

# ANSELMIAN SPACETIME: OMNIPRESENCE AND THE CREATED ORDER

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For Anselm, the attribute of omnipresence is not merely concerned with *where* God exists, but with *where and when* God exists. His account of this attribute thus precipitates a discourse on the nature of space and time: how they are related to God, to one another, and to the rest of the created order. In the course of this analysis Anselm articulates a number of positions which are generally thought to be the sole possession of modernity. In Part One of what follows I argue, first, that Anselm provides us with an analysis of objects which have both spatial and temporal parts, and second, that he provides us with a clear distinction between those objects which persist by enduring through time in their entirety and those which persist by being temporally extended. In Part Two I argue that Anselm's analysis of omnipresence is consciously informed by a conception of spacetime, according to which space and time form a single, four-dimensional manifold in which objects both persist and move.

## I. ANSELM'S TRILEMMA AND THE POSSIBILITY OF TEMPORALLY EXTENDED OBJECTS

Anselm's account of omnipresence in the *Monologion* begins with the following three options: either (a) God exists in every place and time (*ubique et semper*), (b) God exists in (merely) some places and times (*tantum alicubi et aliquando*), or (c) God exists in no place and time (*nusquam et numquam*).<sup>1</sup> In what remains of Chapter 20 he quickly disposes of the latter two options. He begins with two arguments against the thesis God exists in no place or time:

Never and nowhere? But it is that which exists supremely and most truly. A straightforward antithesis. 'Never and nowhere' must be false. Another argument: nothing is good, indeed nothing exists at all, without the supreme being. If, then, it exists never and nowhere, nothing will ever or anywhere be a good thing, or indeed be a thing at all.<sup>2</sup>

Since God is that which exists most supremely, it cannot be the case that God exists in no place and time. For what does not exist in any place or time does not exist in any manner or degree, let alone in the greatest manner and degree. Moreover, since it is impossible for anything to exist when and where God does not, if God did not exist in any time or place, then it would follow that nothing other than God could ever exist, and this is plainly false.

Armed with the principle that nothing can exist when and where God does not, Anselm goes on to confront the thesis that God exists in merely some places and times. This thesis implies that there are times and places in which literally nothing exists, and this is impossible, Anselm thinks, because 'time is a thing and place is a thing (*aliquid*).'<sup>3</sup> That is, for Anselm space and time are themselves creatures which are ontologically dependent upon God. What sort of beings are they, on his view? As we shall see in what follows, Anselm thinks of space as a three-dimensional continuum endowed with height, breadth,

and depth. Space, in other words, is a three-dimensional container in which corporeal objects exist, and through which they move. Time, on the other hand, is a one-dimensional continuum which extends from the moment of creation to the present and from the present into the future. For Anselm, time is neither eternal nor essentially sempiternal. It is not eternal because it has a past, present and a future, and it is not essentially sempiternal because there either is or could be a last moment of time. Speaking of the mode of temporal existence which pertains to God alone, Anselm writes that 'true eternity lacks the limits of beginning and end, which is something that does not apply to created things, precisely because they are created from nothing.'<sup>4</sup> In this passage Anselm seems to be arguing that since every creature was created from nothing, no creature is devoid of temporal limits: no creature lacks both a beginning and an end. Or perhaps he is saying that no creature lacks a beginning and an end in the way that God does, since God could not possibly have a beginning or an end, and even if there are creatures which have always existed, there is no such thing as a creature which could not cease to exist. This is clearly his emphasis in the *Proslogion*, where he is open to the possibility of creatures whose existence is without beginning or end. It is not difficult to discern his response to the following question, which he directs towards God:

Is it also in this way that You surpass even all eternal things, since Your eternity and theirs is wholly present to You, but they do not have the part of their eternity which is yet to come just as they do not have what is past?<sup>5</sup>

Even if there are creatures whose existence is without beginning or end, such beings would not enjoy an eternity which is comparable with God's, since God is eternal and creatures are (at best) sempiternal: whereas God's existence transcends the temporal order, creatures must exist within this order. So while space and time might be without beginning or end, neither is eternal in the greatest and truest sense, since both continua could come to an end, and neither transcends the order of past, present and future.

