Not by Confusion of Substance, but by Unity of Person

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In an earlier essay, I showed how a part of the doctrine of the Trinity (that part that raises problems about counting, identity, and predication) could be given a statement in terms of 'relative identity'.[1] I did not contend that my statement of the doctrine was orthodox, although my tentative opinion, then and now, is that it is. I did not claim in any sense to have penetrated the mystery of the Trinity—to have proposed a non-mysterious formulation of the doctrine—but only to have formulated the doctrine in such a way that no contradiction could be formally derived from it. Here I propose to see whether the same methods can be applied to the mystery of the Incarnation: more exactly, to the doctrine of the hypostatic union of two natures—divine and human—in the person of Jesus Christ. I shall offer a formulation of a part of that doctrine in terms of relative identity. It is my hope that this formulation will be orthodox—that is, consistent with historical orthodoxy. I say 'part of' because I believe that there is no clearly demarcated set of propositions that can be called 'the doctrine of the Incarnation', or even 'the doctrine of the hypostatic union'. The 'part' of the doctrine that I shall be most concerned with is the part that raises grave metaphysical and logical problems: those propositions of

[1] Peter van Inwagen, 'And yet they are not Three Gods but One God', in Thomas V. Morris (ed.), *Philosophy and the Christian Faith* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 241–78. Richard Swinburne's kind words about this paper—which approaches the philosophical problems raised by the doctrine of the Trinity in a way inconsistent with his own treatment of them—have encouraged me to contribute the present essay to this *Festschrift* dedicated to him. Swinburne's views on Trinitarian theology can be found in his essay 'Could there be more than one God?', *Faith and Philosophy*, v (1988), 225–41. The 'kind words' occur in n. 19, along with some words explaining why he prefers his own approach to mine. I will take this opportunity to say just a word (or twenty-one words) explaining why I prefer my approach to his: although I do not accuse him of tritheism, it seems to me that his Trinitarian theology is uncomfortably close to tritheism.

incarnational theology that appear to require violations of the principle of the transitivity of identity or of Leibniz's Law. (A violation of the former would be, a fortiori, a violation of the latter, since Leibniz's Law entails the transitivity of identity.) I shall not claim to have penetrated the mystery of the Incarnation, but at most to have shown that that doctrine can be stated without formal contradiction.

<div align="center">I</div>

The present essay is best read as a sequel to 'And yet they are not Three Gods but One God'. But I shall do my best to make it self-contained. To this end, I present in this section a brief outline of the logic of relative identity ('RI-logic') that was developed in the earlier essay. For a fuller development of that logic, a discussion of the philosophical problems raised by the concept of relative identity, and a philosophical defence of the peculiar features of RI-logic, the reader will have to consult the earlier essay.[2]

Let us understand by 'quantifier logic' the logic of quantification developed as a system of natural deduction. The language of 'quantifier logic' will be understood to contain neither the identity sign nor any terms but variables (that is, it will contain neither names nor the description operator).

RI-logic is simply quantifier logic with its two-place predicate-letters partitioned into two classes, within one of which two special rules of inference apply. We indicate predicate-letters of the sort to which the two 'special' rules apply by underlining ('$\underline{F}$', '$\underline{G}$', . . .). The two rules are:

Sym $\mathfrak{R}xy \vdash \mathfrak{R}yx$

Trans $\mathfrak{R}xy, \mathfrak{R}yz \vdash \mathfrak{R}xz$.

Here '$\mathfrak{R}$' represents any underlined predicate-letter.

The predicate-letters of RI-logic are intended to be replaceable only by ordinary-language predicates that satisfy the following restrictions: they do not contain denoting phrases, any ordinary-language equivalent of the identity sign, or, with one exception

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[2] One very important question to which I can devote no space here is this: what, according to the philosophical defenders of RI-logic, is the status of the classical logic of absolute identity? This question is discussed at length in 'And yet they are not Three Gods but One God'.

that I shall mention in a moment, count-nouns. Underlined predicate-letters are to be replaceable only by 'relative-identity' predicates of ordinary language: phrases like 'is the same horse as' or 'is the same apple as', phrases of the form 'is the same N as', where 'N' represents the place of a count-noun. (This is the exception to the 'no count-noun' restriction. But we also allow one-place predicates of the form '*x* is a(n) N', since these may be regarded as abbreviations for the corresponding phrases of the form '*x* is the same N as *x*'.)

It will be noted that the inference rules of RI-logic do not include:

<div align="center">$\vdash \mathfrak{R}xx$.</div>

If there were such a rule, then

<div align="center">$\forall xx$ is the same horse as x</div>

would be an instance of a theorem. And an allowable reading of this sentence is 'Everything is a horse'. (In saying this, I assume that '*x* is the same horse as *y*' is a relative-identity predicate of ordinary language, an appropriate substituend for '$\mathfrak{R}xy$'. I have said that a relative-identity predicate of ordinary language is a predicate of the form '*x* is the same N as *y*', but this statement needs to be qualified. Identifying ordinary-language relative-identity predicates can be a tricky business in practice. 'Is the same colour as' functions as a relative-identity predicate in 'Magenta is the same colour as purplish-red' but not in 'Jane's skirt is the same colour as Alice's blouse'.[3])

If by Leibniz's Law, we understand the conditional

<div align="center">$x = y \rightarrow (G \ldots x \ldots \leftrightarrow G \ldots y \ldots),$</div>

then it is obvious that the corresponding rule of inference is not a rule of RI-logic, owing to the fact that '=' does not belong to the vocabulary of RI-logic. A more substantive point is this: the rule

<div align="center">$\mathfrak{R}xy \vdash (G \ldots x \ldots \leftrightarrow G \ldots y \ldots)$</div>

is not a rule of RI-logic. It was shown in the earlier paper that if this rule were added to the rules of RI-logic, then RI-logic would be without interest, being a mere notational variant of a fragment of

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[3] Later, we shall have occasion to make use of the predicates '*x* is the same breed as *y*' and '*x* is the same price as *y*'. In the context in which we shall use them, these will not be functioning as relative-identity predicates, being equivalent to '*x* is *of* the same breed as *y*' and '*x* costs the same as *y*'. But it is not hard to imagine contexts in which they do function as relative-identity predicates: '*German shepherd* is the same breed as *Alsatian*', for example.

the classical logic of identity. (Roughly speaking, the addition of this rule would cause 'x is the same horse as y' to have the same logical properties as 'x is a horse and y is a horse and $x = y$'.)

Those who reason using RI-logic must regard any instance of the conditional that corresponds to this rule—for example,

x is the same horse as $y \rightarrow$ (x is to the left of $z \leftrightarrow y$ is to the left of z)

—as a substantive metaphysical thesis, one whose truth the reasoner takes responsibility for. In this case, the RI-predicate '**1** is the same horse as **2**' is said to dominate the predicate '**1** is to the left of **2**'. Loosely speaking, if an RI-predicate dominates a predicate F, then it 'forces indiscernibility' with respect to F.[4] If an RI-predicate dominates all predicates, it is said to be 'dominant'. A statement made above may be rephrased using this term: if RI-logic is to be of any interest, then there must be some RI-predicate that is not dominant; or at least, there must be some RI-predicate that the user of RI-logic does not assume to be dominant.

