ST. ANSELM AND THE LOGICAL SYNTAX
OF AGENCY

In a fascinating fragment, *Lambeth Manuscript 59,*[1] St. Anselm of Canterbury has bequeathed to us the foundations of a logical syntax of agency utilizing the strikingly modern-seeming device of treating agency as a statement operator. This approach, whereby the syntax of agency becomes similar to that of the negation operator in classical sentence logic, is currently a subject of considerable interest because of recent developments in action theory,[2] modal logic,[3] and generative semantics.[4] One might reasonably expect that there might be little coherent historical precedent for the syntactical problems thereby generated. It is therefore something of a surprise, a welcome and interesting one, to find this approach explicitly suggested by St. Anselm, and to discover that he had studied in detail paradigm cases that are of a definite interest in their own right in the analysis of the syntax of agency locutions. The Anselmian approach, as I shall call it, proposes that attributions of agency, such as 'x kills y' can be analyzed out into an expression referring to an agent, a state of affairs, and an operation of "bringing about" such as 'x brings it about that y is dead'. In this paper I will undertake

[1] The contents of this manuscript were first described and printed in F. S. Schmitt, *Ein neues unvollendetes Werk des LI. Anselm von Canterbury, Beitrage zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters,* 3 (1936). The manuscript is reprinted in F. S. Schmitt and R. W. Southern, *Memorials of St. Anselm* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 333–354. A very helpful commentary and partial translation is to be found in Desmond Paul Henry, *The Logic of St. Anselm* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), § 4. A more detailed analysis, also very helpful, is D. P. Henry, "Saint Anselm on the Varieties of 'Doing,'" *Theoria,* 19 (1953), 178-183.

[2] A good general source of material here is Myles Brand (ed.), *The Nature of Human Action* (Glenview. Illinois: Scott Foresman, 1970).

[3] See G. H. von Wright, *An Essay in Deontic Logic and the General Theory of Action* (Amsterdam, North-Holland, 1968).

[4] See John Kimball (ed.), *Syntax and Semantics,* Vol. 1 (New York and London: Seminar Press, 1972).

the triple objective of outlining and commenting on the essentials of some recent developments of this type in the logic of agency, exegetically presenting some of the most interesting and germane arguments of St. Anselm from *Lambeth 59,* and third, showing how these two perspectives interesect, to their mutual enrichment of understanding. A deeper awareness of the power, elegance and relevance of St. Anselm's thoughts on agency will, I hope, eventually enable us to gain a better appreciation of the beauty and force of his theological solutions to the problems of omnipotence, evil, and the free will defense. In the sequel, however, I will largely confine discussion to the *minutiae* of the logic of agency, except for a few cursory general remarks in conclusion.

I. THE ANSELMIAN APPROACH

St. Anselm begins with various syntactical remarks indicating that 'to do' can take as a value a wide range broadly verbal state of affairs.

> ...nemo reprehendit, si interroganti 'quid facit?', respondetur quia 'est in ecclesia,' aut 'vivit sicut bonus vir,' aut 'potest super totam civitatem in qua habitat,' aut 'magnam debet pecuniam,' aut 'nominator super omnes vicinos suos,' aut 'vocatur ante omnes alios ubicumque sit.' [5]

We could translate Anselm's thesis that *all verbs are instances of doing* into a more modern idiom by equating it with the suggestion that 'doing' can be thought of as an operator relativized to individuals over states of affairs.[6] Accordingly, 'Socrates drops the cup' is rendered as asserting that Socrates brings about a state of affairs whereby the cup falls.[7] We have an individual, *a* (Socrates), who

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[5] *Memorials,* pp. 342 f.

[6] I will not try to define 'state of affairs,' but refer the reader to G. H. von Wright, "The Logic of Action - A Sketch," *The Logic of Decision and Action* (Pittsburgh; University of Pittsburgh Press, 1966), pp. 121 f.