Since space is a thing and time is a thing, and since it is impossible for something to exist when and where God does not, Anselm rejects the thesis that God is present in merely some places and times. Against this position, might we say that he is *virtually* present in these places and times? That is, might we say that God is present in these places and times in virtue of his knowledge and power? Anselm decisively rejects this analysis of divine omnipresence on the grounds that it is inconsistent with God's absolute simplicity. He cannot be present in some locations merely in virtue of his knowledge and power because as an absolutely simple being he is *identical* with his knowledge and power.<sup>6</sup> Thus, since we cannot say that God exists either (a) in no places and times, or (b) in some places and times, we must conclude that he exists in all places and times. And while this might well have seemed obvious from the outset of this discussion, in Chapter 21 of the *Monologion* Anselm argues that this position likewise appears to be impossible for the divine nature.

Let us suppose that the supreme being exists *ubique et semper*, everywhere and always. Anselm's first objective is to show that the whole of this being must occupy both (a) the whole of space and time, and (b) every part of space and time. Since God is absolutely devoid of distinct parts or properties, we cannot say that part of God occupies the whole of space and time. Nor can we say that God occupies the whole of space and time by partly occupying the parts of space and time, since 'existing in individual times and places through its parts means that it does not escape being liable to division and composition,' and this condition has already been shown to be utterly 'foreign to the supreme nature.'<sup>7</sup> This passage is the first clear indication that Anselm has an explicit grasp of the notion of a

temporal part. Not only does he use the word ‘part’ in a manner which applies equally to both continua, he clearly understands what it would mean for an object to be *composed* of temporal parts. He sees, for example, that an object is divisible with respect to a given dimension only if it is composed of parts which are spread out along this dimension, and hence that an object is composed of temporal parts only if it is the temporally extended sum of its parts. Since it is impossible for God to be divisible into parts of any sort (spatial or temporal), Anselm concludes that the whole of the supreme being must exist both (a) in the whole of space and time, and (b) in each individual place and time.

In the final leg of his trilemma Anselm argues that it is not possible for the whole of the supreme being to exist both in the whole of space and time and also in each individual region of space and time. His argument to this effect begins with a prominent shift in the nature of this inquiry:

So far we have been able to pursue our investigation taking time and place together. But now the laws of time and place seem to separate and thus slip, as it were, through our fingers. Let us therefore investigate them both individually. Let us first ask about individual places: can the supreme nature exist as a whole in individual places, either at one and the same time, or through different times? Then ask the same question about individual times.<sup>8</sup>

Precisely how does the *ratio loci* seem to diverge from the *ratio temporis*? And do they only *seem* to diverge in this manner? Although he does not explain the precise nature of this divergence, we can at least be sure that it centers around the question which he subsequently presses upon both continua, namely, whether it is possible for the whole of the supreme being to exist at a plurality of locations within this continuum either (a) at the same time, or (b) at different times. Once we have examined his answers to these questions, we will be in a position to determine why the logic of space seems to diverge from the logic of time, and whether this divergence is a matter of appearance or reality.

Anselm’s subsequent discussion of God’s relationship with space begins by asking whether it is possible for God to wholly exist in a plurality of individual regions either (a) at the same time, or (b) at different times. While Anselm may have intended to pursue two separate lines of inquiry here (one which is concerned solely with space, and one which is concerned solely with time), at least in the present case this turns out to be impossible, presumably since something cannot exist in space without doing so at some time. Let us now turn to the questions themselves: is it possible for God to wholly exist in a plurality of locations either at the same time or at different times? Anselm argues that neither of these options is open to the divine nature. In the first place, it is evidently impossible for anything to wholly occupy two regions of space at the same time. If an object A exists as a whole in one location at time *t*, and an object B exists as a whole in a different region at *t*, then we can be certain that A is not identical with B. His argument to this effect runs as follows. If A wholly occupies a given region of space, then all of A’s parts occupy some part of this region, and so nothing which exists in some other (non-overlapping) region is either A or part of A.<sup>9</sup> It should be clear that Anselm is not arguing against the possibility of (spatially) scattered objects, that is, objects which are composed of parts which occupy non-continuous regions of space. Rather, he is arguing for the principle that non-scattered objects (i.e., objects which wholly occupy continuous regions of space) are individuated by their various locations at any given time. Thus Anselm:

