficulty in reconciling a devout and scholarly vocation with administrative and political talent, and this ability was recognised and applauded by his contemporaries.

Chapter Four will examine in detail some of the specific points of contention between the views of Southern and Vaughn about Anselm's political activities, especially his election to the archbishopric and his political program. These examples will serve as a testing ground to show that Vaughn, despite her protestations to the contrary, tends to construct her account in a way which casts Anselm in less than favourable light, and concludes, therefore, that this view diminishes the sanctity which Southern wishes to uphold.

Finally in Chapter Five, I will propose a new picture of Anselm showing how his vocations as a scholar, a monk and an archbishop are not contradictory, but mutually illuminating.

Two

Historical Background

I

Normandy and the Church

Normandy at the end of the tenth century was in great need of religious revival. During the Viking invasions by Rollo and his men at the beginning of the century, the Norman Church suffered: the bishoprics were vacant; there was a well organised exodus of monks from their monasteries, carrying their treasures and seeking refuge¹; priests married and lived as men of the world; religious fervour was at a low ebb.

During the peace of Duke Richard I's reign (942-996) a religious revival was attempted. By 990 all seven episcopal sees in Normandy had bishops and five monasteries had been founded.² Richard II (996-1026) continued the reform started by his father. Working closely with William of Volpiano, an Italian monk trained at Cluny and brought in as abbot of Fécamp, Richard attempted to instill Cluniac ideals in the monks of the area. From Fécamp monks went out to reform other monasteries such as Jumièges, Mont St. Michel and St. Ouen.³

¹ Bates, *Normandy*, p. 11.

² *Ibid.*, p. 189.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 192-3.

The success of the religious revival came to an end with the death of Richard in 1026. Richard III reigned only for a year before his death and Robert I (1027-1035) did not share his grandfather's ideals. The death of Robert, while on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1035, left control of the duchy to William II, an eight year old boy. The structural renewal of the Norman Church did not begin again until William was an adult.

Despite the decline of structural reform, religious fervour was not dead. Spreading across Western Christendom at this time was a longing for renewal. Gerhart B. Ladner in his article, "Terms and Ideas of Renewal" describes this as a longing for reform in the sense of *spiritual* conversion.⁴ One manifestation of this renewal was the restoration of old, and construction of new, churches. A contemporary monk, Ralph Glaber, described, in even clearer imagery, the rebuilding and restoration of churches in this way: "It gave the world the appearance of having bestirred itself, of having cast off old age, and of having put on all over a white costume of churches."⁵ Giles Constable points out that Glaber's comments invoke the image of baptismal renewal, represented by the white robe.⁶ The importance of Glaber's observation is that it shows how contemporaries likened the process of physical and spiritual renewal in the church to baptismal conversion, and the placing of the white baptismal garb on self as a sign of spiritual birth.

⁴ Gerhart B. Ladner, "Terms and Ideas of Renewal," *RR*, p. 1.

⁵ Raoul Glaber, *Les cinq livres de ses histoires (900-1044)*, edited by Maurice Prou [*Collection de textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire*] (Paris: Alphonse Picard, 1886), 3.4:13, p. 62.

⁶ Giles Constable, "Renewal and Reform in Religious Life: Concepts and Realities," *RR*, p. 39.

This period of reform and renewal of the Universal Church is known as the Gregorian Reform. The literature on the subject is immense.⁷ Norman F. Cantor describes it as the first, of only four, "world-revolutions".⁸ These political and structural interpretations are traditional. The Church, tyrannised by secular powers, unable to choose its own leaders, and involved in scandalous practices of simony and clerical-marriage, set about to purify itself and to establish its primacy.⁹ But this is to portray only one aspect of the enterprise. Any survey of the scholarship on the movement brings the realisation that the reform is not easily categorized. It was, at one and the same time, an arena for high papal politics, small episcopal skirmishes, wars of words with kings, local reform movements and many other things. The policies of the reform papacies were not always consistent with each other and different areas of Christendom responded to the reform in various ways.

The reform, a pontifical undertaking, took place, while elsewhere, other similar movements had already been developed under the leadership of princes, bishops or monks. Of course, Gregorians owe little and at times scarcely anything toward such initiatives, at least from the point of view of principles. They benefitted, however, from an undercurrent of thought, sympathy, requirements and religiosity all focused in a common direction.¹⁰

⁷ A major study has yet to be completed in English. The standard authority on the subject has been the magisterial work of Augustin J. Fliche, *La Réforme Grégorienne* (3 vols.; Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1924); see also Gerd Tellenbach, *Church, State and Christian Society at the Time of the Investiture Controversy*, translated by R.F. Bennett (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1940).

⁸ Cantor, p. 6.

⁹ Most notably put forward by Fliche, *Op. cit.*, Vol. II: pp. 185, 189-90 and *passim*.

¹⁰ *La réforme, qui est une entreprise pontificale, apparaît, alors qu'ici ou là, se sont déjà développés des mouvements identiques sous la direction des princes, des évêques ou des moines. Certes, les grégoriens doivent peu et parfois même presque rien à toutes ces initiatives, du moins du point de vue des principes. Ils bénéficiaient toutefois d'un courant d'idées, de sympathies, d'exigences et de religiosité qui allait dans le même sens.* Jacques Paul, *L'église et la culture en occident*, Vol. 1: *La sanctification de l'ordre temporel et spirituel* [Jean Delumeau and Paul Lemerle, eds., *L'histoire et ses problèmes*, Vol. 15] (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1986), p. 295.

Karl Morrison more accurately describes the essence of the movement when he suggests that by establishing a monarchical control over the Church, the reform papacy sought, "a greater spiritual end: the purification of the Church from secular domination."¹¹ The emphasis here is on the word 'spiritual'. The papacy considered three evils as eminently dangerous to the church: simony, married clergy and lay investiture. These three practices were not dangerous merely because they contravened canons of the Church. The faithful, clerical and lay, had accepted lay investiture and clerical marriage as the norm for many years. Rather, the change in policy arose because of an eleventh century awareness of the discrepancy between the image of the Church as it ought to be and its actual state. Gerhart Ladner, in his article "*Reformatio*", suggests that the Gregorian Reform, in stressing the importance of the Church's moral purity, viewed the discrepancies between the contemporary Church and the apostolic Church as a source of danger to its spiritual substance.¹² The problem was seen as a moral one, not merely as a structural or political one.¹³

Professor Tellenbach offers more positive insight into the issue. It was "a struggle for right order in the world."¹⁴ That being said, the definitions of what that right order might be are numerous and many-faceted. In Tellenbach's opinion, the

¹¹ Karl F. Morrison, "The Gregorian Reform," *Christian Spirituality: Origins to the Twelfth Century*, *Op. cit.*, p. 179.

¹² Gerhart B. Ladner, "*Reformatio*," *Images and Ideas in the Middle Ages: Selected Studies in History and Art*, Vol. II, edited by Gerhardt B. Ladner [*Storia e Letteratura: Raccolta di Studi e Testi*, Vol. 156] (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1983), p. 520.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 520.

¹⁴ Tellenbach, *Op. cit.*, p. 1.

Reform marked a change in emphasis of the Church. The Church no longer stood aloof from the world leaving it to be ordered by the monarchy. The Church embraced an active position in the world. Her mission was one of conversion.¹⁵

In the intellectual atmosphere of the eleventh century, stirred by a new interest in Platonic thought,¹⁶ a discrepancy between the ideal and the image was disturbing. Prior to the Reform, as Tellenbach noted, the Church was expected to distance herself from the corruptions of the world. Monks and hermits fled from the world to live a life devoted to God. In the eleventh century, however, this view of reality was questioned. The Apostolic Church was like the newly baptised person. Cleansed from its past corruptions, she was to direct her efforts to doing God's will. Her mission was clear: "Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to all creation. The man who believes in it and accepts baptism will be saved."¹⁷ Before the eleventh century, however, the Church was retreating from the world. The generally accepted view of the time was that man had been created in order to make up the number of fallen angels¹⁸; the only way to fulfil that purpose - to be

¹⁵ Tellenbach, *Op. cit.*, pp. 157-58.

¹⁶ Winthrop Wetherbee, "Philosophy, Cosmology, and the Twelfth-Century Renaissance," *A History of Twelfth-Century Western Philosophy*, *Op. cit.*, p. 24.

¹⁷ Mark 16: 15-16.

¹⁸ It is interesting that Anselm, despite his innovative views of monasticism, seems to have accepted this view. See Schmitt 2:74-76; *CDH*, pp. 224-226.

truly religious and devout - was to withdraw to a monastery.¹⁹ The imagery often associated with the monastery was the angelic life.²⁰

The Gregorian Reform, in its bid to change the direction of the Church's mission, served two purposes. First, the Church recognised itself as a distinct entity which needed to renew its initial apostolic mandate. The mandate was earthly, not angelic. Gregory VII spoke of the renewal of the Church (the corporate institution), its turning away from present sins to return to the newly-baptised Church of the apostles, in terms of Gregory the Great's themes of individual baptismal renewal.²¹ Secondly, the Reform was a call to individual conversion. Before the eleventh century, religion was not a matter of personal choice: Church and society were melded into one so that if one belonged to society one belonged to the Church.²² The result was a luke-warm faith. With no challenge to believe something different, with no challenge to move beyond the common everyday level of devotion, faith stagnated. For the individual who sought something more, the monastery was the only alternative. The Reform, however, challenged people to abandon their lethargy and join in the Church's mission of conversion. Just as the Apostles had to be converted before they embarked on their journey, so too did individuals have to convert before they could evangelise the rest of the world. As people gradually

¹⁹ Collin Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual 1050-1200* [V.H.H. Green, ed., *Church History Outlines*, Vol. 5] (London: SPCK, 1972), p. 31.

²⁰ Jean Leclercq, O.S.B., *The Life of Perfection: Points of View on the Essence of the Religious State*, translated by Leonard J. Doyle (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1961), pp. 15-42.

²¹ Gerhart B. Ladner, "Gregory the Great and Gregory VII: A Comparison of Their Concepts of Renewal," *Images and Ideas in the Middle Ages*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 629-664.

²² See Morris, *Op. cit.*, p. 24 and Evans, "A Change in Mind in Some Scholars of the Eleventh and Early Twelfth Centuries," *Religious Motivation*, *Op. cit.*, p. 29.

awakened to their faith, they began to ask new questions; they wanted to know the rationale of encompassing their whole lives with the Christian principles.

The vast spread of monastic houses witnesses to the spiritual needs of society as a whole, from which came the converts to monastic life and donations that established and sustained their houses...the spread of monastic orders provided ways for believers to satisfy their inmost needs, to endure suffering as proof of their faithfulness, and, if necessary, to unite the sacrifice of their own lives with the sacrificial and saving death of Christ.²³

Places like the Abbey of Bec in Normandy provided the answers being sought by this eleventh century awareness. It even provided an alternative to the typical monasticism. Anselm envisioned a universal call to monasticism, one that was based on interior conversion.

II

The Abbey of Bec

The history of the Abbey of Our Lady of Bec, near Rouen in Normandy is interesting from several perspectives. It became one of the wealthiest and most famous monasteries of the eleventh century. From the time of its foundation, Bec was seen as a reform monastery, not necessarily in any institutional sense but as a place satisfying the needs of the founder that could not be met anywhere else in the region. Two great men were to enter its cloister. The first, Lanfranc, firmly established the place in discipline, order, and intellectual activity. The second,

²³ Morrison, *Op. Cit.*, p. 189.

Anselm, continued the reform tradition and transformed Bec into a model of monasticism.

Herluin was thirty seven when he asked his lord, Count Gilbert of Brionne, to be released from his feudal obligations in order to embrace the religious life.²⁴ An illiterate man, Herluin set himself the task of learning the alphabet and soon became an expositor of Scripture.²⁵ In the village of Bonneville, Herluin himself began construction of a church. In order to acquaint himself with the life of a monk, Herluin visited some neighbouring monasteries only to be scandalized by the unseemly behaviour of worldly and barbarous monks. One night, however, while praying in the church of one monastery, the sight of an elderly, devout monk prostrated in prayer moved Herluin to realise that, "the great work of monks was prayer."²⁶

It was in this spirit of reform that Herluin decided to turn from the world, to renew his baptismal promises in a sense, and live the eremitical life. It is important to realise what a bold step this was. In the Normandy of 1034, monasteries were still founded by the duke. But an illiterate soldier, dissatisfied with the religious life around him, decided to live on his own land with a few followers and live an ascetical life.²⁷ While there was at this time an important eremitical movement in

²⁴ *VH*, pp. 69, 71.

²⁵ *VH*, p. 71.

²⁶ "*Il avait compris que la grande oeuvre du moine, c'était la priere...*" Porée, *Bec*, Vol. 1, p.38.

²⁷ Harper-Bill, *Op. Cit.* pp. 18-19 suggests that Herluin may have been received with less than the usual Benedictine hospitality in the monasteries because he was too illiterate to be considered as a possible vocation.

Italy²⁸, there is no reason to suggest that Herluin would have been influenced by, or even aware of, it. Even though Italians lived in Normandy at the time, and were the reason for Lanfranc's arrival in the area as a scholar, they were mainly part of monastic establishments such as Mont St. Michel.²⁹ Herluin's decision, therefore, was certainly an unusual, if not a downright brave, move to make. The number of Herluin's followers grew so large that he was persuaded by the Archbishop of Rouen to be ordained a priest and to receive the monastic habit in March, 1035.³⁰ With that, the abbey of Our Lady of Bec was founded. The abbey was in a precarious position. John Van Engen makes the observation that:

Discipline and well-being depended almost entirely upon the quality of an abbot, the oversight of a bishop, or the protection of a lord. Such considerable autonomy, combined with the difficulties of maintaining stability anywhere in this era, rendered Benedictine houses extraordinarily vulnerable.³¹

By the time Bec was formally erected as a Benedictine monastery in 1035, it had none of the pre-requisites that Van Engen cites as necessary for success. Bec was free from lay and ecclesiastical control and little could be expected of Herluin as abbot. It is also interesting to note that Herluin's biographer, Gilbert Crispin, an oblate at Bec, writing early in the twelfth century, juxtaposes Herluin's uniqueness to the lack of religious fervour at the time.³² Even though Crispin may have had

²⁸ Leclercq *et al.*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 110-115.

²⁹ Gibson, *Op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.

³⁰ *VH*, p. 72; Porée, *Bec*, Vol. 1, pp. 38-9; Porée lists ten followers of Herluin at this time.

³¹ John Van Engen, "The 'Crisis of Cenobitism' Reconsidered: Benedictine Monasticism in the Years 1050-1150," *Speculum*, Vol. 61, No. 2 (1986), p. 275.

³² *VH*, p. 69.

vested interests in portraying the exceptional excellence of his monastery, it nevertheless shows that the monks of Bec considered themselves more faithful to the Rule than the other monks of the area, and they considered that faithfulness part of their vocation. Thus, the founding of Bec encompasses two innovations -a spirit of ascetical reform and, although an accident of history but very beneficial later on, freedom from all ducal control.

Herluin and his monks lived in destitution, working long hours in the fields in order to support themselves. Even Herluin's mother helped by working in the kitchen and doing laundry.³³ A fire destroyed the original monastery and Herluin moved to the side of a small stream - Bec. Within a few years, Herluin owned the surrounding area and constructed a large church and wooden cloister.³⁴ The spiritual and intellectual training of the monks was almost non-existent and Herluin found himself having to leave the cloister for greater periods of time in order to provide for the needs of the monastery.

Lanfranc's arrival at Bec in 1042 changed the course of the small community. Lanfranc was a highly educated Italian who came to Normandy with a group of fellow intellectuals looking for fame as teachers.³⁵ After a religious conversion he entered Bec as a humble monk. Lanfranc was the thirty-fourth monk to enter Bec, which is amazing considering that the monastery was only eight years old when he

³³ *VH*, p. 73.

³⁴ *VH*, p. 73-4.

³⁵ *VH*, p. 75; Gibson, *Op. cit.*, p. 15. It is interesting to note that Lanfranc came to Normandy as a teacher; it suggests that there was a demand for teachers in Normandy at the time.

arrived.³⁶ Not long after his arrival, however, Lanfranc found living with the ignorant and barbarous Norman monks too much for him. He had decided to leave to become a hermit when abbot Herluin begged him to stay. Lanfranc agreed and was made prior.³⁷ This episode is an interesting commentary on the state of monasticism at Bec. The discipline of Bec was not as strict as Lanfranc wanted it to be. That is not to say that Bec was lax, only that it was not able in its infancy to live the Rule in all its detail. Nonetheless, the coarse Norman monks contrasted sharply with the refined manners of an educated Italian; there was opposition from the monks to Lanfranc at Bec.³⁸ Lanfranc set to work as prior to establish regular customs at the abbey, while Herluin continued to care for the business of the abbey.³⁹ It was Lanfranc who firmly established the Rule in all its detail at Bec; under his influence Bec became known for its purity of observance of the Rule and for its simple but beautiful liturgy. Lanfranc, as the academic, was also in charge of the claustral school.

A distinction needs to be made here. When St. Benedict speaks of monasticism as a "school in the service of the Lord"⁴⁰ he is referring to the monastery as a whole in which people learn to be monks, to devote their lives to prayer and the contemplation of God. But Jean Leclercq also points out, that the Rule also

³⁶ Porée, *Bec*, Vol.1, p. 629.

³⁷ *VL*, pp. 90-91.

³⁸ *VL*, p. 90; Porée, *Bec*, Vol. 1, pp. 54-5.

³⁹ *VH*, pp. 75-6.

⁴⁰ St. Benedict, *The Rule of St. Benedict*, edited with an English translation by Oswald Hunter Blair (Fort-Augustus, Scotland: The Abbey Press, 3rd ed., 1914), Prologue.

implies, or assumes, the presence of what is more commonly known as a school, in the academic sense.⁴¹ This school is known as the monastic - claustral - school. It was open to child oblates, young novices and even external children, not preparing for the religious life.⁴² The purpose of the school was to teach the future monks how to read Latin, how to write. Some would only need to be able to memorise the psalms which were chanted in the Divine Office; others, however, would need to learn grammar in order to read and write books for the library. The extensive catalogue of Bec's library holdings in the twelfth century indicate that illiteracy was not the norm at Bec.⁴³ Lanfranc's duty as prior was to instruct the child oblates (and young novices whose education was deficient) in the rudiments of Latin as well as the subjects of the trivium and quadrivium.⁴⁴ The goal of education was not academic competency; rather, it served the higher end of helping the monks serve God. "Education is not separated from spiritual effort; even from this viewpoint, the monastery is truly a 'school for the service of the Lord.'"⁴⁵

It was Lanfranc, as well, who made Bec into a school in the purely academic, or at least unmonastic, sense. In 1045, Lanfranc was allowed to open a canonical -

⁴¹ Leclercq, *LLDG*, pp. 12-14.

⁴² Emile Lesne, *Histoire de la propriété ecclésiastique en France*, Tome V: *Les écoles de l'an fin du VIII^e siècle à la fin du XII^e* (Lille, France: Facultés Catholiques, 1940), pp. 434, 514-15.

⁴³ See Geneviève Nortier, *Les bibliothèques médiévales des abbayes bénédictines de Normandie* (Caen, France: Société d'Impressions Caron et C^{ie}, 1966), Appendix II.

⁴⁴ Gibson, *Op. cit.*, p. 34.

⁴⁵ Leclercq, *LLDG*, p. 18.

extern - school.⁴⁶ This type of school was generally for externs, candidates for the priesthood from the village, who had received basic education and were in need of clerical training.⁴⁷ Philippe Delhay points out that these schools became increasingly important as more and more monks became priests and exercised their right to preach and administer the sacraments.⁴⁸ Rudiments of reading, sufficient for chanting the office, or spiritual reading, were not enough for these students. At Bec, however, Lanfranc was not teaching mere clerics and monks interested in the priesthood. He taught well educated men and young men of letters.⁴⁹ The teaching was much more advanced and, as such, his school was more akin to the cathedral schools of the next century. The attraction to Lanfranc was his exposition of Scripture.

Lanfranc was singled out as the master of the *artes* who was applying his skills to Christian doctrine; the method was familiar enough - the critical exposition of the meaning and structure of a text - but the material was new. The Psalter and the Pauline Epistles had become the set texts of Lanfranc's school.⁵⁰

After Lanfranc opened the doors of his claustral school to externs, the fame of Bec spread all over Europe. Bec's canonical school trained, among others, a future pope - Alexander II - as well as clerics and relatives of Pope Nicholas II.⁵¹ Even the

⁴⁶ Porée surmises, following William of Malmesbury, that the canonical school was opened to finance construction of new monastery buildings. Porée, *Bec*, Vol. 1, p. 54; *GP* 38.

