

into an actual period, then that time and place becomes one of pilgrimage. Here lies the interest that has launched a thousand books in the last couple of decades, most of them so ill-informed as to be, optimistically, simply a waste of trees or, pessimistically, down-right confusing or worse.

But this quest for alternatives to the contemporary within our past is a genuine quest – it is a basic form of Christian renewal – and must not be dismissed by historians (for it is not simply an historical investigation) or by theologians (simply because so many of the books are the works of charlatans). When Thom's book is viewed as part of this quest we can say that we have a fine product indeed. She has carefully examined the spirituality of that monasticism and sought a balanced perspective on their lives, values, and achievements. It is written by someone who is sensitive to the monasticism of the period, who has tried to come to grips with the spirituality of the time (I say 'tried to come to grips' as this is all anyone can do: the past, especially of our inner lives, is always a foreign country), and who has used all the evidence that she could lay her hands on and used that evidence to the extent that the current state of scholarship permits. So this is an important work: first, it lays out a balanced and evidenced presentation of a monasticism that many today look to for inspiration; second, it sets questions, through its willingness to examine matters such as monastic discipline and penance, over some of the more sensationalist writing labelled 'spirituality/Celtic'; and third, it points out how few people have taken up the challenge to examine in detail this aspect of Christian history.

THOMAS O'LOUGHLIN

READING ANSELM'S PROSLOGION by Ian Logan, *Ashgate*, 2009, pp. 220, £55.00 hbk

Ian Logan's aim is to place Anselm's *Proslogion* historically (he speaks of himself as offering an 'audit trail') and to comment on the worth of its argument. He starts by noting what he takes to be the *Proslogion's* origins, paying particular attention to what we know of what Anselm might have read and to authors such as Augustine and Boethius. Basing himself on part of a text now in the Bodleian Library in Oxford (MS Bodley 271), he then presents a Latin text and translation of the *Proslogion*, the *Pro Insipiente* (Gaunilo's much cited reply to Anselm), and the *Responsio* (Anselm's less cited reply to Gaunilo). Next, he provides a commentary on the *Proslogion* running to around 29 pages. In his remaining chapters we find a discussion of Anselm's *Responsio*, an account and discussion of the *Proslogion's* medieval reception, an account and discussion of the *Proslogion's* reception from the early sixteenth century to the twentieth century, and an account and discussion of how the *Proslogion* has fared at the hands of some contemporary philosophers. Logan concludes his book by remarking on the significance of Anselm's argument. His suggestion, in line with what we find throughout his book, is that Anselm succeeded in doing what he set out to do.

It is unfortunate that what people often think that they know of the *Proslogion* comes from sources which are not to be trusted when it comes to exegesis. Hence, for example, it is commonly and mistakenly said that *Proslogion* 2 and 3 amount to what Descartes argues in certain works and to what Kant attacks in his *Critique of Pure Reason*. A great virtue of Logan's text is that it shows to what extent many have been deceived in their impressions of what the *Proslogion* has to say and how it relates to what others than Anselm have written. Logan's historical approach to Anselm is excellent and much to be welcomed. Having done as good a job as can be done to relate Anselm to his predecessors (here, of course, a lot of guess work is needed), Logan continues firmly and successfully

to show how numerous discussions of the *Proslogion* (or works often thought to have a bearing on it) have failed to engage with the text as it stands. Take, for example, what he has to say about Karl Barth's *Anselm, Fides Quaerens Intellectum* (English translation, 1960). Barth's line was that Anselm never dreamed of offering a philosophical argument for the existence of God in the *Proslogion*. Rather, says Barth, his approach to God in that work was that of Barth himself (an avowed opponent of natural theology considered as an attempt to argue for the existence of God in philosophical terms). Yet, as Logan rightly observes, 'Barth's account is flawed because he does not take account of the fact that Anselm is a dialectician who has great confidence in the power of reason' (p. 169). To be sure, Barth and Anselm are at one when it comes to the importance of faith and the radical distinction between God and creatures. But Anselm had a philosophical nose that Barth clearly lacked. And Logan shows this to be so not only in his discussion of Barth but also throughout his book. At one point he observes: 'The monastic, prayerful Anselm, the author of the *Orationes sive Meditationes*, who reads scripture for spiritual nourishment, is not to be too strongly distinguished from the Anselm who applies the skills of the grammarian and dialectician to scripture' (p. 20). The remark captures Anselm very nicely. 'That Anselm has been consistently misunderstood and misrepresented', says Logan, 'is a central thesis of this book' (p. 1). In my view, Logan has well defended this thesis.