The fact that the language of RI-logic contains no terms but variables constitutes a major stumbling-block for anyone who attempts to translate ordinary-language sentences into the language of RI-logic. But it should be clear that the language of RI-logic must have this feature. The language of RI-logic must not contain

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[4] A small amount of technical apparatus is needed for an acceptable account of dominance. Remove the variables from an open sentence; replace them with bold-face numerals, but use all of and only the first n numerals (use '**1**' or use '**1**' and '**2**' or use '**1**' '**2**'and '**3**' . . .). The result is a *predicate*. Thus, '**1** is between **2** and **3**' and '**2** is between **1** and **1**' are predicates. The former is a three-place (triadic) predicate, the latter a two-place (dyadic) predicate, owing to the fact that '**3**' is the highest numeral to appear in the former and '**2**' is the highest predicate to appear in the latter. The 'sites' in a predicate at which '**1**' appears are collectively called the predicate's first place, the sites at which '**2**' appears, its second place, and so on. An open sentence, which results from replacing the numerals in a predicate with variables, is called an 'instance' of that predicate, provided that a given numeral is always replaced with the same variable. Thus, 'y is between z and x' is an instance of the former predicate but not the latter; 'z is between x and x' and 'y is between y and y' are instances of both.

Strictly speaking, the truth of the formula in the text does not imply that '**1** is the same horse as **2**' dominates '**1** is to the left of **2**' *simpliciter*, but only that it dominates it with respect to its first place. If it is also true that

x is the same horse as $y \rightarrow$ (z is to the left of $x \leftrightarrow z$ is to the left of y),

then '**1** is the same horse as **2**' dominates '**1** is to the left of **2**' with respect to its second place as well. An RI-predicate dominates a predicate F (*simpliciter*) provided that it dominates F with respect to all its places.

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singular terms. If t is a singular term that denotes both x and y then it follows that x is identical with y. The notion of a singular term is unintelligible without the notion of denotation (denoting things is what singular terms *do*—or at least, what they're supposed to do), and denotation is a many—one relation, and if x bears a many—one relation to y and to z, then y is identical with z. And, of course, this difficulty cannot be evaded by the ploy of eliminating singular terms by Russell's method, for that method essentially involves the use of the identity sign (which is no accident, given that denotation is a many—one relation). One can, however, employ relative-identity predicates to do more or less the work that Russell's method assigns to '='. One cannot translate 'Mr Ed told a lie' or 'The (unique) talking horse told a lie' into the language of RI-logic in a straightforward or unproblematic way. But one can say the following within the confines of the language of RI-logic:

$\exists x$ [x is a horse & x talks & $\forall y$ (y is a horse & y talks $\rightarrow x$ is the same horse as y) & x told a lie].

(The sentence 'x is a horse' is short for 'x is the same horse as x'.) Now this sentence comes to much the same thing as the sentence with which Russell's theory of descriptions replaces 'The talking horse told a lie' if 'is the same horse as' is dominant. And no doubt it is dominant. But perhaps not all RI-predicates are dominant.

II

The data of the doctrine of the Incarnation (other than the biblical data[5]) are, in my view, contained almost entirely in the following two statements. The first is from the *Quicunque Vult* and the

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[5] The most important biblical data are, in my view, the opening passages of the Fourth Gospel, of the Letter to the Colossians, and of the Letter to the Hebrews. (Phil. 2: 5–11 has, I believe, less to tell us about the nature of the Incarnation than many have supposed.) The theologian, as I see matters, should regard the Bible as the physical scientist regards sense experience. Physical theories cannot be 'read off' sense experience, but they are in the last analysis responsible to sense experience, and must make sense of sense experience. Theological 'theories'—i.e., formulations of doctrine in abstract, theoretical terms, and even more abstract theoretical reflection on the allowable interpretations of doctrine and on the nature and methods of the interpretation of doctrine—cannot be 'read off' the words of Scripture, but they are in the last analysis responsible to the words of Scripture, and must make sense of the words of Scripture. Chesterton says somewhere that the New Testament is a riddle and the Church is the answer. I would say that the biblical passages cited

second from the Definition of Chalcedon. I know enough Latin to have satisfied myself that the language of the former is unproblematic, except in the matter of the meaning of individual theological terms. I therefore reproduce here the (reasonably accurate) translation of *The Book of Common Prayer*, which, better than anything else in English, captures the sensation of 'the great, roaring machine of Latin rhetoric' running at full throttle.

Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that [one] also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the right Faith is, that we believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man; God of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and Man, of the substance of his Mother, born in the world; Perfect God and perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting; Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead; and inferior to the Father, as touching his Manhood. Who although he be God and Man, Yet he is not two, but one Christ; One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the Manhood into God; One altogether, not by confusion of Substance, but by unity of Person. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and Man is one Christ; Who suffered for our salvation . . .[6]

above are a riddle and that the Nicene Creed is the answer. (The Nicene Creed is in its turn a riddle, and the *Quicunque Vult* is the answer. The *Quicunque Vult*—largely a series of quotations from St Augustine—is a further riddle, to which the speculations of the medieval Trinitarian theologians are attempts at answers. Perhaps riddles come to an end only in the mind of God: there alone is Wittgenstein right: the *riddle* does not exist.)

[6] I do not believe that either the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed adds anything of importance to what is contained in the *Quicunque Vult*. But the Nicene Creed (more properly, the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed) should perhaps be quoted, since, unlike the *QV*, it contains the famous word *homoousios*: 'And [I believe] in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages, God of God, light of light, true God of true God, begotten not made, through whom all things were made, *consubstantial with* the Father. Who, for us human beings and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man: crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, he suffered and was buried: and on the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures and ascended into heaven, sits on the right hand of the Father, and will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall be without end.' This section of the Nicene Creed is a slightly expanded version of the section of the Creed actually issued by the Council of Nicaea. The earlier Creed, unlike the later one, contained a gloss on the phrase '*homoousios* with the Father': *ek tes ousias tou Patros*, which would seem to be the source—perhaps some scholar will correct me on this point—of the phrase '*ex substantia Patris*' ('of the Substance of the Father' in the Prayer Book translation) in the *QV*.

But the meaning of the Greek of the Definition is a more delicate matter, and since I know almost no Greek, I use a more scholarly translation:

In agreement, therefore, with the holy fathers, we all unanimously teach that we should confess that our Lord Jesus Christ is one and the same Son, the same perfect in Godhead and the same perfect in manhood, truly God and truly man, the same of a rational soul and body, consubstantial with the Father in Godhead, and the same consubstantial with us in manhood, like us in all things except sin; begotten from the Father before the ages as regards his Godhead, and in the last days, the same, because of us and because of our salvation begotten from the Virgin Mary, the *Theotokos* [God-bearer], as regards his manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only-begotten, made known in two natures without confusion, without change, without division, without separation, the difference of the natures being by no means removed because of the union, but the property of each nature being preserved and coalescing in one *prosopon* [person] and one *hypostasis* [subsistence], not parted or divided into two *prosopa*, but one and the same Son, only-begotten, divine Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets of old and Jesus Christ himself have taught us about him and the creed of our fathers has handed down.[7]

Our job is to attempt to show how to translate the central statements of the theology of the Incarnation into the language of relative identity, and to show that the whole set of these statements is free from logical contradiction—at least in the sense that no contradiction can be derived from them by the rules of RI-logic. We adopt the following criterion of adequacy: the translations (and the whole set of their logical consequences) must be in accord with the biblical and creedal data. (And what is the criterion of *that*? Who is to say whether our translations are true to the letter and the spirit of the Bible and the Creeds? We must leave that a subjective matter. Those who are interested in such things must judge for themselves. Obviously we are not going to convince everyone. There are certainly plenty of theologians who think that the Creeds themselves are inconsistent with the biblical data; these people will therefore say a priori that we have set ourselves an impossible task: our translations will, of necessity, be untrue to the Bible or untrue to the Creeds—or, of course, untrue to both.)