[7] Donald Davidson, in "The Logical Form of Action-Sentences," in *The Logic of Decision and Action (*op. cit.*),* has suggested various significant difficulties for the Anselmian mode of analysis here reconstructed. Davidson cites various action-sentences such as 'I coughed' and 'He walked to the corner' where there seems to be no *automatic* way to produce the right description of the purported state of affairs that is said to be brought about.

stands in a characteristic relation δ (bringing about) to a certain state of affairs, p. Schematically, we have the sentence, $\ulcorner \delta_a \; p \urcorner$.[8]

This conception is conveyed in Anselm's proposal,

> Quidquid autem 'facere' dicitur, aut facit ut sit aliquid, aut facit ut non sit aliquid. Omne igitur 'facere' dici potest aut 'facere esse' aut 'facere non esse.'[9]

and made more explicit in D. P. Henry's revealing translation.

> For all x, if 'x does' is true, then x does so that something either is so or is not so. Hence the analysis of 'doing' will in fact be an analysis of x's doing so that p, and of x's doing so that not-p [where 'p' is a clause describing a state of affairs, and 'not-p' is short for 'it is not the case that p'][10]

An initial difficulty for this proposal is ontological. Speaking of states of affairs is handier intuitively, but not nearly so accommodating to standard modal syntax as speaking of statements. Moreover, since any number of logically non-equivalent statements may be true of a given state of affairs, whereas conversely, an unambiguous statement designates at most one state of affairs, it is more precise to speak of statements. Thus from a logical point of view it seems more useful to shift from the *de re* idiom to *de dicto,* reading 'Socrates drops the cup' as 'Socrates brings it about that the statement, 'The cup falls' is true.'[11] At any rate, let us follow the *de dicto* route provisionally, deflecting issues of the ontology of action, because St. Anselm's primarily syntactical distinctions are best brought out in this idiom. Thus $\ulcorner \delta_a \; p \urcorner$ may be read, '*a* brings it about that p is true,' more idiomatically '*a* brings it about that p obtains,' or more briefly '*a* does p.'

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[8] Square corners mark off expressions constructed in the manner indicated, following the usage of W. V. Quine, *Mathematical Logic,* Rev. ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951).

[9] *Memorials,* p. 343.

[10] *The Logic of St. Anselm,* p.124.

[11] Some recent theories *of* agency that more or less take the Anselmian approach are the following: Anthony Kenny, *Action, Emotion and Will* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), ch. 7; Roderick Chisholm, "Some Puzzles about Agency," *The Logical Way of Doing Things,* ed. Karel Lambert (Yale University Press, 1969), pp. 199-217; and Roderick Chisholm, "The Descriptive Element in the Concept of Action," *The Journal of Philosophy,* Vol. LXI, No. 20, 613-625.

The next step taken by St. Anselm is tantamount to allowing $\ulcorner \sim p \urcorner$ within the scope of the δ-operator: "Pro negativis quoque verbis, etiam pro 'non facere,' ponitur saepe 'facere.' Nam qui non amat virtutes et qui non odit vitia, male facit, et qui non facit quod non debet facere, bene facit."[12]

This allows him to distinguish among varieties of negative actions such as $\ulcorner \delta_a \sim p \urcorner$, $\ulcorner \sim \delta_a p \urcorner$, $\ulcorner \sim \delta_a \sim p \urcorner$[13] and the like - and he does so at some length - but these distinctions are so familiar in modern logic that they scarcely require comment. St. Anselm did not, to my knowledge, take the next step that would be of interest to a student of modern sentence logic, namely extension to conjunctive, disjunctive and materially conditional states of affairs - allowing the schemata $\ulcorner \delta_a (p \ \& \ q) \urcorner$, $\ulcorner \delta_a (p \ v \ q) \urcorner$, and $\ulcorner \delta_a (p \supset q) \urcorner$ respectively. Nevertheless, this procedure integrates extremely well with his proposals for the analysis of interpersonal attributions of agency, and we therefore outline some recent developments along these lines, then showing how these modern developments can be used to clarify the paradigm cases studied by St. Anselm.

2. MODAL SYNTAX OF AGENCY

In generative semantics, recent proposals for the analysis of the underlying structure of verbs of agency involve a notion of "doing" that is a relation between a person and an action. McCawley's[14] celebrated causal analysis of the verb kill, for example, parses out *kill* as *cause-become-not-alive*. Thus John kills Fred:

[12] *Memorials,* p 337.