⁴⁷ Lesne, *Op. cit.*, pp. 514-5; see also Leclercq, *LLDG*, pp. 194-95.

⁴⁸ Philippe Delhay, "L'organisation scolaire au XII^e siècle," *Traditio*, Vol. 5, (1947), p. 214.

⁴⁹ Lesne, *Op. cit.*, p.448.

⁵⁰ Gibson, *Op. cit.*, p. 39.

⁵¹ Porée, *Bec*, Vol. 1, p. 103; see also MacDonald, *Op. cit.*, pp. 26-27.

famed Ivo of Chartres is reported to have attended Lanfranc's lectures at Bec.⁵² Porée lists Bec's students who went on to become abbots and bishops.⁵³ With Lanfranc's advanced teaching and qualified students, it is no wonder that Bec became an elite "seminary of bishops and abbots."⁵⁴

III

Anselm's Early Years

Anselm arrived at Bec in 1059, just at the time when Lanfranc was achieving renown for his skill in refuting Berengar of Tours in the eucharistic controversy. Anselm did not come to Bec to enter the religious life. He had just spent three years travelling in France visiting various schools; Bec was one of these schools, and he came to hear Lanfranc. The three years Anselm spent travelling are an important, yet very elusive, clue to interpreting Anselm's life.

Born in 1033 in the Italian city of Aosta (then part of the kingdom of Burgundy), Anselm spent his childhood under the care of his devout mother. It was she who was the guide and 'anchor' of his life.⁵⁵ Before he was fifteen, Anselm

⁵² Robert of Torigni, 1117 A.D.; A. Clerval, *Les écoles de Chartres au Moyen-Age du V^e au XVI^e Siècles* (Paris: Minerva, G.M.B.H., 1895), p. 146 states that Ivo was a class-mate of Anselm's.

⁵³ Porée, *Bec*, Vol. 1, p. 103.

⁵⁴ Marjorie Morgan [Chibnall], *The English Lands of the Abbey of Bec* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946), p. 10.

⁵⁵ *VA*, pp. 4-6.

decided that he wanted to become a monk at the local Benedictine monastery.⁵⁶ The monastery refused to admit him because Anselm's father opposed it. Shortly thereafter, Anselm's mother died. Fighting with his father, and attracted to the youthful pleasures of the world, Anselm left home, around 1056 at the age of 23.⁵⁷ The details of the next three years are sparse.

Instead of going south into Italy - the easiest and most expected route - Anselm crossed the Alps in great discomfort and danger.⁵⁸ Relatives of his mother lived across the Alps, probably in Lyon, which would explain why he made the detour to cross the Alps at Mount Cenis instead of Great St. Bernard. Anselm's relatives would have been a welcome source of support.⁵⁹ We can safely assume that Anselm visited Cluny because he later showed knowledge of its routine.⁶⁰ However, the only stop recorded is one at Avranches, where Lanfranc taught before going to Bec.⁶¹ It may be that Anselm travelled there to hear Lanfranc only to find that he was at Bec. In any case, it was at Avranches that Anselm met Hugh, later Earl of Chester, of whom we hear so much in Anselm's later life.⁶² It is interesting that Anselm became friends with Hugh while he was still in the world. It suggests that their

⁵⁶ *VA*, p.5; P. Ragey, *Op. cit.*, p. 12, surmises that Anselm probably had received his early education at the monastery.

⁵⁷ *VA*, pp. 6-7.

⁵⁸ *VA*, pp. 7-8; Southern, *Anselm*, pp. 11-13.

⁵⁹ Southern, *Anselm*, p. 11.

⁶⁰ *VA*, p. 9.

⁶¹ See *VA*, p. 8,n.1; Ragey, *Op. cit.*, p. 27.

⁶² Ragey, *Op. cit.*, p. 27.

friendship was personal and not expedient or political. Hugh had the reputation of being very worldly and rowdy: it may give some indication of what Anselm himself was like at this time.

Anselm arrived at Bec in 1059 and spent a year studying under Lanfranc. We know that intellectual activity and fame was a priority of Anselm because of the difficult time he had deciding what to do with his life in 1060. The death of Anselm's father prompted Anselm to consider moving back to Aosta.⁶³ Anselm's main concern was to continue his scholarly activities and thereby gain fame. By this time, too, earlier thoughts of a religious vocation returned and Anselm considered becoming a monk. He could become a monk at either Cluny or Bec; but at Cluny there would be no time for study and at Bec, Lanfranc's fame would overshadow Anselm. Eadmer records that Lanfranc had attained a great ascendancy over Anselm, so much so that should he tell Anselm to stay in a forest and not come out, he would. Anselm went to Lanfranc for advice and presented three alternatives: he could become a monk, dwell in a hermitage, or live on his father's estate. Lanfranc was hesitant to direct Anselm in this matter and referred him to Archbishop Maurilius of Rouen. Maurilius advised Anselm to enter Bec as a novice.

In short, we know that Anselm left home and travelled for three years visiting various schools. During this time, he had abandoned earlier thoughts of a vocation

⁶³ Eadmer records that Anselm suddenly realised that his life as a student was no harsher than the life of a monk and therefore revived his old desire to be a monk. However, the fact that Anselm considered going back to Aosta where he could strive for intellectual fame, while still doing charitable work for God (Eadmer adds), suggests that Anselm's main priority was scholarly work. The fact that Anselm could go back to Aosta means that Anselm's father had died in the last four years, since Anselm left home; probably that occasion led Anselm to consider his future career moves. For the details of what follows, see *VA*, pp. 8-10.

and began to lead a worldly life. Arriving at Bec to engage in secular studies under Lanfranc, Anselm decided to become a monk, provided that he could still have time for his scholarly activities. There are several implications to these three years which are important for understanding Anselm's later life.

First, Anselm was raised as a layman, under a father of decayed nobility who, nonetheless, was influential enough to block his son's entry to a monastery in his early teens. Anselm spent three years, engaged in worldly affairs throughout France and even considered returning to Aosta to manage his father's estate. All of this suggests Anselm's familiarity with, and ease in, the world of feudal 'politics'.

Secondly, it is important to note Anselm's conversion to the religious life. After spending his youth in worldly pleasures, making the acquaintance of characters like Hugh, Earl of Chester, Anselm decided to turn his life towards God and become a monk. Interestingly enough, one of Anselm's first literary productions was a meditation entitled, *A Lament for Virginity Unhappily Lost*.⁶⁴ Whether or not the event actually occurred, the meditation can be seen as an exercise in trying to rouse the person from his lethargic state to a converted life. Anselm portrays the loss of virginity as a total immersion in the ways of the world. Just as one cannot regain the state of virginity, so too, without conversion, one cannot regain the state of innocence, the state of grace and salvation. This conversion to a living faith, as will be shown, is the driving force of Anselm's life and writings.

Thirdly, Anselm's three year quest for intellectual knowledge shaped, to a large extent, his unique program of assigning the quest for knowledge a primary place in

⁶⁴ Schmitt 3:80-83; Ward, pp. 225-229.

the spiritual life. Just as he first thought that knowledge, for its own sake, was the highest endeavour, so he quickly realised that knowledge ought to be directed to another end - the love of God.

Finally, Anselm's program of study before coming to Bec had a profound influence on what he wrote. His unusual emphasis on the use of reason, was not something new. Jaspar Hopkins outlines the various books and writers with whom Anselm would have been familiar.⁶⁵ He bases his information on Anselm's own citations as well as similarities in problems and examples used by Anselm and other authors. Undoubtedly, Anselm owes his greatest debt to St. Augustine of Hippo. Anselm himself cites Augustine's *De Trinitate* as the basis for the *Monologium*.⁶⁶ In *De Trinitate*, Augustine uses reason alone, as an authority, to address philosophical issues that have a bearing on theological truths. For example, he explains the nature of human thought in order to explain God as wisdom.⁶⁷ Anselm was also influenced by Boethius. His *Consolation of Philosophy*, is a work which uses reason to solve the problem investigated by the treatise.⁶⁸ But, just as with Anselm, the problem Boethius raised is quintessentially a Christian one - "how can good men suffer unjustly?". Only a Christian, who believes in a providential God, could ask such a question; in the same way, only a Christian could ask "why did God

⁶⁵ Hopkins, *Op. cit.*, pp. 16-37.

⁶⁶ *AEp.* 77; Pedrizetti, *Op. cit.*, pp. 455-56.

⁶⁷ St. Augustine, *The Trinity*, translated by Stephen McKenna, C.S.S.R. [Roy Joseph Deferrari, ed., *The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation*, Vol. 45] (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1963), Book 15, Chs. 10-11, pp. 473-480.

⁶⁸ Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, translated by H.F. Stewart, E.K. Rand and S.J. Tester [G.P. Goold, ed., *The Loeb Classical Library*] (2nd ed.; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1973, reprinted 1978).

become a man?". Both of these great thinkers, Augustine and Boethius, who would have been familiar to any serious scholar of Anselm's time, set precedents for Anselm's theological method. However, Anselm uses the knowledge gained from such intellectual pursuits in a different way. He bridges the worlds of secular learning and monastic living.

* * *

Firmly established as a monastery, living the Benedictine Rule with a renewed vigour in reaction (at least in their own eyes) to the monasteries around it, the monks of Bec tapped the spirit of renewal. Bec had become a veritable elite of monasticism. Orderic Vitalis, a contemporary of Anselm, describes Bec in these terms:

[T]he monks of Bec are so devoted to the study of letters, so eager to solve theological problems and compose edifying treatises, that almost all of them seem to be philosophers. [T]he school sent out many distinguished scholars and also prudent pilots and spiritual charioteers who have been entrusted by divine providence with holding the reins of the churches in the arena of the world...The whole community is full of joy and charity in the service of God, and because true Wisdom is their teacher they are unailing in their devotions. I cannot speak too highly of the hospitality of Bec.⁶⁹

Lanfranc's presence at the papal court for a year in 1049-50,⁷⁰ ensured that the monks of Bec were aware of the aims of the reform Papacy. Pope Gregory VII took a direct interest in Bec. This is evident from a letter he wrote to Anselm after receiving a complaint about Bec.

⁶⁹ OV 2:297.

⁷⁰ VL, p. 92; Vaughn, *Anselm*, p. 42.

The sweet odour of your virtues has reached us; we render prayers of thanksgiving to God and embrace you to our heart in the love of Christ, holding for certain that your exemplary work contributes to the good of the Church and that your prayers, as well as the prayers of those who imitate you, will, by the mercy of Christ, save us from the menacing perils...Someone has left at our feet, while on a pilgrimage to Rome, a complaint concerning one of your religious. "The Lord will judge the world with justice, he will look on his people with equity." Imitate your Lord, imitate the master from whom you have received the words of life. And we also direct that you settle this affair in the presence of our cherished son, Hubert, who, as we understand, is your friend.⁷¹

Gregory's legate, Hubert, often stopped at Bec during his travels in England and Normandy and eventually died at Bec in 1088.⁷² Bec's association with the papacy, and kings, meant that it dealt effectively in the world. David Knowles sums up Bec's life and fame well when he says:

Bec, in a little over a quarter of a century, from being a wholly obscure venture which was in a sense a reaction from the monasticism around it, came to rival and to surpass its neighbours in their most typical activities and to be the model and mistress of Norman monasticism.⁷³

But what did it mean for a monastery to be the 'model and mistress'? In 1060 it could not have been material grandeur, for Bec was still in the process of

⁷¹ *Quoniam fructuum tuorum bonus odor ad nos usque redoluit, quam dignas grates deo referimus, et te in Christe dilectione ex corde amplectimur; credentes pro certo tuorum studiorum exemplis ecclesiam dei in melius promoveri, et tuis similibusque tibi precibus etiam ab instantibus periculis, Christi subveniente misericordia posse eripi...Querimoniam apud nos fecit quidam peregrinus de quodam converso tuo. "Justus dominus iustitias dilexit, aequitatem vidit vultus eius." Imitare dominum tuum, imitare magistrum, a quo habes doctrinam vitae. Praecipimus etiam et nos, ut ei iustitiam facias coram Huberto, dilecto filio nostro, et - ut intelleximus - amico tuo. AEp. 102.*

⁷² Porée, *Bec*, Vol. 1, p. 171. See also *AEp.* 125 in which Pope Urban II mentions that he has heard of the death of his predecessor's legate at Bec.

⁷³ David Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England: A History of its Development from the times of St. Dunstan to the Fourth Lateran Council 943-1216* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940, reprinted 1950), pp. 91-2.

rebuilding its ramshackle quarters.⁷⁴ It could not have been the elaborateness of its liturgy, for Bec's liturgical style was decidedly a reaction to Cluny. The fame of Bec lay in its ability to capture, and inspire in others, contemporary ideals of what monasticism was.

These ideals, as Knowles points out, embodied the 'most typical activities.' Monasticism of the eleventh century sought to embody both a communal and personal life devoted to God. The charism of Bec did not, unlike Cluny, express itself in grand liturgical ceremony, nor great intellectual achievements (perhaps as achieved under Lanfranc); rather, as Orderic Vitalis mentioned, it was the monks' devotion to God with Wisdom as guide.⁷⁵ Bec monasticism was a life in which faith lived in each monk. Together they formed the corporate body of Christ, always subservient to its head, Christ. Because Wisdom was their teacher, the monks of Bec were able to attain a heightened understanding of their faith and therefore, 'were unfailing in their devotions.'⁷⁶ The ideal monasticism of Bec was a faithfulness to the baptismal promises which demand nothing more (and nothing less) than fidelity to God, and living according to His will. But Orderic also makes the observation that many monks were sent out to be pilots and charioteers of the church in the world. Bec, therefore, can be seen as embodying what Tellenbach noted as the change in emphasis of the church from detachment to active conversion. The monks of Bec were not totally separate from the world; rather, they

⁷⁴ Construction of the stone monastery began in 1060, a quarter century after its foundation. Porée, *Bec*, Vol. 1, p. 66.

⁷⁵ *OV* II:297.

⁷⁶ *OV* II:297.

renounced its enticements and concentrated on loving God. They were able therefore to go out, when called, and effectively teach others to do the same. Just as monasticism was no longer a place where people fled from the world, but rather consciously rejected it after a conversion of life, so these monks were best able to go back to the world and draw others where they themselves had been.

Three

Saint Anselm as Monk and Scholar

I

Monasticism as Baptismal Renewal

According to St. Benedict, the monastery is a particular kind of school. The monastery is neither an academic school, nor one with earthly interests; rather, it is, "a school of the Lord's service" in which monks may share "in the sufferings of Christ" and thereby "may deserve to be partakers of His kingdom."¹ The attraction, one may say even the necessity, of the monastery is clear, when it is realised that:

the Christian or the monk - it is all one - is in a dubious position. Already the son of God, of the Church, and of the christian law [sic], he remains nevertheless a son of folly, incapable of directing himself and subject to the fatal illusions of his self-will. The exact purpose of the monastery is to procure for him the sure direction which he cannot do without, while awaiting the day when alone he will perhaps be able to keep himself from sin, with the help of God.²

Three themes are clear in this modern analysis of St. Benedict's Rule - the unfulfilled baptismal promises of the Christian, his entrapment in self-will and the

¹ St. Benedict, *The Rule of St. Benedict, Op. Cit.*, Prologue.

² Adalbert de Vogué, *The Rule of St. Benedict: A Doctrinal and Spiritual Commentary*, translated by John Baptist Hasbrouck [*Cistercian Studies Series*, Vol. 54] (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1983), p. 19.

necessary penance of the monastery which directs him to heaven. These themes resonate with particular power against the eleventh century's quest for a religious renewal based on a model of baptismal conversion.

If Bec was a model of renewal, in this sense of moral purity and conversion of life, then it owed its fame to the ability of its spiritual teachers, most notably St. Anselm, to embody the new vision of the Church and specifically the "school of the Lord's service". Anselm's success in this regard is mirrored in his monastic students.

First, Gilbert Crispin, monk of Bec, Abbot of Westminster and close friend of Anselm, speaks of monastic profession as a second baptism in which a person repents for infractions made against his first baptismal promises. Profession is a new renunciation of Satan and a turning of one's life irrevocably towards God.³ This baptismal vision of monasticism has deep roots in the Benedictine tradition. The image is taken from Scripture in which Jesus says, "Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."⁴ The first command, "come to me", is seen as a call to baptism after which a person's soul is recreated and restored to righteousness.⁵ However, after baptism, the soul still bears the pain of earthly desires. While the soul is nonetheless free to choose God and remain righteous, it is also free to sin.⁶ This ability to sin marks the

³ Leclercq, "Une doctrine de la vie monastique dans l'école du Bec," *Op. cit.*, p. 479.

⁴ Matthew 11:28-9.

⁵ de Vogüé, *Op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁶ Schmitt 1:214-217; St. Anselm, *On Freedom of Choice*, in *Truth, Freedom, and Evil: Three Philosophical Dialogues* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1967), Ch. 5.

importance of the second command. The second phrase, "take my yoke upon you", is seen as the call to leave the world and in the spirit of a baptismal turning from sin, enter the monastery.⁷

[M]onastic life appears as an immediate prolongation of baptism. In the text of Matthew, the second appeal of Christ is inseparable from the first. Like the first, it is addressed to all human beings overwhelmed by the weight of their faults. It states the urgency and universality of the monastic vocation. In the eyes of our author [St. Benedict] there is no baptized person who is not called. This explains the severity he shows in more than one passage of his Rule to those who do not answer this appeal and who remain in the world.⁸

This baptismal vision of the religious life underlies Anselm's letters and prayers, and helps to place some of their more striking characteristics into perspective.

An overwhelming sense of sin is a common theme of Anselm's prayers. Three examples illustrate this.

Almighty God, merciful Father, and my good Lord, have mercy on me a sinner. Grant me forgiveness of my sins. Make me guard against and overcome all snares, temptations, and harmful pleasures.⁹

I long to come before you [St. Mary] in my misery, sick with the sickness of my vice, in pain from the wounds of crimes, putrid with the ulcers of sin. However near I am to death, I reach out to you.¹⁰

I am afraid of my life. For when I examine myself carefully, it seems to me that my whole life is either sinful or sterile. If anything in it seems fruitful, it is either imperfect or it is a pretence, or even in some way corrupt, so that either it fails to please or it actually displeases God. So, sinner, now not almost the whole, but certainly the whole of your life, is either sinful and damnable, or unfruitful and contemptible...O man, luke-warm and worthy to be spewed out, why

⁷ de Vogué, *Op. Cit.*, p. 14.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁹ *Prayer to God*, Schmitt 3:5; Ward, p. 91.

¹⁰ *Prayer to St. Mary (1)*, Schmitt 3:13; Ward, p. 107.

are you sleeping? He who does not rouse himself and tremble before such thunder, is not asleep but dead.¹¹

Anselm uses the image of a 'luke-warm' man. In the Book of Revelation the luke-warm, those neither hot nor cold in their faith, are condemned.¹² Anselm addresses himself, and his fellow monks, as luke-warm and reminds them of the call to choose or reject the faith. Also prominent in these passages are images of complete sickness and sinfulness which are a sign of spiritual death. The only way to life is through God. Anselm says in his prayer to St. John the Baptist:

You set aside, merciful Lord, the old rags of original sin, and clothed me in the garments of innocence, promising me incorruptibility in the future; and casting off what you had given me I busied myself with sordid sins; despising what you had promised...Give me back through the sorrow of penitence what you had given me through the sacrament of baptism.¹³

For Anselm, this recovery of the life promised at baptism, of being 'clothed in the garments of innocence', is made through monasticism. Eadmer recounts a story which shows that Anselm evidently equated salvation with monasticism.

Eadmer records in his biography of Anselm the story of one of Anselm's visions while ill in bed.¹⁴ Caught up into an ecstasy, Anselm was shown a vision of a river filled with the filth of the world. Then he was shown the true monastic life which was represented by a cloister with walls of silver. Finally, Anselm was asked if he would like to see of what true patience consisted, at which time he woke up in his

¹¹ *A Meditation to Stir up Fear*, Schmitt 3:76-77; Ward, pp. 221-22.

¹² Revelation 3:15-16.

¹³ Prayer to St. John the Baptist, Schmitt 3:27,29; Ward, pp. 128,132.

¹⁴ *VA*, p. 35-36.

sick bed. Presumably the meaning of the vision was that monasticism was the sure road to paradise and that it required patience. Eadmer notes that Anselm, "From this time therefore...gave himself up entirely to being a true monk and to understanding the rational basis of the monastic life, and expounding it to others."¹⁵

Monasticism was seen as the primary way of attaining union with Christ. Like baptism, it was a turning away from the world. That Anselm should be teaching this to his monks, such as Gilbert Crispin, at a time when the world was putting on "all over a white costume of churches" (symbolic of the baptismal gown) in its bid to "cast off old age"¹⁶ (symbolic of turning away from sin), is not unusual. It shows how much Anselm was a part of the spirit of ascetic renewal sweeping through the Church and how deeply monastic he was. It perhaps explains why Anselm changed, at Bec, the traditional black habit of Benedictine monks to a white one.¹⁷ In a very striking and symbolic way, the monks of Bec donned a white baptismal gown.