[7] Trans. in J. N. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 2nd edn. (London: A. and C. Black, 1960), pp. 339 ff. I have added the words in square brackets; Kelly's translation has only the transliterated Greek words. The word *prosopon*, incidentally, like the Latin *persona*, originally meant 'mask' or 'face'.

In 'And yet they are not Three Gods but One God', I made use of the following primitive vocabulary:

x is the same being (substance, *ousia*) as y,
x is the same person as y,
x is divine,
x begets y,
x proceeds from y through z.

(We also introduce by definition the predicates 'x is a being' and 'x is a person': something is a 'being' if it is the same being as something, and similarly for 'person'.) The first two of these predicates are relative-identity predicates, and the rest are ordinary predicates. The fourth and fifth express the relations that individuate the Persons of the Trinity. The idea of 'individuating the Persons' by means of these relations is roughly this: the Father is the unique Person who begets; the Son is the unique Person who is begotten; and the Holy Spirit is the unique Person who proceeds. Thus, for example, the sentence 'The Father made us' is translated into this vocabulary as:

> Something begets (that is, begets something), and anything that begets is the same person as it, and it made us.

The sentence 'All things were made through the Son' is translated into this vocabulary as

> Something is begotten (that is, is such that something begets it), and anything that is begotten is the same person as it, and all things were made through it.

The sentence 'The Holy Spirit is the Lord, and giver of life' is translated as:

> Something proceeds (that is, proceeds from something through something), and anything that proceeds is the same person as it, and it is the Lord, and giver of life.

I will use the fourth and fifth predicates without any regard for how they might be explained.[8]

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[8] If I *were* to attempt some sort of explanation of them, it would be along the following lines: 'x begets y' would be understood as meaning something like 'x is divine, and does not receive its divinity from another; and x imparts divinity to y'; 'x proceeds from y through z' would be understood as meaning something like 'y is divine, and does not receive its divinity from another; and y imparts divinity to z, and z imparts divinity to x'.

In sentences containing 'God', 'God' is understood as 'the unique divine being'. Thus we translate 'God made the heavens and the earth' as

> Something is divine, and anything that is divine is the same being as it, and it made the heavens and the earth.

I will make only one other comment about any of these predicates. In my view, 'person' in the predicate 'is the same person as' means just what it means in ordinary speech. (But a little caution is needed here. One ordinary meaning of 'person' is, apparently, 'human being'. I have often talked at cross-purposes with philosophy students who have been puzzled by my speaking of intelligent non-human extra-terrestrials as 'persons'. C. S. Lewis somewhere records the statement of an uneducated man who said that he did not believe in a 'personal devil'; it transpired that he meant only that he regarded the devil as a spiritual being, and not as the horned and tailed biped of popular iconography. Let us say that if we are using 'person' in such a way that the devil and Wells's Martians are 'persons', then we are using the word in its 'inclusive' sense. My thesis is that 'person' in the Creeds ought to be understood as meaning no less and no more than it does in everyday speech, provided that we understand the everyday word in its inclusive sense.) This position of mine has met with the following criticism: '[Van Inwagen's] doctrinal formulations seem almost naïve: while he has heard that 'person' in Trinitarian theology does not mean what it means in everyday English (as indeed it does not), he is content to brush this aside with a remarkably ahistorical quotation from Geach.'[9] I will leave it to Geach to defend himself against the charge of having written something remarkably ahistorical, if that charge in fact means anything and is not simply a hostile noise. As to what I have been charged with—'seeming near doctrinal naïveté', we might call it—my first reaction to reading these words was to wonder what their author would come up with if he were asked to give an account of what 'person' does mean in everyday English. One is not in a position to write words like those quoted above unless one can give some sort of account of what 'person' means in everyday English. And this point applies to everyone, no

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[9] James Wm. McClendon, Jr, review of *Philosophy and the Christian Faith*, ed. Thomas V. Morris, *Faith and Philosophy*, ix (1992), 109–16. The quoted passage occurs on p. 113.

matter how learned he or she may be about the history of the doctrinal employment of terms like 'hypostasis' and 'prosopon'. (The following objection to what I have just said misses the point: 'Since I am a native speaker of English, I have a perfect understanding of the ordinary sense of "person".' This objection misses the point because one can have all sorts of false *beliefs* about the meanings of words one understands perfectly: witness the famous case of 'by accident' and 'by mistake'.)

The doctrinal meaning of 'person' can be specified 'functionally' as follows: persons are what there are three of in the Trinity.[10] The ordinary sense of 'person' is best explained by means of pronouns. Persons are those things to which personal pronouns are applicable: a person can use the word 'I' and be addressed as 'thou' (we can address a skylark or an urn or a flower or a city or an abstraction like learning or fame as 'thou'—'Thou still unravished bride of quietness'—but this is the rule-proving exception, for we call it 'personification'). A person, if he is male or female, or if we are willing to regard him as male or female for certain purposes, is called 'he' or 'she', as opposed to 'it'.[11] (Many languages, of course, do not face the unfortunate gender difficulty raised by third-person singular pronouns in English.) And it is not only personal pronouns and the closely related possessive and reflexive pronouns that mark a distinction between persons and non-persons. Consider the indefinite pronoun 'one', which is used in generalizations applying only to persons. Consider the contrasting pairs, 'which' ('that')/'who', 'something'/'someone', and 'everything'/'everyone'. We could easily introduce a count-noun 'someone' by means of the

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[10] Or, to employ a syntactical device that is used with great subtlety and flexibility by 6-year-olds, persons are what the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are three ones of.