[13] The expression $\ulcorner \sim \delta_a \sim p \urcorner$ may require some elucidation. A paraphrase would read, *'a* fails to bring it about that not-p obtains,' or *'a* allows p to happen.' The resultant sense of agency is weaker than [δ_a p], i.e., if we have it that $\ulcorner \delta_a p \urcorner$ then we have it that $\ulcorner \sim \delta_a \sim p \urcorner$ but not conversely. Hart and Honoré discuss the case of *Hardcastle v. Biclby,* I Q.B. 709, 1892, where a distinction is made "between 'causing' a heap of stones to be laid upon the highway and 'allowing' it to remain there at night, to the danger of persons passing thereon." H. L. A. Hart and A. M. Honoré, *Causation in the Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 330. The first case requires proof that the stones were laid by the accused, whereas allowing the stones to remain, it was ruled, required no positive act.

[14] James D. McCawley, "English as a VSO Language," *Language,* Vol. 46, No. 2 (June 1970), 286-299. See also Dieter Kastovsky, "Causatives," *Foundations of Language,* Vol. l0, No. 2 (July 1973), 255-325.
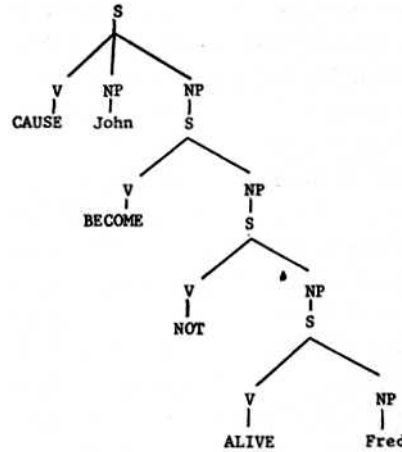
McCawley's proposal clearly exemplifies the Anselmian approach in basic outline, and it is significant that they even choose the same verb, *kill*, as a paradigm for study.

Recently, Frederic B. Fitch has suggested using an action-operator over conjunctively molecular sentences, thus, as it were, providing an extension of St. Anselm's basic proposal.[15] Fitch's proposal amounts to laying down the following two axioms.

$$(\delta A\ 1) \quad \delta_a p \supset p$$
$$(\delta A\ 2) \quad \delta_a (p\ \&\ q) \supset (\delta_a p\ \&\ \delta_a q)$$

The first asserts that 'doing' is truth-entailing: if I bring it about that p obtains then p in fact obtains. The second states that 'doing' is closed with respect to conjunction-elimination: if I bring it about that p and q obtain jointly, then I bring it about that p and moreover I bring it about that q.[16] Adoption of $(\delta A\ 1)$ and $(\delta A\ 2)$ would give us the rudiments of a seemingly not very contentious, if rather minimal, system of agency. But it is natural to see if these axioms might be strengthened somewhat. For example, suppose we allow the converse of $(\delta A\ 2)$ as well, that is, adopt $(\delta A\ 1)$ plus

$$(\delta A\ 2') \quad \delta_a (p\ \&\ q) \equiv (\delta_a p\ \&\ \delta_a q)$$

[15] Frederic B. Fitch, "A Logical Analysis of Some Value Concepts," *Journal of Symbolic Logic,* Vol. 28, No. 2 (June 1963), 135-142

[16] Fitch, ibid., p. 138.

So far as I know, this proposal is fairly innocuous unless material conditional sentences are allowed, for the resultant system would be isomorphic with the basic System T of standard alethic model,[17] and we would have the following as theorems (analogous to the paradoxes of strict implication).

* $(\delta \text{ T } 1)$ $\delta_a p \supset \delta_a(q \supset p)$
* $(\delta \text{ T } 2)$ $\delta_a \sim p \supset \delta_a (p \supset q)$

The first has as an instance: if Socrates drops the cup then Socrates brings it about that if the earth moves in relation to the sun the cup falls. The second has an instance: if Socrates brings it about that the cup does not drop then Socrates brings it about that if the cup drops the earth collides with the sun. Since, as we will see, it is useful to be able to allow δ to range over material conditionals in analyzing some Anselmian locutions, we need to reject (δA 2') in order to bar (δ T 1), δ T 2) and other similarly undesirable consequences.

