Law, Reason, Truth: Three Paradigmatic Problems Concerning Faith

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Abstract: By the second half of the eleventh century, in the Christian West, the theological doctrine of St. Anslem sought to re-establish the place of reason within the domain of faith. Anselm arrived at a possible re-enactment of this relation under the condition regulated by the principle *fides quaerens intellectum* – faith seeking reason. This paper is an attempt to explore not only the possible implications of this principle but to understand the internal logic which constitutes it and holds it together. It is the contention of this paper that this regulative principle (*fides quaerens intellectum*) could complete such a process of logically constituting itself through a violent *forcing* of thought which gathered and maintained within itself an anomy. This internal paradox produced a logical excess which at one hand threatened constantly to expose a crisis, inhabiting the very centre of the theological system it sought to build, but on the other hand it also became the very ground on which such a system constituted itself. To that extent this paper would try to understand the metaphysical forcing of this moment of crisis back into the theological system it sought to express and normalize at the same time.

Keywords: St. Anselm, Medieval philosophy, faith, law

In order to articulate the problem of faith as it emerged in the Christian Middle Ages by roughly the 12th century, the provisional methodological strategy we shall adopt is to treat this problem—the problem of conceptualizing certain possible forms of fiduciary practices—as a procedural one. To that extent this historical investigation into the genealogy of formalization or rather formalizations (in the plural) of this concept mirrors a concern to understand the theoretical structure of this problematic in the present.

But what exactly does it mean to say that in the Christian West by the beginning of the 12th century the question of faith as a historical problem was emerging as a procedural one? Here I think we need to consider the

question of faith as operating within a theo-topological space of heterogeneous repetitions. As such it produces a site which, in spite of its iterability, constructs and expresses the problem anew in multiple formal variations. Although by the beginning of the 13ᵗʰ century, as we hopefully will be able to show, these abstractions which were in a constant struggle to find suitable localizations found a greatly imposing juridico-political temptation to be captured and modified by the new ecclesiastical idiom of the resurgent Catholic Church. And yet the topology marked by the operation of faith nevertheless or perhaps because of it, resists any attempt to be appropriated by a consistent self-interpretation. It rather maps an open interior whose abstract spacing always already includes the other, where it comes to appear in the place of the other, the place of absolute exteriority. Thus, faith speaks solely at the margins of faith, at the threshold between the place of faith and its other – be it knowledge, reason, law or as we shall see, truth. Thus the surge that this operation generates will neither be understood nor answered if we continue to place it into neatly spaced regions of understanding and consciousness designated by such names as God, Man or History. As long as we settle for any internal explanation, interior to the history of faith or religion or even languages or cultures, this operational surge will escape any logic of formalization. What this paper intends to do is interrogate the question of the formalization of the concept of faith at the very borderline between its interior and all the apparently exterior dimensions including technologies of faith. It is not between these two places (of interiority and exteriority) that a relationship is developed which would help us to understand the concept of faith. Rather what is sought is this passage from the interiority of faith to its outside which is already inscribed onto faith itself as an impasse to its formalization. This is the 'real' of faith that we would like to investigate further.

By the second half of the eleventh century, the teachings and writings of St. Anselm, theologian and philosopher, had already started to vibrate with a new voice within the domain of Christian theological knowledge. This new voice which took the name of *reason* had never been quite dead in the history of Christian theology up till then. And yet the murmurings of reason in this world of faith were only a muffled one, almost secretive in its passage and at times quick to dissipate. By the 10th century, the old Romanesque spirit of a terrifying God-lord, a sword bearing God was giving way to a more coherent and graceful concept of an 'immortal legislator' whose Word was sought through particular ways of life and conduct in the austere serenity of the monasteries. But the relation of faith to knowledge in this emerging topology was at best ambiguous. The reaction against intellectual work, for austerity's sake, had swept through certain abbeys in the Empire early in the ninth century. After the year 1000 AD, the