[11] I say 'as opposed to' and not 'and not'. The pronoun 'it' can be used in generalizations that are supposed to include persons but which apply to other things as well. We may say of Alice that whenever she admires something, she wants to write a poem about it. This implies that if Alice admires Jack, then she wants to write a poem about him. Exercise for the reader: connect this observation with the use of 'it' in the renderings in the text of 'The Father made us' and 'All things were made through the Son' and 'The Holy Spirit is the Lord, and giver of life' and 'God created the heavens and the earth'.
Ordinary usage is very complicated in the matter of 'he' and 'she'. We use these pronouns when we talk about our pets, and we may use them when talking about very primitive animals in contexts in which their sexes are particularly relevant. But note that we can say, 'It's hurt' or 'Don't go near it' when speaking of a dog of unknown sex; we cannot use these words of a human being of unknown sex.

definition 'x is a someone' $=_{df}$ 'x is someone'. And this count-noun, I maintain, would mean exactly what the count-noun 'person' (understood in its 'inclusive' sense) means, for there is a person—'a someone'—having the feature F if and only if someone has the feature F. (If the devil tempted Sally, then someone tempted Sally. If a Martian can prove Goldbach's Conjecture, then someone can prove Goldbach's Conjecture.) It is evident that the Persons of the Trinity *are* in this sense 'persons', *are* 'someones': if the Father loves us, then someone loves us, and if the Son was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, then someone was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary. But this does not prove that 'person' in Trinitarian theology means 'person' in the ordinary (inclusive) sense. After all, all three Persons are *invisibilia*, but this does not entail that 'person' in Trinitarian theology means *invisibile*. The real question is whether 'persons' in the ordinary sense are 'what there are three of' in the Trinity.

In order to investigate this question from the perspective provided by an appeal to relative identity, we must remind ourselves that in our relative-identity language, count-nouns appear only in relative-identity predicates. (We should also remind ourselves that, from a relative-identity perspective, there is no such thing as absolute counting, a fact that has the consequence that, from a relative-identity perspective, the phrase 'what there are three of' has to be approached very carefully.) What we need to do is to explain what the relative-identity predicate 'x is the same person as y' means, using the pronominal resources of ordinary English. (A solution to this problem that exploited the pronominal resources of Latin or Greek would differ only in irrelevant detail.) The clearest, most idiomatic pronominal phrase of English that can be used to express propositions concerning the identities of persons is, to my mind, the negative phrase 'someone else'. Accordingly, I offer the definition:

> x is the same person as $y =_{df} x$ is someone and y is someone but not someone else.

(Another possibility would be, ' . . . but not someone other than x'.) Having this predicate at our disposal, we are able to count by persons—by 'someones'. To say, for example, that exactly two persons sinned in Eden is to say:

> Someone x sinned in Eden, and someone y sinned in Eden, and y was someone other than x, and anyone who sinned in

Eden was either not someone other than x or not someone other than y.

And is it not true that when we count Persons of the Trinity we are counting 'someones'? The Father is someone. The Son is also someone. And, surely, he, the Son, is someone *else*? If he were not someone else, could he not say truly, using the *personal* pronoun 'I', 'I am the Father'? In general, if someone can say truly, 'I am F', then anyone who is *not someone else* can say truly 'I am F'. And if there is one undeniable datum in Trinitarian theology it is this: the Son (though he can say 'I and the Father are one') cannot say 'I am the Father'. And, of course, the Father cannot say 'I am the Spirit', nor the Spirit, 'I am the Son'. Each of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit is 'Thou', not 'I', to the other two. That is to say, each of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit bears the following relation to the other two: *being someone else*. (And it is in fact this very relation that we are counting by when we use the phrase 'the other two'.)

I do not wish to maintain that a technical term of Trinitarian theology like 'hypostasis' is an exact equivalent of 'person' (understood in its inclusive sense). 'Hypostasis', as it is used by many theological writers, no doubt carries a lot of metaphysical baggage that is not carried by the ordinary 'person'. And it may well be that many other writers use it as simply a convenient general term to cover the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, and do not trouble themselves too much about its content. What I do maintain is that any theologian of whatever period who says, for example, that the Father and the Son are distinct hypostases says something that entails that the Father and the Son are distinct persons (in the ordinary, inclusive sense), or is at any rate consistent with their being distinct persons in that sense, or is simply heretical. (As to the second possibility: it *may* be that the theologian is simply using 'hypostasis' as a place-holder, its use sanctified by tradition, with very little content, no more than this: (a) by definition, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are 'distinct hypostases'; (b) whatever its meaning, 'distinct hypostases' does not entail 'not consubstantial'.) And here is a pair of far more important theses: any theological treatise on the Trinity whose propositions do not entail that the Persons are three distinct persons in the ordinary sense is gravely incomplete; any treatise whose propositions entail that they are *not* three distinct persons is simply heretical. And I am willing to argue

that anyone who denies these two theses is philosophically confused, probably about the everyday meaning of the word 'person'. I suspect that anyone who denies these two theses thinks that 'person' in ordinary English means something more or other than it does.[12] (Of course, my being willing to argue for this implies a willingness to listen to arguments for the conclusion that I ought to change my mind.)

[12] Theologians do not seem to me to speak with one voice on these matters. Here are two quotations. The first is from Van A. Harvey's *A Handbook of Theological Terms* (New York: Macmillan, 1964), 246: 'It is important to note that no important Christian theologian has argued that there are three self-conscious beings in the godhead. On the contrary, Augustine's favorite analogy for the triune God was one self-consciousness with its three distinctions of intellect, will, and the bond between them' (article 'Trinity'). The second from Edmund Hill's *The Mystery of the Trinity* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1985), pp. 101 ff.

'Now in God [according to Thomas] what are distinctly subsistent are the mutually opposed and corresponding relationships. So the words "person" and "hypostasis" can properly be used in talking of God to refer to these relationships, even though in themselves they do not signify any kind of relationship. Thomas adds that since "person" means that which is most perfect in the whole of nature, namely what subsists in rational (or intelligent) nature, it is particularly apt for use in talking about God. . . . But Aquinas adds a most important proviso. . . . "But the word cannot be used in the same way of God as of creatures, but in a superlative way. . . ." What this superlative . . . way actually means is that . . . to call the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit three persons [adds] nothing to what we already know from calling them the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, apart from being our way of saying that they are really distinct from each other. . . And this is really the point that Augustine is making when he concludes that these words are no more than just labels . . . so that we might just as well, in answer to the question "Three what?", reply "Three Xs", or, more elegantly, "Three someones".'

I take the second quotation more or less to support my position, with the following important qualification: Hill seems not to be aware that, or, to choose my words more judiciously, does not accept my thesis that, the meaning of the ordinary word 'person' is just 'a someone'. My difference with Thomas, as Hill represents him, would be just this: I think that the word 'person' *can* be predicated univocally of God and creatures. (Note that the 'superlative sense' point would apply if we spoke of God without using Trinitarian language at all; if Thomas is right, then when, say, Alvin Plantinga defines atheism as the thesis that there is no such person as God, the word 'person' in this thesis cannot have the same sense as the sense it has in the thesis that there was no such person as King Arthur—or in the thesis that there is no such person as Satan. This I would deny, for reasons having nothing to do with Trinitarian theology.)

As to the first quotation, I probably do subscribe to various theses that, in the view of its author, no important Christian theologian has held. It is true that I would deny that there are three self-conscious beings in the Godhead, since I would deny that there are three beings of any description in the Godhead. But I would say that the Father is self-conscious (he knows of himself that he is the Father, and that would seem to be sufficient for self-consciousness) and that the Son is self-conscious, and the Son is not the Father but rather someone else. And I *think* that Harvey would deny that any important Christian theologian has held this. Whether or not

In the earlier paper, I translated a fair number of sentences in traditional Trinitarian language into a language whose entire vocabulary comprises sentential connectives, brackets, variables, the quantifiers, and the above five predicates. I contended that these sentences (together with their logical consequences) included all the Trinitarian sentences that implied any seeming contradictions relating to counting, identity, or predication. And I showed that this set of sentences is formally consistent; I showed this by finding a model on which all these sentences are true. One striking consequence of this result, the single consequence that I find the most interesting, is this: the translations of the following three sentences make up a formally consistent set:

The Father is the same person as God.[13]
God is the same person as the Son.
The Father is not the same person as the Son.