Any system reasonably adequate to the natural language of actions, even if extended to allow for material conditional action-sentences, will not have as a theorem

* $(\delta \text{ T } 3)$ $[\delta_a p \ \& \ (p \supset q)] \supset \delta_a q$

[17] See G. E. Hughes and M. J. Cresswell, *An Introduction to Modal Logic* (London: Methuen, 1968). Hughes and Cresswell have shown that T and T' are deductively equivalent. T consists of the following axioms and rules:

A1–A4 for PM, plus:
A5: $Lp \supset p$
A6: $L (p \supset q) \supset (Lp \supset Lq)$
TR1 and TR2: Uniform Substitution and Modus Ponens
TR3: $\vdash \varnothing$, to infer $\vdash L \varnothing$
T' consists of A1–A4 for PM, TR1 and TR2, plus:
A5: $Lp \supset p$
A9: $(Lp \ \& \ Lq) \equiv L (p \ \& \ q)$
A10: $L (p \supset p)$
TR4: $\vdash (\varnothing \equiv \Psi)$, to infer $\vdash (L \varnothing \equiv L \Psi)$
Isomorphically, $(\delta \text{ A } 1)$ plus $(\delta \text{ A } 2')$, plus the analogous rule
$(\delta \text{ TR } 4) \vdash (\varnothing \equiv \Psi)$, to infer $\vdash (\delta_a \varnothing \equiv \delta_a \Psi)$, with the trivial axiom
'$\delta_a(p \supset p)$' (see note 10), is equivalent to the system with axioms $(\delta \text{ A } 1)$ plus
$\delta_a (p \supset q) \supset (\delta_a p \supset \delta_a q)$
with the rule (see note 10), (R1) $\vdash \varnothing$, to infer $\delta_a \varnothing$
This latter system, isomorphic with T, would have as theorems *(δ T 1) and *(δ T 2) as T has the "paradoxical" theorems T15 and T16 (See Hughes and Cresswell, p. 39).

since the addition of *(δT 3) would make the system stronger than System T, and thereby allow for the praxic analogues of the paradoxes. Yet an even stronger reason for rejecting *(δT 3) lies in its truth-functional implication of the schema,

$$* \ (\delta \ T \ 3') \quad (\delta_a \, p \ \& \ q) \supset \delta_a \, q$$

An instance: if Socrates scratches his head and Plato dies then Socrates brings it about that Plato dies. *(δT 3) is quite puzzling in its own right however: to what degree do I do the consequences of the things I do? If we replace the $\supset$ by a connective denoting the causal relation '$\ni$–' the resultant expression states a plausible principle we return to below.

$$(\ni\!\!-\ A \ I) \quad [\delta_a \, p \ \& \ (p \ni\!\!- q)] \supset \delta_a \, q$$

Yet a plausible system could have a schema similar to though weaker than *(δT 3) as an axiom in place of (δA 2), namely,

$$(\delta A2'') \quad [\delta_a \, p \ \& \ \delta_a \, (p \supset q)] \supset \delta_a \, q$$

The system composed of (δA 1) plus (δA 2") would seem stronger than the Fitch system, (δA 1) plus (δA 2), since (δA 2") implies (δA 2) whereas the converse implication does not seem to hold. The latter claim is inconclusive, in the absence of a δ-semantics, but we can say that it seems plausible, looking at the alethic analogues of these systems.

   At any rate, we can show that (δ A 2') implies (δ A 2) if we add the rule of inference,

$$(R \ I) \quad \emptyset \quad to \ infer \ \delta_a \ \emptyset$$

where $\emptyset$ is a theorem. In particular, all truth-functional tautologies will be theorems, i.e., we will have as theorems, $\ulcorner\delta_a \, (p \vee \sim p)\urcorner$, $\ulcorner\sim\delta_a \, (p \ \& \sim p)\urcorner$, and the like. Here we would regard the δ-operator as vacuously applicable, much as a quantifier is vacuously applicable to a schema containing no free variables matching the variable of the quantifier.[18] Now to proceed with our proof, assume the antecedent of (δ A 2), namely