The second theme of eleventh-century monasticism was a total renunciation of self-will. Anselm used the analogy of two farmers, each of whom owned a precious fruit-tree. One of the farmers went to his lord and offered him the fruit; the other gave him the whole tree for his own use forever. The second farmer typifies the

¹⁵ *VA*, p. 36. G.R. Evans states that this phrase sums up the whole of the Anselmian program; see her article, *Anselm of Canterbury: A Monastic Scholar*, *Op. cit.*, p. 5.

¹⁶ Raoul Glaber, *loc. cit.*

¹⁷ Porée, *Bec*, Vol. 1, pp. 504 ff. It should be pointed out that the change in colour of the habit was not due to any sympathies Anselm may have had with the Cistercian "white monk" movement at that time in its infancy. It may be that the reason for the change was due to an increased devotion to Mary, under whose patronage Bec was founded, and her virginal purity symbolised by the colour white.

monk.¹⁸ The monk must unite himself totally to God and his superiors in the monastery. It is the only way that a man can be sure he will not renounce once again his baptismal promises.

Gilbert Crispin also speaks of the monastic habit as a constant symbol of the monk's voluntary crucifixion.¹⁹ This is the third theme of eleventh century monasticism. A desire to do penance is part of the movement, "to satisfy their inmost needs, to endure suffering as proof of their faithfulness,"²⁰ which characterised the Gregorian Reform. By giving up self will, by enduring the hardships of a life of obedience, chastity and poverty, the monk united his sufferings to those of Christ and atoned for his past sins. The spiritual teachers of Bec trained their students to renew baptismal promises.²¹ Such an act demanded a conscious effort, on behalf of the monk, to direct his life completely towards God. To accomplish that he had to give up his self-will, to discipline himself in order to guard against future transgressions.²² However, for a person to embark upon such a life

¹⁸ Anon. *Liber Anselmi archiepiscopi de humanis moribus per similitudines*, R.W. Southern and F.S. Schmitt, O.S.B., eds., *Memorials of St. Anselm* [The British Academy: *Auctores Britannici medii aevi*, Vol. 1] (London: The Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 73-74.

¹⁹ Leclercq, "Une doctrine de la vie," *Op. cit.*, p. 480.

²⁰ Morrison, *Op. cit.*, p. 189.

²¹ See Leclercq, "Une doctrine de la vie," *Op. cit.*, p. 479 where he quotes a monk of Bec: "*Beaucoup viennent du monde au cloître, parce qu'ils se damneraient en restant dans le monde, n'y accomplissant pas ce qu'ils ont promis au baptême...*" See also Glenn W. Olsen's article, "The First Community of Christians at Jerusalem," *SB II*, pp. 341-353, in which he traces the references in the writings of Lanfranc and Anselm to early monastic imagery of the cloistered life "preserving the first exalted conditions of Christian existence, often in contradistinction to a laity and Christian society which had abandoned... the ideals of the beginning. (p. 342)

²² See *AEp*. 37; *VA*, pp. 32-34, in which Anselm warns a novice against the wiles of the Devil. Obedience to the Rule, patience with fellow monks and abandoning self-will to God are the means to perfection. See *AEp* 232 in which Anselm tells a monk that one prayer said by an obedient monk is better than thousands of prayers said by a disobedient monk.

demanded that he be motivated to do so. Anselm devoted his life to motivating his monks. That consideration is the key to understanding his vocations as scholar, monk and archbishop.

II

The Interior Cloister

Part of Anselm's fame is due to the fact that he lived in a peculiar time. He was the first original mind since John Scotus Eriugena, two centuries before him, and the first innovative thinker to arise in an age that was earnestly in quest of explanations of the faith. Anselm recognised this need to expound the rationality of the faith and directed his efforts towards those who sought his help.

The Normans, of Anselm's time, were rustic and untutored people. Lanfranc found them so coarse that he wanted to leave Bec. It can be imagined that Anselm, a fellow Italian with refined tastes and manners, would have had the same difficulty. While modern visions of monasticism see it as a very quiet, pious and angelic life of gliding slowly around the cloister walk with Bible in hand rapt in contemplation, the actual state of monasticism in Anselm's day was very remote from such an ideal picture. Marjorie Chibnall's book, *The World of Orderic Vitalis*, provides valuable insight into the realities of contemporary monastic life.²³

The monastery was not a place of total seclusion. Unlike today, a monastery was an integral part of the social, political and economic functioning of medieval society. Benedictine houses were noted for providing hospitality, as prescribed by

²³ Marjorie Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis*, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1984).

Rule.²⁴ The monastery often found itself, in eleventh century terms, running a first class hotel.²⁵ Orderic records that Bec was known far and wide for its gracious hospitality.²⁶ Eadmer notes that Anselm often deprived himself of food in order to provide for the guests.²⁷ A monastery's other distractions were numerous. Some laymen worked inside the confines of monastic enclosure as servants, as infirmarians; some even assisted at liturgical functions.²⁸ One can imagine the news of the world that would be brought into the peace of the cloister. Many times hermits lived under the protection of an abbey outside its walls.²⁹ At Bec two widows received the veil from Anselm and lived as religious outside the abbey; Anselm referred to them as 'his dearest mothers'.³⁰

So friends and benefactors were received in the abbey's chapter-house for the ceremony of admission, and might on other occasions be allowed to share in the worship of the monastic church, or seek spiritual guidance from the monks in their own cloister. Whilst this was accepted as normal and even mutually beneficial, it followed that the monastic enclosure was not rigorous.³¹

²⁴ St. Benedict, *Op. cit.*, Ch. 53.

²⁵ C.H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages* (London and New York: Longmann, 2nd ed., 1989), p. 123.

²⁶ OV 2:297.

²⁷ VA, pp. 46-47.

²⁸ Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis*, *Op. cit.*, p. 79

²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 80.

³⁰ *AEp.* 118; Paschal D. Honner, O.S.B. in "Letters of St. Anselm to his Monks at Bec," *The American Benedictine Review*, Vol. 14 (March, 1963), pp. 152-55.

³¹ Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis*, *Op. cit.*, p. 70.

In addition to this, it must be remembered that the monastery also had secular authority and would often have to act as both the duke's judge and court to the neighbouring towns and villages. Eadmer records that Anselm delegated some of this work to others; however, Anselm himself was often in a crowd of litigants.³² We can conclude, therefore, that many monks had to leave the monastery on business. All of this did much to disturb the peace of the cloister.

As a remedy for this situation Anselm recommended turning "aside for a while from your daily employment." He instructed his monks to "Put aside your weighty cares, let your burdensome distractions wait, free yourself awhile for God and rest awhile in him. Enter the inner chamber of your soul."³³ The image is one of creating a cloister within the individual. In other words, the conditions of the feudal world in which monks lived necessitated re-drawing the frontiers of the cloister within the human heart. This image is even clearer in a work of uncertain authorship, but generally ascribed by leading scholars to Anselm, "De custodia interioris hominis".³⁴

The work is a commentary on the passage from Matthew's gospel in which Jesus says, "But know this, that if the householder had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have watched and would not have let his house be broken into."³⁵ The author says that the householder is the rational soul the family of whom has a tendency to be rebellious unless it is restrained. The house is the

³² *VA*, p. 46.

³³ Schmitt 1:97; *Proslogium*, p.239.

³⁴ Anon., *De custodia interioris hominis*, *Memorials of St. Anselm*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 354-360.

³⁵ Matthew 24:43.

soul into which the father gathers all the virtues into a small box so that the virtues can be guarded. The author cites two aims in keeping custody of the interior man: to keep out the thief - the devil and his vice - and to regulate the thoughts, senses and appetites towards virtue. Certain virtues regulate foreign intruders while others regulate the interior of the household.

From this we may surmise that each soul is analogous to a monastery where the abbot is the rational soul. Just as the box which contains the virtues seeks to keep out the devil and order the virtues, so the monastic enclosure seeks to keep out the world and to order the lives of monks toward virtue. It is noteworthy that these analogies also universalise monastic experience and allow anyone, even a layman, to keep the cloister within himself.

"By the middle of the eleventh century it was apparent that lay piety had in many cases attained the level of religious devotion hitherto only exhibited by the more conscientious among the clergy."³⁶ Increased lay piety explains why Anselm was on such good terms with people in the world who sought his prayers. But Anselm also answered a particular need of the time. In an age when people thought monasticism the only sure way to salvation, Anselm's interior cloister satisfied their innermost desires. The interior cloister suggests, also, that Anselm could still be faithful to his monastic vow even though he was an Archbishop away from the physical cloister.

The work continues with a dialogue between Prudence, speaking on behalf of all the virtues, and Remembrance of Death and Heavenly Desire. Hearing

³⁶ Norman F. Cantor, "The Crisis of Western Monasticism," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 66, No. 1(1960), p. 61.

descriptions of hell and heaven, the virtues are in a clamour to which the interlocutor, Heavenly Desire, says, "If you want to hear me, be silent and quiet; I cannot be heard among the clamour and tumult."³⁷ The image here is reminiscent of the Benedictine emphasis on silence in order to hear God speaking to the soul.³⁸ The clamour of a medieval monastery was distracting and it was necessary for a monk to keep interior custody of the cloister. The concept of the interior cloister helps to explain why Anselm would seem to sleep while at business meetings.³⁹ Shutting out the clamour, Anselm remained detached from the world; his bright mind allowed him, nonetheless, to conduct business effectively.

III

Anselm's Monastic School

The success of Anselm as a teacher, or of Bec as a model of monasticism is not the issue of contention. Rather, the debate centres on Anselm's motivation in teaching. To bring clarity to the issue requires an appreciation of the monastic

³⁷ "Si me vultis audire, silentium et quietem habete; non enim inter clamores et tumultus audiri possum," *De Custodia Interioris Hominis, Op. Cit.*, p. 358.

³⁸ St. Benedict, *Op. cit.*, Ch. 53; de Vogué, *Op. cit.*, p. 115.

³⁹ *VA*, 46.

context and intentions of Anselm's teaching. By portraying Anselm an academic teacher, and a Scholastic one at that, modern scholars risk a misinterpretation of both the content and the purpose of Anselm's writings. Anselm's success as a teacher, measured by his own standards and by the standards of his age, lies in his methods of forming men into monks, of turning all Christians from the world to God. It was to that end that Anselm directed his writings.

Eadmer provides valuable information on Anselm's teaching preferences:

Nevertheless his [Anselm's] chief care was for the youths and young men...He compared the time of youth to a piece of wax of the right consistency for the impress of a seal. 'For if the wax,' he said, 'is too hard or too soft it will not, when stamped with the seal, receive a perfect image. But if it preserves a mean between these extremes of hardness and softness, when it is stamped with the seal, it will receive the image clear and whole. So it is with the ages of men. Take a man who has been sunk in the vanity of this world from infancy to extreme old age, knowing only earthly things, and altogether set in these ways...He is the hardened wax; his life has not moved in these [spiritual] paths; he has learnt to follow other ways. Now consider a boy of tender years...Here indeed the wax is soft, almost liquid, and incapable of taking an image of the seal. Between these extremes is the youth and young man, aptly tempered between the extremes of softness and hardness. If you teach him you can shape him as you wish.⁴⁰

There are three things to notice in this passage: first, that in Anselm's mind, education meant moral and monastic formation, not academic training; secondly, Anselm's desire to train young men; thirdly, Anselm's image of impressing wax with a seal.

Anselm's emphasis on teaching as a process of moral training marks a significant departure from Lanfranc's emphasis on scholarly training. Bec's famous students - the popes, bishops, Roman clerics - all date from Lanfranc's day. There is no

⁴⁰ *VA*, p. 20-21.

reason to assume that Anselm continued the extern school after Lanfranc's departure for Caen.⁴¹ In fact, the evidence suggests the opposite. However, it is generally assumed that Anselm continued in the tradition of Lanfranc, giving lectures, with students gathered around his feet, in the words of Orderic Vitalis, as if everyone were a philosopher.⁴² Southern and Vaughn, however, disagree. They acknowledge that Bec no longer attracted secular students in Anselm's day; however, I think they misinterpret the change in emphasis by suggesting that Anselm continued Lanfranc's academic pursuits, but only with his monks.⁴³ This interpretation misrepresents what both Anselm and Orderic understood by monastic formation.

First, it is clear that after Lanfranc's departure Bec seems to have closed the doors of its external school. Pope Alexander II, himself a former pupil of Bec, sent people to study under Lanfranc at Caen rather than Anselm at Bec.⁴⁴ A contemporary of Anselm criticised him for not being as well known as Lanfranc.⁴⁵ Secondly, Anselm himself stated in a letter that he found it tiresome to teach boys

⁴¹ Gibson, *Op. cit.*, p. 35.

⁴² See Philippe Wolff, *The Cultural Awakening*, translated by Anne Carter (New York: Pantheon Books, 1968), p. 242; Charles Homer Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1927, 1955, reprinted 1967), pp. 38-9; Léon Maitre, *Les écoles épiscopales et monastiques en Occident avant les universités (768-1180)* (Ligugé, France: Abbaye Saint-Martin and Paris: A. Picard et fils, 1924), p. 82; Thibaud Maze, "L'abbaye du Bec au XI^e siècle," *La Normandie Bénédictine au temps de Guillaume le conquérant (XI^e siècle)* (Lille, France: Facultés Catholiques de Lille, 1967), p. 234; A.A. Porée, *Saint Anselme à l'abbaye du Bec*, *Op. cit.*, pg. 18; G.R. Evans, "St. Anselm and Teaching," *Op. cit.*, pp. 89-101 in which she says that Anselm's teaching was the exposition of purely academic problems that interested him.

⁴³ Southern, *Anselm*, p. 31, n.1; Vaughn, *Anselm*, pp. 68-69; see also Pierre Riché, "La vie scolaire et la pédagogie au Bec au temps de Lanfranc et de Saint Anselme," *SB II*, p. 219.

⁴⁴ Gibson, *Op. cit.*, p. 103.

⁴⁵ *AEp.* 19.

grammar.⁴⁶ Formal teaching was not something he enjoyed. The school, while under his supervision, was run in its day to day details by others.⁴⁷ The emphasis, on Anselm's part, was clearly not on academic pursuits in the modern understanding of the word.

An example of an earlier, though similar, school may help to clarify the problem. Older scholarship depicts Bishop Fulbert of Chartres as promoting advanced types of secular learning, such as is found in the modern university.⁴⁸ However, as Loren C. MacKinney points out, there is little evidence to support this claim. The interpretation is based on a loose translation of a phrase from one of Fulbert's letters - *causa discendae honestatis*.⁴⁹ Scholars have translated this as 'for the sake of studying letters' instead of 'for the sake of learning virtue', which was Fulbert's meaning.⁵⁰ MacKinney concludes that, "the dominant purpose of Fulbert and his school was not the advancement of the liberal arts, but the training of young clergymen in orthodoxy and morality."⁵¹ MacKinney also makes the astute observation that:

⁴⁶ *AEp.* 64; St. Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo: to which is added, Op. cit.*, p. 124.

⁴⁷ Lesne, *Op. cit.*, p. 120; see also *AEp.* 39; Pedrizetti, *Op. cit.*, p. 449, in which Anselm mentions that Guido has been teaching the young students.

⁴⁸ Clerval, *Op. cit.*, pp. 94 ff.

⁴⁹ Letter 76 of Fulbert of Chartres edited by Frederick Behrends in *The Letters and Poems of Fulbert of Chartres* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1976), p. 136.

⁵⁰ Loren C. MacKinney, *Bishop Fulbert and Education at The School of Chartres* [A.L. Gabriel and J.N. Garvin, eds., *Texts and Studies in the History of Mediaeval Education*, Vol. 6] (Notre Dame, Indiana: The Mediaeval Institute, University of Notre Dame, 1957), pp. 23-24, 24 n.75.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

Fulbert's teaching of theology was pious rather than rational, a subject for tearful pleading rather than scholastic lectures with subsequent student discussion groups...Fulbert's school was anything but a Socratic academy; it was more nearly modeled after Christ's group of disciples.⁵²

Similarly, modern scholars misinterpret Anselm's emphasis on the use of reason as an indication of a scholastic bent rather than moral formation. Just as in the case of Bishop Fulbert, there is little evidence that Anselm carried on formal lectures, or that the content of his teaching was secular in nature. He wrote only one treatise on grammar which he says was to introduce the student to the study of dialectic.⁵³ The rest of his writings are theological in nature. Be that as it may, there is more positive evidence that Anselm's school was more like Fulbert's than Lanfranc's. This is evident from Anselm's desire to impress young men with the seal of virtue, much like a seal forms a waxen image. He was interested in moral formation.

When Eadmer describes Anselm's preference for training young men he uses the words *adolescens* and *juvens*. Elizabeth Sears, in her book, *The Ages of Man*, traces the various medieval conceptions of infancy, childhood, adolescence and other stages in the life of a man.⁵⁴ Her research shows that *adolescens* referred to people in their teens and early twenties; *juvens*, people in their twenties and thirties, perhaps even forties.⁵⁵ Clearly, Anselm was neither interested in teaching young children nor

⁵² MacKinney, *Op. cit.*, p. 34. See also Behrens, *Op. cit.*, pp. xiii-xlii, esp. p. xvi, xxxvi where he discusses the attraction Fulbert's students had to him.

⁵³ Schmitt 1:173; St. Anselm, *De Veritate*, in *Truth, Freedom, and Evil*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 89-90.

⁵⁴ Elizabeth Sears, *The Ages of Man: Medieval Interpretations of the Life Cycle* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, *passim*.

older monks. Rather, he was intent on teaching young men, perhaps 18-30 years in age, who were still tractable. Tractability was a necessary character trait for Anselm's teaching. Young children would possibly outgrow Anselm's moral training; older men were already set in their bad habits. This requirement of tractability was closely bound up with Anselm's notion of monastic life as a form of baptismal conversion.

Anselm refers to pressing an image on a person in his prayer to St. John the Baptist. He says:

You refashioned your gracious image in me, and I superimposed upon it the image that is hateful. Alas, alas, how could I? How could I, miserable and crazy little man that I am, how could I superimpose that image upon the image of God?⁵⁶

Though created in the image of God, man has superimposed an image of sin upon God's image. Praying to St. John the Baptist, the patron of baptismal conversion as it were, Anselm seeks the grace to renew the image of God. It is the image of God that he wishes to impress, like a seal upon wax, on his young novices. Impressing the image of God meant moral training. Anselm desired monks not scholars.

Eadmer provides one other indication of Anselm's theories of education. An abbot was speaking to Anselm about his problems disciplining young boys in the cloister. He told Anselm that no matter how much the boys were beaten, they remained incorrigible. Anselm, astonished at this report, admonished the abbot in this way:

You have spent your energies in rearing them to no good purpose: from men you have reared beasts...At their oblation they are planted in the garden of the Church, to grow and bring forth fruit for God.

⁵⁶ Prayer to St. John the Baptist, Schmitt 3:27; Ward, p. 129.

But you so terrify them and hem them in on all sides with threats and blows that they are utterly deprived of their liberty...they harbour and welcome and nurse within themselves evil and crooked thoughts like thorns...But, in God's name, I would have you tell me why you are so incensed against them. Are they not human?...if you want your boys to be adorned with good habits, you too, besides the pressure of blows, must apply the encouragement and help of fatherly sympathy and gentleness...just as weak and strong bodies have each their own food appropriate to their condition, so weak and strong souls need to be fed according to their capacity...the weak soul, which is still inexperienced in the service of God, needs milk, -gentleness from others, kindness, compassion, cheerful encouragement, loving forbearance, and much else of the same kind. If you adapt yourself in this way according to the strength and weakness of those under you, you will by the grace of God win them all for God, so far at least as your efforts can.⁵⁷

Here we see Anselm embodying the Benedictine spirit of gentleness, of mitigating the harshness of the Rule according to each man's needs. This is in perfect accord with St. Benedict's admonition to abbots to:

[O]bserve the bidding of the Apostle, wherein he says: 'Reprove, entreat, rebuke': mingling, as occasions may require, gentleness with severity; shewing now the rigour of a master, now the loving affection of a father, so as sternly to rebuke the undisciplined and restless, and to exhort the obedient, mild, and patient to advance in virtue...Let him so accommodate and suit himself to the character and intelligence of each, winning some by kindness, others by reproof, others by persuasion, that he may not only suffer no loss in the flock committed to him, but may even rejoice in their virtuous increase.⁵⁸

The desired result of this individualized teaching was not obedience to the Rule for that end alone; rather, obedience was the means to the end of being a holy monk, of loving God. What did it matter if a monk was perfectly observant of the Rule if he did not love God? As Benedicta Ward shows, it was necessary, in

⁵⁷ *VA*, 37-39.