And this result holds despite the fact that the transitivity of personal identity (if that is the abstract substantive that corresponds to 'is the same person as') is an immediate consequence of the rule Trans.

III

I now turn to the theology of the Incarnation. Our first problem is the problem of how to use the sparse referential capacities of our language (supplemented by whatever ordinary predicates may be useful) to refer to particular human beings. How, for example,

he is right about this, the appeal to Augustine's psychological analogy is not to the point. The relations between intellect and will pertain, in Augustine's analogy, to the nature of the relations in which (as which?) the Father and the Son subsist. The Father and the Son are, for Augustine, *subsistent* relationships, and the mutual relations of intellect and will in human beings, by which we can reach a dim analogical understanding of them, are *not* subsistent relationships. Because the latter are not subsistent, any question about their consciousness makes no more sense than a question about the consciousness of a number or a quality. If there could be subsistent relationships, however, there would be no logical or metaphysical barrier to their being self-conscious. In my view, what Augustine says about the three subsistent relationships in the Godhead commits him to the thesis that each of them is a someone.

[13] That is: for some *x* and for some *y*, *x* begets, and anything that begets is the same person as *x*, and *y* is divine, and anything that is divine is the same being as *y*, and *x* is the same person as *y*.

restricted as we are, shall we talk about Abraham Lincoln? The question is in a way ill-formed, for, if we are really restricted to our 'referentially sparse' language, we cannot ask it. But we can observe that there are various sets of ordinary predicates (like 'ended slavery' and 'saved the union' and 'once practised law') such that, or so we believe, there is one and only one human being who satisfies all of them. Let 'L' be the conjunction of the members of some suitably comprehensive one among these sets. (Perhaps 'L' is the predicate that, according to the description theory of names, expresses the meaning of 'Abraham Lincoln' in the usage of some reasonably knowledgeable person—if there is such a predicate.) If we take 'being' in the phrase 'human being' seriously, it would seem plausible that a sentence of the form 'Lincoln is F' would best be represented in our referentially sparse language by the corresponding sentence of the form

$$\exists x \, (Lx \, \& \, \forall y \, (Ly \rightarrow \underline{B}xy) \, \& \, x \text{ is F}).$$

(In this formula, $\underline{B}$ abbreviates 'is the same being as'.) Now it is no doubt true that all of us would accept the thesis that if *x* and *y* are human beings, then, *x* and *y* are the same being if and only if *x* and *y* are the same person. Accordingly, we would accept a sentence of the above form if and only if we were willing to accept the corresponding sentence of the form

$$\exists x \, (Lx \, \& \, \forall y \, (Ly \rightarrow \underline{P}xy) \, \& \, x \text{ is F}).$$

(In this sentence, of course, $\underline{P}$ abbreviates 'is the same person as'.) And we should no doubt therefore regard the sentence of the second form as an equally good representation of the corresponding sentence of the form 'Lincoln is F'. It is, however, sentences of the first form that I shall be primarily interested in. The reason for this will soon transpire if it is not already evident.

In order to represent the propositions of Incarnational theology using the apparatus of relative identity, we require only two predicates (both of them ordinary) in addition to the five that figured in our representation of the propositions of Trinitarian theology. The first is 'J', which we shall use for a predicate that stands to the historical figure Jesus of Nazareth as 'L' stands to the historical figure Abraham Lincoln. (The exact list of predicates of which 'J' is a conjunction is of no great interest—but the list is restricted to predicates that neither imply divinity nor involve any of the concepts of incarnational theology. The list might include 'was born of

a virgin', 'was crucified', and 'was raised from the dead'. But it may not include 'is God', 'is the Son of God', or 'is possessed of a human nature that enters into a hypostatic union with the Godhead'. I leave the question of the list of predicates that define 'J' unresolved, because the facts of Jesus' biography are controversial, and because even a controversial list would be very long. I assume, however, that everyone who believes that there was a historical Jesus at all will be able to devise a list of predicates that he believes applies to Jesus and to no other historical figure.) Having introduced J, we allow it immediately to disappear into an abbreviation:

$$J x =_{df} \textrm{J} x \ \& \ \forall y \ (\textrm{J} y \rightarrow \underline{B} x y).$$

'Jx' may be read 'x is Jesus (of Nazareth)'. Any sentence of ordinary English of the form 'Jesus is F' may be represented in our vocabulary as the corresponding sentence of the form '$\exists x$ (Jx & x is F)'.

The only other predicate that we shall need to add to our list of predicates is 'is human'; we shall abbreviate 'x is human' as 'Mx'. We abbreviate 'x is divine' as 'Dx'. And (as in the earlier paper) we introduce the abbreviations (read, respectively, 'is God', 'is the Father', 'is the Son', and 'is the Holy Spirit'):

$$G x =_{df} D x \ \& \ \forall y \ (D y \rightarrow \underline{B} x y),$$
$$F x =_{df} x \ \textrm{begets} \ \& \ \forall y \ (y \ \textrm{begets} \rightarrow \underline{P} x y),$$
$$S x =_{df} x \ \textrm{is begotten} \ \& \ \forall y \ (y \ \textrm{is begotten} \rightarrow \underline{P} x y),$$
$$H x =_{df} x \ \textrm{proceeds} \ \& \ \forall y \ (y \ \textrm{proceeds} \rightarrow \underline{P} x y).$$

The earlier paper listed a set of theological assertions and 'conceptual truths' that were held to comprise that part of Trinitarian theology that concerns counting, identity, and predication. The theological assertions were the formal equivalents of 'There is exactly one God' and 'There are exactly three divine Persons'. The 'conceptual truths' included some more or less trivial assertions ('Anything that is divine is both a being and a person'; 'All persons are beings') and some more substantive ones. The latter comprehend the assertion that sameness of being dominates divinity (formally: $\underline{B} x y \rightarrow . \ D x \leftrightarrow D y$) and various assertions whose collective import is that the relations of begetting and procession hold only among divinities, that these relations uniquely specify the three divine Persons, and that nothing besides the three divine Persons enters into these relations. We must now expand this set of state-

ments. We begin with four conceptual truths (the numbers are continuations of the numbering in the earlier paper).[14]

$$\textrm{CT13} \ M x \rightarrow \neg D x,$$
$$\textrm{CT14} \ J x \rightarrow M x,$$
$$\textrm{CT15} \ M x \rightarrow . \ P x \ \& \ B x,$$
$$\textrm{CT16} \ \underline{B} x y \rightarrow . \ M x \leftrightarrow M y.$$

Thus, humanity is like divinity in that it entails both personhood and being and in that it is dominated by 'ontic identity' or sameness of being. In the earlier essay, I explicitly and pointedly refrained from assuming that personal identity dominated divinity. I now explicitly and pointedly refrain from making the corresponding assumption as regards personal identity and humanity. In the earlier essay, I explicitly and pointedly refrained from assuming that ontic identity dominated personal identity. I now explicitly and pointedly refrain from assuming that personal identity dominates ontic identity.