How, then, can something be a whole in one place, and simultaneously be a whole in another place as well? (Nothing, after all, from it can be in another place.) One whole, therefore, cannot be simultaneously in several places as a whole. It follows, then, that if there is a whole in several

individual places at the same time, then there is one individual whole for each of the several individual places.<sup>10</sup>

In the continuation of this passage Anselm extends this analysis to the divine nature:

Suppose, then, that the supreme nature exists as a whole at one and the same time in all the individual places. In this case there are as many individual supreme natures as there are individual places – an unreasonable thing to think. The supreme nature, therefore, does not exist as a whole in individual places at one time.<sup>11</sup>

Since it is impossible for objects to wholly occupy discrete regions of space at the same time, then it must likewise be impossible for the supreme nature to wholly exist in a plurality of regions at the same time. Should an instance of this nature wholly exist in each region of space, there would be as many supreme beings as there are distinct regions, and this is patently absurd.

While it is generally possible for objects to wholly exist in different regions of space at *different* times, Anselm contends that this option is not open to the supreme nature. For this would imply that at a given time there is a region of space which God wholly occupies, and also a region which he does not occupy. Here again, Anselm insists that this is impossible, since nothing can exist when and where God does not, and this holds for regions of space as well as for the things which occupy these regions.<sup>12</sup> Since it is evidently impossible for the supreme nature to wholly exist either (a) in multiple regions at the same time, or (b) in multiple regions at different times, Anselm concludes that ‘the supreme nature does not exist as a whole in different regions in any way at all.’<sup>13</sup>

Let us now turn to Anselm’s discussion of how the supreme nature is related to individual times. This discussion begins with the following pair of questions:

Does the supreme nature exist as a whole in individual times? Does it do so simultaneously or distinctly throughout individual times?<sup>14</sup>

Anselm has already shown that the supreme nature must exist as a whole in individual times. The question at hand is whether this is possible, and if so, how. Note that he is not asking whether it is possible for God to exist at different times in one or more *places*. While Anselm’s account of God’s relationship to individual places includes a discussion of when God exists in these places, his account of God’s relationship to individual times does not broach the question of where God exists at these times. Although it is not possible to exist in some place without existing there at some time, the converse is less obvious: it may well be possible for something to exist at some time without also existing in some location at this time. By focusing exclusively upon God’s relationship with the temporal order, Anselm is asking, first, whether it is possible for God to *simultaneously* exist at *different times*, and second, whether it is possible for God to exist ‘distinctly throughout’ different times. At least at first glance, it is hard to see what he is asking here, or even whether he has succeeded in anything at all. It thus comes as something of a relief when he immediately dismisses the first question as nonsensical. For, he asks, ‘how can something exist as a whole simultaneously in individual times, unless those times are simultaneous?’<sup>15</sup> That is, how can something *simultaneously* exist at *different* times? The suggestion is plainly absurd.

Anselm thus turns to the second of the two options mentioned above, and asks us to suppose that the supreme nature ‘exists as a whole in individual times severally and distinctly.’<sup>16</sup> What is he asking us to suppose here? In order to clarify the nature of this

supposition, he immediately provides us with an example of a being which does exist at different times in this manner, noting that a 'human being, for instance, exists as a whole yesterday, today, and tomorrow.'<sup>17</sup> He is asking us to suppose, then, that God is related to time in the same way in which *we* are. And how is that? Anselm is clearly assuming that we are related to time in a manner which is altogether different from our relationship to space. For though we exist in multiple regions of space at a given time by having one part in this region and another part in that one, we do not believe ourselves to exist in different times by having different temporal parts at these times. Rather, we believe that the very same human being who existed both yesterday and today will also exist tomorrow. In current philosophical parlance, Anselm is insisting that we persist through time by *enduring* rather than by *perduring*, where an enduring object is one which exists in its entirety at every moment of its existence, and a perduring object is one which exists at different times by having different temporal parts at these times. Consider the following example. Suppose that you were only fortunate enough to have watched the first inning of the first game of the 2008 World Series between the Philadelphia Phillies and the Tampa Bay Rays. If you saw the entire first inning of this game, then you saw Chase Utley hit a two-run homer in the top-half of this inning. If you only saw the first inning of this game, then you didn't see the whole game, much less the whole series. You only saw *part* of this game, and *part* of this series. We are thus familiar with the notion of temporal parts, and hence with the objects (events) which are composed of such parts. If Anselm is correct about our relationship with time, you didn't see a temporal part of Chase Utley: you saw *him*, and the person you saw at bat in the top-half of this inning is the very same person you saw playing second base in the bottom half of this inning.