abbeys of the *Cluniac* order continued to discourage their followers from familiarity with pagan classics and to warn them that any monk who enjoyed the poems of ancient Rome ran the risk of incurring *spiritual infection*. Dialectics, the science of reasoning, was regarded not only useless in a cloistral retreat where there was no one to persuade but it was also deemed threatening as a carrier of this infection, an alien body *outside* the domain of faith whose intervention would only corrupt the immaculate spirituality of the Scriptures. A monk was supposed to carry on his solitary rumination over some selected passages of the Scriptures. But how were the words of the scripture perceived in such practices? They were to be committed to memory, not to find its meaning through cognition but through the thought associations brought about by encountering them, in order to probe the world's mysteries *intuitively*.[1] Words led to God intuitively; through an immediate grounding of their presence in the harmonic accord they produced an 'affect' which directly pointed the faithful mind to the perfection of the divine harmony. To that extent the function of words was very similar to the harmony sought in liturgical music. The monastic world did not seek to rationalize its faith; instead, it strove to stimulate that faith through the collective wonderment that filled the faithful in the act of performing that faith.

Thus when, by the second half of the 11th century, St. Anselm started seeking the Word of God through reason, it exposed the sheer complexity of imagining this space of theological knowledge at this juncture. Of course Christian Faith, at this time, started seeking legitimacy because of certain determined historical conditions-the problem of the heretics and correlatively the unification of the church-being two of the fundamental causes. But we are not directly concerned here with such historical imperatives, in spite of their constant presence in the background. Our present concern is rather to try and investigate this new relation between faith and reason which unfolds in the space of theological knowledge and to map its consequences.

Fides Quaerens Intellectum

The whole set of propositions forwarded by St. Anselm was an elaborate interpretation of the existence of God and his relation to man, whose axis was determined by the following principle: *fides quaerens intellectum.* Faith seeking reason. Following this principle, Anselm makes an argument about the 'ontological' proof of God's existence as a "being than

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[1] Georges Duby, *The Age of Cathedrals: Art and Society 980-1420*, trans. By Eleanor Levieux & Barbara Thompson (London: Croom Helm 1981), 69-70.

which nothing greater can be conceived"[2] who is always *with* a place or *with* a time rather than *in* a place or *in* a time because as the Supreme Being he cannot be contained in any one place or any one time. The Supreme Being is not contained at all by anything else other than him and, hence, is in every place and every time, sustaining everything else by his presence, in order that they not fall away into nothing. Thus, the Supreme Being *is* every place and time because "it is absent from none; and it *is* no place and time because it has no place or time."[3] We find the paradox which informs the whole of St. Anselm's thinking introduced here for the first time. In order to maintain his Omnipresence, God has to withdraw from any and all particular spatio-temporal occasions. The relation that God has to maintain with the constituted, corporeal world is that of a withdrawal or exclusion in order for him to become the Omnipresent Supreme Being. Inversely, the corporeal world is included in the divine, spiritual domain by being outside that very domain. The corporeal world of man is included in the realm of the spiritual through its very exclusion. This is the very core structure on which the omnipresence and in turn the omnipotence of the Supreme Being rests. But what does it entail for the *life* in question? In other words, how does the theological self-realize his/her place in this homogenous space of the transcendent God?

To this problem Anslem proposed a thesis of seeking Divine Knowledge through a particular, and one might add, schematic, set of thought practices which a rational mind could follow in order to individually participate in the process of *arriving* at divine knowledge which was also the moment of *coming into faith*. The process involved a complex practice of obtaining knowledge, which for Anslem was divided into two domains: First, knowledge came from the senses in the form of images where even the verbal signs were retained in memory as images to be re-collected and re-membered in the mind-a merger between *cogo* (to collect, bring together, assemble) and *cogito* (to know). Something similar to what St. Augustine used to argue: that to know was to re-collect. This mental movement from images to cognition (*cogitatio*) was followed by meditation or rather the movement from cognition to meditation (*intellectus*) where memory through recollection and examination by the rational faculty of cognition led to the mind's introspective mode of knowing *itself*. This was the act of meditation which turned the mind inward on itself. According to Anselm, when a rational mind conceives of itself in meditation, thought

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[2] St Anslem, *Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in behalf of the Fool by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo,* trans. by Sidney Norton Deane, B.A., Second Edition (New York 1910), 7.