We require two theological assertions. The first is (as I shall call it) the Dogma of the Incarnation:

$$\exists x \ \exists y \ (S x \ \& \ J y \ \& \ \underline{P} x y).\textrm{[15]}$$

That is to say, God the Son and Jesus of Nazareth are one and the same person. And this in the ordinary sense of the words 'same person': the Son is someone and Jesus is someone, but not someone else; the Son can say 'I am Jesus whom thou persecutest', and Jesus can say 'I am (*ego eimi*) God the Son'. (Perhaps, as many have contended, Jesus did not, during his earthly ministry, possess the concept that theologians were later to express by the words 'God the Son'; if not, I expect he does now.) More exactly, these two sentences are ambiguous. The word 'am' that occurs in each *could* be taken to express an ontic identity between the human being

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[14] No doubt there are other conceptual truths involving the concepts that are represented formally in our language. One candidate for such a truth would be a proposition that has already been mentioned: that sameness of person and sameness of being coincide on human beings. For all we can show, therefore, it may turn out that even though (as we shall see) the truths of Incarnational theology, as they are specified here, are formally consistent, there are plausible candidates for conceptual truths that, if added to our set of truths, would yield a formal inconsistency. But the same might be said of any formal system that is intended to capture the relations that hold among the members of some set of concepts.

[15] In unabbreviated form: $\exists x \ \exists y \ [\exists z \ z \ \textrm{begets} \ x \cdot \ \& \ \forall y \ (\exists z \ z \ \textrm{begets} \ y \cdot \rightarrow \underline{P} x y) \ \& \ \textrm{J} y \ \& \ \forall x \ (\textrm{J} x \rightarrow \underline{B} x y) \ \& \ \underline{P} x y]$.

from whose lips the word issues and God the Son; if it is taken in that sense, then what is expressed by the two sentences does not follow from the Dogma of the Incarnation (and is, of course, heretical). But if the copula expresses personal identity (much the more natural interpretation, to my mind, owing to the fact that its subject is a personal pronoun), then what is expressed by these sentences—leaving aside the part about persecution—does follow from the Dogma of the Incarnation.

The second theological assertion that we shall require is the thesis that no more than one divine Person is incarnate:

$$Dx \ \& \ Dy \ \& \ \exists z \ (Mz \ \& \ \underline{P}xz) \ \& \ \exists z \ (Mz \ \& \ \underline{P}yz) \cdot \rightarrow \underline{P}xy.$$

We shall now consider a fairly comprehensive set of English sentences that pertain to the theology of the Incarnation, sentences that can plausibly be said to be parts of or logical consequences of the doctrine of the Incarnation. We shall show how to translate these sentences into our formal vocabulary; we shall then show that they are formal consequences of our conceptual truths and our two theological assertions (taken together with the conceptual truths and the theological assertions that were endorsed in 'And yet they are not Three Gods but One God'), and that no contradiction is a formal consequence of this set of sentences.

The most difficult problems of translation arise in connection with sentences containing the name 'Jesus Christ'. Let us begin by considering sentences that do not involve this name. I follow each sentence with a proposed translation.

—God was incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth[16]

$$\exists x \ \exists y \ (Gx \ \& \ Jy \ \& \ \underline{P}xy).$$

Or, in unabbreviated form:

$$\exists x \ \exists y \ (Dx \ \& \ \forall y \ (Dy \rightarrow \underline{B}xy) \ \& \ Jy \ \& \ \forall z \ (Jz \rightarrow \underline{B}yz) \ \& \ \underline{P}xy).$$

—God the Son was incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth

$$\exists x \ \exists y \ (Sx \ \& \ Jy \ \& \ \underline{P}xy).$$

Or, in (almost) unabbreviated form:

$$\exists x \ \exists y \ (x \text{ is begotten} \ \& \ \forall y \ (y \text{ is begotten} \rightarrow \underline{P}xy)$$
$$\& \ Jy \ \& \ \forall z \ (Jz \rightarrow \underline{B}yz) \ \& \ \underline{P}xy).$$

(From now on, I will given only the abbreviated forms of sentences.) The next sentence,

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[16] Our formal apparatus does not extend to the representation of tenses.

—God the Father is not incarnate

is ambiguous. It could be read either as a predication of 'is not incarnate' of God the Father, or as a denial of the thesis that God the Father is incarnate: as

$$\exists x \ (Fx \ \& \ \neg \ \exists y \ (My \ \& \ \underline{P}xy))$$

or as

$$\neg \ \exists x \ (Fx \ \& \ \exists y \ (My \ \& \ \underline{P}xy)).$$

Some sentences containing the word 'God' are ambiguous in ways that have led to theological controversy. I given two examples. First,

—God died on the Cross.

This might be represented in either of the following ways:

$$\exists x \ (Gx \ \& \ x \text{ died on the Cross});$$

$$\exists x \ \exists y \ (Gx \ \& \ y \text{ died on the Cross} \ \& \ \underline{P}xy).$$

The second of these sentences follows from the sentences we have endorsed (given that Jesus of Nazareth died on the Cross) and, I believe, represents something like the position that those who have looked favourably on language like 'God died on the Cross' were defending. The first does not follow from the sentences we have endorsed. In fact, its denial follows, given the additional premiss that anything that dies on a cross is a human being. I would suppose that it represents something like the position that those who opposed language like 'God died on the Cross' were trying to guard against. ('God the Son died on the Cross' can be seen to be ambiguous in almost the same way. But all reasonable representations of the sentences 'God the Father died on the Cross' and 'The Holy Spirit died on the Cross' in our formal language can easily be seen to be 'false'.[17])

Our second example of an ambiguous sentence is

—Mary was the God-bearer (*Theotokos*).

Let us invent a predicate 'Vx' that stands to Mary as '$Lx \ \& \ \forall y \ (Ly \rightarrow \underline{B}xy)$' stands to Lincoln and 'Jx' stands to Jesus. And let us suppose that 'x bears y', whatever precisely it may mean, is satisfied by a pair of objects only if the first is biologically female and the

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[17] I will call sentences that follow from the sentences we have endorsed 'true' (in scare-quotes) and sentences whose denial follows from the sentences we have endorsed 'false' (in scare-quotes).

second is a living organism (for dualists: has a body that is a living organism) that develops from a gamete supplied by the first. Our sentence may be represented in either of the two following ways:

$$\exists x \, \exists y \, (Vx \, \& \, Gy \, \& \, x \text{ bore } y)$$

$$\exists x \, \exists y \, (Vx \, \& \, Gy \, \& \, \exists z \, (x \text{ bore } z \, \& \, \underline{P}zy)).$$

Remarks similar to the above remarks about the two representations of 'God died on the Cross' apply to these two sentences.