In asking us to suppose that the supreme being 'exists as a whole in individual times severally and distinctly,' Anselm is thus asking us to suppose that like us, God 'exists, as a whole yesterday, today and tomorrow.' Is it conceivable that God should persist through time in this manner? Anselm contends that it is not. For God endures through time only if he persists through time, and if God persists through time then he exists in a temporally-indexed manner: we would have to say that he existed in the past, that he exists at present, and that he will exist in the future. In this case, however, we would have to say that like us, God has a time-span which is not 'simultaneously a whole,' but is instead 'stretched out in parts through the parts of time.'<sup>18</sup> This is impossible, Anselm contends, because as an absolutely simple being there can be no real distinction between the supreme essence and its various modes of its existence. We must therefore say, of the supreme essence, that 'its time-span is its eternity and its eternity is precisely itself.'<sup>19</sup> If God has a time-span which extends both backwards into the past and forward into the future, then God must himself be composed of temporal parts which exist in succession, so that God would be the temporal sum of these parts. He is arguing, in other words, that God persists through time only if he persists by perduring, i.e., only if he exists at different times by having different temporal parts at these times. And this implication is inconsistent with the thesis that God is absolutely devoid of distinct parts, modes or properties. Thus Anselm:

If it is one thing at one time, and a different thing at another, if it has parts scattered throughout time, how will what rational and transparent necessity has already made clear still be true? I refer, of course, to the fact that the supreme nature is not composite, but supremely simple and supremely unchangeable.<sup>20</sup>

Since the doctrine of divine simplicity is fundamental to our understanding of the divine nature, and this doctrine is incompatible with the thesis that God encounters time as past,

present and future, Anselm concludes both (a) that the supreme nature does not ‘exist as a whole in different individual times,’ and also (b) that it ‘does not exist in different individual times severally.’<sup>21</sup> That is, he concludes that the supreme essence does not persist through time either by enduring through time in its entirety, or by being the temporally extended sum of its temporal parts. And though it perhaps goes without saying, if the supreme essence does not persist through time in either of these manners, it does not persist through time in any manner at all.

Here, then, is a distilled expression of Anselm’s trilemma: God must exist either (a) in all places and times, (b) in some places and times, or (c) in no place and time. Since God is that which exists most supremely and perfectly, it cannot be the case that God exists never and nowhere. And since it is impossible for anything to exist when and where God does not, it is likewise impossible for God to exist in only some places and times, since space and time are themselves created things, and like all created things they are dependent upon God. Because God is an absolutely simple being, we cannot say that God is substantially present in some places and virtually present in others by means of his knowledge and power, since God is identical with his knowledge and power. So we must say that God exists in all places and times. Since God is absolutely devoid of spatial or temporal parts, we must say that God wholly exists in all places and all times, and this implies that God wholly exists both in the whole of space and time and also in each individual part of space and time. As it happens, neither of these options is open to the divine nature. It is impossible for anything to wholly exist in a plurality of regions at the same time, and it is likewise impossible for God to wholly exist at different times. For if God encounters time in this manner, then (like us) God would have a time-span which is divisible into temporal parts. This, in turn, would commit us to saying that God himself has temporal parts, since we cannot meaningfully distinguish between *who God is* and *how God exists*. We must therefore say both (a) that God wholly exists in all places and times, and (b) that God cannot wholly exist in all places and times, and the conjunction of these claims is obviously absurd.