[3] As cited by Michal Kobialka from St Anslem's *Monologium*, See Michal Kobialka, *This is my Body : Representational Practices in the Early Middle Ages* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 113.

becomes its own image. In other words here, the object of thought is nothing other than thought itself. The rational mind while bringing forth its image at the same time cannot separate itself from it. And because the image of the rational mind engaged in thought can only be sustained by the Supreme Wisdom and Supreme Reason, *than which none greater can be thought and in which all created things exist*, the process necessarily enacts the conserving presence of the Supreme Being. This is the moment which Anselm defined as contemplation (*sapientia*). This is also the moment of faith which is explored and enunciated through reason. In order to give faith its proof, reason is actualized whose *telos* remains faith. Or better, the facticity that reason externalizes serves as the very guarantee for the faith one experiences. But the actualization of reason does not destroy faith, rather, preserves it as a pure possibility. The thinking mind thinking of itself corresponds to what Aristotle in *Metaphysics* argued as the *thinking of thinking*, that is, a thinking that in actuality thinks its own *potentiality* to think. Thus we see the relation between faith and reason already taking the shape of a paradox. If reason was a mode of necessarily arriving at the presence of the experience of faith, then that very presence in this modality unfolds not as an essence or existence but as pure potentiality which is always a contingent category. We shall re-turn to this problem of faith as potentiality through a more detailed examination in a while.

Faith seeking Reason, in Faith

Let us now try to approach this problem from another direction. Not from the point of view of reason but that of faith. In chapter one of his book *Proslogion*, inviting the reader to prepare himself for the proof of the Supreme Being by prayer, Anselm writes these enigmatic lines :

> I confess and give thanks, Lord, that you have created in me this your image, so that I may remember you, that I may think of you, that I may love you. But your image has been so worn away by the continued corruption of vices, it has been so clouded by the smoke of sins, that it can not do what it was meant to do unless you renew and reform it. I am not seeking, Lord, to penetrate your heights, for I do not in any way consider my understanding equal to this; but I desire only a *little* understanding of the truth which my heart believes and loves. For I do not seek in order that I may believe, but I believe in order that I may understand.

> For I also believe this, that unless I believe, I shall not understand.[4]

The paradox of Anselm's thought can now be articulated more clearly. Without faith there is no understanding and yet it is through understanding – which is a rational pursuit of knowledge – that one seeks the proof of God and the access to his Divine Knowledge and ultimately the *guarantee* for the faith that he already possesses. In order to seek out that which would guarantee the faith that one possesses, namely the Divine Truth, one has to *already* believe in the Divine Truth. The paradox also opens a second problematic that is of partial fulfillment. Because God is a being than which none greater can be thought, then God is also the greatest of all rational beings. Hence, the Divine Reason of God is always infinitely greater than the mortal/finite reason of man. Any act of reason under such circumstances on the part of man is only a partial participation in that infinite and supreme reason. Thus, although reason can bring man to the realization of God, it will always be incomplete. God as Infinite Reason will always be in a position to give some *intellectual credit* to man as long as man has faith and depending upon the intensity and capacity of that faith, this intellectual dole would be forwarded.