Let us now turn to sentences containing the name 'Jesus Christ'. How are we to understand this name? Logic and etymology would suggest that 'Jesus Christ' means 'Jesus the Messiah'. If that were so, we should represent sentences of the form 'Jesus Christ is F' in our formal language by the corresponding sentences of the form '$\exists x \, (Jx \, \& \, x \text{ is F} \, \& \, x \text{ is the Messiah})$'. But in theology, as in all other areas of human discourse, established usage laughs at logic and etymology. It may well be that there is no one meaning that covers all theologically legitimate uses of 'Jesus Christ', but it seems to me that the term has a 'central' meaning in Christian theology, and that whatever else may be true of this central meaning, it somehow involves the idea of the Incarnation, the union of the divine and human natures in a single Person. (I take it that this is not part of the meaning of 'Messiah': if it had pleased God so to arrange matters, the Messiah might be, or might have been, a human being in whom he was not incarnate.) It would seem that 'Jesus Christ' does not mean the same as either 'God the Son' or 'Jesus of Nazareth' but something more like 'the Person who is both God the Son and Jesus of Nazareth'. I would suggest that we represent sentences of the form 'Jesus Christ is F' by the corresponding sentences of the form

$$\exists x \, (\exists y \, (Sy \, \& \, \underline{P}xy) \, \& \, \exists y \, (Jy \, \& \, \underline{P}xy) \, \& \, x \text{ is F}).$$

If this is what we mean by 'Jesus Christ', then the formal representation of the sentence

—Jesus Christ is God and man

is 'true'. Or, at any rate, it is true if we regard it as the conjunction of the two sentences 'Jesus Christ is God' and 'Jesus Christ is man', and not as predicating of Jesus Christ the impossible property *being-both-God-and-man* (that is, the property expressed by the open sentence 'x is God and x is man'). In other words, we must distinguish between

$$\exists x \, (\exists y \, (Sy \, \& \, \underline{P}xy) \, \& \, \exists y \, (Jy \, \& \, \underline{P}xy) \, \& \, Dx) \, \&$$
$$\exists x \, (\exists y \, (Sy \, \& \, \underline{P}xy) \, \& \, \exists y \, (Jy \, \& \, \underline{P}xy) \, \& \, Mx)$$

and

$$\exists x \, (\exists y \, (Sy \, \& \, \underline{P}xy) \, \& \, \exists y \, (Jy \, \& \, \underline{P}xy) \, \& \, Dx \, \& \, Mx).$$

The former sentence follows from the endorsed sentences, and is, I believe, orthodox. The second does not follow from the endorsed sentences; in fact, its denial follows.

One traditional device that is used in discussions of the truth-values of sentences of the form 'Jesus Christ is F' is a threefold distinction marked by the use of sentences of the following forms:

Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* F (is F without qualification).

Jesus Christ is *secundum divinitatem* F (is F 'as touching his divinity').

Jesus Christ is *secundum humanitatem* F (is F 'as touching his humanity').

I shall adopt this distinction. What I have so far discussed is the representation of *simpliciter* sentences. The other two types of sentences are represented as follows:

$$\exists x \, (\exists y \, (Sy \, \& \, \underline{P}xy) \, \& \, \exists y \, (Jy \, \& \, \underline{P}xy) \, \& \, Dx \, \& \, x \text{ is F})$$
$$\exists x \, (\exists y \, (Sy \, \& \, \underline{P}xy) \, \& \, \exists y \, (Jy \, \& \, \underline{P}xy) \, \& \, Mx \, \& \, x \text{ is F}).$$

On this reading, the following theses are true:

Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* human.

Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* non-human.

Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* divine.

Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* non-divine.

Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* such that there never was a time when he was not.

Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* such that in 10 BC he did not yet exist.

It is important to realize that there is neither contradiction nor (in my view) unorthodoxy in these theses. Consider, for example, 'Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* non-human'. This thesis is not equivalent to (nor does it entail) the thesis

It is not the case that Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* human.

If this equivalence did hold, then some theses in the above list (the second if no other) would be unorthodox, and the whole list would

be self-contradictory. But the formal representation of 'Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* non-human' is:

$$\exists x\ (\exists y\ (Sy\ \&\ \underline{P}xy)\ \&\ \exists y\ (Jy\ \&\ \underline{P}xy)\ \&\ Mx),$$

while the formal representation of 'It is not the case that Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* human' is:

$$\neg\ \exists x\ (\exists y\ (Sy\ \&\ \underline{P}xy)\ \&\ \exists y\ (Jy\ \&\ \underline{P}xy)\ \&\ Mx).$$

And these two sentences are not equivalent. The first follows from the set of sentences we have endorsed. The second does not follow from those sentences. Is there anything unorthodox about the sentence 'Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* non-human'? I should say that there was not. The sentence—or what is meant by it on my reading of it—does not deny the full humanity of Jesus Christ, for it is consistent with 'Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* human'. The truth of what is expressed by 'Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* non-human' is simply a consequence of the fact that God the Son, Begotten Divinity, although he is the same person as a certain member of our species, is not (being, as he is, eternal, omnipresent, and so on) 'in the strict and philosophical sense' a member of our species. The truth of what is expressed by 'Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* human' is simply a consequence of the fact that Jesus of Nazareth, not begotten of the Father but rather conceived by the Holy Ghost, although he is the same person as a certain Person of the Trinity, is not (being, as he is, temporal, locally present, and so on) 'in the strict and philosophical sense' a Person of the Trinity. In the words of the *Quicunque Vult*, Jesus Christ is 'One altogether; not by confusion of Substance, but by unity of Person' (*unus omnino non confusione substantiae, sed unitate personae*). As there are in the Holy Trinity three distinct persons who are one by unity of being, so there are in Jesus Christ two distinct beings who are one by unity of person.

It is often confusing to predicate properties of Jesus Christ in the 'ontologically promiscuous' manner provided by the form of words 'Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* F'. It is often a more perspicuous procedure to employ an idiom that segregates the properties of Jesus Christ according as they belong to him in virtue of his divine or his human natures. This is, of course, the function of the other two idioms of predication, predication *secundum divinitatem* and predication *secundum humanitatem*. We may thus say that Jesus Christ is begotten of the Father before all worlds *secundum divinitatem*, but is not begotten of the Father before all worlds

secundum humanitatem, and that Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary *secundum humanitatem*, but was not conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary *secundum divinitatem*, and that Jesus Christ is equal to the Father as touching his Godhead and inferior to the Father as touching his manhood. (And so on; there would seem to be no particular difficulty in deciding whether a property that belongs to Jesus Christ according to one or the other nature belongs to him *secundum divinitatem* or *secundum humanitatem*. There are, of course, many properties that he possesses both *secundum divinitatem* and *secundum humanitatem*: consciousness, free will, and moral perfection, for example. Or, at least, this is true if these terms can be predicated of God and humanity in the same sense.)