⁵⁸ St. Benedict, *Op. cit.*, Ch. 2.

Anselm's mind, to do more than wear the habit.⁵⁹ In his prayer to St. Benedict, Anselm laments, "I profess myself a soldier, a scholar, a monk, but my life cries out that I am a liar."⁶⁰ Content, rather than form; action, rather than intention, mattered in the religious life.

Anselm also had to consider the character of his monks while forming them. Although Bec was noted for its rigorous observance and purity, there is no need to assume that each individual monk fit that role. One need only recall the resentment of the monks that Anselm was elected prior at such an early stage in his vocation.⁶¹

R.W. Southern says of monks during this period:

The monasteries were filled with a conscript army [i.e. oblates]. It was not an unwilling or ineffective army on that account; the ideal of monastic service was too widely shared for the conscription to be resented. But the circumstance that many men and women in the monasteries had no special aptitude for the life presented a further problem. Communal effort, at the best of times, is easily dissipated, and readily evaporates in a multitude of trivial channels. Sickness, absence, the necessary offices of life call men away from the main task.⁶²

Bec, at least in its early years, accepted oblates; Gilbert Crispin was one.⁶³ It was only natural that a monastery with people not particularly suited to the monastic life; with people who had to attend to daily human needs of the monks perhaps at the

⁵⁹ Benedicta Ward, *Anselm of Canterbury, A Monastic Scholar, Op. cit.*, p. 8.

⁶⁰ Prayer to St. Benedict, Schmitt 3:63; Ward, p. 198.

⁶¹ *VA*, 15-16; see also *HN*, p. 59.

⁶² R.W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1953, reprinted 1964), p.162.

⁶³ From a discussion about the virtues of both oblates and adult conversions in which Anselm says both are to be valued we can infer that Anselm had oblates at Bec. See *De Humanis moribus, Op. cit.*, pp. 68-69.

expense of taking part in the regular monastic routine; with people who, having lost their initial fervour, suffered from accidie; would need to be converted in order to become the "model and mistress" that Bec was.

To put the matter simply, Anselm taught in order to make monks. Statistically speaking, he did just that. From the foundation of the monastery to Herluin's death, forty-four years later, Bec professed 136 monks; during the fifteen years of Anselm's abbatiage, 151 more monks had professed.⁶⁴ Anselm taught them the necessity of fulfilling baptismal promises, the value of renouncing self-will in order to do so, and the benefit of the monastic life in attaining eternal life. He did so by directing the monks' minds to an understanding of what they were doing.

IV

The Role of Knowledge in the Religious Life

For Anselm, union with God was closely linked to knowledge. This is, in fact, rather innovative. The emphasis on intellectual training, not side by side with (as under Lanfranc) but as an integral part of monastic asceticism is distinctive of Bec under Anselm. It is thus that Orderic can refer to the monks of Bec as philosophers. The religious life was considered a manifestation of rational living - the rationality of despising the vanity of the world - and there was a medieval

⁶⁴ Porée, *Bec*, Vol. 1, p. 165.

tradition of equating monks with philosophers.⁶⁵ It is in this context that Orderic's high praise of Bec should be understood. Anselm's unique formula of union with God through knowledge was also an answer to a new eleventh century vision of the role of reason and thought in the Christian life.

The development of the pupil's critical faculty was intended only to help him discriminate in favour of those qualities which had already proved excellent. In the case of a pupil of St. Anselm, it was felt that the more clearly he learned to think, the more clearly would he perceive the truths of orthodox Christian faith.⁶⁶

Anselm was educating his monks to choose excellent qualities - virtues- because they had already been proved excellent, just as he tried to understand his faith only because he believed it. Intellectual training was linked to moral training in this way: if the monks understood how virtue led to God then they would want to embrace it. But someone needed to impress the image of the virtues on the waxen spirit of the young monk - to form the character of the young minds in favour of virtue. It was natural for Anselm to seek out young men from amongst the monks. Their minds were expanding; they were seeking knowledge. The seal had to be applied to the wax at this crucial time.

The better the mind, the more Anselm wanted to work with it.

The prime need for a boy in a monastic school was that he should master a fixed body of knowledge, sufficient to enable him to sustain his part in the round of services, and to have some understanding of the books he received for private reading. The function of the master of a monastic school was to ensure that he did so...[the student of Bec fame required] something more than a mere grounding in essentials.

⁶⁵ Leclercq, *LLDG*, pp. 100-101; Peter Abelard, *Historia Calamitatum*, translated by J.T. Muckle (Toronto: The Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1964), p. 35.

⁶⁶ Evans, "St. Anselm and Teaching," *Op. cit.*, p. 89.

In both kinds of student, Anselm would have found quickness of understanding helpful.⁶⁷

As G.R. Evans correctly points out, Bec's students were exceptional - an indication of the demand of the world around Bec for a deeper understanding of the faith. The degree of their intelligence provided a greater opportunity for directing their minds towards God. Evans is correct in her assessment of Anselm's educational goals. She says:

[Anselm's] own powers of analysis and synthesis were formidable; he expects nothing like them in his pupils. But he adopts a system of guided questioning which will enable the student to feel his way through an ordered programme of discovery.⁶⁸

Anselm did not seek an ordered program of study; rather he wanted the monk to increase his religious fervour through an interior and personalized process - a monastic not scholastic process. Through intellectual application, Anselm hoped that his inquisitive students would deepen their faith by thinking it through, by discovering 'the rational basis of monastic life'. Guibert of Nogent, a monk who made Anselm's acquaintance, tells how Anselm helped him to overcome a moral difficulty through the use of intellectual instruction.

In his autobiography, Guibert explains how he had been given to the vanities of reading pagan authors and trying to model himself after them as a writer. After confessing this sin, Guibert set himself to the task of studying Scripture, often with the help of Anselm who visited Guibert's monastery. It was Anselm who taught Guibert how to regulate the body against the impure motions from which he was

⁶⁷ Evans, "St. Anselm and Teaching," *Op. Cit.*, p. 94.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

suffering, presumably from his pride and the reading of pagan authors. By explaining what he saw as the four-fold division of the mind, Anselm showed Guibert that it was possible to control the will. If Guibert could control his will, then he could control his propensity towards impurity.⁶⁹ Thus what seems at first glance to be metaphysical speculation was really moral instruction.

In his autobiography, Guibert also speaks of two senses of conversion: the more common sense of entering monastery and the sense of a real spiritual conversion - a complete redirecting of one's life toward God.⁷⁰ It is obvious that Anselm understood this nuance of meaning: he taught that monasticism was a second baptism, a voluntary crucifixion.⁷¹

Anselm's own career was an example of the second type of conversion. He left Aosta seeking intellectual renown but ended up a monk at Bec: he turned away from the vanity of self-seeking fame to seek perfection in a poor monastery. His predecessors Lanfranc and Herluin followed the same pattern. G.R. Evans, in her article, "A Change in Mind in Some Scholars of the Eleventh and Early Twelfth Centuries," examines this phenomenon of conversion.⁷²

In Guibert's day it was acceptable to be a Christian in every sphere of society. [One is] not dealing here with the conversion of intelligent men who may have to face some ridicule from their friends if they declare themselves Christians...But a creed which enjoys full

⁶⁹ Guibert of Nogent, *Self and Society in Medieval France: The Memoirs of Abbot Guibert of Nogent*, translated and edited by John F. Benton [Adams et al., *Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching*, Vol. 15] (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), pp. 87-90.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

⁷¹ Leclercq, "Une doctrine de la vie," *Op. cit.*, p. 480.

⁷² Evans, "A Change in Mind in Some Scholars of the Eleventh and Early Twelfth Centuries," *Religious Motivation*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 27-38.

intellectual respectability may nevertheless be more or less apathetically believed by many...[this is not] conversion from unbelief, but...conversion from half-hearted belief to full commitment.⁷³

Evans also speaks of a conversion from mistaken belief. Both conversion from half-hearted belief and conversion from mistaken belief were the intent of many of Anselm's writings. It is this factor that makes Anselm a monastic theologian. He did not seek to compile a complete survey of theology; rather, he sought to provoke the individual and personal conversion of the Christian.

Two of Anselm's works, especially, may be said to be directed towards conversion from mistaken belief. The genre of dialogues between Christians and Jews, such as Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo*, had as its purpose the refutation of Jewish and Moslem criticisms of Christianity.⁷⁴ Anselm wrote his work *De Processione Spiritus Sancti* to refute the erroneous Greek view of the Trinity. While these are his attempts to convert people from mistaken belief, there is no reason to believe that they were written for this purpose exclusively.

Cur Deus Homo is a moving exploration of God's love for man, the proof of which is the Incarnation. Man responds by loving God. He does this by refraining from sin: it would be better that the earth be destroyed and the heavens collapse than that a man should commit the smallest sin against God.⁷⁵ These themes are material for meditation and conversion. Unlike other dialogues of this genre, interestingly enough, the interlocutor is not a Jew but a fellow monk, Boso.

⁷³ Evans, "A Change in Mind in Some Scholars of the Eleventh and Early Twelfth Centuries," *Religious Motivation, Op. cit.*, p. 29.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

⁷⁵ Schmitt 2:89; *CDH*, p. 243.

Anselm's target audience was primarily monastic. The same is true of *De Processione Spiritu Sancti*. Anselm states at the beginning of the work that his intent is to satisfy the requests of others, who with great religious desire, want to know the necessity of believing the truths they confess.⁷⁶

Most of Anselm's other works were directed to converting people from luke-warm belief. One cannot really conceive of monks having doubts about the existence of God; yet, Anselm surely had a purpose in writing the *Proslogium*. It was to draw Christians from their state of accidie - complacent, superficial belief - to a fervent, committed, informed and interior love of God. At the end of the work, after proving God's unquestionable existence, Anselm addresses Him saying: "Let the knowledge of thee advance in me here [Earth], and there [heaven] be made full. Let the love of thee increase, and there let it be full, that here my joy may be great in hope, and there full in truth."⁷⁷ Anselm fittingly concludes the work in this way, emphasizing the growth of love that accompanies the increase of knowledge.

Even Anselm's letters were directed toward conversion. He often uses apparently exaggerated images in his correspondence to express his delight at people entering the monastic life, leaving behind their luke-warm faith. To one person, whom he didn't even know, Anselm wrote:

My eyes eagerly long to see your face, most beloved; my arms stretch out to meet your embraces. My lips long for your kisses; whatever remains of my life desires your company, so that my soul's joy may be full in time to come.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Schmitt 2:177; *Processione Spiritus Sancti*, p. 183.

⁷⁷ Schmitt 1:121; *Proslogium*, p. 80.

⁷⁸ *AEp.* 120; Southern, *Anselm*, p. 72.

These are strange words but not when it is realised that Anselm's expressions of strong friendship were not 'personal' in the modern sense of the word but a "general attitude towards his fellow religious."⁷⁹ In Anselm's eyes, they were spiritual friendships; thus, he did not see anything strange in requesting that recipients of his letters pass them on to other people as if they were written to each individually.⁸⁰ The joy of Anselm's heart was to see a worldly person enter a monastery: "Delay not thy so great good, and fulfil my yearning for thee, that I may have thee for my companion in following Christ."⁸¹

It is evident, from his constant disclaimer that he is writing at the request of others, that Anselm was explaining in greater detail those things which he discussed with his monks, those meditations which brought about his own conversion. The works are the fruit of his spiritual life. Anselm was a scholar; however, when he became a monk, he channelled those energies towards a higher end. Understanding how his faith was true, Anselm desired to pass on to his students the joy of such knowledge.

There were two reciprocal purposes in seeking this conversion in his monks. First, Anselm was concerned about salvation. Scripture says the thief may come at any time. If the monk wishes to be saved, he must be prepared; therefore, a monk must live continually as if this were his last minute. Secondly, there is direct link between knowledge and love for Anselm. He lived in an age in which there were

⁷⁹ Mary-Rose Barra, "Reflections on Anselm's Friendship and *Conversatio*," *AS* 2, p. 175.

⁸⁰ *AEP*. 4, 5; St. Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo: to which is added, Op. cit.*, pp. 117-120.

⁸¹ *AEP*. 117, 54; St. Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo: to which is added, Op. cit.*, pp. 130-134, 123 respectively.

no distinctions between knowledge and prayer, reason and desire, reason and faith.⁸² *Fides quaerens intellectum* means that knowledge of what one believes helps the person believe more fervently. Anselm was not aware of Aristotle's distinctions between theoretical and practical knowledge; for Anselm, all knowledge was practical, and served some other end.⁸³ Knowledge served to move the will to love God. In heaven, the Beatific Vision is a vision of full knowledge of God - joy is to be found in truth.⁸⁴ Truth pertains to the intellect and knowledge, not the will.⁸⁵ Thus beatitude comes through knowing (understanding in Anselm's terminology) and hence loving God as Truth. The more knowledge one has on Earth the closer one can be to heavenly life. The *Proslogium* can thus be analyzed as an exercise in discovering truths about God - His necessary existence - and using that truth as a subject of prayer.

According to Augustine, "To believe is to think with assent."⁸⁶ That is to say, to believe is to recognise as true that which one is thinking. Anselm says much the same thing in the *Proslogium*: "no one who understands what God is, can think that God does not exist." Knowledge of God brings about the assent of faith in His

⁸² Massimo Parodi, *Il conflitto dei pensieri: Studio su Anselmo d'Aosta*, Quodlibet 3 (Bergamo, Italy: Pierluigi Lubrina, 1988), p. 89.

⁸³ See Michael W. Strasser, "Anselm and Aquinas: Center and Epicenter," *From Cloister to Classroom: Monastic and Scholastic Approaches to Truth* [Rozanne Elder, ed., *The Spirituality of Western Christendom*, Vol. 3] (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications Inc., 1986), p. 133.

⁸⁴ Schmitt 1:121; *Proslogium*, p. 266.

⁸⁵ "*Veritas est rectitudo mente sola perceptibilis.*" Schmitt 1:191; "[W]e can define truth as the rightness perceptible only to the mind." St. Anselm, *De Veritate*, in *Truth, Freedom, and Evil*, *Op. cit.*, p. 110.

⁸⁶ St. Augustine, *De Praedestinatione*, Ch. 5, in Whitney J. Oates, *Basic Writings of Saint Augustine*, Vol. 1 (New York: Random House, 1948), pp. 780-81. One must not confuse 'assent' with an 'act of the will'. The intellect assents to that which it knows is true; the will assents to that which it desires.

existence. Knowledge is crucial to the process of "Faith seeking understanding [for the purposes of increasing faith]." Anselm did not write in traditional modes, using quotations from the Fathers, for a very good reason: such references, strictly speaking, would have been unnecessary. The 'superficial' believer knew them already; what he needed to discover was why they were true. The Fathers make reference to matters which are part of a serious spiritual life, which are profoundly theological. To someone who has not given much thought to such matters, the references have little meaning. It would be analogous to speaking to children of the principles of multiplication when they had been taught only simple addition and subtraction. The former has its roots in the latter, but if the children have never explored the heights of advanced mathematics, the concepts are meaningless. Anselm had to appeal to his monks' intellects, after which the Fathers would take on new meaning.

Until the eleventh century, the main focus of monasticism was on the corporate life. What mattered was the communal observance of the rule, the communal celebration of the *Opus Dei* and a person's belonging to the community.⁸⁷ With the revival of religious fervour at this time there is a noticeable change in emphasis from the corporate to the individual. Self-knowledge was seen as the path to God.⁸⁸ Confession ceased to be considered primarily as a public action and was seen more as an act of interior compunction. Outward penance was not nearly as important as

⁸⁷ Even as late as the Cluniac movement, great emphasis is placed on communal prayer and the elaborate celebration of the Divine Office. The corporate life, the singing, was considered to be in imitation of the angels who continually sang the praises of God. See Leclercq, *The Life of Perfection*, *Op. cit.*, p. 20-26.

⁸⁸ Morris, *Op. cit.*, p. 66.

internal conversion from sin.⁸⁹ Anselm's concept of prayer was directed toward interiority. Even the monastic enclosure was essentially in the mind. At this time too, the eremitical life, as an expression of a new solitary type of relationship with God, was gaining in popularity. Anselm's age was one that was sounding out new modes of expressing what in modern terms could be called 'the self'.⁹⁰ The call to reject the values of the world and live for God was one that necessitated strength of character. Those who made the break with the world provide some of the earliest examples of biography and autobiography.⁹¹ In the conflict between the two worlds, "some outstanding men found themselves as individuals."⁹² This is evident from Anselm's writings. They were 'an intellectual autobiography,'⁹³ meant to act as a record, for others, of Anselm's conversion and process of understanding his faith.⁹⁴

Because Anselm was concerned with this new emphasis on interiority, with assent to faith, with understanding what one believed, we must digress now and examine the process of conversion and the place it has in Anselm's writings. For

⁸⁹ See Morris, *Op. cit.*, pp. 70-75, esp. p. 75; Leclercq, *et al.*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 50-51; Rosalind and Christopher Brooke, *Popular Religion in the Middle Ages: Western Europe 1000-1300* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1984), p. 118.

⁹⁰ Morris, *Op. cit.*, p. 67

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 32; Peter Damiani, Odo of Cluny, Otloh of Saint Emmeram, Guibert of Nogent all wrote biographical or autobiographical works.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ Evans, *Anselm and Talking About God*, *Op. cit.*, p. 4.

⁹⁴ Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983), pp. 332-333.

this purpose, Katherin A. Rogers' article, "Can Christianity be Proven? St. Anselm of Canterbury on Faith and Reason" provides invaluable insight.⁹⁵

Given Anselm's famous statement about believing in order to understand, his use of rational arguments to bring people to faith becomes clear. For the most part Anselm was writing for monks, people who already believed. However, his arguments could also be used to convert people from error. Reason as a tool to bring people closer to God was important for those within and outside the faith.

In *Cur Deus Homo*, Anselm provides an excellent analysis of his theory of faith. He says: "The understanding which people can achieve in this life is half-way between faith and vision."⁹⁶ Rogers comments, "One must conclude that, by as far as the beatific vision exceeds the understanding which one can achieve of God in this life, that understanding exceeds mere belief to the same extent."⁹⁷

The process of conversion has four stages.⁹⁸ First, a person investigates the reasonableness of the tenets of faith; he examines whether or not it is rational to believe, for example in the notion of the Trinity. Second, after the mind recognises the tenets of faith as true, the person assents intellectually to them. This stage marks a basic, elementary level of 'understanding'. Belief is not due so much to a recognition of faith's inner logic as much as assenting to the idea of obedience to an

⁹⁵ Katherin A. Rogers, "Can Christianity be Proven?: St. Anselm of Canterbury on Faith and Reason," *AS* 2, pp. 459-79.

⁹⁶ [Q]uoniam inter fidem et speciem intellectum quem in hac vita capimus esse medium intelligo. *Cur Deus Homo: Commendatio operis ad Urbanum Papam II* in Schmitt II:40.

⁹⁷ Rogers, *Op. cit.*, p. 464.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 464.

all powerful God who commands our belief. In other words, a fear that what God says is logically possible brings them to assent. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom" (Ps. 11:10). The third stage, the one Anselm is concerned about, is marked by an increased understanding of the faith. The believer moves from a state of fear of retribution for unbelief to a stage of love because of a familiarity with the truth of what God has revealed. Fourth, faith is replaced by the beatific vision - complete understanding which negates the need of faith.

Rogers argues that when Anselm speaks of believing in order to understand he is speaking exclusively of the third stage of conversion which presupposes the initial steps of faith. Be that as it may, it still remains that Anselm may very well have been directing his arguments, to the same purpose, to unbelievers as well as believers. She believes that the arguments Anselm uses are directed at increasing understanding in the believers but not at bringing unbelievers to the stage of faith.⁹⁹ In this respect, Rogers misses the import of a passage from St. Augustine which she herself cites. Augustine says that it is possible for a man to move from the stage of reasoning to the stage of understanding without the intermediate stage of faith.¹⁰⁰ For the wise man, the Church's appeal through both miracles and authority is not always necessary.

⁹⁹ Rogers, *Op. cit.*, p.465-66.

¹⁰⁰ St. Augustine, *On the Usefulness of Believing*, translated by John H.S. Burleigh in *Augustine: Earlier Writings* [John Baillie, et al., eds., *The Library of Christian Classics*, Vol. 6] (London: SCM Press, 1963), X:24, pp. 310-311.

