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(7c) is true and (7a) false when (7b) is false. Supporting Strawson, though, is the strong intuition that 'Are your crimes excusable or not?' is a loaded question, which cannot be answered if you are innocent. An outstanding problem for either approach is to describe how implications of complex propositions (whether presuppositions or implicatures) are related to those of their components.

Implicature has also been invoked in accounts of lexical gaps, language change, indirect speech acts, textual coherence, discourse analysis and even syntax.

See also: MEANING AND COMMUNICATION;
PRAGMATICS; SEMANTICS; SPEECH ACTS

References and further reading

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Gazdar, G. (1979) *Pragmatics: Implicature, Presupposition, and Logical Form*, New York: Academic Press. (Attempts a partial formalization of conversational implicatures, focusing on quantity implicatures, and uses it to provide a pragmatic theory of presupposition.)

* Grice, H.P. (1989) *Studies in the Ways of Words*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (Contains all of Grice's work on meaning and implicature, plus an introduction and retrospective epilogue.)

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compelling argument that different sorts of presupposition can be accounted for as different types of implicature, plus a representation of conventional implicature using model-theoretic semantics, specifically, Montague grammar.)

Leech, G. (1983) *Principles of Pragmatics*, London: Longman. (A leading introduction to pragmatics stressing implicature. Develops Grice's suggestion that another maxim is 'Be polite', showing that it motivates many implicatures.)

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WAYNE A. DAVIS

INCARNATION AND CHRISTOLOGY

It is a central and essential dogma of Christianity that Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified in Judea during the procuratorship (AD 26-36) of Pontius Pilate, and God, the eternal and omnipresent creator of the universe, were in some very strong sense 'one'. The department of Christian theology that is devoted to the study of the nature and implications of this 'oneness' is called Christology. Orthodox Christology (unlike certain heretical Christologies) sees this oneness as a oneness of person, as consisting in the co-presence of two natures, the divine and the human, in one person, Jesus Christ. To speak plainly, orthodox Christology holds that there is someone, Jesus Christ, who is both divine and human. Because God pre-existed and is superior to every human being, orthodox theologians have found it natural to speak of the union of the divine and human natures in the person of Jesus Christ as

something that happened to the pre-existent divine nature: at a certain point in time, at the moment of the conception of Jesus, it 'took on flesh' or 'became incarnate'; in the words of the Athanasian Creed, the union of the two natures was accomplished 'not by conversion of the Godhead [divinitas] into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God'. This event, and the continuing union it established, are called 'the Incarnation'. The Incarnation was not, according to Christian teaching, undone by Christ's death (his corpse – a human corpse – continued to be united with the divine nature by the same bond by which the living man had been united) or by his 'Ascension' (his 'withdrawal' from the everyday world of space and time forty days after the Resurrection), and it will never be undone: the Incarnation is eternal.

The primary statements of the dogma of the Incarnation are the Definition issued by the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451) and the Athanasian Creed (fifth century; its origins are obscure). The creed issued by the Council of Nicaea (AD 325) and the longer, revised version of this creed that is today used liturgically (and commonly called 'the Nicene Creed') contain nothing of substance that is not found in the two later statements.

- 1 The doctrine of the Incarnation
- 2 Logical problems
- 3 Attributive solutions
- 4 Predicative solutions

1 The doctrine of the Incarnation

Books present portraits, generally inadvertent, of their authors and their intended audiences. The New Testament presents a portrait of Christians who were not quite sure what to say about the relation between Jesus Christ and God. On the one hand, the earliest Christians could hardly deny that Christ was a man (had he not frequently referred to himself as 'the Son of Man?'), a human being who had been born and had died (albeit he was not dead for very long), who ate and drank and spoke and slept and left prints in the dust of Palestine. On the other hand, they could hardly speak of Christ without mentioning God in the same breath, they called him 'the Son of God', and they were unreflectively willing to ascribe to him honours held traditionally in their cultures to be due to God alone. Explicit statements about the relation between Christ and God are rare in the New Testament. There are, however, a few passages in which this relation is described, and all of these imply, or come very close to implying, a 'high' Christology – a Christology that in some sense identifies Christ with God. Thus

(the translations are those of the New American Standard Bible):

In the beginning was the Word [*logos*], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being by him, and apart from him nothing came into being that has come into being . . . And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory . . .

(John 1: 1–3, 14)

He [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation [that is, has an authority over the created world comparable to that which, under Jewish law, a first-born son had over his living father's estate]. For by him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, . . . – all things have been created by him and for him. And he is before all things and in him all things hold together [*sunistemi*]. . . . For in him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.

(Colossians 1: 15–17; 2: 9)

In these last days, [God] has spoken to us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the world [literally: 'made the ages']. And he is the radiance of his [God's] glory, and the exact representation of his nature, and upholds all things by the word of his power.

(Hebrews 1: 2, 3)

It should also be noted that in John 8: 58, and possibly in John 10: 22–38, the author represents Jesus as affirming his own deity, and that in John 20: 28, the apostle Thomas addresses the risen Jesus as 'My Lord and my God'.

The New Testament, although it is rich in Christological suggestion, contains no systematic Christology. The development of a systematic Christology was the work of the first five Christian centuries. The relevant biblical passages – those quoted above, and a few others, such as Philippians 2: 5–11 – have been treated by most theologians not as explicit statements of doctrine but as data to which explicit statements of doctrine must be responsible. The 'developed' doctrine, the doctrine of the fifth century, is contained in the following two passages.

. . . 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.

(Definition of Chalcedon; see Kelly 1960)

... [N]ow the right faith is that we should believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is equally both God and man.

He is God from the Father's substance, begotten before time; and he is man from his mother's substance, born in time. Perfect God, perfect man composed of a rational soul and human flesh, equal to the Father in respect of his divinity, less than the Father in respect of his humanity.

Who, although he is God and man, is nevertheless not two but one Christ. He is one, however, not by the transformation of his divinity into flesh, but by the taking up of his humanity into God; one certainly not by confusion of substance but by oneness of person. For just as rational soul and flesh are a single man, so God and man are a single Christ.

(Athanasian Creed; see Kelly 1964)

These passages seem to say, and rather insistently, that there is a single *prosopon* or *hypostasis* or *persona*, Jesus Christ, who both has a beginning in time and has no beginning in time. More generally, he has all of the properties – attributes, features or characteristics – appropriate to a (sinless) human being, and at the same time has all of the properties that the Christian faith ascribes to God.

In order to grasp the orthodox doctrine expressed in these statements, it is advisable to have some conception of unorthodoxy, of the great Christological heresies of the first five Christian centuries, for these heresies were present in the minds of the framers of the statements and are to a large extent responsible for the details of the wording. The most important heresies for this purpose are the following three.

Nestorianism denies that the two natures belong to the same person: according to Nestorianism – if not

to the eponymous Nestorius (d. *circa* 451), who may not actually have held this – the divine Christ and the human Christ are numerically distinct persons. That is, however intimate the union – or 'conjunction' (*sunâpheia*), the word preferred by the Nestorians – of the human and the divine Christs, there is no one who can say truly both 'I am God' and 'I am a human being'. According to Nestorians, the 'conjunction' of the divine and the human natures was effected between God and a pre-existent human being. Since God and Jesus each existed before the conjunction, and each was then who he was, there could not have been only one person 'present' after the conjunction unless the human person had somehow ceased to be – which is obviously unacceptable. (Orthodox Christology holds that the human being Jesus of Nazareth did not exist before the Incarnation, and that, in modern terminology, there is no possible world in which he exists, even for the briefest instant, without God's being incarnate in him.)

Monophysitism ('one-naturism') holds that there is only one nature, the divine nature, in the incarnate Christ. The human attributes of Jesus of Nazareth are somehow taken up into or made to be contained within the divine nature; at any rate, they do not constitute a distinct, subsistent human nature – that is, a human being. (It should be noted that early Christological writings do not always make it clear whether 'a nature' (*physis, natura*) is a 'predicable', like the *attributes* divinity and humanity, or a 'first substance', an impredicable subject of predication, like God and Jesus of Nazareth. Some authors write as if the distinction did not exist or was of no importance; others seem perversely to take their opponents to mean one of these things when they should pretty clearly be taken to mean the other.)