I have to say that I am puzzled by some of the other things than he has to say. Speaking about *Proslogion 2* he says that Anselm 'does not draw the conclusion that God exists from his argument' (p. 91). But Anselm, surely, does just that, for, having noted that God is 'that than which nothing greater can be thought', he claims in *Proslogion 2* that, considered as such, God must exist both *in intellectu* (in the understanding) and *in re* (in reality). In a perfectly obvious sense, *Proslogion 2* does conclude that God exists. Again, I do not see that Logan has, as he seems to believe, disposed of the Kantian charge that the 'Ontological Argument' wrongly takes existence to be a 'predicate'. According to Logan, Anselm is concerned with whether or not existence is a predicate only in the case of 'that than which nothing greater can be thought'. Anselm, says Logan, holds that 'existence subtracted from the concept of God...leaves one with the concept of something else' (p. 160). Yet as Logan presents Anselm's way of thinking it seems as though Anselm is taking existence *in re* to be a perfection of some sort. On p. 95, for example, Logan suggests that Anselm is asking us to believe that 'that than which nothing greater can be conceived' is *in re* since 'if it exists *in re*, it must be the possessor of greatness in a sense which is clearly greater than if it exists *in intellectu* alone'. In that case, however, it looks as though Anselm is working with the idea that existing *in re* is a perfection, which is at least part of what Kant's 'existence is not a predicate' slogan is denying.

In replying to this slogan as employed in critiques of Anselm one might, of course, deny that Anselm wished to suggest that existing *in re* is a perfection. This approach to Anselm was adopted by the late Elizabeth Anscombe in her paper 'Why Anselm's Proof in the *Proslogion* Is Not an Ontological Argument' (*Thoreau Quarterly*, 17, 1985). Logan, though, and in my view unfortunately, does not pursue it and makes no mention of Anscombe's paper. If Anscombe is right in her reading of the *Proslogion*, as I think she is, then Logan is wrong in his reading. Unlike Logan, she thinks, as I do, that Anselm's *Proslogion 2* argument depends on the premise that we can think of there being something greater than something in the mind, a premise not asking us to suppose that being *in re* makes something to be great/perfect/good in some sense or other. This premise of Anselm was one that he defended at some length in his *Responsio*.

All of that being said, however, there is much more to praise than to worry about in Logan's distinguished volume, which provides a much needed reference work for anyone wanting seriously to understand and think about the *Proslogion*. I think that Logan misrepresents Anselm in certain ways. But he does a fine job when it comes to giving readers a sense of Anselm in his historical context.

BRIAN DAVIES OP

THE IMPORTANCE OF INSIGHT: ESSAYS IN HONOR OF MICHAEL VERTIN, edited by John J. Liptay Jr. and David S. Liptay, University of Toronto Press, 2007, pp. 230

Michael Vertin has had a distinguished academic career as both a lecturer at St Michael's College, University of Toronto, and as a Lonergan scholar. This *Festschrift* has been put together to celebrate Vertin's achievements by two of his former students.

One of the most stimulating contributions to this collection of essays by Lonergan scholars is on Lonergan's Christology by Charles Hefling. Hefling's paper, exemplary in its clarity and precision, outlines central features of Lonergan's writing on Christ's divine self-consciousness and knowledge, at the same time as throwing light on the notion of Christ as Revealer, on the relationship between *Method in Theology* and Lonergan's 'Latin theology', and on the notions of 'faith' and 'belief' as these appear in *Insight* and *Method*. As Hefling very ably demonstrates, Lonergan's explication of the Church's teaching that Christ had the beatific vision while on earth is subtle and persuasive. Given the recent reaffirmation by the magisterium of this doctrine, in the CDF censure of Sobrino's Christology, what Lonergan has to say is very relevant to current theology.

I detect a common theme running through three of the other contributions to the collection that I would like to especially commend here: those by Matthew Lamb, Fred Lawrence, and Mark D. Morelli. All three authors are concerned, in one way or another, with showing how Lonergan's thought is an invitation to an intellectual, moral and religious personal appropriation which points the way beyond both the great philosophical 'systems' of modernity and the existential or anarchic deconstructive reactions to the same. Such self-appropriation is at once an appropriation of the heritage of the tradition of Aristotle, St Augustine, St Thomas Aquinas and later thinkers, such as Newman. Thus, Morelli shows that the existentialist and personalist dimensions of Lonergan's philosophy acknowledge the anti-Hegelian protests of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, while inviting the 'protector' through, among other things, the dialogue of friendship, to acknowledge his or her underlying intellectual and moral 'commitments'. Matthew Lamb issues a challenge by underlining how an hermeneutic appreciation of what Lonergan is really up to becomes ever more difficult insofar as there is a failure, a failure evident in much theological education today, to read what Lonergan read: Aristotle, St Augustine and St Thomas Aquinas. Fred Lawrence begins his essay with an appreciative evaluation of Charles Taylor's analysis of both the strengths and weaknesses of the modern view of the self. Taylor is positive about the modern stress on subjectivity yet indicates the inconsistency of the moderns and post-moderns in their refusal to specify ontological and cultural values that the self may aspire to. Lawrence goes on to show how Lonergan's work as a whole can do justice to both sides of the coin.

Bob Doran's contribution to the volume is important for the ways in which it draws our attention to possible misreadings of Lonergan's 'level of experience'