This is borne out by experience. Converts to a religion always remember why they converted; they know why they came, so to speak.¹⁰¹ It is the person raised from infancy in his religion that has difficulty explaining not only what he believes but why he believes it. Conversion is the personal reaffirmation of baptismal promises made on one's behalf in childhood. The non-believer who converts of his own will usually has converted because he has the understanding of the faith. The sudden and overwhelming realisation of the truth of the faith jolts the person out of his apathy and into the third stage of faith. It is the conversion from faith to understanding that Anselm was trying to bring about in his monks. The big difference lies between steps two and three, faith and understanding, rather than between steps one and two, reasoning about the faith and faith. That is to say it is easier to bring an unbeliever to faith than it is to bring the unbeliever, or a man with elementary faith, to a state of understanding. In this sense, Anselm can be said to be addressing both believers and unbelievers.

Thus we can see that Anselm was clearly trying to revivify the faith of his readers. This is why he mixed with the logical arguments very personal devotional passages which served the purpose of exciting the will to love of God. G.R. Evans says:

[Anselm] deliberately attempted to prepare his readers for the emotion he felt. He wants to pass it on to them intact. He set portions of the argument within passages of devotional writing. Both works [*Monologium*, *Proslogium*] are more than mere treatises. But in the *Proslogion*, Anselm seems to have wanted to create a mood of

¹⁰¹ See Anne Roche Muggeridge, *The Desolate City: The Catholic Church in Ruins* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), p. 184 for a similar analysis of a modern renewal of faith.

heightened spiritual awareness in his reader before he presents him with his argument.¹⁰²

This paper began with the observation that the modern interpretation of the *Proslogium* as a purely philosophical work has distorted the character of Anselm's life and writings in a fundamental way. Examining the *Proslogium* as a monastic meditation will show how Anselm reconciled his scholarly vocation with his monastic vocation. This, in turn, will help to illuminate, in the next chapters, how Anselm's political career is of a piece with his monastic intentions.

As a monk much of Anselm's day would have been taken up with spiritual reading, singing the Divine Office; as a priest saying up to two masses a day; as prior and abbot spending many hours in the business affairs of the monastery, and as a teacher spending many hours instructing his pupils. "Study and scholarly research were very much a secondary concern of twelfth-century monastic life."¹⁰³ One is amazed that Anselm had time to do any writing at all.

But because he has left a large collection of writings, we must assume that Anselm's daily life must have given him the material and time for thinking. The task that gave him this opportunity was monastic meditation. Jean Leclercq, O.S.B. describes the process best:

[M]editari means, in a general way, to think, to reflect...thinking of a thing with the intent to do it...All these shades of meaning are encountered in the language of the Christians; but they generally use the word in referring to a text...the Bible and its commentaries.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Evans, *Anselm and Talking about God, Op. Cit.*, p. 41.

¹⁰³ M.J. Charlesworth, *St. Anselm's Proslogium, Op. cit.*, p. 13.

¹⁰⁴ Leclercq, *LLDG*, p.16.

Monks spent long hours reciting parts of the Bible in choir or reading by themselves. The Bible was the mainstay of their lives: they spent them trying to live the Bible's message. When monks read, they usually moved their lips and said the words aloud, quietly. This was in order to impress upon the mind of the monk what he was reading; it would help him remember the words.

[M]editatio consists in applying oneself with attention to this exercise in total memorization...This repeated mastication of the divine words is sometimes described by use of the theme of spiritual nutrition. In this case the vocabulary is borrowed from eating, from digestion. This way of uniting reading, meditation, and prayer, ...had a great influence on religious psychology...It is this deep impregnation with the words of Scripture [and their commentaries] that explains the extremely important phenomenon of reminiscence whereby the verbal echoes so excite the memory that mere allusion will spontaneously evoke whole quotations and, in turn, a scriptural phrase will suggest quite naturally allusions elsewhere in the sacred books...Reminiscences are not quotations, elements of phrases borrowed from another. They are the words of the person using them; they belong to him. Perhaps he is not even conscious of owing them to a source.¹⁰⁵

Understanding this monastic activity is of the greatest importance if St. Anselm and his method are to be understood. A monk spent his time 'digesting' Scripture so that it became part of him, so that it was real to him, so that he could live out its message. The process was not one of mere memorization; rather, the monk attempted to unpack the words and understand them in all their implications. The phenomenon of reminiscence meant that the monk, in one sense, had no control over his thoughts: one thought would trigger another. He was not conscious of analyzing arguments, or worried about who said what; rather, he was interested in motivating himself to lead a Christian life. This was done by recreating the scenes

¹⁰⁵ Leclercq, *LLDG*, pp. 73- 75.

of the Bible in his mind in order to excite his will to the love of God. Anselm, as a monk, would have spent time learning this practice.

We know from Anselm's biographer, Eadmer, that Anselm spent long hours in prayer and spiritual reading,¹⁰⁶ the framework of the *meditatio*. From this we can assume that Anselm applied himself assiduously to the task of meditation described above. Anselm says at the beginning of the *Meditation on Human Redemption*:

Consider again the strength of your salvation and where it is found. Meditate upon it, delight in the contemplation of it. Shake off your lethargy and set your mind to thinking over these things. Taste the goodness of your Redeemer, be on fire with love for your Saviour. Chew the honeycomb of his words, suck their flavour which is sweeter than sap, swallow by loving and rejoicing.¹⁰⁷

Here Anselm uses the typical digestive imagery of *lectio divina*. In this passage, he is trying to understand what salvation means. For him, that meant the chance of blessedness rather than damnation. The realisation of that fact, would move Anselm to thank God for His gift, to flee from sin, to love God even more. The importance of this activity of *meditatio* cannot be overemphasised, for it shows clearly the relation between knowledge and love. The process "has nothing to do with the inward gaze of the Eastern devotee or with the imaginative fabrications of piety. It is a practical love-oriented activity in which personal faith seeks understanding."¹⁰⁸

Meditatio was much more than an intellectual activity; it was an affective activity.

¹⁰⁶ VA, pp.13-14.

¹⁰⁷ *Meditation on Human Redemption*, Schmitt 3:84; Ward, p. 230.

¹⁰⁸ Kenneth C. Russell, "A Medieval Dynamic Understanding of Meditation," *Review for Religious*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (January and February 1982), p. 411. In this article, Russell analyzes a text of Guigo II, ninth prior of the Grand Chartreuse (died c. 1188) entitled *A Letter on the Contemplative Life*. Russell's use of Anselm's phrase is revelatory because it shows the link between prayer and a greater understanding of the faith.

Once the food of meditation has been chewed, "it goes to the heart which then distributes it to the various virtues. Love thus conforms us to the Christ on whom we feed. Knowing Christ should lead us to love him and make us want to be like him."¹⁰⁹

From the library holdings of Bec we can assume that Anselm spent a great deal of time memorizing Scripture, St. Augustine, Boethius and all sorts of Biblical commentaries until they became his own words. This is an important consideration. The constant reading, praying and meditating on the same words, ideas and arguments has the same result as any other repetitive activity: the feeling that what one is doing is no longer new, everything has a familiar ring. Thus, Anselm reading St. Augustine's treatise on the Trinity would soon begin to feel as though he was not reading anything new, even if, indeed, St. Augustine was being highly original. The words become familiar and in a sense the reader's own - the phenomenon of reminiscence. The words become public domain, as it were, so that Anselm could use them as he wished in much the same way that one can speak of the law of gravity without explaining the source of the information. This being the case, it is evident that the life of a monk provided ample opportunity for thinking about the many issues which Anselm discusses. "For Anselm, spiritual exercises, meditations on the Scriptures, and theological speculation merge inextricably into each other."¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Russell, *Op. cit.*, p. 415. See also Ambrose Wathen, "Monastic [sic] *Lectio*: some clues from terminology," *Monastic Studies*, No. 12: *On Education* (Pine City, N.Y.: Mount Saviour Monastery, 1976), pp. 207-215.

¹¹⁰ James T. Gollnick, "The Monastic-Devotional Context of Anselm of Canterbury's Theology," *Monastic Studies*, Vol. 12 (1976), p.243.

This process is also the reason why the *Proslogium* is strikingly bare of any references to Scripture, Church Fathers or any of the great philosophers, Christian or pagan. It seems an unusual practice, even for the academic standards of the eleventh century, if the treatise was a purely academic endeavour. Even Lanfranc criticised Anselm for the fault in his *Monologium*.¹¹¹ However, if it is accepted that St. Anselm was primarily a monk and holy man and secondarily a philosopher/theologian, it is easy to see that the reason for the paucity of Anselm's sources is not intellectual dishonesty or poor scholarship; rather, it is a result of his very monastic character. The *Proslogium* was clearly written as material for meditation. It was written for his monks, or pious laymen. As a meditation, the academic trappings were secondary in importance. It didn't matter who said what, only what was said. Citations are unnecessary because the works are prayers.

But Anselm was also a philosopher and theologian; not all of his works were written exclusively for monks. It seems, then, that more attention should have been given to providing sources for his ideas. In his defence, one could assume that the scriptural authorities were so self-evident to him, because he truly was a monk, that he felt it unnecessary to quote them. So it seems at once strange and understandable that Lanfranc would have criticised Anselm. It is strange because surely Lanfranc would have understood how in meditating upon the words of Scripture they become one's own and just as Augustine's influence was clearly evident to Anselm so he should have been to Lanfranc. It is understandable because Anselm was using reason in areas where it had not been used before; that

¹¹¹ *AEp.* 77; Pedrizetti, *Op. cit.*, pp. 455-56.

fact necessitated the use of citations. Perhaps Lanfranc did recognise the audience for whom Anselm was writing and was criticising Anselm on a question of form, not content. What is clear is that Anselm ignored the criticism and continued to write in the same manner for the rest of his career. He showed that reason can act as its own authority so long as it operates within the supreme wisdom of God found in Scripture and the Church. "I long to understand in some degree thy truth, which my heart believes and loves. For I do not seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe in order to understand. For this I also believe, - that unless I believed, I should not understand."¹¹² Anselm provides much insight into this famous passage from the *Proslogium* in his work *De Incarnatione Verbi*¹¹³ and in a letter to Bishop Fulco of Beauvais.¹¹⁴

The strongest evidence that Anselm was not trying to prove a tenet of faith in the *Proslogium* is his explanation of what he was attempting to do in *De Incarnatione Verbi*. The treatise was not written in order to defend the Catholic faith against someone who erroneously challenged it. For,

as long as he persists in this obstinacy let him remain anathema, for he is not at all a Christian. But if he was baptized and was brought up among Christians, then he ought not at all to be given a hearing. No explanation of his error should be demanded of him, and no explication of our truth should be presented to him...For it is pointless and most foolish to call back into the uncertainty of unsettled

¹¹² Schmitt 1:100; *Proslogium*, p. 53.

¹¹³ Schmitt II:3-35; *Incarnatione Verbi*

¹¹⁴ *AEp.* 136; *St. Anselm*, St. Anselm of Canterbury, translated and edited by Jaspar Hopkins and Herbert Richardson, Vol. 3 (Toronto and New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1976), pp. 4-5.

questions that which is most firmly established upon a solid rock - on account of every single man who lacks understanding.¹¹⁵

Defending the faith against heretical Christians was foolish, not because it might reveal that the heretic was correct, but because discussing the faith in terms of proof and error might disturb the faith of a believer if he was incapable of understanding the discussion. To defend the faith in the belief that it needed defense was comparable to:

[Anselm], loaded with stakes and ropes and the customary items used to tie down and to render steadfast what is likely to collapse - working around Mount Olympus in order to strengthen it lest as the result of some shock it collapse or be destroyed.¹¹⁶

Anselm's task was not to defend and strengthen that which was impenetrable to attack, nor was it to question whether or not it was impenetrable to attack; rather, it was, either to explain rationally the tenets of faith to those who were unbelievers in order to bring them to the faith¹¹⁷, or, it was to help those in the faith who were struggling to the truth behind an apparent inconsistency of faith.¹¹⁸ The Christian, if he is unable to understand the problem of faith, must not proclaim rashly that he therefore does not believe. That would be analogous to bats and owls, which see only at night, disputing about the midday sun with eagles, which with unblinded

¹¹⁵ *AEp.* 136; St. Anselm, *Anselm of Canterbury, Op. cit.*, Vol. 3, p. 5.

¹¹⁶ Schmitt II:5; *Incarnatione Verbi*, p. 10.

¹¹⁷ *AEp.* 136, *loc. cit.*

¹¹⁸ Schmitt II:6; *Incarnatione Verbi*, p. 11.

vision gaze into the sun.¹¹⁹ Thus, *before*, one presumes to judge the faith, he must be cleansed by faith. For,

he who does not believe will not understand. For he who does not believe will not experience; and he who has not experienced will not know. For the more experiencing-a-thing is superior to merely hearing about it, the more knowledge from experience surpasses knowledge at second hand.¹²⁰

The profound questions of faith are only for those who have developed "spiritual wings through firmness of faith,"¹²¹ for those who are trying to gain a deeper understanding of that which they already love and believe. Anselm continually says that he is writing his treatises at the request of his brethren. The students Anselm taught were the best and brightest of the monastery, not necessarily intellectually but spiritually. Anselm's arguments are not accessible only to the professional philosopher; however, they are understood (in the Anselmian sense of the word) only by the spiritually fit. The arguments are formed such that they are meant to have a direct, interior and personal effect on the reader.

Brian Stock, in his book *The Implications of Literacy*, has provided an excellent analysis of Anselm's style of writing and argumentation.¹²² According to Stock, Anselm's texts, "although resulting from purposeful text generation, are not in themselves dispositive; they are evidence, memoranda, aids to the recreation of the

¹¹⁹ Schmitt II:7-8; *Incarnazione Verbi*, pp. 11-12.

¹²⁰ Schmitt II:9; *Incarnazione Verbi*, pp. 12-13.

¹²¹ Schmitt II:7; *Incarnazione Verbi*, p. 11.

¹²² Stock, *Op. cit.*, pp. 329-361.

experiential process linking man and God through Christ."¹²³ That is to say that treatises like the *Monologium* and *Proslogium* were not conceived, primarily, as objective literary documents; rather, they were written reports of Anselm's process of rational investigation, his process of understanding truths of the faith. The intention was that each monk should recreate that process in his own mind, and not just memorise the results of the text as a piece of information. As proof of this, Stock points out that there were three audiences for the treatises: the real audience of monks; the fictive audience of the alter ego of Anselm's mind, the person with whom he engages in his interior discussion; and the fictive audience of a potential readership of his treatise.¹²⁴ The texts were obviously the product of someone well versed in Scripture. Far from repudiating Scripture, the *Monologium* and *Proslogium* were meant to be more than mere exercises of simple reading and discussion; rather, they were intended to provide a discussion of Scriptural matters that had not attracted enough attention.¹²⁵ Stock makes the observation that these advanced interior investigations were a new form of literacy. "Conventional speech, so to speak, is a kind of theological popular culture. Logical reasoning is the equivalent of learned culture."¹²⁶ The learned culture to which Anselm belonged sought understanding of faith in order to motivate correct living. Monastic living, in Anselm's time, meant being concerned with more than just the Divine Office and

¹²³ Stock, *Op. cit.*, p. 361.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 333.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 334.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 335.

walking around the cloister. The Bec model of monasticism was more all-encompassing. It sought the conversion of all aspects of life to God's will. It was precisely that total and dedicated image of the Christian life which concerned Anselm as Archbishop of Canterbury.

Four

Saint Anselm as Archbishop

It is Anselm's career as Archbishop that clearly, and pointedly, brings the conflict about his motivation to a head. The problem is not that being an archbishop is unreligious; however, it is a strong point of contention that a devout, saintly, monk should seek the office, and that he should be able to manoeuvre within the world of ecclesiastical and secular politics, as would be required of an archbishop. Can a monk be a politically astute archbishop without sacrificing his monastic, spiritual and moral principles? Sir Richard Southern expresses the issue best when he says:

[Vaughn exhibits] Anselm in the light in which she has always seen him, as a sharp-sighted, politically motivated man...I need not scarcely say that Vaughn does not think that Anselm's purposes were anything but high-minded: she does not say that he was motivated by a desire for personal wealth or aggrandizement; but she says that he was a man of the world, a political animal, very different from the unworldly, inward-looking, world-renouncing, contemplative monk, as presented by Anselm himself and by his first biographer Eadmer.¹

The question arises, as Southern points out, because, at least in Vaughn's eyes the records of Anselm's life seem to differ from the actual events.

¹ R.W. Southern, 'Sally Vaughn's Anselm,' *Op. cit.*, p. 183.

Much of the problem stems from a failure, on the part of both Southern and Vaughn, to define the term 'politician' clearly and in an historically convincing manner. Southern, from the above quotation, seems to think that 'politician' has derogatory connotations of a person who is ambitious, unscrupulous, hypocritical and unprincipled. In Southern's view, being a politician is incompatible with a monastic vocation. Vaughn is less clear in her definition of 'politician'. Upon superficial observation, it seems as if she thinks very highly of politicians. They are more like statesmen than campaigners. Vaughn likens Anselm to a highly principled politician like Abraham Lincoln, as opposed to one like Richard Nixon.² Be that as it may, her account of Anselm gradually implies that even the Lincolns slip into the behaviour patterns of the Nixons. This becomes evident from a careful analysis of her interpretation of Anselm's motivation in accepting the Archbishopric of Canterbury.³ The politician really is just a man of the world; a monk in that position cannot help but descend from his heavenly heights. Though Vaughn denies it, her definition of 'politician' is essentially the same as Southern's. The issue, then, really comes down to determining Anselm's motivation. This motivation can be explored by examining two issues over which Southern and Vaughn disagree: how Anselm became Archbishop; and whether or not he had an explicit ecclesiastical-political program.

Was Anselm forced into the Archbishopric (as Southern says) or did he seek the office out of political ambition (as Vaughn says)? Or does the answer lie

² Vaughn, *Anselm: Saint and Statesman*, *Op. cit.*, p. 206.

³ *Infra*, pp. 103 ff.

somewhere between the two? In defence of Southern, I think it is evident that Anselm was a devout and holy monk. In defence of Vaughn, I think it is also true to say that Anselm possessed administrative and political talent. But, the two views are not mutually exclusive. Even though Anselm was a monk, he could still manoeuvre politically with a view to implementing at Canterbury his vision of the Church and its relation to the world. Indeed, it could be argued that it was precisely his monastic background which created his political vision.

The aim of examining the issues raised is not simply to clear the good name of St. Anselm, as it were; rather, it is to shed light on what Anselm thought he was accomplishing by becoming Archbishop and to see if that related in any way to his accomplishments as a monk at Bec. This leads to the second issue of concern. If Anselm was an astute politician, did he have a program he wished to implement in the English Church? Properly speaking, this issue deserves separate treatment, for it is really a question of whether or not Anselm was a Gregorian reformer, in the political sense of the term.

The issue is hotly contested. Norman F. Cantor portrays Anselm as a conscious and thorough-going Gregorian reformer.⁴ Vaughn, in an article written several years ago, suggests that Anselm had Gregorian sympathies; however, in her latest book, she seems to have changed her position, for she criticises Cantor for misrepresenting Anselm as a Gregorian.⁵ In Southern's view, Anselm was too absorbed with heavenly things to be concerned with the Gregorian Reform or indeed any

⁴ Cantor, pp. 40-41 and *passim*.

⁵ Vaughn, "St. Anselm of Canterbury: the Philosopher-Saint as Politician," *Op. cit.*, p. 280; Vaughn, *Anselm*, p. 3.

systematic plans for reform.⁶ The issue, however, is too large to be covered comprehensively in this thesis. I will confine myself to showing that Anselm's political goal was not to implement structural, jurisdictional or administrative changes in the English Church, but to create a spirit within the English Church that embodied his vision of the 'right order' that Tellenbach says was the crucial issue of the Gregorian Reform. Just as Anselm wished to impress the image of virtues on the waxen spirit of his young monks, so too did he wish to impress upon the Church an image that embodied eleventh-century ideals.

There are many events in the life of Anselm that could be examined to answer these questions. Because Anselm's election to the see of Canterbury in March 1093 has received such detailed analysis in the controversy between Southern and Vaughn, I have chosen to use this event as the testing ground for a new interpretation of Anselm's life. As Southern and Vaughn demonstrate, it is a complicated affair. But before looking at their interpretations of the events, it will be helpful to summarize Eadmer's record.⁷

⁶ Southern, "Anselm at Canterbury," *Op. cit.*, p. 7, 21; Southern, *Anselm*, p. 150, n. 1 in which he distances himself from Cantor's interpretation. Southern's article, "Anselm at Canterbury" is a deviation from his earlier position. Written in 1983, the article seems to be an early response to some of Vaughn's criticism, and Cantor's view of Anselm as a Gregorian. In it, Southern argues that Anselm may have been an effective politician but that he had no systematic plan of reform. Anselm's political activities were mainly a reaction to other events and pressures. This view differs sharply from his earlier arguments in his biography of Anselm which maintain that, apart from his success in restoring the primacy of Canterbury, Anselm had an ineffectual episcopacy. Since writing the article, Southern has not elaborated on his new position, even in the debate with Vaughn in *Albion*. I interpret this to mean that Southern has abandoned the position which may have been only an exploratory essay. We will have to wait for the second edition of Southern's biography, now being prepared for publication, for further clarification.