Apollinarianism (after Apollinarius (c.310–c.390)) holds that Christ did not have a human mind or spirit or rational soul – that he lacked something that is essential to human nature – and that God or some 'aspect' of God (such as the divine *logos*) was united to the human body of Jesus of Nazareth in such a way as to 'be a substitute for' or perform the function of the human mind or soul or spirit. This is perhaps the most important of the heresies for the task of understanding orthodoxy: it is certainly very frequently suggested by the language of popular Christianity. Orthodoxy insists, however, that whatever is present in our common human nature (other than sin) is present in Christ. The reason for this, briefly, is that the saving work of Christ is to heal our ruined human nature, and (in the words of Gregory of Nazianzus), 'what [Christ] has not assumed he has not healed' (Letter 101, *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 37). The conviction that 'what he has not assumed he has not healed'

is one of the main pressures that guided the development of the orthodox 'Chalcedonian' Christology. It was this conviction that made 'fully human' to be for the 'Chalcedonian' party what in the 1960s was called a 'non-negotiable demand'.

At the same time, other pressures made 'fully divine' non-negotiable for most of the parties, including the Chalcedonian party, to the great Christological controversies. One might cite (1) the conviction that the situation of fallen humanity was so desperate that any effective saviour of humanity must be divine, (2) the fact that from the earliest days of Christianity, Christians had offered honours to Christ that it would be blasphemous to offer to a creature, and (3) the realization that the biblical texts quoted above – which at the very least seem to represent Christ as 'very like' God – could not be interpreted as describing Christ as a being who was close to being God but was not quite God, or even as a being who was ontologically intermediate between God and man: no such 'not quite God', no such intermediate, is possible, because any being who is not God is finite, and any finite being must be infinitely closer ontologically to any other finite being than it is to God.

2 Logical problems

The main philosophical problems facing the doctrine of the Incarnation are logical: the doctrine implies, or seems to imply, that there is an object that has various pairs of incompatible properties – or worse (if worse is possible), that there is an object and a property such that that object both has and does not have that property. (God is eternal; Jesus is not eternal; God is identical with Jesus; hence there is something that both is and is not eternal.) Some theologians have held, apparently, that the doctrine does have these features and is therefore internally inconsistent, but is nevertheless to be believed. Having said this, they proceed to deprecate 'merely human logic'. Their point is not that the doctrine *seems* to be inconsistent owing to the deficiencies of merely human logic; it is rather that it is only because of the deficiencies of merely human logic that inconsistency (at least in theology) seems objectionable (see Morris 1986: 24–5 for a nice selection of quotations on this subject). This position has (to be gentle) little to recommend it. It perhaps rests on a failure to see clearly that a truth cannot be inconsistent with a truth.

It would, of course, be possible to maintain that although the orthodox doctrine of the Incarnation seems to be inconsistent, it is in fact consistent, the explanation of the fact that it is, despite appearances, consistent being beyond human understanding. This

position will not be discussed in the present entry, for the simple reason that there is little if anything that can be said about it. Rather, various attempts to solve the problem that faces orthodox Christology owing to the *prima facie* inconsistency of the properties it ascribes to the incarnate Christ will be discussed. Philosophically promising solutions will be examined, but with no attempt to trace their historical roots. These solutions are (as perhaps any solution must be) of one or the other of two types:

(1) The orthodox doctrine does not imply all the statements it appears to imply. One or the other of each of the mutually contradictory pairs of statements the doctrine appears to imply it does not in fact imply. (For example, the doctrine appears to imply that Christ began to exist when Herod was king in Judea, and also appears to imply that Christ's existence had no beginning. But it in fact implies only the latter. Those who have concluded that the doctrine implies the former statement have reached this conclusion on the basis of a superficial understanding of what is contained in the concept of humanity.)

(2) The doctrine does imply all the statements it appears to imply, but these statements are not, as they appear to be, inconsistent. (For example, the doctrine implies that Christ began to exist when Herod was king in Judea, and also implies that Christ's existence had no beginning. But these two statements are consistent. Those who have concluded that they are inconsistent have reached this conclusion on the basis of a superficial understanding of their logical form.)

We shall call solutions of the former type 'attributive' and solutions of the latter type 'predicative'. These words are no more than convenient labels. Neither corresponds to any school or division in the history of theology.