$$(I) \quad \delta_a \, , (p \ \& \ q)$$

Now by (R 1) we have it that

$$(2) \quad \delta_a[(p \, \& \, q) \supset p]$$

From (1) and (2), by (δA 2"), we have it that

$$(3) \quad \delta_a \, p$$

By similar reasoning we can infer

$$(4) \quad \delta_a \, q$$

Thus by conjoining (3) and (4), we have it that

$$(5) \quad \delta_a \, p \, \& \, \delta_a \, q \quad \text{Q.E.D.}$$

Hence (δA 2") implies (δA 2) whereas the converse seems not to obtain. If we have it that

$$(1) \quad \delta_a \, p$$

and the equivalent of $\ulcorner \sim \delta_a \sim q \urcorner$, namely

$$(2) \quad \delta_a \sim (p \, \& \sim q)$$

then we have it that q obtains, and moreover that $\ulcorner \sim \delta_a \sim q \urcorner$ obtains, but (seemingly) not necessarily that $\ulcorner \delta_a \urcorner$ q must obtain. Thus for the present, lacking a semantics, it seems reasonable to regard the system with (δ A 2") as probably the stronger. Here we have the rudiments of a language of agency, or possibly two independent languages that will share many theorems in any case. The disadvantage of the otherwise welcome extension provided by (δ A 2") is that δ would then be isomorphic with L in System T. For (δ A 2") imports the praxic paradoxes.

Ingmar Pörn has proposed a system of agency with axioms (δ A 1) and (δ A 2") that, he concedes, contains theorems corresponding to what I have called the praxic paradoxes.[19] Pörn's highly developed system, also containing a semantics, shows the potential of systems along Anselmian lines, even though the praxic paradoxes

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[19] Ingmar Pörn, *The Logic of Power* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970). These questions of logical syntax are more fully developed in two papers of mine: "Modal Logic and Agency," *Logique et Analyse,* Vol. 69-70 (1975), 103-111, and "Logical Form and Agency," *Philosophical Studies,* Vol. 29, No. 2 (1976). 76-H9.

show that many perplexing questions of interpretation of his system remain to be studied.

   We now turn from these recent developments to a related question of special interest to St. Anselm, that of indirect agency.

3. INDIRECT AGENCY

   We now return to the puzzling schema we had discussed earlier

$$(\ni\!\!-\ A\ \text{I})\quad [\delta_a\, p\ \&\ (p \ni\!\!-\ q)] \supset \delta_a\, q$$

A normal reaction to this puzzling expression is to hedge somewhat and rule that the consequences of actions are brought about by the agent in some suitably indirect sense.[20] This reaction may be tantamount to the device of defining a derived notion of *indirect agency,* $\ulcorner \dot{\delta}_a\, p \urcorner$ as follows.

$$\text{Def. } \dot{\delta}:\quad \dot{\delta}_a\, p = \text{df}\ \delta_a\, q\ \&\ (q \ni\!\!-\ p)$$

To paraphrase : *a* indirectly brings it about that p if, and only if, *a* brings it about that q and q causes p. This ruling makes the class of direct actions a subset of the class of indirect actions. Thus notice that a direct action is not excluded as an instance of indirect agency. Notice also that direct actions are distinguished as a subset herein only by their pragmatic specification as appearing within the scope of the δ-operator and not in virtue of some mysterious property of "directness" that they possess. In other words, whether an action is direct or indirect is a relative matter - relative to p, q may be indirect, yet in another context, q may be cited as a direct action. Unlike so-called "basic actions," there are no "rock-bottom" direct actions.[21] This distinction, or one very like it, is central to St. Anselm's writings on grammar as well as to his theory of agency. As he put it, an agent can bring about something itself *(facere idipsum esse),* or bring it about through some other state of affairs (*facere aliud*

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[20] See Donald Davidson, "Freedom to Act," *Essays on Freedom and Action,* ed. Ted Honderich (London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), pp. 139-156. cf. p. 146.

[21] See Annette Baier, "The Search for Basic Actions," *American Philosophical Quarterly,* Vol. 8 No. 2 (April, 1971), 161-170.

esse).[22] In his explanation of the distinction, St. Anselm uses *per se* to explain direct agency, and *non per se* for indirect agency. The Latin (or English) idiom of agency can be systematically misleading. *Idipsum* and *aliud* are both objects of the verb *facere ;* but whereas *idipsum* refers to direct killing, *aliud* refers to something that may (but possibly sometimes may not) be thought to constitute a killing, but leads to the same result. Thus the modal idiom of bringing-about is thought by St. Anselm to constitute a clarification of an area of natural language that is inherently vague and ambiguous.