We shall come back to the question of debt in a moment. But let us now retrace our steps back to the first problem of faith achieved *in* faith. In this light, the earlier principle of *faith seeking reason* can now be modified into *faith seeking reason, in faith*. In St. Augustine, we find a hint of this problem in a Latin formula he devised which read as *qui facit veritatem venit ad lucem* which very roughly could be translated as 'he who practices/or makes truth inside oneself comes to light /or has access to the light.' Thus a Christian is supposed to be supported by the light of faith if he wants to explore himself and conversely, access to the truth of faith cannot be conceived of without the purification of the soul. Foucault in his writing, "Christianity and Confession"[5] indicates this curious point arguing how such a notion of dual nature of truth obligations although present in other religions like Buddhism and Gnostism, it is in Orthodox Christianity that one finds these two truth obligations – the one concerned with access to light and one concerned with the making of truth, the discovering of truth inside oneself – operating and always maintaining a relative autonomy. Nonetheless these two processes, to make truth inside of oneself and to get access to the divine truth, Foucault maintained to be strongly connected. But what is the nature of this relation between these two processes which in

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[4] St. Anslem, *Prosloguim*, 3.
[5] Michel Foucault, "Christianity and Confession" in *The Politics of Truth,* eds. Sylvere Lotringer & Lysa Hochroth (New York: Semiotext(e) 1997), 119-235.

Christian theological knowledge seems to maintain a relative autonomy? Are they two separate, heterogenous processes resisting each other? Or are they related in a more complex fashion where each is included in the other by being placed outside it. The moment of a subjective search for the divine truth through reason is exactly such a moment of making truth or discovering truth inside oneself which is always performed in the light of the divine truth. Reason or the subjective moment of truth's discovery through reason, of its own validity is always outside divine reason and yet it is the way to realize that very divine reason. What emerges here is a relation of the exception where faith in keeping reason outside its domain includes it through that very exclusion. In other words, in abandoning oneself to faith ("I also believe this that unless I believe I shall not understand")[6] one comes to reason because faith's relation to reason is that of an inclusive exclusivity. Reason in St. Anselm's thought thus expresses the exteriority that animates faith and gives it meaning. Through the interiorized movement of rational thinking, faith first of all creates the sphere of its own reference in real life, which in Anselm becomes the life of the mind. Here reason is the constituted facticity that gives validity to the constituting moment of faith and yet never exhausts it through such an actualization. In Anselm's thought we find the imperative of faith which cannot be reduced to the rational act, although the rational moment unfolds as the very manifestation of that imperative. Thus, faith unravels itself as both distinct and yet inseparable from reason which through its operation, both proves and preserves the fiduciary imperative. One can find a corresponding model to this structure in the relation that exists between constituting power and constituted power. But we do not have the time to develop that analogy here. Rather we wish to go back to another of St. Anselm's text in order to further investigate this paradoxical problem of faith.

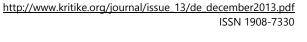## From *fidelite personelle* to incommensurable debt

In his book *cur dues homo*, Why God became Man, Anselm in addressing the question of will and liberty writes these curious lines:

> Anselm : " To sin", then, is nothing else than not to render God his due.
> Boso :   What is the debt we owe God?
> Anselm : The will of every rational creature must be subject to the will of God… this is the debt which angel

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[6] St Anslem, *Prosloguim*, 3.

and man owe to God, so that no one sins if he pays it and anyone who does not pay it sins. This is justice or rectitude of will, which makes persons upright or *right in heart*, that is, in will. This is the only and the total honour which we owe to God and which God exacts of us… a person who does not render God His honour due Him takes from God what is His and dishonours God and this is to commit sin… similarly for one who violates the honour of some person, it does not suffice to render honour if he does not make restitution of something pleasing to the person dishonoured, in proportion to the injury of dishonor that has been inflicted… thus, therefore, every man who sins must pay God the honour he has taken away and this is satisfaction that every sinner must make to God.[7]

Anselm argues that because the magnitude and gravity of the original sin is so immense, it is only natural that its payment is impossible for man in his finite and mortal state. The debt is infinitized at the moment when it is measured against the infinity of God's honour. Hence it can only be paid back as a gift by someone who is not obliged to pay-Jesus Christ. It does not merely suffice to render honour to God in his infinite grace through personal rectitude of the Christian subject that is through personal faith. It needs to be always supplemented by an excess of faith which is received in the state of grace. Because Christ the God-man is not obliged to pay back the debt that man incurred from God, it is he who can accomplish *satisfaction*[8] through his incarnation, death and resurrection. Only the God-man by his divinity is able to render God the satisfaction due to him and by his humanity to represent a human being "who has a rational nature created in the state of justice precisely for the purpose of being happy in the enjoyment of God."[9] Thus the incarnation of Christ as the son of God (the perfect man) and his resurrection (the perfect God) can only embody the infinite supplement or the originary excess of rectitude and thus faith. Thus, man's having faith is always informed by an excess which is received by