3 Attributive solutions

Is it not possible that we sometimes read more into certain of the attributes that orthodoxy ascribes to Christ than is really there? We tend to assume that a human being must have a beginning in time, and that this is part of the concept of a human being. But what justifies this assumption? We tend to assume that whatever is a human being is essentially a human being. But, again, what justifies this assumption? Even if Solomon and Catherine the Great and all other 'ordinary' human beings have a temporal origin – even if they all have this property essentially – and even if they are all essentially human, does it follow that there could not be an eternal being who acquired the attribute of humanity at a certain point in time? Is there something about the concept of humanity that

makes the idea of such a being a conceptual impossibility? Or is there something about the attribute of humanity that makes the idea of such a being a metaphysical impossibility? We may think so – but how do we know? Are we prepared to assert confidently that an alleged divine revelation that implied the existence of such a being would have to be judged a fraud or fantasy of merely human origin? (No doubt we ought to be prepared to assert this in respect of an alleged divine revelation that implied that the walls of the New Jerusalem would be both square and circular.) Or consider omnipresence. A human being must be locally present somewhere, but does it follow that a human being cannot be omnipresent? We must remember that local presence and omnipresence are two different modes of presence. It is indeed impossible for one and the same being to be both locally present everywhere (like the luminiferous ether) and locally present only at a certain spot on the shores of the Sea of Galilee – but omnipresence is not local presence everywhere (see OMNIPRESENCE §4). Again: is it really impossible for a human being to be omnipotent? If an omnipotent being took on a set of properties such that whatever had those properties would be human, it would thereby acquire a certain set of powers or abilities, a set that might be the whole set of the powers had by an ‘ordinary’ human being; but might this set not be simply a (rather small) subset of the set of all its powers – might that being not continue to be omnipotent? Might it not continue to be able to move mountains? (Only, of course, in the way it had been able to move mountains before it took on its ‘new’ set of properties and powers: it would be unable to move mountains by using its limbs to exert physical pressure on them, even as Solomon and Catherine were unable to do this.) Similar questions can be asked in respect of omniscience.

If a human being can indeed be omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient, then one might address the problem of the apparent logical inconsistency of the doctrine of the Incarnation simply by denying it reality and asserting, without qualification, that Jesus of Nazareth was omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. Whether this solution is philosophically coherent could be debated interminably. But there is also the question whether it is in fact usable by Christians (who are, of course, the only people who have a use for it), for it is certainly arguable that it is inconsistent with the data of the New Testament, in which Jesus is sometimes represented as unable to do certain things and as learning things of which he had hitherto been ignorant and, in one case, as simply not knowing the exact day and hour of the end of the age (Matthew 24: 36; Mark 13: 32). It would no doubt be

possible to insist that the passages in the New Testament that represent Jesus as subject to many of the limitations of ordinary human existence can be reconciled with the thesis that he is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent – rather as many have found it possible to insist that the doctrine of a timeless, impassible God can be reconciled with the narratives of the Pentateuch. But it would seem that a solution to the problem would be more attractive to most Christians if it allowed Jesus to share our human limitations.

There is an attributive solution that claims to have this feature. It is called *kenoticism*, from the Greek *kenosis* (‘emptying’), an account of the nature of the Incarnation that is based on the statement (Philippians 2: 7) that, in becoming incarnate, Christ ‘emptied’ himself. Whatever the correct interpretation of the difficult passage in which this statement occurs may be, kenoticism holds that, in becoming incarnate, Christ relinquished omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence and various other of what are commonly called the divine attributes (although it continued to be true of him that he was morally perfect, had no beginning in time and was not a created being). Kenoticists do not, however, hold that when Christ had become incarnate *no one* was omnipotent and omnipresent. This entry has not so far touched on the relation of the doctrine of the Incarnation to the doctrine of the Trinity, but the two doctrines intersect on the following point: it was the second person of the Trinity alone, God the Son, who became incarnate. According to the kenotic theory, God the Son ‘emptied himself’ of omnipotence and omnipresence, but God the Father and God the Holy Spirit continued to possess these attributes.

Kenoticism, it will be noted, requires a ‘rethinking’ of divinity and various of the divine attributes as well as of humanity. We are inclined to think that a being that had attributes such as omniscience and omnipotence would have to have them essentially – and hence that that being could not relinquish them. But how, the kenoticist asks, do we know this? We are also inclined to think that a being who was not omniscient or omnipotent at *t* would not be at *t* a divine being. But how do we know this? How do we know that, for example, omnipotence is really a divine attribute, really entailed by divinity? Might it not be that it is not strictly omnipotence that is entailed by divinity, but rather some ‘weaker’ attribute – perhaps ‘omnipotence unless omnipotence is voluntarily relinquished’?

