welcome and unwelcome. Irrespective of whether our knowledge (or putative knowledge) of nature's operations is or is not physically reducible, the fact remains that valuation is not so. Even were it the case that science informs us adequately regarding the constitution and *modus operandi* of reality, nevertheless the issue of what we should do about it—which aims deserve pursuit and which do not—which situations are appropriately prized and which are not—remains out of the range of science. Any and all conjuring in actualities and possibilities leaves the issue of value untouched. And yet, just this is pivotal for our philosophical concerns for the human condition. Nor need such recourse to evaluative issues stand in the way of the realism that Ross endorses. For the axiological dimension is every bit as physically irreducible as the hidden necessities that Ross highlights—and yet need be no less amenable to abstractive cognitivism.

In sum, I am persuaded that Ross's case against eliminative physicalism in metaphysics would be yet further strengthened by extending its purview from alethic to evaluative modality and thereby from ontology to axiology.

This said, one must turn from absence to presence. And, what we have in Ross's stimulating and insightful book is a widely informed, thoughtful, and well argued venture in defending scholastic realism against the scientific reductionism that pervades the contemporary scene.

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ANSELM. By Sandra Visser and Thomas Williams. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. Pp. xii + 303. Paper $29.95, ISBN: 978-0-19-530939-3.

In this book Professors Visser and Williams attempt to acquaint the reader with the full breadth of Anselm's thought. Although no obvious principle of order suggests itself in Anselm's corpus and there does not appear to be a central work that provides a roadmap to his thought, Visser and Williams have nonetheless crafted a unified book committed to "exposition rather than evaluation" (v). They open with an Introduction concerning Anselm's life and works, and they close with a reflective Epilogue. In between, the exposition has three parts: "The Framework of Anselm's Thought," "God," and "The Economy of Redemption." I focus here chiefly on the first and second parts; for in the first part Visser and William interpret central notions in Anselm's corpus, thereby revealing the contours of their approach, and in the second part they treat the *Proslogion* argument for God's existence, a text with which most readers are familiar.

The first part of the book deals with the following topics: the reason of faith (chapter 1), thought and language (chapter 2), and truth (chapter 3). The reason of faith "refers to the intrinsically rational character of Christian doctrines in virtue of which they form a coherent and rationally defensible system" (14), and thus it may be considered correlative with Anselm's task of faith seeking understanding. In chapter 1, then, Visser and Williams suggest ways to understand Anselm's faith-induced rational inquiry. They write: "[F]aith, Anselm thinks, is not simply an epistemic attitude but a spiritual discipline marked by an obedient

will" (20); and: "The first chapter of the *Proslogion* both represents and enacts the humility, obedience, and spiritual discipline that are necessary for discovering the reason of faith" (24). In these ways Visser and Williams point to Anselm's suppleness and humanity as a thinker, suggesting that he addresses readers in the entirety of their being as intellectual, volitional, and emotional.

At other times, however, Visser and Williams read too much into Anselm's motives. Consider, for example, the following comments concerning the *Monologion* and *Cur Deus Homo*, respectively: "Though he is cagey about admitting it in the *Monologion*, Anselm is aware that in making a constructive rational case for the doctrine of the Trinity, he is abandoning the method (though certainly not the content) of Augustine's *De Trinitate*" (16); and: "Anselm does not go so far as to say that it is permissible to *contradict* the fathers [of the Church] as opposed to merely supplementing them; but he does in fact reject a venerable patristic view through the arguments against the ransom theory that he puts into the mouth of Boso. He just avoids saying outright that that is what he is doing" (23). The latter comment comes on the heels of a quotation from *Cur Deus Homo* in which Anselm asserts that "the reason of truth is so abundant and so deep that mortals cannot come to the end of it" (23). The attitudes of Anselm alleged by Visser and Williams, therefore, seem discordant with Anselm's synthetic and supple approach. To be sure, Anselm does not deny that certain ways of explicating the truths of faith are simply wrong and that some are better than others, but he also recognizes that such truths are suffused with a "superintelligibility" that should make one wary of presenting any rational explication as definitive. The reader of *Anselm*, then, may begin to sense a tension in the exposition being offered: although Visser and Williams recognize the suppleness of Anselm's thinking, they nonetheless read motives into Anselm's writings that appear not to fit with his explicit acknowledgment of the richness of truth.