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[7] As cited by Michal Kobialka from St Anslem's *Cur Deus Homo,* See Michal Kobialka, *This is my Body : Representational Practices in the Early Middle Ages*, 161-162.

[8] St. Anslem coins this term, *Satisfaction*, in order to elaborate on his concept of the eternal debt that the Christian subject owes to God. Satisfaction is thus that state when the debt of God, which man inherited from the moment of the original sin, is paid back. This act of giving *Him* back the honour that is due Him is not possible by man in his mortal state and can only be done through the incarnation, death and resurrection of the God-Man, Christ. In other words only Jesus Christ has the capacity to render *Satisfaction* possible. *Ibid.*

[9] *Ibid.*, 162.

man from this originary moment of Christ's incarnation, death and resurrection. The Christian subject who desires to give God his due by subjecting his will to the will of God can only do so under grace which is subsumed within the embrace of an originary faith gifted to him through Christ. Hence, the rational mind's act of reason, his participation in the Divine Reason of God, which in this light also becomes an attempt to seek justice in order to pay back the infinite intellectual debt, through individual rectitude can only take place within such an originary faith. It is interesting to note here that the church has historically claimed this originary faith in announcing itself as the Vicar of Christ on earth. The power of the church originates from being the guardian of this originary faith on earth which is to say the guardian of the infinite debt which is incommensurable with any individual faith and yet inseparable from it.

Deditio in Fidem

This curious state of the Christian subject whose debt is incommensurable with his capacity to pay and nonetheless has to be infinitely paid through ritual and liturgical practices, practices of everyday conduct and even thought processes highlights a peculiar state of freedom where in order to be free, in St. Anselm's words "to have liberty,"[10] is to have rectitude of will which is also justice. So justice entails a state of abandonment where you abandon your will to the will of God. This is also, as we have seen, the moment of coming into faith through reason which is always already an abandonment to faith. This intimate structure of faith as an individual pact, what the linguist Emile Benveniste defined as *fidelite personell* or personal loyalty finds a curious juridico-political analogy in the insitition of *deditio in fidem*[11]. This peculiar institution did not involve individuals as much as it did the city and the people. During war, the enemy city could either be conquered and destroyed through violence or the weaker city could take recourse to the institution of the *deditio in fidem* which practically meant the unconditional surrender to the hands of the enemy which obliges the victor to a more benevolent conduct. What is both curious and relevant to our investigation is the nature of freedom that the vanquished would enjoy under this state of affairs. In this instance, the

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[10] Armand A. Maurer, "St Anslem," in *Medieval Philosophy* (New York: Random House 1962), 56.

[11] The relation of *fidelite personell* to *dedition in fidem* as it appears in the work of Emile Benveniste is not only concisely and inceptively summarized by Agamben but its implications are also extended to the domain of law and religion. See Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains: A commentary on the Letter to the Romans,* trans. by Patricia Dailey (Stanford: Stanford University Press 2006), 115 -116.

salvation of the city would lead to a state where its inhabitants would be granted a personal freedom, while not being completely free. They compromised a special group called the *dediticii*, who gave themselves over. As Giorgio Agamben so meticulously shows, this institution of giving oneself over was called *pistis* by the Greeks and *fides* by the Romans (to deliver oneself into the *fides* of the Roman people).[12]

What is of seminal importance for our purpose is that through this example of *deditio in fidem*, one can have a clue of the inherent relation of faith to law which is also at work in Anselm's thought. Secondly, it indicates the possibility of thinking the operation of abandoning oneself, in faith, to the will of God (justice) as not only an operation of faith but also of law where (divine) law refers to life through this relation of abandonment. In other words, the modality of seizing life through faith mirrors the capture of life by law. And thirdly, this inevitably leads to the nature of identifying such modality which is nothing other than guilt as being-in-debt (*in culpa esse*).