We are now in a position to specify the apparent discrepancy which prompted Anselm to separately discuss God’s relationship with space and time. Consider the following passage, which contains his initial response to the above trilemma:

Contradictory language – but ineluctable logic! How to reconcile all this? Well, perhaps there is a way for the supreme nature to exist in place and time. Perhaps it can exist as a whole in individual places and times, without there being lots of wholes, and without its life span (which is nothing other than true eternity) being divided into past, present and future.<sup>22</sup>

The source of the apparent discrepancy between the *ratio loci* and the *ratio temporis* is simply this: the reason which prevents God from wholly existing in a plurality of locations at the same time is quite different from the reason which prevents him from wholly existing at a plurality of times. The first supposition is apparently inconsistent with the thesis that there is exactly one instance of the divine nature, while the second is apparently inconsistent with the thesis that the divine nature is devoid of distinct parts, modes or properties. I say ‘apparently’ because Anselm is now indicating that it might be possible for God to wholly exist in individual places and times, after all. His solution to this conundrum comes in the passage which immediately follows the one quoted above:

For it would seem that only things that are limited to the time and place that they are in are bound by the law of time and place. To such the rule that ‘one and the same whole cannot simultaneously be a whole in several times and places’ applies. But we are not necessarily confined to conclude this of things that are not so limited.<sup>23</sup>

Anselm is now convinced that it is indeed possible for God to wholly exist in a plurality of times and places because neither of the above reasons apply to the divine nature. This means, in turn, that we have only witnessed an *apparent* discrepancy between the *ratio loci* and the *ratio temporis*. Anselm thus reverts to speaking of *the* law of space and time (*lege loci ac temporis*), i.e., with one set of quasi-judicial principles which governs the behavior of spatial and temporal parts and wholes. His final move, in terms of resolving this dilemma, is to show that God is not bound by this law.

Although God must indeed be wholly present in each place and time, he is not present in each place and time in the same manner as other things, since he is not *limited* or *contained* by these places and times. The passage quoted above continues in the following manner:

It would seem to be within the letter of this law to say 'X has a place if that place contains the extent of X by circumscribing it and circumscribes it by containing it.' And 'X has a time only if that time somehow delimits the duration of X by measuring it, and measures it by delimiting it.' So then, if we can adduce no limit to the spatial and temporal extent of Y, we may deduce that Y has no place or time. Place does not place it, time does not time it. So, we may reasonably say, its place is no place and its time no time. Now, to have been discovered not to possess time or place, is immediately to have been declared free from the jurisdiction of the time and place. What, therefore, no time or place defines, space and time do not confine.<sup>24</sup>

Consider the region of space which wholly contains your body. While it is true by definition that your body wholly exists in this region, Anselm also insists that God wholly exists in this region. But we must still say that God does not exist in this region in the same manner as your body. Although this region demarcates the full spatial extent of your body, it does not similarly demarcate the full spatial extent of God, since he is absolutely devoid of such limits. Anselm contends that God is similarly devoid of temporal boundaries. Consider the existence of an insect which began to exist in early May and ceases to exist in mid-July. Although God also wholly exists during this period, this period does not similarly demarcate the temporal limits of God's existence because he is absolutely devoid of such limits.

Anselm's final objective is to establish that only those things which are contained by space and time are bound by the law of space and time. Thus Anselm:

This, then, is what time and space stipulate: that (and only that) which is enclosed in their limits, neither escapes the logic of (spatial and temporal) parts and wholes, nor exists as a whole in more than one place and time simultaneously. But as for what the long arm of space and time law does not encircle: this is neither condemned to the multiplicity of having parts, nor prohibited from being present as a whole in more than one place and time simultaneously.<sup>25</sup>

Because God is devoid of spatial and temporal limits or boundaries, he is not bound by the rules which apply to those beings which exist within these limits or boundaries; he exists well beyond the 'long arm of space and time law.' This means that Anselm is in a position to say that God is substantially present both to the whole of space and time and also in each individual part of space and time. We should pause for a moment to consider the significance of this claim: on this account of divine omnipresence, God is substantially present in and around us with a degree of immediacy which could hardly be exaggerated. The fullness of God's being literally *permeates* and *embraces* all things.<sup>26</sup> He is telling us, moreover, that at any given moment of time God is substantially present throughout the whole of the created order in the same manner as the soul is commonly said to be present in the body.<sup>27</sup> More surprising still, he is telling us that God is present throughout the whole of this order in the same manner as the whole, divine-and-human Christ is said to be present under the forms of bread and wine in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.<sup>28</sup> On

the basis of reason alone, Anselm is providing us with a philosophical precursor to the doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, namely, the Real Presence of God in the Cosmos.