4- SIX KINDS OF AGENCY

Using the example of killing, St. Anselm distinguishes six kinds of agency as follows.

1.	Killing directly	*Facere idipsum esse*
2.	Not making not dead, (e.g. not raising the dead man to life, should one have the power so to do)	*Non facere idipsum non esse*
3.	Making the killer have arms (arming the killer)	*Facere aliud esse*
4.	Not arming the victim	*Non facere aliud esse*
5.	Making the victim not armed (disarming the victim)	*Facere aliud non esse*
6.	Not making the killer not armed (not disarming the killer)	*Non facere aliud non esse* [23]

[22] *Memorials,* p. 339f.

[23] The relevant portions of the actual text read as follows (*Memorials,* p. 344 f):

"I. In primo modo, cum quis gladio perimens hominem dicitur facere illum mortuum esse...

II. Secundi modi exemplum in 'facere mortuum esse' non habeo, nisi ponam aliquem qui possit resuscitare mortuum et non velit...

III. Per tertium modum est, cum asseritur quilibet alium occidisse, quod est mortuum fecisse esse, quia praecepit illum occidi aut quia fecit occidentem habere gladium, aut quia occisum accusavit, aut si etiam occisus dicitur se occidisse quia fecit aliquid propter quod est occisus...

IV. In quarto modo est, quando pronuntiamus illum occidisse, qui non exhi-

Using the δ-operator, we can now construct schemata corresponding to these expressions.

1. $\delta_a\, p$
2. $\sim\delta_a \sim p$
3. $\delta_a\, q\ \&\ (q \ni\!\!- \delta_b\, p)$
4. $\sim\delta_a\, q\ \&\ (q \ni\!\!- \sim \delta_b\, p)$
5. $\delta_a \sim q\ \&\ (q \ni\!\!- \sim \delta_b\, p)$
6. $\sim\delta_a \sim q\ \&\ (q \ni\!\!- \delta_b\, p)$

The adequacy of the above translations can be somewhat better appreciated by reflecting on these awkward paraphrases.

1. directly bringing it about that the victim is dead
2. not bringing it about that the victim is alive, i.e., allowing him to remain or become dead
3. bringing about some state of affairs q such that somebody else kills the victim [q $=$ the killer has arms]
4. failing to bring about some q such that somebody else does not kill the victim [q $=$ the victim has arms]
5. bringing it about that some q fails to obtain where the q is such that somebody else does not kill the victim [q $=$ the victim has arms]
6. not bringing it about that some q fails to obtain where q is such that somebody else kills the victim [q $=$ the killer has arms].

Observe that the last four expressions are ambiguous and could also possibly be translated as below.

3.' $\delta_a\,[q\ \&\ (q \ni\!\!- \delta_b\, p)]$
4.' $\sim\delta_a\,[q\ \&\ (q \ni\!\!- \sim \delta_b\, p)]$
5.' $\delta_a\,[\sim q\ \&\ (q \ni\!\!- \sim \delta_b\, p)]$
6.' $\sim\delta_a\,[\sim q\ \&\ (q \ni\!\!- \delta_b\, p)]$

buit occiso arma antequam occideretur, aut qui non prohibuit occidentem, aut qui non fecit aliquid quod si fecisset non esset occisus...

    V.   Quintus modus est, cum aliquis perhibetur occidisse quoniam   auferendo arma fecit occidendum non fuisse armatum, aut auferendo ostium fecit occiden-tern   non esse clausum ubi detinebatur...