Three states of 'will'

In the book *Why God Became Man*, Anselm further argues that because of the original sin committed by man (Adam), the whole of mankind is corrupted and everybody is a sinner irrespective of whether he or she has individually sinned or not. Thus, the guilt that places mankind in a perpetual state of being-in-debt is also the condition of being included within divine law through an exclusion, in other words, of being in relation to God from which he or she is perpetually excluded and whose will he or she cannot fully assume. Thus the capture of life through law starts to coincide with the capture of life through faith. To be more precise, when modified according to the formula, faith seeking reason (in faith), the capture is specifically of the life of the mind which is thought as reason. Faith captures reason through abandoning it in a world of infinite intellectual debt where the rational mind can only seek to prove over and over the faith that he already possesses and thus preserves it in the same gesture as the inexhaustible faith which is never fulfilled and yet is constantly sought for fulfillment. Between prayer and denial, in the infinite deferral of the *parousia* (the second coming), this faith seems to wait poignantly and intimately, in the inwardness and isolation, defining and redefining its own limits. This is the pathetic faith subsumed in its own liminality in the heart of the believer abandoned to law which ultimately
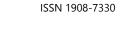
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[12] *Ibid.*

finds its expression in St. Anselm's thought and yet it also exposes the danger of such waiting.

St. Anselm had three meanings for the term 'will'. Firstly, it means the power or capacity of willing, like 'sight' means the potential for seeing. Like the power of sight, the will is inseparable and a natural endowment of the soul of man who possesses it even while not actually using it like when he is asleep. In the second sense, the term 'will' means the act of willing like sight is also the act of seeing. This act is the realization and the manifestation of the power of the will, such that each decision, or each choice is an actualization, an enactment of the potential to will or choose. But there is a third meaning of the term 'will' which is at best ambiguous. It means the inclination, propensity or affection of the power of will. For example, Anselm explains, a mother is always inclined to will the well-being of her children so that this can be called her permanent will. This permanent inclination of the will he called that what is *useful* and not what is *just*, all the time. Thus, the will is permanently inclined to what is useful and not what is just. The inclination towards justice is inseparable from the power of will only in the angels and saints. In the present life of man, the permanent inclination towards being 'useful' can go astray from the inclination to 'justice.' This Anselm argues is the moment of sin. Thus reason is to be utilized in order to make will coincide *being useful* with *being just*. Reason is thus the guarantee which 'will' seeks in order to force a fundamental and permanent state of freedom in being useful to become indistinguishable from a juridical moment of liberty which is already captured within divine law. And the cipher of that capture becomes guilt because as Anselm notes "liberty does not include the power of sinning."[13] We again return to the concept of debt where in order to be in justice one needs to become the being-in-debt who, while seeking justice and hence liberty through individual rectitude, constantly offers oneself to be captured by the divine will which here is nothing but law.

Faith as (im)potentiality

But what about the other possibility of a state, where being useful does not coincide with being just. This moment of sin is also the moment of default where the fundamental and permanent inclination of the will to be useful finds a moment of *decision* which goes against justice and in turn against law. This moment of *decision* thus emerges as the moment of defaulting against the eternal debt of the divine will. St. Anselm argues that though man chose individually to sin, he cannot repay the debt thus

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[13] Maurer, *Medieval Philosophy*, 57.

incurred, alone – without the grace of God. But what is the *relation* of this most intimate moment of defaulting to faith? In other words, what is that state of being inclined to be useful without justice? What does it expose about the nature of faith, which in Christianity emerges as the absolute and irreducible necessity for salvation?