In spite of its theological significance, there is nothing radical or innovative about Anselm's resolution of his trilemma. From the standpoint of classical theism, there is probably no alternative to the thesis that God is both fully transcendent and fully immanent. What is surprising about this analysis is the conceptual machinery he employs in the course of presenting this account, machinery which rests heavily upon a strongly analogous understanding of space and time. Thus informed by the sense that time and space are alike in fundamental ways, Anselm considers the possibility that corporeal objects are extended in time in a manner which is analogous to their extension in space. That is, Anselm clearly articulates both (a) the notion of a temporal part, (b) the possibility that some objects are composed of temporal parts, and even (c) the possibility that some objects are composed of both spatial and temporal parts. Finally, Anselm provides (d) a clear and explicit account of the distinction between those objects which persist by enduring through time in their entirety, and those objects which persist by being temporally extended. While these concepts and distinctions have become mainstays of contemporary metaphysics, they are generally thought to be the sole possession of modernity. In addition to being the first clear and explicit account of these concepts and distinctions by a philosopher of note, I suspect that several hundred years must pass before we encounter an analysis of these categories which is as clear as Anselm's.<sup>29</sup> Even so, none of this clearly indicates that Anselm's understanding of omnipresence is informed by a conception of spacetime. Given his understanding of the fundamental similarities between space and time, does Anselm think that these continua are themselves united into a single, four-dimensional manifold through which things both persist and move? In what remains of this paper I will argue that he does.

## II. ANSELM ON SPACE, TIME AND SPACETIME

There is no question but that Anselm is strongly inclined to think of time and space as being alike in important ways. We see this, first, in his use of 'part' and 'whole' in connection with both continua. We see this, even more clearly, in his search for a 'law of space and time,' i.e., with a single set of principles which governs the occupants of both continua. In the *Proslogion* Anselm advances a doctrine which serves both to extend and to explain his understanding of the deep similarities between space and time. Consider the following passage from Chapter 19. After presenting an account of God's transcendence with regard to time, Anselm goes on to say something quite surprising about the manner of God's relationship to both time and space:

Is there nothing past in Your eternity, so that it is now no longer; nor anything future, as though it were not already? You were not, therefore, yesterday, nor will You be tomorrow, but yesterday and today and tomorrow You *are*. Indeed You exist neither yesterday nor today nor tomorrow but are absolutely outside all time. For yesterday and today and tomorrow are completely in time; however, You, though nothing can be without you, are nevertheless not in place or time but all things are in you. For nothing contains You, but You contain all things.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to transcending time and space, Anselm is telling us that God *contains* both time and space, that all times and places exist in him. This passage commits Anselm to the



denial of *presentism*, the thesis that only the present moment of time is real, and hence that neither the past nor the future is an existing reality. For this passage constitutes an affirmation of a so-called *tenseless* or *four-dimensional* theory of time, according to which every point and period of the temporal continuum is as real as every other.<sup>31</sup> Since all regions of space are present to God in the same way, it would be absurd to single out one region (*viz., here*) as being real in a way that other places are not. Along the same lines, if all times are present to God in the same way, then it would be no less absurd to single out some one time (*viz., now*) as being real in a way that other times (e.g., yesterday and tomorrow) are not. Anselm's rejection of presentism helps to explain his readiness to speak not merely of the whole of space, but also of the whole of time, since all times form a (temporally extended) whole only if all times are equally real. And while this affirmation does not itself constitute an affirmation of spacetime (according to which space and time together compose a four-dimensional manifold in which things persist and move), it is clearly a necessary component of this position. For unless every part of time is as real as every other, it would be impossible for time to be the sort of reality which could be united with the whole of space in the way that this position requires. Since Anselm appears to be the first philosopher to clearly and consciously embrace a tenseless theory of time,<sup>32</sup> if he does think of time and space as jointly constituting a four-dimensional manifold, then he is likely to be the earliest advocate of this position.