    VI.   Secundum   sextum   modum est, cum ille criminatur occidisse, qui non

We can clearly see the difference between the above quadruple and their four previous counterparts by observing that, by conjunction elimination of the δ-operator through (A δ 2), the above four are equivalent, to, respectively,

3.″ $\delta_a \, q \, \& \, \delta_a \, (q \ni \!\!- \delta_b \, p)$

4.″ $\sim[\delta_a \, q \, \& \, \delta_a \, (q \ni \!\!- \sim \delta_b \, p)]$

5.″ $\delta_a \sim q \, \& \, \delta_a \, (q \ni \!\!- \sim \delta_b \, p)$

6.″ $\sim[\delta_a \sim q \, \& \, \delta_a \, (q \ni \!\!- \delta_b \, p)]$

In fact 3.″ and its companions are stronger than 3. and its respective companions, since the right conjunct of 3.″ implies the right conjunct of 3. by (δA 1), but the converse implication does not obtain. To perceive the difference, observe that 3., for example, states: *a* brings it about that q, and q causes that *b* brings it about that p. Whereas 3.′ states: *a* brings it about that the following state obtains – q, and q causes that *b* brings it about that p. Observe that substituting by Def. $\dot{\delta}$ into 3. yields the equivalent,

3.‴ $\dot{\delta}_a \, \delta_b \, p$,   Sub. $[\delta_b \, p/p]$

This raises the problem of iterated δ-operators. This question is of much more than merely technical import, as it is central to the problem of evil and the free will defense, not to mention its application to jurisprudence[24] or any area where interpersonal agency is

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fecit arma aufcrendo occidentem non fuisse armatum, aut qui non abduxit occidendum ut non esset coram occidente."

    See also D. P. Henry, "St. Anselm on the Varieties of Doing," *Theoria.* Vol. 19 (1953), 191.

    [24] The Law is replete with *dubia* of this type. Some comments of Hart and Honoré (op. sit., note 13) are suggestive (p. 323 f):

    "Criminal prohibitions, common law or statutory, are normally formulated as forbidding some act such as 'killing' or 'causing death.' The problem considered here is to what extent such forms of expression cover the act of an accused person who brings about death, & c. by inducing another to act in a certain way. Of course the central case of homicide which satisfies the definition of 'causing death' is one where death is brought about without the intervention of another person, e.g. by shooting. Here the 'causal connexion' traceable from the act to the harm is of the simplest kind, like that between two physical events. But it is also clear that when offences are defined either by simple verbs (like 'killing') or in causal terms ('causing death') the required causal connexion exists in certain cases where the harm is brought about by the act of another, viz. where it can be said that the accused caused the second act."

important.   How can God bring it about that Satan (or any free agent) freely does good?[25]

5. INTERPERSONAL AGENCY

The expressions that Anselm sets out to analyze, 3., 4., 5. and 6., really constitute a special case of indirect agency, namely, indirect interpersonal agency, and thereby raise two distinct logical problems, that of indirect agency, and that of the notions of inter-personal agency in connection with the iteration of δ–operators. This second problem concerns the interpretation of the expressions $\ulcorner \delta_a \delta_a p \urcorner$, $\ulcorner \delta_a \delta_b p \urcorner$, $\ulcorner \dot{\delta}_a \delta_a p \urcorner$, $\ulcorner \dot{\delta}_a \delta_b p \urcorner$ and the like. What might it mean to assert that Plato brings it about that Socrates drops the cup? If by hypothesis, Socrates drops the cup through his own direct personal agency, can Plato bring it about that Socrates so acts through *his* own (Plato's) direct agency without cancelling the hypothesis of Socrates' agency? Formally this cancelling-out effect might suggest banning iteration of δ–operators (but not $\dot{\delta}$–operators, as we will see) from the language altogether or adopting some axiom like

$$(\delta \, A \, 3) \quad (\forall x)(\forall y) \sim \delta_x \delta_y p$$

I would not like to rule out that some intuitive interpretation for these iterated expressions might be found, but I will not pursue the question further. Some interesting interpretations are proposed by Pörn.

The case of $\dot{\delta}$–operators is even more interesting in this respect, as Anselm's examples show. Legal cases abound with examples of indirect interpersonal agency.[26] Another striking application of such schemata as in theology - current philosophical theology is much concerned with statements of this type. Anselm, needless to say, was well aware of the theological implications of the language of agency and, as interesting as it would be, I will not try to relate the Lambeth

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[25] *See De Casu Diaboli* in *Truth, Freedom, and Evil: Three Philosophical Dialogues by Anselm of Canterbury,* edited and translated by Jasper Hopkins and Herbert Richardson (New York: Harper, 1967), pp. 145-196. This work contains a short Anselm bibliography.

[26] Hart and Honoré , Part II, Ch. 13.