Chapter 2 offers a comprehensive and coherent presentation of Anselm's views on thought and language, even though Anselm never treats such topics thematically. Chapter 3 concerns truth and focuses chiefly on Anselm's *De veritate*, especially with respect to the unity of truth and truth as *rectitudo*. (Visser and Williams unfortunately translate *rectitudo* as "correctness," even though it is better rendered as "rightness," since *rectitudo* refers to the inner lining-up or "straightness" of a thing in relation to its end.) In their exposition Visser and Williams introduce the type/token distinction, a distinction more at home in contemporary analytic thought, and they adjust Anselm's conception of truth as *rectitudo* to fit it. The intention undoubtedly is to make Anselm's thought amenable to an analytically-inclined reader; the result, however, is the obfuscation of Anselm's thought.

Consider, for example, Anselm's treatment of the truth of *enuntiatio* [a "statement" or "act of speaking"]. Near the beginning of *De veritate*, a teacher and a student in dialogue agree that *enuntiatio* is true when that which it states is, and in doing so *enuntiatio* does what it ought. The truth of *enuntiatio*, then, consists in its *rectitudo*, its "rightness," inasmuch as it expresses what it ought, namely, that which is. *Enuntiatio*, however, can be false and yet still signify something, a fact that causes consternation in the student. He says:

> A statement [*enuntiatio*] . . . has received the power to signify (*accepit significare*), both that what-is is, and that what-is-not is—for if it had not received the power to signify that even what-is-not is, it would not signify this. So even when it signifies that what-is-not is, it signifies what it ought to. But if, as you have shown, it is correct and true [*recta et vera*] by signifying what it ought to, then a statement is true even when it states that what-is-not is. (43)

In response, the teacher acknowledges that every *enuntiatio* is true inasmuch as it does what it ought merely by signifying; for *enuntiatio* has received the power to signify. What is usually called a true *enuntiatio*, however, does more than this; for it signifies that what-is is, which *enuntiatio* was ultimately made to do.

The teacher is saying, in other words, that *enuntiatio* does what it ought insofar as it signifies, and yet this is not the full rightness that it can have, since it is able to signify that what-is is or that what-is-not is not, which *enuntiatio* was ultimately made to do. The teacher exemplifies this as follows:

> For example, when I say "It is day" in order to signify that what-is is, I am using the signification of this statement correctly, since this is the purpose for which it was made; consequently, in that case it is said to signify correctly. But when I use the same statement to signify that what-is-not is, I am not using it correctly, since it was not made for that purpose; and so in that case its signification is said not to be correct. (44)

Hence "It is day" spoken during the daytime is right in a twofold manner; it not only signifies, but also signifies what it was made to signify, namely, that what-is is or that what-is-not is not.

Now, consider the odd interpretation of these passages by Visser and Williams: "So it is statement-types, not tokens, that were 'made' in order to signify that what-is is. We asked earlier: made by whom? By now it has become clear that Anselm's answer is: by God" (45). Apparently, then, Anselm's position is that a statement-type (e.g., the statement-type "It is day") is created by God, and a token of that statement-type (e.g., a particular statement "It is day") is true inasmuch as it aligns with the divinely-made statement-type. Visser and Williams continue:

> The strangeness of [Anselm's] view lies not in the mere claim that God makes natural-language statement-types. God's making those is in itself no odder than his making any other type. The strangeness lies instead in the *teleological* element of Anselm's claim. God not only makes the type "It is day" but confers on it its purpose of signifying that it is day (when, in fact, it is day). (45)

Doesn't the strangeness lie, rather, in the interpretation offered here—an interpretation stemming from a misguided attempt to fit Anselm's account into the constraints of the type/token distinction coupled with an unwillingness to take seriously the intrinsic teleology of speech? By means of such expositions, a significant gap between Anselm's way of thinking and that of Visser and Williams appears, and the reader may begin to lose confidence in the exposition being offered.

In the second part of the book, Visser and Williams discuss Anselm's teaching about God, considering first the proofs for God's existence in the *Monologion* and *Proslogion* (chapters 4 and 5), then the divine attributes (chapter 6) and

the way human beings think and speak about God (chapter 7), then creation and the Word (chapter 8), and finally the Trinity (chapter 9). The exposition is comprehensive, although Visser and Williams are again prone to translate Anselm's thought into a contemporary analytic idiom.