It would seem that a sentence of the form 'I am F' spoken by Jesus of Nazareth should express a truth just in the case that the corresponding sentence of the form 'Jesus Christ is *simpliciter* F' is true. Thus, Jesus could say truly both 'I am meek and lowly of heart' (presumably, being meek and lowly of heart belongs to Jesus Christ *secundum humanitatem* and not *secundum divinitatem*) and 'Before Abraham was, I am'. This is because 'I' is a personal pronoun and 'attaches semantically' to all the properties of the *person* who utters it; more exactly, if it is uttered by one of two beings who are the same person, that utterance comprehends the properties of both of those beings.[18]

It is time now to show that the whole set of sentences we have endorsed is consistent—that no contradiction can be deduced from its members by RI-logic. It will not be surprising if this is so, for the deductive resources of RI-logic are rather weak, owing to the fact that the inference rules of RI-logic do not include anything corre-

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[18] There may have been some attempt, either by Jesus or by the Evangelists, to divide his self-ascriptions into those true of him *simpliciter*, those true of him *secundum divinitatem*, and those true of him *secundum humanitatem*. I have in mind his (or their) use of, respectively, the first-person-singular pronoun, 'the Son', and 'the Son of Man'. I do not mean to suggest by this speculation that anyone in the first century was in possession of a fifth-century Christology. I mean, rather that his, or their, use of these terms may have been a response to the same divine/human reality that was later conceptualized in developed Christologies. (It should not be necessary to make this disclaimer, but one is liable to be accused of just such an anachronism if one says anything that implies that a developed Christology can be of some use in understanding the Gospels.) This speculation faces severe textual difficulties (consider, e.g., Mark 13: 32 = Matt. 24: 36), but I nevertheless think that it is worthy of careful consideration.

sponding to Leibniz's Law (and owing to the further fact that we have not assumed that identity of person dominates either humanity or divinity or identity of being). Our method is simple. We shall tell a story, a story that is obviously internally consistent, and we shall give each of our formal predicates an interpretation in that story—being careful to interpret both our RI predicates as expressing symmetrical and transitive relations. We shall see that all our endorsed sentences are true on this interpretation. It will follow, by a well-known property of quantifier logic, that if a contradiction follows from the endorsed sentences by quantifier logic, then our story is internally inconsistent—which it is obviously not. Since, moreover, our two RI predicates are interpreted as expressing symmetrical and transitive relations, our story will be internally inconsistent if a contradiction can be deduced from the endorsed sentences by the rules of quantifier logic plus Sym and Trans. It follows that no contradiction can be deduced from the endorsed sentences by RI-logic.

The story is an elaboration of the story used for the same purpose in the earlier paper:

Our universe of discourse comprises four animals. There are three dogs of the same breed, A, B, and C, and one cat, a jet-black Manx. None of the dogs is jet-black. Each of the dogs is for sale at a different price, and the cat is for sale at the same price as dog B. A barks at B and at nothing else, and nothing else barks. C prances from A to B and does no other prancing, and nothing else prances.

Here are our interpretations:

$\underline{B}xy$	: x is the same breed as y.
$\underline{P}xy$	: x is the same price as y.
Dx	: x is a dog.
Mx	: x is a Manx.
Jx	: x is jet-black.
x begets y	: x barks at y.
x proceeds from y through z:	x prances from y to z.

These interpretations of our undefined predicates settle the interpretation of our defined predicates:

Bx : x is of some breed.

Px : x is for sale at some price.

Gx: x is a dog of the only breed.

Fx : x barks, and anything that barks is the same price as x.

Sx : x is barked at, and anything that is barked at is the same price as x.

Hx: x prances from something to something, and anything that prances is the same price as x.

Jx : x is jet-black, and anything that is jet-black is the same breed as x.

It is an easy, if somewhat tedious, exercise to verify that all our endorsed sentences are true in the story of the four animals, provided that the predicates they contain are interpreted according to this schema.[19] It follows from this fact and from the fact that 'is the same breed as' and 'is the same price as' are symmetrical and transitive, that the story of the four animals is internally inconsistent if a contradiction can be derived from the endorsed sentences in RI-logic. But that story is obviously internally consistent. Therefore, no contradiction can be derived from the endorsed sentences in RI-logic.

As I said I should at the beginning of this chapter, I have shown how a part of the doctrine of the Incarnation (or of the Hypostatic Union) can be represented in a way that is free from formal contradiction. But, as I said, I have done nothing to make the mystery of the Incarnation any less a mystery. Just as 'And yet they are not Three Gods but One God' left the mystery of the Trinity untouched, so the present chapter leaves the mystery of the Incarnation untouched. Indeed, I have done little more than provide a vocabulary in which the mysterious aspect of the doctrine can be stated precisely. But perhaps this vocabulary has the advantage of suggesting a precise description of the relationship between the mystery of the Incarnation and the mystery of the Trinity. The mystery of the Trinity is this: how can it be that ontic identity (which dominates humanity and divinity) fails to dominate personal identity? The mystery of the Incarnation is this: how can it be that personal identity fails to dominate ontic identity—and humanity and divinity as well? These questions raise more general and abstract questions that are no less mysterious: how can *any*

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[19] As one would expect, the four dominance assumptions that we have 'explicitly and pointedly' refrained from making—$\underline{P}xy \to \cdot Dx \leftrightarrow Dy$, $\underline{P}xy \to \cdot Mx \leftrightarrow My$, $\underline{B}xy \to \cdot \underline{P}xz \leftrightarrow \underline{P}yz$, and $\underline{P}xy \to \cdot \underline{B}xz \leftrightarrow \underline{B}yz$—are false on this interpretation.

relative-identity predicate fail to dominate *all* predicates? (That is to say, how can the whole topic of relative identity be of any interest, for relative identity is interesting only if some relative-identity predicate is not dominant?) And given that ontic identity and personal identity fail to dominate certain predicates, what is the reason for the fact that they interact differently with humanity and divinity? To none of these questions have I an answer.[20]

[20] My thinking about the questions addressed in this chapter has been stimulated by correspondence with Timothy Bartel.

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Neither Confounding the Persons nor Dividing the Substance

C. J. F. WILLIAMS

Richard Swinburne is the only colleague I have had, in thirty-one years of teaching philosophy in British universities, who has shared my belief in God. There was an occasion when our familiarity with atheistic milieux was thought enough to make us experts on the 'phenomenon of non-belief', and we were summoned to a meeting in Manchester organized on behalf of a Vatican body rejoicing (perhaps it still rejoices) in the name *Il Segretario per i Non-Credenti*. And we are indeed fellow Christians. That in itself gives him a special place in my affections. As young men we were members of a small but rapidly growing philosophy department in the University of Hull. We later collaborated in running the journal *Analysis*, and we have often discussed each other's work. I think that Richard's paper on the Trinity was what chiefly prompted me to put into words the thoughts I have been having for some time on the same subject. I offer them here in the hope that they may do him honour, and in the confident expectation that they will in due course receive the benefit of his judicious criticism.

If my memory can be trusted, I remember singing the words that form my title, coming as they do from the so-called Athanasian Creed, as part of the service of Morning Prayer at the simple parish church that my family used to attend in my Anglican childhood. I suspect that you need to be old enough to have pre-war memories to be able to say that. Like much else that is in the *Book of Common Prayer*, this practice had fallen into desuetude long before that book was replaced by the *Alternative Services Book*; and that, as far as I can see, does not contain the Athanasian Creed. But it is not only Anglicans whose liturgical devotion no longer finds expression in the *Quicunque Vult*. In my twenties, as a member of the novitiate at Downside Abbey, I recited it again at the monastic