I think we must concede, for starters, that Anselm would have been at least open to the question of whether time and space are united into a single, four-dimensional manifold. Given his strongly analogous understanding of space and time, and his suggestion that objects might be related to time in a manner which is analogous to their extension in space, he could hardly have ruled out such a possibility. The principle that 'opposites attract' may apply in some quarters, but it holds no sway here. One who does not think of time and space as being fundamentally alike is not going to think of them as forming a single, spatiotemporal reality, while one who is impressed by their similarities is likely to be open to this possibility.

I am convinced that Anselm is not simply open to the idea that space and time form a single, four-dimensional continuum. In the first place, he does not merely speak about the *whole of space* and the *whole of time*: he also refers to the *sum* of these wholes. In Ch. 21 of the *Monologion*, for example, he considers the possibility that God exists as a whole 'only in the sum of all places and times,' and also the possibility that he exists 'both as a whole in the sum of all and in each individual place and time.'<sup>33</sup> In referring to the sum of all places and times, he is referring to a four-dimensional manifold in which things both persist and move. Since the whole of time is a one-dimensional continuum whose parts exist in succession, and the whole of space is a three-dimensional continuum whose parts exist simultaneously, the sum of these wholes must obviously be a four-dimensional continuum, that is, a continuum which is endowed with three spatial dimensions and one temporal dimension. Since it is unlikely that he could have referred to the sum of these wholes without being aware of this implication at some level of his understanding, the most direct reason for thinking that Anselm has a concept of spacetime is simply this: he refers to it on multiple occasions.

In what remains of this paper I would like to provide an additional argument for Anselmian spacetime. Suppose that he hadn't explicitly referred to 'space and time, taken together.'<sup>34</sup> Would we still have reason to suppose that he has a notion of spacetime? I think we would. To see why, we must examine his account of how the parts of space are related to the whole of time and vice versa. Since he is unabashedly realistic about both wholes and their parts, let us consider the following three questions:

- (Q1): How is each part of space related to the whole of time?  
 (Q2): How is each part of time related to the whole of space?  
 (Q3): How is the whole of space related to the whole of time?

Our goal will be to discern Anselm's answer to (Q3) by identifying his answers to (Q1) and (Q2).

Starting with (Q1), I think it is pretty clear that Anselm must say that each region of space exists for the whole of time. In Ch. 21 of his *Monologion* Anselm observes that everything which exists must exist either (a) at some time, or (b) at all times.<sup>35</sup> Since he repeatedly insists that space is a thing, this principle must hold true for individual locations as well as for the objects which exist in these locations. Anselm is thus committed to the thesis that every region of space exists either (a) at some time, or (b) at all times. When he addresses God's relationship to these continua, he never considers the possibility that God might be temporally present to the created order without being spatially present to this order. On his view, God must exist either (a) in all places and times, (b) in some places and times, or (c) in no place and time. All three of these options are conjunctions rather than disjunctions: in connection with (b), for example, he is asking whether God exists in some place and at some times, and not whether he is present either in some places or at some times. Since the trilemma is intentionally designed to cover all possible options, if he had thought that it were possible for God to be present temporally but not spatially, then he would have confronted this option in the course of presenting his trilemma. I submit, therefore, that Anselm does not think it would be possible for God to be temporally present without also being spatially present, and this is impossible for God only if the temporal order shares the same temporal boundaries as the spatial order. This, in turn, enables us to identify Anselm's answer to (Q1) and (Q2): he must say that every region of space exists at all times, and hence that every part of time exists in every part of space. In short, he must say that every part of space exists *always*, and that every part of time exists *everywhere*.

Do these answers to (Q1) and (Q2) commit Anselm to answering (Q3) in a manner which involves a commitment to spacetime? I contend that they do. Consider the following passage from Locke's *Essay*:

Expansion and Duration do mutually imbrace, and comprehend each other; every part of Space, being in every part of Duration, and every part of Duration, in every part of Expansion.<sup>36</sup>