When treating the famous *Proslogion* argument, Visser and Williams rightly note that it cannot be approached superficially:

> [W]hen Anselm says in *Proslogion* 2 that that than which nothing greater can be thought exists in the understanding, he is not talking about someone's understanding the verbal formula "that than which a greater cannot be thought" and being able to do logical moves with it. He is talking about someone's actually having that than which nothing greater can be thought before his mind: having a thought that does not, as it were, misfire, but is actually about that than which nothing greater can be thought. And such a thought is not the easiest thing in the world to achieve. Anselm's reader, or the Psalmist's fool, must "form the idea" on the basis of the kind of rational reflection that Anselm lays out in the *Monologion* and then later in the reply to Gaunilo. (83)

One must be prepared, then, to encounter the argument in *Proslogion* 2. It is puzzling, however, that Visser and Williams do not point to *Proslogion* 1 as preparatory, despite evident connections between it and *Proslogion* 2.

In *Proslogion* 1, after struggling with himself as a fallen but striving human being trying to make sense of his condition, Anselm concludes: "For I do not seek to understand so that I may believe, but I believe so that I may understand. For I believe this also: that unless I will have believed, I will not understand." Then *Proslogion* 2 opens thus: "*Therefore*, Lord, you who give understanding to faith, give to me so that I may understand, to the extent that you know to be advantageous, that you are, as we believe, and that you are that which we believe. And indeed we *believe* that you are something than which nothing greater can be thought" (emphases added). Both the "therefore" and the claim that "that than which nothing greater can be thought" is a thought of God made accessible to Anselm by faith point to a crucial connection between *Proslogion* 1 and 2. It is not within the scope of this review to articulate this connection. I bring it up, however, in order to point out strengths and weaknesses of the exposition offered by Visser and Williams. On the one hand, their suggestion not to approach the *Proslogion* argument superficially and out of context should be heeded; on the other hand, their failure to plumb the connection between *Proslogion* 1 and 2 leads to their saying little about the preparation needed for *Proslogion* 2 and instead pushes them toward a reading of the argument in the language of modal logic, great-making properties, and the like. A promising beginning, therefore, bears little fruit. Near the conclusion of chapter 5, the reader is told that "Anselm's reasoning is a version of what has come to be called a *modal* ontological argument" (92)—an interpretation that fails to capture the existential context and rhetorical character of the *Proslogion*. Such an exposition exemplifies two shortcomings of the second part of this book, namely, its failure to delineate more fully how faith seeking understanding guides Anselm's approach to God and its distorting translation of Anselm's thinking into the idiom of analytic philosophy.

In the third part of the book, Visser and Williams consider Anselm's views concerning the economy of redemption. They begin by discussing modality (chapter 10) and freedom (chapter 11), which they consider necessary for understanding morality (chapter 12), the Incarnation and atonement (chapter 13), and original sin, grace, and salvation (chapter 14). Once again, the exposition is comprehensive; they cite not only the key works of Anselm, but also personal and official letters. Analytic terminology dominates the exposition at times, and claims about Anselm's views are sometimes made with questionable support. The reader is led to believe, for example, that Anselm thinks that "we are in this life perpetually on the brink of hell," an assertion soon followed by this remark: "Small wonder, then, that Anselm so often writes as though no one outside a monastery has any hope of salvation" (251). This judgment is, in turn, supported by the following footnote: "This sounds like an exaggeration, but if one reads through Anselm's letters, it is not until Letter 189 that one finds the first indication that anyone living 'in the world' can be saved" (292 n. 33). Such comments may again strengthen the reader's perception that there exists a significant gap between Anselm's way of thinking and that of Visser and Williams.

In the Epilogue, the reader is told that Anselm's work is "highly reactive." "[H]e only writes," Visser and Williams aver, "about what he's interested in at the time; but in doing so, he assumes all of his philosophy" (254). Such a claim assumes, of course, that Anselm has a "philosophy," even though Visser and Williams assert that Anselm's "overarching project" is "faith seeking understanding" (254), usually understood to be a description of theological inquiry. Indeed, as they say, "[Anselm] is interested in philosophical explorations only insofar as they bear on matters of faith, which means that fundamentally he is interested only in God and in the economy of redemption" (254). I cite these passages from the Epilogue with a sympathetic spirit, in order to emphasize the difficult project that Visser and Williams have undertaken in this book. But, I cite them also with a critical spirit, in order to indicate the somewhat vexed and vexing picture of Anselm that they paint. Their exposition succeeds in presenting a comprehensive account of Anselm's thought as seen through the lens of contemporary analytic philosophy, thereby allowing those familiar with such trends to engage with numerous aspects of Anselm's thought; for achieving this, it is to be recommended. I would advise, however, that readers of *Anselm* eventually turn to Anselm's own words and works in order to encounter firsthand the supple mind and spirited heart that underlie his project of *fides quaerens intellectum*, which this exposition fails to capture.

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