⁷ Eadmer gives accounts in *HN*, pp. 28-42 and *VA*, pp. 63-67. The account in the *Historia Novorum* is the fuller of the two and includes, except where noted, all the information that is given in the *Vita Anselmi*. The summary given here will conflate the two accounts for clarity of chronology.

Lanfranc died as Archbishop of Canterbury in May 1089. It was customary, under William I, that vacant sees were filled within a year of a bishop's death. William Rufus, however, did not take any great care to follow his father's custom and it was four years before Lanfranc's successor to Canterbury was chosen.⁸ During the four years of Canterbury's vacancy, Rufus seized all revenues from its lands and provided the monks with bare sustenance.⁹ The monks suffered great hardships and pressure was put upon the king by prelates and magnates to appoint a successor. According to the *Historia Novorum*, pressure was not exerted explicitly on Rufus until the Christmas Court of 1092. However, Norman F. Cantor shows that as early as May 1092, there was an expectation that the archbishopric would soon be filled; this would explain rumours which Anselm heard concerning his candidacy for the office.¹⁰

Sometime between May and September, 1092, for Eadmer says, "in the fourth year [of Canterbury's vacancy]", Anselm received three letters from his very good friend Hugh, Earl of Chester, asking him to come to England. Eadmer adds in the *Vita*, that such requests also came from "many other noblemen of the English Kingdom."¹¹ Hugh's first letter asked that Anselm come to England to oversee the establishment of Bec monks at one of Hugh's monasteries, St. Werburg's. Anselm

⁸ Barlow, *English Church, Op. cit.*, pp. 67-8. Of the eight vacancies in Rufus's reign the average length was just over two years. Barlow says that if three long vacancies are subtracted the length is reduced to a little over a year. However, three out of eight, one of which was four years, is not a good track record.

⁹ *HN*, p. 27.

¹⁰ *HN*, pp. 30-31; Cantor, pp. 53-54.

¹¹ *HN*, p. 28-9; *VA*, p. 63.

knew of rumours that people in England were suggesting he be made Archbishop of Canterbury. To avoid such an event, and to dispel any rumours that he was seeking the office, Anselm declined to go to England.¹² Hugh wrote a second letter, this time saying that he was ill and asking for Anselm to minister to his spiritual needs. Hugh also added that if rumours about Anselm and Canterbury were preventing him from coming, then he must know that there was nothing to the rumours. Anselm still refused to go to England. Finally, Anselm received a third letter from Hugh, saying he was very ill and that, "If you do not come, you may be sure that never in the life eternal will you find repose so deep that it shall save you from perpetually grieving that you did not come to me."¹³ With this plea, Anselm was moved to go to Hugh's sick-bed knowing that he would be condemned either for failing a friend in need or for seeming to desire the office of archbishop. Eadmer also notes that at that time, there were certain other pressing affairs of Bec in England.¹⁴

On his way to England, Anselm stopped in Boulogne to see the Countess Ida and was unavoidably detained for an unspecified reason for some days. During this time, Anselm received a letter from his monks at Bec stating that unless he wished to be branded with the sin of disobedience, then he must not return to Bec without first taking care of the abbey's business in England. Eadmer's *Vita* makes no mention of the delay at Boulogne or the letter from Bec but includes other

¹² *HN*, pp.28-29.

¹³ *HN*, p. 29.

¹⁴ *HN*, p.29-30; *VA*, p. 67.

information not found in the *Historia Novorum*. On September 7, 1092 Anselm arrived at Canterbury where he was unexpectedly acclaimed by monks and laity as the new archbishop. Upset by this turn of events, Anselm left Canterbury early the next morning without celebrating the Feast of the Nativity of Mary, the Mother of God. From Canterbury, Anselm went to the royal court where he was received with great honour, especially by the King. Anselm requested a private audience with the King, and putting aside the business of the monastery, which was his chief reason for going to England, Anselm rebuked Rufus for his homosexual vices, the rumours of which had spread everywhere. From the royal court, Anselm went finally to Chester where he had discovered that Hugh had miraculously recovered.¹⁵

Eadmer next states that Anselm was detained for some months due to the business of St. Werburg's, Chester, and also the business of Bec. During this time, nothing had been said or done about the archbishopric; Anselm began to feel secure from the danger of his election and his old fear of being accused of seeking office. Afterwards, presumably when the matter in Chester had been completed, Anselm desired to return to Normandy but was prevented from doing so as the "King refused to give his permission."¹⁶

At this time, all the magnates of the Kingdom were gathering at the King's Christmas court. Pressure was exerted on the King to appoint an archbishop to

¹⁵ *HN*, p. 30 reports that after landing at Dover, Anselm went in haste to Hugh in Chester not mentioning, as does the *Vita* II:1, Anselm's visit to Canterbury and the royal court. The reason for the discrepancy may be none other than that Anselm began to write the *Historia* long after he had begun the *Vita*: the fact may have been forgotten or considered unnecessary and repetitious detail.

¹⁶ *HN*, p. 30.

Canterbury, which was met with obstinate refusal. Prayers were said in all the churches that an archbishop would be appointed.

In March 1093, Rufus was suffering from a life-threatening illness. All the nobles gathered at his bedside in Gloucester; Anselm himself was nearby. Expecting the King's death, the nobles and bishops advised him to think of his salvation and how it was threatened by the crimes of his life. They requested him to release prisoners, pardon fines and debts, restore liberty to the Churches and to fill vacant sees, particularly Canterbury. Anselm was summoned. Entering the King's bedchamber, he was asked what counsel ought to be given to the King. Anselm enquired what had already been told the King, approved of it, and recommended that the King make a confession of his sins, and promise that, should he survive, he would set right all his past errors. Anselm also advised him to order to be done those things which the bishops had requested. The advice was taken and Anselm heard the King's confession, the rest following as Anselm suggested.

Some time later, for Anselm was no longer at the bedside, the nobles were entreating the King to appoint an Archbishop of Canterbury. The anxious Rufus finally assented. The question arose as to who could fill the office best and Anselm was declared the man unanimously. Anselm was aghast at this. While being taken to Rufus's bedside to be invested with the pastoral staff, he resisted with all his might, and declared that many reasons made this impossible. Anselm protested, too, that he had neither the mind, nor the ability, because of his age, to manage the Church in England. The bishops replied that if Anselm would wait upon God for them, they would manage the worldly affairs for him. To this, Anselm protested that he owed obedience to another bishop, another duke, and the monks of Bec. Anselm

was then taken to the King, who being informed of his obstinacy, accused Anselm of damning him to eternal punishment because he would die without appointing an archbishop. When Anselm still resisted, the bishops became indignant and accused Anselm of tormenting the King. Anselm began to weep and blood poured forth from his nostrils. Then the bishops cried, "Fetch the pastoral staff, the pastoral staff!" and seizing hold of his right arm they began to drag him towards the King.

But when the King held out the staff to him, he closed his hand and utterly refused to take it. Then the Bishops tried to raise his fingers, which were clenched tightly against his palm, that even so the staff should be put into his hand. But when in this they had for some time laboured in vain and he himself uttered groans of anguish for the pain which he suffered, at last they lifted his forefinger, which he immediately closed again, and so the staff was placed in his closed hand and staff and hand together were pressed and held fast by the hands of the Bishops. Then while the crowd cried, "Long live the Bishop; long may he live", the Bishops and clergy began with uplifted voices to chant the *Te Deum*; and so the Archbishop elect was carried, rather than led, into the neighbouring church, all the time resisting to the utmost of his power and saying, "It is a nullity, a nullity, all this that you are doing."¹⁷

All of this took place on March 6, 1093. After the ritual had taken place in the church, Anselm returned to Rufus to assure him that he would recover and could then set right what had just been done, for Anselm still did not consent to being archbishop. Withdrawing from the King's bedchamber, Anselm once again addressed the bishops. It was at this time that Anselm used the analogy of the Church as the plough being led by two oxen - the King and Archbishop. Anselm warned the bishops that they were harnessing an old and weak ox next to a strong one:

¹⁷ *HN*, p. 36.

'You will gain but this that you will one day see the Church, which you so greatly long to deliver from her widowhood, relapse again into widowhood...When I have been crushed and there is not one of you who would dare to oppose the King in anything, then without doubt he will not hesitate to trample on you too in whatever way his whim inclines him.'¹⁸

Anselm was invested with all that pertained to the Archbishopric and was granted, outright, lands which had formerly been held as a benefice by the Church of Canterbury from the King. In the meantime, letters were sent by the King to the Duke of Normandy, the monks of Bec and the Archbishop of Rouen, to whom Anselm was tied by obedience, asking for his release from his obligations. The Duke and the Archbishop agreed, but the monks of Bec protested at first and only after persuasion finally gave their consent. Letters were dispatched back to Anselm and the King; however, Anselm received his letter first.

Rufus recovered from his illness and immediately declared null and void all those favours he had granted *in extremis*. Anselm took the king aside and declared the conditions under which he would consent to being archbishop, knowing all the while he had been released from his Norman obligations (the news of which he kept secret from the King for unspecified reasons).¹⁹ He demanded that all lands held under Lanfranc be restored to Canterbury; that lands held previously but since lost should be restored after a judicial hearing; that in all things pertaining to God and Christianity, Rufus must accept his advice before that of anyone else; and that Rufus must recognise, as Anselm had already done, Urban II as the rightful Pope. Anselm

¹⁸ *HN*, p.37.

¹⁹ While Eadmer does not specify reasons, we may see this as an astute Anselm placing himself in a strong bargaining position by making Rufus think he could still decline the Archbishopric.

was asked to repeat his demands in front of the King's advisors, which he did. Rufus agreed only to the first of the demands. Anselm and Rufus parted.

Several days later, after the King had received his set of letters informing him of the news of Anselm's release from Norman obligations, Rufus pressed Anselm not to desist any longer in consenting to be archbishop. A quarrel broke out about the lands of Canterbury and things came to a standstill once again. By this time, Anselm had already returned his abbatial staff to Bec and began to rejoice that perhaps he was now free from the demands of any higher office. But the King could no longer ignore the public outcry against the ruination of the churches and he summoned Anselm to Winchester, where an assembly of the nobles had been convened. An agreement was reached and on December 4, 1093, Anselm was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury in Christ Church Cathedral.

That is the whole complicated affair according to the account of Eadmer. The ordeal lasted more than year, a year that has been interpreted in various ways. It is Sally Vaughn who provides the most controversial interpretation of events and her version must now be considered.²⁰

Vaughn makes it abundantly clear that Anselm's reluctance to accept the archbishopric was "heartfelt, not feigned."²¹ He sought neither its prestige and wealth nor even the opportunity to carry on God's work in the field of

²⁰ Vaughn, *Anselm*, pp. 116-48 provides the main account; for an earlier treatment see her article, "St. Anselm: Reluctant Archbishop?" *Albion*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Fall 1974), pp. 240-50; for subsequent defense of her view see her article "Anselm: Saint and Statesman," *Op. cit.*, esp. 207-09;

²¹ Vaughn, *Anselm*, p. 116.

administration and politics.²² Nonetheless, she interprets Anselm's reluctant acceptance as essentially the acting out of a role required of him. Christian tradition, in her view, demanded that people shun the dignities of office out of humility and yet accept them, when manifestly the will of God, out of obedience.²³ But for Vaughn to say that humility demanded that the Christian abhor high office and express his abhorrence publicly, is incorrect. Christian humility, as Anselm would have understood it, requires that a man honestly admit his weaknesses and strengths. Thus, if a man had the ability for high office, then it would be false humility to profess abhorrence for such a job. Humility would be the admission that the ability for the job came not from the man himself but was a gift from God, the ability for the job did not lead to vain glory but to the glory of God.²⁴

Vaughn says that Anselm "sought" the archbishopric when he realised that it was manifestly God's will.²⁵ This raises two questions: did Anselm 'seek' the archbishopric? and when did he realise that God willed him to take the job? The answer to the first question is complicated. The fact that Vaughn chooses the word 'sought' raises serious difficulties because she uses the term in its strongest sense -

²² Vaughn, *Anselm*, p. 120; also p.5.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 117-121, see also her article "Eadmer's *Historia Novorum*: A Reinterpretation," *ANS X*, p. 270-1.

²⁴ Anselm lists seven degrees of humility: to recognise how contemptible you are; to grieve over such contemptibility; to confess it; to convince others of it; to wish them to believe it; to suffer being treated with contempt; and to be content with such treatment. See Anon. *De Humanis Moribus*, *Op. cit.*, p. 81. To recognize and profess one's own unworthiness does not mean that one does not have the ability for a certain task, only that one does not deserve the honour of having such ability. These degrees of humility were meant to instill in a monk the correct picture that everything belonging to man comes from God. From that mental outlook there can arise no vain-glory, only a disposition to thank God for the talents He has bestowed.

²⁵ Vaughn, *Anselm*, p. 121. See also p. 14: "Once he was convinced that God's will placed him there [the see of Canterbury], he manoeuvred expertly,...to secure his position."

actively willing to have. To maintain that about Anselm does not seem to be borne out by the facts, and the choice of words colours Vaughn's interpretation in ways she denies but obviously means.

The answer to the second question - when Anselm realised he was destined for the archbishopric - Vaughn answers in all frankness. It was not, as Eadmer and Anselm himself relate, after the death-bed scene of Rufus. Rather, Vaughn says that it was while Lanfranc was still alive.²⁶ Lanfranc, it is reported, openly predicted that Anselm would be Archbishop after him.²⁷ Vaughn also theorises that Lanfranc chose Anselm because they were of like mind. She even goes so far as to say that Lanfranc was grooming Anselm for the position at William I's court. Her evidence for this is the fact that when Anselm visited England, William always received him and Lanfranc warmly, and heeded their advice.²⁸ Considering that Anselm only visited England twice before his journey of 1092,²⁹ it is hard to see how he could have received any real grooming for the office. Walter Frohlich demonstrates that, while Anselm and William were great friends, "there is little evidence to show his [Anselm's] frequent presence at the ducal and royal court."³⁰ Anselm's name appears only once on a charter signed in England, where he would have been

²⁶ Vaughn, "St. Anselm of Canterbury: Reluctant Archbishop?" *Op. cit.*, pp. 240-50; *The Abbey of Bec*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 43-6; Vaughn, *Anselm*, pp. 121-22; "Eadmer's *Historia Novorum*: A Reinterpretation," *Op. cit.*, p. 269.

²⁷ *VL*, p. 110.

²⁸ Vaughn, *Anselm*, p. 122.

²⁹ Marjorie Chibnall, "The Relations of Saint Anselm with the English Dependencies of the Abbey of Bec 1079-1093," *SB I*, pp. 521-2.

³⁰ Walter Frohlich, "St. Anselm's Special Relationship with William the Conqueror," *ANS X*, p. 103.

groomed by Lanfranc; six other charters exist with Anselm's name, all these in Normandy. Anselm's two visits to England are the only evidence Vaughn gives. It seems far more likely that Anselm first considered the idea sometime in Spring 1092 when it was greatly expected that an appointment would be made to the see shortly. Norman Cantor cites a charter dated May 1092 in which there is a space in the witness list for the name of the next Archbishop of Canterbury. "It is unlikely that the royal clerk would have drawn up the witness list in this way if the election of a new archbishop were not expected soon."³¹ It was this expectation, the rumours of which probably reached Anselm's ears and prevented him from tending to Bec's business in England and from hurrying to Hugh's bedside.

Vaughn next examines the three reasons Eadmer gives for Anselm's decision to go to England in 1092 despite rumours that he would be acclaimed Archbishop and insinuations that he was openly seeking the office. Of the three reasons given by Eadmer - the imminent death of Hugh, Earl of Chester, pressing business of Bec and the command of the Bec monks to take care of that business - Vaughn discounts as "least persuasive" the strongest reason given by Eadmer - the dying Hugh.³² Her reason for discounting it is highly questionable.

Vaughn does not believe that Anselm was hurrying to the bedside of a sick friend because of the "leisurely pace" he took in reaching Hugh in Chester.³³ The three letters of Hugh, urging Anselm to visit England for various reasons, Vaughn

³¹ Cantor, pp. 53-4.

³² Vaughn, *Anselm*, p. 123.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

sees as echoing the topos of the threefold summons to court, in other words the threefold summons to accept the archbishopric.³⁴ In any case, Anselm left Bec for England and on his way stopped in Boulogne to visit the Countess Ida for a number of days where he was unavoidably detained. Vaughn seems to think this an unusual move for Anselm. But Boulogne, a port city, was an obvious place for Anselm to be on his way to England. The fact that he was unavoidably detained is no less odd. It could have been due to poor weather, a lack of ships ready to leave at Anselm's command, or any number of reasons. It is at this time that Anselm is said to have received the letter from the monks of Bec ordering him not to return to the abbey until its business is completed in England. The business may well have been the geld reduction that Anselm sought and received on Bec's English lands.³⁵ That Hugh wanted to fill St. Werberg's with monks from Bec is also borne out by fact.³⁶ But as Vaughn correctly points out, the letter from Bec poses a problem, for surely the monks would have been aware of the rumours circulating that Anselm might be made Archbishop. If that is the case, then it would have been against their best interests to urge him to go to England, especially since they fought so hard to bring him back to Bec after his election.³⁷ There are two possible scenarios to consider - Anselm did receive a letter from the monks of Bec, or he did not.

³⁴ Vaughn, *Anselm*, p. 124.

³⁵ *GP*, 79.

³⁶ Vaughn, *Anselm*, p. 125, n. 63.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 124; *HN*, p. 38.

Anselm had received three letters from Hugh in a short space of time, each increasing in urgency, and all coming amid rumours of Anselm's election. Anselm was an astute man and could easily see that perhaps Hugh was purposely trying to get him to England in order to be elected Archbishop, especially if, as Eadmer states in the *Vita*, Anselm had been receiving similar requests from many English magnates. However, Hugh was a good friend, and two urgent letters written from a death-bed would understandably move Anselm to action despite his other fears. But in days of slow transportation, and Chester was far from the English port of Dover, perhaps Anselm never really expected to be able to reach Hugh before his death. If Anselm did receive a letter, it may be that his protracted stay in Boulogne was due to a renewed fear about being made Archbishop. Perhaps he arrived in Boulogne only to hear of the rumours again and decided not to take the risk of going to England. It would have been several days, at least, before news of Anselm's decision reached Bec and their letter, in turn, to reach him. Eadmer says that, upon receiving the letter, Anselm left for Dover; whether that was from obedience or concern for a sick friend is not clear. But it is not necessary to escalate this, as Vaughn does, into a major contradiction. Moreover, Anselm never mentions the letter as one of his reasons for visiting England.³⁸ It is quite as likely that Anselm never received the letter and the delay at Boulogne was simply a matter of days due to poor weather.

³⁸ *AEp.* 198; St. Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo: to which is added*, *Op. cit.*, p. 162, where the only reason sighted for the trip is Bec's pressing business.

That Anselm probably did not receive a letter from Bec is suggested by two considerations. First, Eadmer says that Anselm stayed for "some days",³⁹ which I do not interpret to mean a protracted stay. If Anselm were to have received a letter from Bec, we would have to assume that Anselm was in Boulogne for more than "some days." Several days must be allotted for Anselm to reach Boulogne, him to change his mind about going to England, his news to reach Bec and the letter from Bec to reach Anselm. Secondly, Eadmer is vague about the contents of the letter, or "message" as he calls it. He says the message was "to the effect..."⁴⁰ That sounds as if Eadmer never saw the letter, and it is not extant. Moreover, we know that Eadmer confused other events, such as his incorrect dating of the Council of Rockingham and his erroneous description of Anselm being 'forbidden' to leave England before he was Archbishop. We might assume that Eadmer had his facts wrong in the case of the letter from Bec. Perhaps the letter was one which Anselm might justifiably have received after he made his request to have his unfinished prayers sent to him. After all, he wrote requesting his prayers because he was going to be delayed in England because the business of Bec had not yet been completed. In any case, the issue is not as disturbing as Vaughn thinks it is.