It is very doubtful whether kenoticism can be reconciled with orthodoxy. The following two difficulties are apparent. First, the theory does not mesh well with orthodox Trinitarian theology, for it seems

to imply that the persons of the Trinity are distinct substances, distinct *beings*, and hence to imply tritheism (see TRINITY §§1–2). Second, the theory allows the incarnate Christ to be divine only by considerably ‘weakening’ the concept of divinity. The incarnate Christ can indeed say truly ‘I am a divine being’, but only because, for the kenoticist, it is possible to be a divine being at a certain moment without then being omnipotent, omniscient or omnipresent. It is doubtful whether kenoticism can be reconciled with the following two requirements: ‘the property [that is, defining properties or essential features] of each nature being preserved’ (Definition of Chalcedon); ‘not by the transformation of his divinity into flesh’ (Athanasian Creed). Even if kenoticism can, by artful interpretations of their language, be reconciled with the letter of the two documents, it certainly cannot be reconciled with their spirit. (Kenoticism is a nineteenth-century invention and did not, therefore, influence the wording of the Definition or the Creed. There can be no real doubt that they would have been so worded as to exclude it if it had existed in the fifth century.)

Thomas Morris (1986) has defended an attributive solution that both takes into account the biblical data concerning the human limitations of Christ and retains a robust concept of divinity. Morris accounts for the biblical data by suggesting that Christ, in becoming incarnate, acquired a human mind without thereby relinquishing his divine mind. (The divine mind that Christ retains is not, according to Morris, ‘divine’ only in some etiolated, kenotic sense: it remains, for example, omniscient.) Between the two minds there exists an ‘asymmetrical accessing relation’: only a minuscule segment of what is present in the divine mind is accessible to the human mind. Christ’s human limitations are to be traced to the limitations of his human mind, and it is this mind whose thoughts and sufferings are recorded in the Gospels.

Morris’ solution is certainly to be preferred both to the ‘unqualified’ solution and to kenoticism. One might wonder, however, whether it is not a form of monophysitism. (This point could also have been brought against the ‘unqualified’ solution.) Morris’ solution represents Christ’s human mind as a ‘sub-system’ of his divine mind – which is, after all, really just his mind, his mind *simpliciter*. And although Christ has (on the physical side) weight and shape and local presence – all the physical properties that someone needs to be fully human – these are simply properties that God has acquired, ‘additions’ to the properties that he had before the Incarnation. It would seem, therefore, that Morris’ solution inherits the following feature of the ‘unqualified’ solution: it

represents the incarnate Christ as a single substance, a divine substance that, by becoming incarnate, acquired certain properties that would otherwise belong only to created beings. Morris would certainly vigorously affirm the presence of two natures in the incarnate Christ, but his account of what this means seems to be very like the account given by those monophysites who were willing to accept the ‘two natures’ terminology: ‘It is the claim of orthodoxy that Jesus had all of the [essential] properties of humanity, and all the [essential] properties of divinity, and thus existed (and continues still to exist) in two natures’ (Morris 1986: 40). The definitional statements that an advocate of Morris’ solution would have to pay special attention to are these: ‘made known in two natures without confusion [without running together]’ (Definition of Chalcedon); ‘not by confusion of substance’ (Athanasian Creed).

4 Predicative solutions

Predicative solutions concede that pairs of predicates like ‘is eternal’ and ‘was born of a human mother in 6 BC’ are inconsistent. But advocates of these solutions maintain that the real logical form of some or all sentences of the superficial form ‘Christ is *F*’ is not what that superficial form suggests. There are two, or perhaps three, ways a sentence of this form can be construed: ‘Christ is *F qua* God (as regards his divinity)’, ‘Christ is *F qua* man’, and, possibly, ‘Christ is *F* without qualification (*simpliciter*)’. Predicative solutions contend, moreover, that pairs of sentences like ‘Christ is eternal *qua* God’ and ‘Christ was born of a human mother in 6 BC *qua* man’ are consistent. (It would seem natural to suppose that proponents of predicative solutions – since they concede that ‘is eternal’ and ‘was born...’ are inconsistent – must regard ‘Christ is eternal *simpliciter*’ and ‘Christ was born of a human mother in 6 BC *simpliciter*’ as inconsistent. Indeed, it would seem natural to suppose that they would have to say that it was false that Christ had either his ‘exclusively divine’ or his ‘exclusively human’ attributes *simpliciter*, and would allow only that he had each of them *qua* God or *qua* man, as appropriate – although they might hold that Christ had certain attributes, such as moral perfection, *simpliciter*. But some ‘predicativists’ may refuse to recognize the ‘*simpliciter*’ mode of predication. And at least one ‘predicativist’ author explicitly treats such pairs of sentences as consistent, for reasons that will be given below.)