To say that every part of space is in every part of duration is to say, with Anselm, that every part of space exists at all times. And to say that every part of duration exists in every part of expansion is to say, with Anselm, that each part of time exists in all places. It is thus not hard to see why Locke should say that space and time do 'mutually imbrace, and comprehend each other.' Though space and time do not themselves share parts, the parts of each continuum are contained by the whole of the other: every part of space stretches throughout the whole of time, and every part of time comprehends the whole of space. In light of these mutual relations, there can be no question as to their compositional affinity: the whole of space and the whole of time are mereologically woven into a single, spatiotemporal reality.<sup>37</sup> It is important to note that Anselm is not merely committed to the existence of this reality, since he refers to it on multiple occasions. Since its existence as a spatially and temporally extended entity could hardly have been lost upon him, we can say without fear of anachronism that Anselm's account of divine omnipresence is consciously informed by a conception of spacetime. Since Anselm is evidently the first

philosopher to embrace such a notion, it is only fitting that we should refer to this spatiotemporal reality as *Anselmian spacetime*.

## Notes

1 Anselm of Canterbury, *Monologion*, translated by Simon Harrison, in *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works*, edited by Brian Davies and G. R. Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), Ch. 20, p. 34. All Latin excerpts are taken from the corresponding passages from the Latin text which is included in Jasper Hopkins' *A New, Interpretive Translation of St. Anselm's Monologion and Proslogion* (Minneapolis: The Arthur J. Banning Press, 1986).

2 *Monologion* 20, 34.

3 *Monologion* 20, 34.

4 *Monologion* 24, 41.

5 Anselm of Canterbury, *Proslogion*, translated by M. J. Charlesworth, in *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works*, edited by Brian Davies and G. R. Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), Ch. 20, p. 99.

6 *Monologion* 20, 34. The doctrine of absolute divine simplicity tells us that there can be no real distinction between (a) God, (b) God's essence, or (c) any of God's attributes or capacities. For Anselm's account of divine simplicity, see *Monologion* 8, 11–12, 16–17, 26–8; and *Proslogion* 12, 18, 22–3.

7 *Monologion* 21, 35.

8 *Monologion* 21, 35.

9 *Monologion* 21, 35.

10 *Monologion* 21, 35–6.

11 *Monologion* 21, 36.

12 *Monologion* 21, 36.

13 *Monologion* 21, 36.

14 *Monologion* 21, 36.

15 *Monologion* 21, 36.

16 *Monologion* 21, 36.

17 *Monologion* 21, 36.

18 *Monologion* 21, 36.

19 *Monologion* 21, 36.

20 *Monologion* 21, 36.

21 *Monologion* 21, 37.

22 *Monologion* 22, 37.

23 *Monologion* 22, 37–8.

24 *Monologion* 22, 38.

25 *Monologion* 22, 38.

26 *Proslogion* 20, 99.

27 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I. Q. 75, Article 8, body.

28 This is made clear, for example, in the Decree on the Most Holy Eucharist which was issued in the Thirteenth Session of the Council of Trent in 1551. See *The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church*, seventh edition, edited by J. Neuner, S.J., and J. Dupuis (New York: Alba House, 2001), 616.

29 This is largely because these concepts and distinctions presuppose a theory of time which is generally supposed to belong solely to modernity. On this point see Andrew W. Arlig, 'A Study in Early Medieval Mereology: Boethius, Abelard, and Pseudo-Joscelin' (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 2005), 50–52.

30 *Proslogion* 19, 98.

31 For this observation I am indebted to Kathrin Rogers, 'Anselm on Eternity as the Fifth Dimension', *The Saint Anselm Journal* 3. 2 (Spring 2006), 1–2. It should be clear that this conception of four-dimensionalism is a theory about the nature of time, and not about the nature of temporal continuants. It should thus not be confused with the account of persistence which is more aptly entitled four-dimensionalism, according to which physical objects persist by having temporal parts, and are hence extended in both three spatial dimensions and one temporal dimension.

32 Thus Kathrin Rogers, 'Anselm on Eternity as the Fifth Dimension,' 3.

33 *Monologion* 21, 34–5.

34 *Monologion* 21, 37.

35 *Monologion* 21, 37.

36 John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, edited by Peter Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 2.15.12, p. 204.

37 For a more detailed defense of this conclusion in connection with a parallel passage in the General Scholium of Newton's *Principia*, see Howard Stein, 'Some Philosophical Prehistory of General Relativity,' in *Foundations of Space-Time Theories* ed. John S. Earman, Clark N. Gilmour, and John J. Stachel, vol. 8 of Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 13.