What becomes evident from Anselm's first two definitions of will is its existence as both potentiality and act. In the book *Theta of Metaphysics*, Aristotle tackles this very problem of the relation between potentiality and act, *dynamis* and *energia,* which in the last analysis seems to exactly correspond to Anselm's relation between 'will' as the capacity for willing and 'will' as the act of deciding. What Aristotle indicates in *Metaphysics* is the autonomous existence of potentiality which also becomes evident in case of Anselm's idea of man's ability to will which remains inseparable from him even when he does not use it like when he is sleeping. But it is to Aristotle's genius to point out that potentiality in its effective mode of existence, (and not merely as a logical possibility) has to maintain its own consistency and not always be subsumed by actuality. To that extent, it is imperative that potentiality be able *not* to pass over into actuality, that potentiality constitutively be the potentiality not to do or be. As Aristotle writes, "every potentiality is impotentiality of the same and with respect to the same" and further "every potentiality is impotentiality of the same and with respect to the same for the same is potential as much with respect to being as to not being."[14] Here potentiality preserves itself in the form of its suspension. It is capable of the act in not realizing it, thus, becoming sovereignly capable of its own impotentiality. The category of distinction between being *useful* and being *just* now comes to unfold in a new light. If the will is a self-determining power which moves itself to its own decisions, then faith can exist as a pure potentiality even when one does not obey god's sovereign will, in the form of will's sovereign decision of not letting its potential for faith pass into actuality, in other words, of permanently preserving faith as potentiality in *being useful* which is the fundamental and permanent state of the will, *without being just*. Through faith as potentiality Being founds itself sovereignly, which is to say without anything preceding or determining it other than its own ability not to be. But such sovereignty can only be ascribed to God. For as we have seen earlier, for Anselm everything starts with the axiom 'God is a being than which none greater can be thought.' If through faith as a pure potential the being of man is soverignly grounded in its own capacity to be or not to be, then God no longer remains the transcendental and Supreme Being but immanentizes

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[14] Aristotle, *The Metaphysics,* trans. by Hugh Lawson-Tancred (London: Penguin 2004), 275-255.

himself in the world as anonymous as anyone. This is the *aporia* and danger that Anselm both exposes and resolves through his concept of will where sin is defined as the moment of defaulting on the sovereign debt. A faith which emerges as this pure potentiality which is also the potentiality of *not being in faith*, on which Being founds itself sovereignly and anonymously renders such faith absolutely contingent. Thus, faith emerges as the sovereign decision of the individual which is not governed by any logic of necessity or dogma but where any such logic of necessity becomes indistinguishable from contingency. Hence, faith becomes that which transforms chance into destiny.

By the end of the 12th century such a condition of faith was threatening to the very existence of the church which was trying to unify itself as the *Eccelessia Universalis*, a universal community bound together in faith. Through the logic of *Eccelessia Universalis*, the church reduced the heterogenous modes of investigating the validity of faith into a strictly juridical order where either you had faith and believed in the presence of Christ and God in which case you were bound to follow the rules imposed by the church or you did not have faith and were deemed as a heretic. It is also the time when the church appropriated St. Anselm's claim that there is nothing in faith contrary to reason and the church became the very guardian of both.

What St. Anselm's works and thought expose is the anomie on which such a juridical and intellectual order was established. The 'real' of faith was required to be sought after through reason and through law, through the mysteries and through the miracles, in discursive formalizations which intersected and entwined and sometimes overlapped in threatening ways within this theo-topological site. And yet this 'real' was what seemed to challenge the very orders of formalization, the very structures of reason by exposing faith to its real which instead of giving strength to faith abandoned faith to its liminal weakness, which could not be accumulated in any form of knowledge or dogma. The only way to fulfill the exigency of faith seemed to be in rendering law and reason inoperative, in dismantling their sovereign capture of life. To that extent the real of faith does not seem to reside in its content nor in the validity it seeks but in that abandoned place, where discharged and divested of all sovereign capture, like Bartleby, one begins to utter the words "I would prefer not to"[15] believe.

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[15] Herman Melville, *Bartleby the Scrivener* (London: Melville House 2011), 68.

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