Vaughn continues her analysis of Anselm's "leisurely pace" by pointing out the fact that Anselm did not rush to Chester as Eadmer states in the *Historia Novorum* but stopped first at Canterbury and then at the Royal Court, as recounted in the *Vita Anselmi*. But again these stops are not so unusual. Canterbury is near Dover

³⁹ *HN*, p. 30.

⁴⁰ *HN*, p. 30.

and an obvious resting stop after an arduous Channel crossing. But Anselm was prematurely acclaimed Archbishop by the monks and people of Canterbury and left in haste the next morning. We can interpret this as the action of a man who was understandably worried about seeming to seek the office as the partisan candidate of the Canterbury monks; he would have preferred the more normal procedure of consensus of bishops, king and magnates. He also most certainly knew of the renewed vigour with which simony was being condemned by Rome. And Anselm had reason to fear for his reputation. Cantor cites a contemporary account which states that Anselm had been summoned by Hugh, other magnates as well as by the King (perhaps before the May charter?). After his election, rumours of simony circulated, very possibly because of the fact that Anselm had been invited by the King.⁴¹

Southern correctly points out that the Royal Court may well have been on Anselm's way to Chester, a point which Vaughn concedes.⁴² It is also true, that Anselm was an important Norman abbot with large land holdings in England, who was on intimate terms with Rufus's father and many of the English magnates, and that Anselm had not met the King since his accession to the throne. It is only logical that on Anselm's first visit to the kingdom during Rufus's reign, he should present himself at the King's court as a matter of courtesy.

⁴¹ Cantor, pp. 54-5.; see Anselm's concern about rumours of his cupidity in *AEP*, 148, 150, 153, 155, 156, 159, 160, 163, 165, 166, 176.

⁴² Southern, "Sally Vaughn's Anselm," *Op. cit.*, p. 185; Vaughn, "Anselm: Saint and Statesman," *Op. cit.*, p. 208 where she still finds trouble with the lengthy stay at Boulogne.

Vaughn also finds peculiar the fact that Anselm, when meeting the King, put aside the business of Bec which was so pressing, in order to chastise him about his homosexuality. Vaughn says that doing so, Anselm assumed the role, "more befitting an English primate than a Norman abbot."⁴³ This seems, at best, a specious argument. Anselm was probably taking advantage of the traditional monastic privilege of *parrhesia*, or frank speech.⁴⁴ The point to be made, however, is that Anselm was not the English primate yet. If he was seeking the office, as Vaughn says he was, then chastising the very person who was to appoint him was a peculiar way indeed of going about it. It might be more plausible to see it as a strategic move by Anselm. If he was indeed worried by rumours that he was to be elected, he may well have wanted to quash such hopes by angering the King. In any event, it was only after three stops that Anselm finally went to Chester where he found Hugh fully recovered.

Vaughn next surmises that there was no reason for Anselm to stay in England any longer unless, indeed, he was seeking the office of Archbishop; yet Anselm did stay. The geld reduction and the business at St. Werburg's do not account for Anselm's lengthy visit of four months. Southern points out that it is unlikely that Anselm stayed in Chester for the whole period because the business with St. Werburg's would not have taken that long. Instead he was staying at Westminster

⁴³ Vaughn, *Anselm*, p. 125.

⁴⁴ See Alexander Murray, *Reason and Society in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1978, revised 1985, reprinted 1986), pp. 393-399. *Parrhesia* was the practice of speaking to kings as an equal or superior. Its purpose was to chastise the king for some wrong with virtue as the speaker's only weapon in such a risky endeavour.

with an old friend, and former monk of Bec, Gilbert Crispin.⁴⁵ But perhaps the business of Bec was not transacted immediately, which would account for Anselm's stay. This explanation is supported by Anselm's letter to Bec, in which he states:

I am not yet able to send any word to you about the usefulness of our journey into England insofar as it concerns our Church. For thus far the king delays giving a reply to our petition...Regarding my own well-being, the bearer of this epistle, a monk of the Lord Abbot Gilbert, will be able to inform you than could a letter of ours...I do not expect that we shall return before Lent.⁴⁶

From the letter, we know that Anselm was at Westminster and Bec's business had still not been resolved. It was also in this letter that Anselm requested that his unfinished treatises and letters be sent over to him from Bec, that he might profitably employ the delay in working on them. If the letter was sent at Christmas 1092, as Vaughn believes,⁴⁷ why would he request his treatises which he would scarcely have received before his expected return in Lent, unless he was settling down for a protracted stay? Southern suggests the letter might have been sent in September which clears away the difficulty.⁴⁸ Vaughn, on the other hand, maintains the letter was probably written after the Christmas court; otherwise, it would have to be concluded that Anselm expected to be away from Bec for seven months, from

⁴⁵ R.W. Southern, "St. Anselm and Gilbert Crispin, Abbot of Westminster," *Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, edited by Richard Hunt and Raymond Klibansky, Vol. 3: 1954 (London: The Warburg Institute, 1954), p. 87-8.

⁴⁶ *AEp.* 147; Paschal D. Honner, O.S.B., "Letters of St. Anselm to His Monks at Bec," *Op. cit.*, p.p. 156-57.

⁴⁷ Vaughn, *Anselm*, p. 126; see also Barlow, *William Rufus*, *Op. cit.*, p. 303 "Clearly he was preparing for a protracted stay in England in which he could get down to some devotional and theological work."

⁴⁸ Southern, "Sally Vaughn's Anselm," *Op. cit.*, p. 185.

September to March 2 - the beginning of Lent 1093.⁴⁹ But her suggestion that the letter was written at Christmas is still questionable. Would it have taken two whole months for a messenger to make the return journey from London to Bec? If Vaughn believes this, then it nullifies her own criticism of Anselm for dawdling on his way to Chester, certainly a much farther distance. It may not have been a deceptive request on Anselm's part; he may well have expected to return for Lent. We do know, according to Eadmer, that at Christmas, Anselm was ready or had hoped to go back to Normandy but could not get the King's permission.

This last point is somewhat confusing. Why would a Norman abbot need the permission of the English King to return to his abbey? Norman Cantor, most certainly, correctly interprets this as an error on Eadmer's part. It was not that Anselm could not get the King's permission; rather, the problem was, as Anselm stated, that the King was delaying the granting of Anselm's request.⁵⁰

Vaughn presses her analysis of this important event even further, for her thesis depends on it. Three months later, at the beginning of March, 1093 Rufus is *in extremis* and calls for Anselm who is "conveniently" close by. Anselm arrives at the King's quarters after the magnates and bishops have urged Rufus to think of his salvation by correcting his errors and appointing an Archbishop to Canterbury. Anselm asks what counsel has already been given to the King; he is told and approves of it saying, "let him order to be done those things which you have advised

⁴⁹ Vaughn, "Anselm: Saint and Statesman," *Op. cit.*, p. 208.

⁵⁰ Cantor, pp.53-56; Sally Vaughn maintains that Rufus probably did order Anselm not to leave the Kingdom in a momentary lapse, forgetting his proper jurisdiction. In this case, unlike others, she does not think that Eadmer could be mistaken or fabricating the event. See her article, "Eadmer's *Historia Novorum*: A Reinterpretation," *Op. cit.*, p. 274.



without a moment's delay."⁵¹ Vaughn cites this as an open declaration by Anselm that he wanted to be Archbishop.⁵² But once again the facts are open to a different interpretation. It is quite possible that the magnates and bishops, knowing Anselm's reluctance to accept the office of Archbishop, would not have told Anselm all that had been counselled to Rufus. Surely, they would have feared his confronting the King with an obstinate refusal then and there. Also, the magnates had not specified *whom* Rufus should appoint, only that he should appoint someone, and Anselm would understandably approve of their wish.

Anselm is forcibly elected archbishop, is painfully invested with the pastoral staff, is carried into the church all amid tears and extravagant protests that he does not consent to what is happening. Vaughn presents a rather peculiar interpretation of Anselm's protestations. Anselm was again acting out the topos of reluctance, demanded of him by tradition. Anselm genuinely did not want the archbishopric but used the theatricalities of the 'reluctance topos' to conceal the fact that he had long ago surrendered himself completely to God's will, i.e. made up his mind to seek the archbishopric. "By making a secret of his self-surrender, Anselm was reduced to protesting his election on grounds that the himself did not fully believe."⁵³ Vaughn's point is not at all clear and I think that is because she is trying to suggest something that she does not wish to say explicitly.

⁵¹ *HN*, p. 32.

⁵² Vaughn, "Eadmer's *Historia Novorum*," *Op. cit.*, p. 275.

⁵³ Vaughn, *Anselm*, p. 130.

Her choice of words betrays a slant to her thoughts. This was alluded to earlier when discussing whether or not Anselm 'sought' the archbishopric. Vaughn's choice of words is ambiguous and edges on innuendo. To give a few examples: Anselm "tarried" in England;⁵⁴ Anselm journeyed "at a most leisurely pace" to Hugh in Chester;⁵⁵ "only then" did he go to Chester;⁵⁶ Anselm was "conveniently" near by Rufus's sick bed;⁵⁷ it seems clear that Vaughn is questioning Anselm's motives. Indeed, she makes no secret of the fact when she says that "Anselm would reinterpret his actions in such a way as to align them absolutely to traditional Christian norms,"⁵⁸ and when she tries to show that Anselm edited and intentionally suppressed some information from his letters in order to form a polished and respectable public image of himself.⁵⁹ That she can maintain that Anselm genuinely did not want to be archbishop, yet sought the position expressly because it was the will of God, seems contrived and artificial.

If Anselm had surrendered himself to God, and accepted the archbishopric as *de facto*, then why did he go to such unusual lengths to protest his elevation? He was giving reasons he only half believed. It seems that if Anselm was resigned to the fact then a more traditional and restrained form of the protests of reluctance

⁵⁴ Vaughn, *Anselm*, p. 123.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 126 where she is quoting Barlow, *Rufus*, p. 303.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 135-39;293-4 and *passim*.

would have been in order. But the protest in itself was also unnecessary. Lanfranc was a monk who became archbishop without all the posturing and topoi and no one thought it amiss.⁶⁰ Southern's criticism of Vaughn is valid when he says that Anselm "keeps protesting that he wishes to find some way of resigning long after the moment when it might have been edifying to protest his inadequacy for the job."⁶¹ Vaughn wants to maintain Anselm's sanctity in the matter because the facts will hardly tolerate its denial; however, she implicitly seems to believe that Anselm was no more than a political animal.

If Vaughn was trying to say that once Anselm realised there was no way out of his election (and that realisation came much later than Vaughn would have us believe) and sought to fulfil the job as best he could in obedience to God's will, there would be no difficulty. But Vaughn would have us believe that Anselm knew he was destined for Canterbury many years before the see was vacant and then sought to ensure that he received the job. The position is absurd. Vaughn is indulging in gratuitous psychologizing of Anselm, with no basis in historical evidence.

Thus, the only conclusion that can be reached is that Vaughn wants to portray Anselm as a careerist. But that this is not the case is made plain both by the facts of Anselm's sixty years of life before Canterbury, and by everything Vaughn ably shows about Anselm's reformist tendencies. Indeed it is Vaughn in her first book who goes so far as to say that Bec may have been acting as reform 'seminary' with the express intention of setting up a network of abbots and bishops connected with

⁶⁰ *VL*, pp. 96-98.

⁶¹ Southern, "Sally Vaughn's Anselm," *Op. Cit.*, p. 185.

Bec for the purpose of reforming the church.⁶² This claim may be somewhat exaggerated, but nonetheless, if true, it would be more logical for Anselm to want to stay at Bec, where he could form such prelates in his monastic school as described earlier. Vaughn's glossing over logical alternatives to her interpretations makes her account less convincing. As Southern said:

It is always easy for one whose suspicions are aroused to find food for suspicion; and the evidence Vaughn quotes, while never sufficient for proof, is generally sufficient to support suspicion once aroused.⁶³

It is questionable, indeed, what Vaughn is trying to prove.

Southern criticises, as well, Vaughn's account of how Anselm was released from his Norman obligations to the Archbishop of Rouen, the Duke of Normandy and the monks of Bec.⁶⁴ According to Vaughn, "Anselm was taking active measures to ensure his advancement."⁶⁵ When the King's efforts to obtain the releases were not immediately forthcoming, "Anselm took matters into his own hands. He personally requested that his old friend Archbishop William sanction his translation to Canterbury."⁶⁶ The letter is not extant, but from the reply of Archbishop William it is clear that Anselm was in communication with him. The letter states:

⁶² Vaughn, *The Abbey of Bec, Op. cit.*, pp. 25,27, and 28-29 "In effect, therefore, Anselm was creating a network of highly placed churchmen bound to him by friendship and old habits of obedience...Thus a network of reformers, under Anselm's influence, covered the Anglo-Norman state, linking the reform movements in Normandy and England. The monks of Bec seem to have viewed themselves in this way."

⁶³ Southern, "Sally Vaughn's Anselm," *Op. cit.*, p. 185.

⁶⁴ Vaughn, *Anselm*, pp. 135-41.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

Regarding those matters that the king had asked of me concerning you, and of which you yourself have written me..., I order that you accept the pastoral care of the church of Canterbury.⁶⁷

Eadmer also quotes the letter in the *Historia Novorum* where it says that the Archbishop pondered long about the matter and sought advice about what to do.⁶⁸ Nowhere is it implied, even in the passage cited by Vaughn, that Anselm had requested the Archbishop to sanction the election. That is pure conjecture by Vaughn. It seems more likely that Anselm had written to the Archbishop asking him, so to speak, if in any way this cup could pass him by. The Archbishop was in a quandary; he knew the election had taken place and received a letter from Anselm telling him that he could veto it. The Archbishop sought counsel and bade Anselm to accept what was God's will. In defiance of the tone of Archbishop William's letter, Vaughn states categorically that Anselm was pushing the Archbishop to release him from his obligations. She assumes he was doing the same thing to the Duke of Normandy and the monks of Bec.

Obviously, the affair is a complicated one. Vaughn's contention that Anselm's vow of obedience and submission of self to God's will allowed him to seek the office of archbishop is grossly overstated.⁶⁹ The key word is submission, not direction or manipulation. When Anselm adapts the imagery of Christ in the Garden of

⁶⁷ *AEp.* 154; Vaughn, *Anselm*, p. 135.

⁶⁸ *HN*, pp. 38-9.

⁶⁹ See also C. Warren Hollister's account in which he concurs with his one time student Vaughn; "St. Anselm on Lay Investiture," *ANS X*, p.146.

Gethsemane the night before His passion,⁷⁰ he is invoking that same feeling of Christ - knowing what was about to happen, dreading it, yet accepting it. Thus Anselm, after the horrific scene at the King's deathbed, perhaps even before, as he most certainly knew of the rumours in England, realised that he was going to be elected Archbishop. He dreaded the thought, did not want it to happen, but realised, especially after his forced investiture that it was God's will. He could rightly cry out with Christ, "if it be possible, let this cup pass me by." Those were not feigned words of Christ, they were the cries of anguish of a man willing to suffer. But suffering implies just that - pain and anguish - whether or not one accepts the suffering. So Anselm resigned himself to God's will and suffered the hardship. Even if he had not continued to protest after the election, (though he did protest quite unedifyingly), that would not mean he was seeking the office, but only that he was resigned to it. It seems clear that Anselm's motivation for accepting the archbishopric was not political, in the pejorative sense of the term; it may not even have been political in the positive sense of the term. It is probable that Anselm genuinely did not want the office; however, after realising that there was no way to refuse, he bargained effectively for the best conditions under which to accept the responsibility. With that, Anselm knew he had an opponent in William Rufus. The image of the Church and the world under Anselm and Rufus was distorted; it was Anselm's job as Archbishop to renew the image.

⁷⁰ *AEp.* 148; Vaughn, *Anselm*, p. 119: "After having prayed as much as I could, and striven that, if it were possible, this cup pass me by - that I should not drink it - then, seeing my prayer rejected and my struggles useless, I should say to God, 'Nevertheless, let it be not as I will but as you [sic] will.'"

Anselm's election is the most important event for highlighting the differences of opinion over the compatibility of Anselm's vocations as monk and archbishop. But if, in this instance among others⁷¹, Vaughn portrays Anselm in too worldly a light, R.W. Southern portrays, in others, his monkish Anselm in too naive a light. His view must now be examined.

Southern criticises Vaughn for not making distinctions between world-oriented and God-oriented outlooks when comparing Anselm with secular magnates such as Robert of Meulan.⁷² The lack of this distinction, he says, stems from her failure to recognise that Anselm's life and actions as Archbishop can only be understood as an extension of Anselm's life during the previous thirty years as, monk, abbot and theologian.⁷³ That is exactly the problem, not only of Vaughn, but also of Southern. Southern fails to recognise the importance of Anselm's life as an abbot of the most flourishing monastery in Normandy at the time, a monastery that enjoyed the friendship of kings, dukes, and popes alike.

Like Lanfranc, Anselm acceded to the archbishopric of Canterbury not as a politically inexperienced monk unpractised in the ways of the world but as the seasoned, notably successful head of one of the greatest abbeys in Normandy. And Bec's greatness...was the product in large measure of the zeal, practical intelligence, and saintly acquisitiveness of Anselm himself.⁷⁴

⁷¹ See Southern, "Sally Vaughn's Anselm," for an excellent critique of Vaughn's questionable interpretations to Anselm's motivation in other instances. The credibility of the work, Vaughn, *Anselm* is often diminished because of this tendency to exaggerate or to look for trouble when none is present.

⁷² Southern, "Sally Vaughn's Anselm," *Op. cit.*, p. 203.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

⁷⁴ Hollister, *Op. cit.*, p. 147.

Marjorie Chibnall has shown how much Bec's lands grew in England during his time as abbot.⁷⁵ She also describes the zeal with which Anselm sought to gain for Bec many privileges and exemptions, a task at which he succeeded.⁷⁶

Despite this evidence to the contrary, Southern can still write, "As abbot of Bec, Anselm had been little, if at all, troubled by the problems raised by the privileges of a local church."⁷⁷ And because he was unpractised in such affairs, he had no political agenda when he became Archbishop.

This is because there was no middle distance in Anselm's thought: he dealt either with eternal things or with immediate things and people. Politics, the art of the middle distance, is concerned with directing groups, organizations, and people *en masse*. These were not Anselm's concerns.⁷⁸

Anselm's overwhelming concern for eternal things meant that he concentrated only on monasticism and encouraging people to embark upon that way of life. Southern cites as evidence for his argument the fact that Anselm made little or no use of canon law as Archbishop. The use of canon law was the necessary step for carrying out a determined policy of local government.⁷⁹ Anselm's preoccupation with serving God meant that he necessarily shunned all worldly things that did not have their ends in God and eternity. The world did not belong to that communion of souls,

⁷⁵ Chibnall, "The Relations of Saint Anselm with the English Dependencies," *Op. cit.*, esp. 522-3; also her article "The English Possessions of Bec in the Time of Anselm," *SB II*, pp. 273-282.

⁷⁶ Marjorie Chibnall, "From Bec to Canterbury: Anselm and Monastic Privilege," *AS I*, pp. 23-44; Anselm's success was due to his familiarity with the practical side of an abbey's business. p. 24.

⁷⁷ Southern, *Anselm*, p. 127.

⁷⁸ Southern, "Anselm at Canterbury," *Op. cit.*, p. 21.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

Anselm's friends, that had as its end the service of God.⁸⁰ "The only aim in human life for which Anselm seems to have had any deep and lasting sympathy was the aim of binding together and enlarging the dedicated groups of men and women - either in monasteries, or associated in some way with a monastic intention."⁸¹

Southern is essentially correct in this last point. Anselm's sole concern, as was shown earlier, was with turning people to God, in making people fulfil their baptismal promises. However, what is really at issue is what that aim meant in practical terms. This is the second issue of contention with which we began this analysis. Did Anselm have an ecclesiastical-political program?

Southern, when addressing Anselm's career as Archbishop, seems to be indulging in an idyllic vision of monasticism that does not take into account the fact that a monastery exists in the world. In order for Anselm to be able to attract people to Bec, he had to have a successful monastery. That included providing for the temporal needs of monks, maintaining proper freedom in the face of episcopal or royal pressures to the contrary, and in short, being able to conduct political affairs with a high level of competence while maintaining heavenly goals. Southern does not see this as possible and therefore portrays Anselm as shunning all politics. Vaughn does not see this as possible and therefore portrays Anselm as losing sight of his heavenly ends. The middle ground, and probably correct one, is that it is possible and Anselm is an example of it.

