

**Abstract.** Anselm of Canterbury's doctrine on Evil is hardly known if compared with his argument to prove God's existence, called the ontological argument by later philosophy. The issue of Evil is dealt with as originated in the sin of the rebellious angel who, by sheer force of will, distanced himself from God. Although Anselm never wrote a treatise on angels –as did Thomas Aquinas–, nor did he elaborate a doctrine on the theme –as Suarez did–, he wrote a treatise in dialogue form called *The Fall of the Devil* in which he discussed the origin and nature of Evil. God created the angel as a free being, so that he would enjoy eternal beatitude. When he did not persevere in God's justice, he distanced himself from and abandoned the justice in which he was created. The brief report of this initial drama of the angel's sin contains a profound difficulty or a mystery which persists throughout Anselm's doctrine. Why should a purely spiritual being, whose intelligence includes neither error nor ignorance, commit sin and distance himself from God? There is no fault or deviation from intelligence in such a choice. He chose Evil by a sheer act of his own will. We intend to show that Anselm's reflection enhances the exercise of free will, the very cause of his act, as a determining factor of the sinful act. When Anselm deprived Evil of essentiality, the attribution of both being and its denial became the role of discourse. Evil within discourse, or rather, within the *usus loquendi*, is the only way it may be understood, up to a certain point. Two items will be emphasized in this article: a) the angel's disordered will, and b) the significance of the negative terms Evil and Nothing.

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