Manuscript to his writings on major theological   problems.[27] Suffice it to briefly note the following applications to the problem of evil.

(a) *Evil and Agency:* St. Anselm and others suggest that the sense in which God brings it about that evil obtains and the sense in which free men do what is right is represented by 2. on our list, namely $\ulcorner\sim\delta_a \sim p\urcorner$, a sense of agency weaker than 1. of the list, $\ulcorner\delta_a\ p\urcorner$.[28] We could read $\ulcorner\sim \delta_a \sim p\urcorner$ '*a* allows p to occur,' although this sense of 'allows' needs to be distinguished from more familiar deontic and alethic modalities such as *permission* and *control.*[29]

(b) *The Free Will Defense:* If we iterate a modal operator, M*, for opportunity, or equivalently *physical possibility*[30] over the δ-operator, as in $\ulcorner M^* \ \delta_a\ p\urcorner$, reading this expression as '*a* has the op portunity to bring it about that p,' we can express two very controversial principles of the free will defense, namely the pair,

$$(p\ 1) \qquad \delta_a\ \delta_b\ p \supset\ \sim M^*\ \delta_b \sim p$$
$$(p\ 2) \qquad \dot{\delta}_a\ d_b\ p \supset\ \sim M^*\ d_b \sim p$$

The first reads: if *a* directly brings it about that *b* brings it about that p, then *b* does not freely bring it about that p. The second reads: if *a* indirectly brings it about that *b* directly brings it about that p, then *b* does not freely bring it about that p. According to a key principle of Plantinga, for example, if God brings it about that I do right, then I do not do right freely.[31]

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[27] D. P. Henry in Ch. 4 *of The Logic of St. Anselm* (op. cit.), is very helpful here. See also Douglas Walton, "Principles of Interpersonal Agency in the Free Will Defense," *Bijdragen Tijdschrift Voor Filosophie en Theologie,* 37 (1976), 36-46.

[28] See St. Anselm's *De Libertate Arbitrii,* in Hopkins and Richardson. as well as sources already cited. Also Jacques Maritain, *Saint Thomas and the Problem of Evil,* Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1942.

[29] See Douglas Walton, "Some Theorems of Fitch on Omnipotence," *Sophia,* Vol. XV, I (Marck 1976), 20-27.

[30] See Douglas Walton, "Modalities in the Free Will Defence," *Religious Studies,* Vol. 10, No. 3   (September, 1974), 325–331.

[31] Alvin Plantinga, "The Free Will Defense," *Philosophy in America,* ed. Max Black London: Allen and Unwin, 1965. Reprinted in William Rowe and William Wainwright, eds., *Philosophy of Religion: Selected Readings* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovitch, 1973), pp. 206-216, esp. p. 213. See also Alvin Plantinga, "Which Worlds Could God Have Created?" *The Journal of Philosophy,* Vol. LXX, No. 17 (October, 1973), 539-552.

(c) *The Paradox of Omnipotence:* can God make a stone too heavy for him to lift? If so, there is an object that he could not lift, and therefore he is not omnipotent. If not, obviously he is not omnipotent either. The puzzling states of affairs here are the *self-limiting* states, namely those such that if an agent brings one about, he lacks some power.[32] That is, a state p is *self-limiting* for an agent *a* if and only if,

$$\delta_a\, p \ni\!\!- (\exists\, q) \sim M^*\, \delta_a\, q$$

Here we have a third problem where the syntactical basis can be perspicuously expressed through Anselm's language of agency.

Hopefully the fertility of the Anselmian approach has now been made apparent. For it is as a foundational syntactical basis that opens up new and promising perspectives rather than as a direct means for the solution of the continuing difficult problems of agency and causation that the Anselmian approach is best seen. So viewed, the seminal importance of St. Anselm's achievement becomes manifest. What, I am sure, has appeared to many readers to be a set of apparently artificial, vacuous grammatical abstractions, can be seen as a very elegant and surprisingly prescient contribution to the history of thought.

University of Winnipeg   DOUGLAS   WALTON
Winnipeg, Manitoba

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[32] Douglas Walton, "The Omnipotence Paradox," *The Canadian Journal of Philosophy,* Vol. IV, No. 4 (June 1975), 705–715.