⁸⁰ Southern, "Anselm at Canterbury," *Op. cit.*, pp. 12-15.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

Vaughn outlines several instances of Anselm's prowess in dealing with a difficult king or archbishop in order to attain goals for the good of the Church and the glory of God.⁸² The fact that Bec was such a successful monastery shows something of Anselm's ability. There is no question that Bec, with Anselm as its prior and abbot, sought to become a nurturing ground for exemplary monks and willingly farmed out its monks to help other houses mend their ways. In this sense, Anselm had a political agenda, and effectively carried it out. It is also true that Lanfranc and Anselm would have been aware of the principles of the Gregorian Reform both from their presence at the papal court for long periods of time, and the presence of papal legates at Bec.

At a later time, his famous stand as Archbishop of Canterbury at the Council of Rockingham against William Rufus and all his fellow English bishops

marks the point where 'Gregorian reform', in the strict sense of the ideology of Gregory VII himself enters England. Anselm's argument accorded with Gregory's claim against the Emperor Henry IV in 1081 that the authority of kings and dukes, so far from being divinely ordained, originated from the devil...By going into exile in 1097 and being in daily contact with Urban II, Anselm was in the forefront of the new papal idealism and a powerful figure in his own right.⁸³

The Council of Rockingham is an excellent example of how Anselm sought to restore to England his image of the Church. Once again, there are several issues that could be analyzed in investigating this question. But a few events, namely the Council of Rockingham and Anselm's first exile, briefly analyzed, suffice to

⁸² See, for example, Anselm's confrontation with Robert of Meulan when he tried to establish lordship over the abbey of Bec; Vaughn, *Anselm*, pp. 106 ff.

⁸³ M.T. Clanchy, *England and its Rulers 1066-1272: Foreign Lordship and National Identity* [G.R. Elton, ed., *The Fontana History of England*, Vol. 2] (London: Fontana Press, 1983, reprinted 1988), pp. 99-100.

demonstrate the point. The fullest account of the affair comes from Eadmer's *Historia Novorum*.⁸⁴

As an Archbishop, it was customary for the newly consecrated to travel to Rome to receive from the pope a pallium, the symbol of an archbishop's metropolitan authority. At this time, there were two claimants to the papal throne - Urban II and the anti-pope Clement III. The situation created difficulty because Anselm, while abbot of Bec, recognised, in communion with the Church of France, Urban as the pope. Rufus, at that stage, had refused to recognise either one. Anselm approached Rufus to ask his permission to make the journey to Rome, whereupon Rufus asked of which pope Anselm was speaking. Anselm replied that it was Urban, and immediately there arose, once again, a dispute between Rufus and Anselm. Rufus maintained that it was his prerogative to recognise the pope. A truce was declared until such time as all the magnates and bishops could decide the issue. Accordingly a council was held at the Church at Rockingham in 1095.

Briefly told, Anselm was accused, mainly by his fellow bishops afraid of incurring the King's wrath, of robbing Rufus of his proper sovereignty by maintaining allegiance to Urban before Rufus had made his decision. What ensued was near to a trial of Anselm for treason. Anselm, realising he had been abandoned by his bishops, chastised them for not supplying the help they promised him in worldly affairs, when convincing him to become Archbishop. He also reminded them of Christ's counsel to give unto Caesar what is Caesar's and to render unto God what is God's. The bishops replied that they could not support Anselm in anything that

⁸⁴ *HN*, pp. 49-69.

went against the King's will. While King, magnates and bishops busied themselves with arguments to refute Anselm, Anselm "leaned back against the wall and slept peacefully."⁸⁵

Here we see again, Eadmer's characterization of Anselm as someone who could defend himself competently against the most powerful men in the realm and at the same time compose himself in prayer. The issue was an important one for Anselm. He realised the duty of his previously declared allegiance to Urban. Having declared his allegiance, he could not renounce it. More importantly, Anselm very astutely reminded his bishops and the court that, as Archbishop of Canterbury, he could be judged by no one, save the Pope. He pointed out that his recognition of Urban in no way breached his oath of fidelity to the King and that any charges brought against him were false. To this argument, the bishops had no reply, because, in the words of the Bishop of Durham, Anselm's adversary in the matter, there was "no argument which could be advanced to invalidate Anselm's reasoning."⁸⁶

It is interesting that Eadmer should include this statement, for it demonstrates that Anselm could carry into the arena of ecclesiastical politics precisely those powers of logic and persuasiveness that made his reputation as a philosopher-theologian. Perhaps it is no wonder that modern scholars have failed to notice this trait of Anselm, for even the Bishop of Durham was unaware of Anselm's ability. He described Anselm in this way to Rufus: "At first...we thought him a simpleton

⁸⁵ *HN*, p. 59.

⁸⁶ *HN*, p. 63.

devoid of all human shrewdness."⁸⁷ Here, in the political arena, Anselm is using the same process of meditation that he uses in the *Proslogium*. He withdraws into himself, which people interpreted as sleeping, and reasoned out an irrefutable argument.

Rufus' hope of trying Anselm on some charge, and expelling him from the Kingdom, were dashed. In the face of total desertion by his fellow bishops, Anselm maintained his position. There was no earthly gain to be made from his stand. It can only be interpreted as Anselm fighting to restore to the English Church its proper image. But lest we seem to be falling into Southern's 'idealist' position, it is worth pointing out that on this occasion, Anselm actually won his political point. And he won it, not by a stroke of luck, nor by bumbling his way through the dispute, but by sound reasoning, the power of rhetoric and maintaining clear principles. The issue was finally resolved, mainly in Anselm's favour. In the end, Rufus sent to Rome for the pallium from Urban. Anselm received the pallium and Urban was recognised as Pope. Anselm won his first test of wills with Rufus, and also laid his political cards on the table for his fellow-bishops to see.

R.W. Southern, for his part, sees no prowess on Anselm's part during this affair. Giving the affair a scant treatment of two pages, he interprets Anselm's motives as a desire to escape the burden of his office. Anselm's ineptitude won out; he "fought like a somnambulist whose blows were difficult to counter because they were impossible to predict. He slept while others argued."⁸⁸ Southern fails to see

⁸⁷ *HN*, p. 63.

⁸⁸ Southern, *Anselm*, p. 155.

Anselm's clarity of mind and astute perception of the real issues. Southern makes the same sort of interpretation for another important event - Anselm's forced exile.⁸⁹

Anselm had been repeatedly asking the King for permission to hold a reforming council - a request that always fell on deaf ears. Realising that he was therefore powerless to perform the proper functions of his office, Anselm declared, at a gathering of the bishops and magnates, his intention to visit Rome, without the King's permission, to seek the Pope's help. While Rufus was deliberating what to do in the face of Anselm's adamancy, Anselm called the bishops to him and addressed them. Once again without their support, he admonished them to remain faithful to God and not to an earthly prince. They could only reply that their earthly interests took first priority and prevented their rising to Anselm's sublime heights. Anselm went to Rufus and explained his case once again, reminding all gathered that allegiance to any man was always qualified by allegiance to God. When the two allegiances came into conflict, there was no question that allegiance to man lost its validity. Rufus was obstinate in his refusal to give Anselm permission to visit Rome and told Anselm that, if he was adamant about visiting Rome without permission, then he must go into exile, leaving the country within eleven days. At this point Eadmer makes an interesting comment. He mentions that:

After such treatment as this we were anxious to get away at once to our lodging place. But Anselm, *trained to possess his soul in patience*, returned to the King, his face beaming with cheerfulness and joy...Then Anselm stood up and with his right hand upraised made the sign of the Holy Cross over the King, who bowed his head to receive the blessing.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ See *HN*, pp.82-91.

⁹⁰ *HN*, pp. 90-91 (emphasis added).

Here we see Anselm maintaining within himself the peace of the cloister - trained to possess his soul in patience. There is no question of Anselm's motivation. Still a monk, he desired all things to be directed to God. His responsibilities as Archbishop demanded that he order the English Church in that regard; however, the King's disregard for things moral and religious prevented Anselm from doing his duty. The image of King and Prelate yoked together and working for the good of the kingdom was marred and distorted. The only way for Anselm to do something about it was to expose the discrepancy in a dramatic way. He did so by ignoring the King's authority, though in Anselm's eyes the King ceased to have authority in this case, and going into exile. The English Church was bereft of her leader; Anselm's prediction about the Church being widowed once again had come to pass. It was only by placing the Church in that position about which her bishops lamented before, that Anselm could have hoped to settle the issue. By staying in the kingdom, nothing could have been accomplished; by leaving, he would expose the danger that existed.

Once again, however, Southern views Anselm as a person trying to abdicate his responsibilities.

To Anselm it [exile] meant freedom from an intolerable position, dangerous to his soul and to his monastic vows: it held out little else - certainly no immediate prospect of practical effectiveness: 'I go indeed willingly, trusting in God's mercy that my journey will do something for the liberty of the Church in future times.' Just how it was to contribute to this end was hard to see.⁹¹

Southern does not see Anselm as trying to conform the English Church to a pattern, his image of the proper roles of king and archbishop. Anselm was concerned only

⁹¹ Southern, *Anselm*, pp. 160-161; Southern's quotation of Anselm is from *VA*, p. 93.

for his vows, in Southern's view. But this is to ignore Eadmer's very *a propos* comment on Anselm's training to maintain his soul in patience. Anselm's cloister was in his heart and no amount of tribulation could take that peace from him.

To portray Anselm as a bumbling politician, as Southern does, is to ignore that Anselm's politics are not easy to analyze in terms of straightforward advantage. Anselm was not uncompromising, but when no compromise existed which would uphold right order, he maintained his high principles. He was quite willing, under Henry I, to compromise about prelates doing homage to the King; he would have allowed lay investitures, too, had it not been for the express prohibition of Rome.⁹² Anselm even petitioned the Pope to exempt England from the decrees in order that he might have peace with Henry I. Anselm's vision of the Church in England was at once very practical and ideal.

When being forced to accept the Archbishopric of Canterbury, Anselm described the Church as a plough being pulled by two oxen - the king and the archbishop.⁹³ Vaughn uses this image, at great lengths, to support her thesis that Anselm's political agenda was to set up a system of co-rule with the King.⁹⁴ She is correct,

⁹² See Vaughn, *Anselm*, Ch. 6 for a discussion of Anselm's difficulties with Henry I and the attempts at compromise. "Anselm, too, strove through the good works of friendship and generosity for the utility and safety of his Church." p. 263.

⁹³ *HN*, pp. 36-37.

⁹⁴ Vaughn, *Anselm*, pp. 150-153. Vaughn explains her theories in great detail in her article, "The Monastic Sources of Anselm's Political Beliefs: St. Augustine, St. Benedict and St. Gregory the Great," *AS* 2, pp. 53-92. Once again the limits of this thesis do not allow a thorough treatment of her ideas. Suffice it to say that Vaughn continues to look for trouble when none is present. In the article she attempts to trace the sources of Anselm's political philosophy which she sees as encompassing four goals: the establishment of right order; co-rule with the king; maintaining a distant allegiance to the papacy; acting as a teacher. Although I find many of her theories questionable, I will concentrate only on her discussion of the two-oxen image which she sees as an exchange of roles between the bishop and king. That is to say that the king becomes a quasi-priest; the bishop, a quasi-king. It is exactly this type of interpretation that places Anselm in the 'political' sphere with worldly interests. The image conveys,

to some extent, in her initial observation that the image is un-Gregorian because of the prominence of the king in the ruling of the Church. However, when examined closely, the image is, indeed, very Gregorian and summarizes well, how Anselm viewed his position as monk and archbishop in relation to the world.

The oxen image is un-Gregorian because the lay ruler is given a prominent place in governing the Church. However, the image is more Gregorian in its separation of the lay and ecclesiastical powers. We must take note of the fact that the bishop and the king work side by side. The bishop is not subservient to the king; the bishop is free, controlled only by the Church driving the plough. Interestingly enough, the king, is driven by the Church and, indeed, is subservient to the Church. Both the lay and ecclesiastical worlds are guided by the Church, and all the work accomplished in the various fields is for the benefit of the Church. It is fitting that a man who turned his life to God as a monk, should adopt that same type of image in his role as archbishop. Far from being un-Gregorian, the image embodies what Tellenbach singled out as the distinctive character of the Reform, namely the Church's change of emphasis from flight from the world to converting the world. Anselm's image does not have the Church, or the bishop working separately from the king and the world. Rather, the bishop and king work together to order all things rightly, under the Church.

rather, the fact that king and bishop each had their separate and distinct roles thus necessitating both people in the rule of the church. If a bishop could become a quasi-king, or a king a quasi-bishop, then there would be no reason to have two people ruling the church. What Anselm attempted to show was that the bishop, because of his authority, taught the country what its principles should be; the king, because of his power, enacted those principles. This separation of the roles with mutual co-operation allows a person like Anselm to function *in* the world without being *of* the world.

Five

Careers Reconciled

The mutual incomprehension of Vaughn and Southern and the general failure of scholarship to grasp the functional context of Anselm's writings are, in fact, one and the same problem, namely, an inability to see the whole Anselm. Our restrictive views of what 'philosophy' is or what 'politics' are, are the cause for this dilemma. Southern is preoccupied with Anselm's theological writings; he fails to consider that Anselm was also the abbot of Normandy's most flourishing abbey. Vaughn sees Anselm as an astute politician; she fails to consider that Anselm was a devout monk. Philosophers have taken one small piece of Anselm's writings and shaped his image from that. Each of these positions is highly selective and therefore distorts the picture. Neither Southern's inward-looking, other-worldly Anselm; nor Vaughn's implicitly conniving and hypocritical Anselm accords with the Anselm of the writings, a man both deeply attuned to the needs of Christendom in his age, and profoundly dedicated to a high ideal of right order.

The unifying force of Anselm's many careers are the themes of *conversion* and *image*. These imbue his theological and spiritual writings, and also provide a more plausible ideological rationale for his behaviour as Archbishop than does either

Southern's theory of Anselm's 'bumbling', or Vaughn's implied picture of purposeful ambition. They also respond to the tenor of his times.

I have shown how the Gregorian Reform, specifically its spiritual aspects, pervaded Norman life in the eleventh century. An increased awareness of one's spiritual obligations necessitated a new emphasis in the Church. Rather than fleeing from the snares of the world, the Church began to see her mission as one of converting the world to God. Into this scene, there sprang up a small monastery in Bec that soon became a model of Christian life and offered people a new and unique way of fulfilling their deep longing to follow God's will.

The intellectual atmosphere of the eleventh century began to give reason a prominent role in solving philosophical and theological problems. Anselm was a man greatly interested in these endeavours. He spent three years of his youth travelling from school to school sharpening his rational skills. After coming under the influence of Lanfranc at Bec, Anselm experienced a conversion of life and became a monk. Far from leaving his academic pursuits behind, Anselm incorporated them into his monastic life. This amalgamation of the intellectual with the spiritual demonstrates the congruency of the eleventh-century reform with an intellectual revival. Anselm had no difficulty integrating the two enterprises, unlike the later Bernard of Clairvaux who saw the intellectual climate of the university schools as inherently dangerous to the spiritual life.

With Anselm, we see a new emphasis in monastic training - understanding the rational basis of the religious life. His writings show a marked preference for exploring theological problems using reason alone. Anselm's arguments are interspersed with prayer to reflect his intention of directing his intellectual activities

toward God. Knowledge played an integral role in Anselm's monastic formation. He attempted to help his monks understand why they should devote their lives to God; when they understood why, they would be drawn to conversion.

Conversion is an important image of Anselm's life. He directed all his efforts to changing his own life in accordance with God's will and directing others to do the same. Conversion was a popular image of the Reform movement. It stemmed from the realisation that sin had marred the image of God that man received when baptised. The Reform, and Anselm's monastic school, attempted to restore that proper image to the Church and each individual. Anselm's goal was to impress upon the waxen spirit of his novices the image of virtue. But that was not an easy task to perform, even in a monastery.

The necessary distractions of the secular world for a monastery often made it difficult to maintain the solitude and peace of the cloister. Here Anselm shows how devoted he was to his monastic vows, for he trains himself, and others, in the practice of internalizing the cloister. By shutting out the noise of the world, by drawing one's thoughts to God, one created a cloister in the heart. It was in this way that Anselm could, with good conscience, accept the duties of being an archbishop away from his monastery.

The details of Anselm's life as Archbishop of Canterbury have sparked great controversy. It is in this forum that Vaughn's and Southern's disagreements are most obvious. We saw how Vaughn's interpretation of Anselm's election to the archbishopric betray a slant to her views that leads one to conclude Anselm was a careerist. The events, however, seem to show that Anselm reluctantly accepted the

position, not out of ambition, but obedience to God's will as expressed through the people.

On the other extreme, we saw Southern's naive failure to take into account Anselm's administrative abilities when discussing his episcopate. Anselm had been the prior and abbot of Normandy's most flourishing abbey. The responsibilities of such a job required consummate administrative skill in order to provide for the physical well-being of the monks. Moreover, eleventh-century monasticism was inextricably linked to secular concerns, with the result that Anselm would often have to act as a ducal judge in Bec's neighbouring villages. Anselm's skill at transforming his monastery into a large and rich enterprise enabled him to qualify as a candidate for the archbishopric. Before accepting office, he made clear, to King and bishops, his vision of the right order of the Church with his two-oxen image. While in office, he went to great lengths, including exile, to implement his idea of right order. And win his point he did, for example at the Council of Rockingham where he skilfully evaded expulsion from the Kingdom, and forced Rufus to recognize Urban as Pope. All of this was possible only because of Anselm's principles which he formulated while a monk at Bec. For Anselm, life on earth was meant to be a process of loving God and directing all actions according to His will. In doing this, one was able to make incarnate the image of right order.

Progress in Anselmian scholarship that would take into account this total picture of Anselm is impeded by a kind of unconscious anachronism. Today we are too accustomed to see the categories of secular and ecclesiastical as inherently exclusive; the two spheres should never meet. Such distinctions were not present in Anselm's day. The distinctions between monastery and world were clear for Anselm, but they

were not confrontational. It is only with this consideration that Anselm can be understood. It would be helpful if modern scholars brought Anselm back down to earth and everyday affairs. We have little difficulty in seeing that being both a mother and a career woman are compatible, or that a local parish priest can be at once a devout and holy man and a competent administrator of a parish budget, and yet in studying the medieval past we fall with extraordinary ease into naive dichotomies.

If we wish to understand Anselm, what he was writing and why, then we must try to picture him in his everyday life. That life for Anselm was mainly in an eleventh-century monastery. A monk prays and it is reasonable to assume, especially when Anselm himself says it, that his writings are directed toward that end. But we must not naively think that praying is merely a form of intellectual speculation. On the contrary, monastic life is a total conversion of mind and body. In our secular era, it is difficult to comprehend how all encompassing the spiritual life is. Every action, down to even the most practical and concrete, ought to be shaped by it. This is how it was for Anselm. If prayer was the center of his life, then his life was meant to be changed by it, converted by it.

If we can comprehend Anselm's motivation, then we can see how even politics fell under the cover of conversion. Church and prayer did not stay separate from politics; they influenced it. It was a natural progression, although undesired, for Anselm to move from the sphere of directing a comparatively small group of men at Bec to directing the King and whole English Church. It was not a mission to be shunned but, in the new direction of the Church towards conversion, a mission to be taken seriously.

This thesis has been an attempt to reconcile what modern sensibilities see as incompatible, namely the union of political and religious vocations in one man. It is essential to realise that in the eleventh century to be an abbot and to be an archbishop were each political-religious careers. Perhaps the term administrative-religious careers would remove the negative connotations of 'political' that cause Vaughn and Southern so much trouble, but at the expense of conveying the real leadership and policy-directive side of Anselm's role. The next step in Anselmian scholarship must be a re-integration of Anselm's various parts in this context. Southern called for an explanation of the differences between Anselm and worldly politicians. The answer lies, I think, in Anselm's other-worldly purposes. Other-worldly purposes does not mean, as Southern thinks, that Anselm was happy only in the heights of prayer. It means that the concrete day to day activities, political, administrative, and religious, were directed, not towards personal aggrandizement, but towards a right order in accordance with God's will. In desiring to convert the English, Anselm followed after the suffering Christ by going into exile, by giving up the happiness of the monastery. The reason he was able to do that was because he himself had been converted. Through his studies and prayer he directed his life and being towards God. The outward manifestation of that mentality was living the monastic life. Not long after, however, he was called to direct other men in that endeavour. And soon enough, he was called to lead a nation. For the truly devout Christian, such a mission is his joy.

With these considerations in mind, it may be easier to see how multi-faceted Anselm's character was. Eadmer's characterization of Anselm as a prophet with a political mission is clearer. Prophets came to direct nations and kings in the will of

God. So too, did Anselm. Understanding that will enable us to comprehend how the man who proved the existence of that than which nothing greater can be thought could compose himself to sleep in the midst of desertion by his fellow bishops and in the midst of political intrigues meant to do him harm. Just as Anselm's faith cries out for understanding, so too does Anselm.

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