‘Predicativism’, so understood, is unquestionably orthodox. But it is doubtful whether it constitutes a solution to the problem of the apparent inconsistency of orthodox two-natures Christology. A satisfactory

predicative solution must supplement the abstract theses of the preceding paragraph with some sort of reply to the following challenge:

Where F and G are incompatible properties, and K_1 and K_2 are 'kinds', what does it mean to say of something that it is F *qua* K_1 but G *qua* K_2 ? – or that it is F *qua* K_1 but is not F *qua* K_2 ? And can any more or less uncontroversial examples of such pairs of statements be found?

R. T. Herbert (1979) has offered an example of such a pair of statements. Consider ambiguous figures, like the familiar 'duck-rabbit'. One could point at such a figure and say truly both, 'That has ears *qua* rabbit' and 'That has no ears *qua* duck'. But this example immediately suggests a question: what does the word 'that' refer to? Certainly not to the ambiguous figure. The figure belongs neither to the kind 'rabbit' nor to the kind 'duck', and therefore, presumably, has no properties *qua* rabbit or *qua* duck. (And if 'that' does not refer to the figure, what does it refer to?) It may be true that the figure has the property 'representing something with ears' *qua* rabbit-representation and lacks this same property *qua* duck-representation. If so, this would be an example of a pair of '*qua*' statements of the forms the above challenge has demanded. But it does not seem that this example will be of use in Christology, for the property the figure has '*qua* something' and lacks '*qua* something else' is a representational property, and Christ, not being a drawing or a statue, has no representational properties. (It is not accidental to the example that the property it involves is representational, and the example provides the inquirer with no clue as to how to construct an example involving a property that is not representational.) It is true that one biblical quotation describes Christ as 'the exact representation [*charaktér*] of [God's] nature' (Hebrews 1: 3). But this means that Christ is a 'perfect copy' of God, and does not imply that any of Christ's properties is a representational property. (A daughter who is the 'spit and image' of her mother is not a representation of her mother in the way a portrait of her mother is.)

Peter van Inwagen (1994) has presented a very comprehensive and general predicative solution to the problem of the apparent inconsistency of the doctrine of the Incarnation. It has been observed by several authors that Peter Geach's thesis of the 'relativity of identity' can be employed to solve the 'Leibniz's Law' problems faced by the doctrine of the Trinity (see TRINITY §3). Van Inwagen has shown that the techniques employed in this solution can be extended to solve the similar problems faced by the doctrine of the Incarnation. The following is a simplified version of van Inwagen's solution.

Suppose that, although God is not (of course) the same substance or being as the human being Jesus of Nazareth, he is nevertheless the same *person* – the same 'I' or 'thou' or 'he'. (This assumption has two closely related presuppositions: that it is possible for x to be the same person as y but not the same substance; and that if x is the same person as y , and x has the property F , it does not follow that y has F .) Let the adjective 'Nazarene' represent some conjunction of 'human' properties that uniquely identify the human being Jesus of Nazareth. We may now offer the following three definitions:

Jesus Christ is *F simpliciter*:

Something x is such that: something divine is the same person as x ; and something Nazarene is the same person as x ; and x is F .

Jesus Christ is *F qua* God:

Something x is such that: something divine is the same person as x ; and something Nazarene is the same person as x ; and x is divine; and x is F .

Jesus Christ is *F qua* man:

Something x is such that: something divine is the same person as x ; and something Nazarene is the same person as x ; and x is human; and x is F .

The two latter definitions have the expected and desired consequences. The following two consequences of the first, however, although not unorthodox, are certainly somewhat counterintuitive: Jesus Christ is eternal *simpliciter* (since something divine and something Nazarene are the same person, and the former is eternal), and Jesus Christ had a beginning in time *simpliciter* (since something divine and something Nazarene are the same person, and the latter had a beginning in time). Using constructions like those illustrated in the three definitions, van Inwagen has shown how to correlate each statement endorsed by the orthodox doctrine of the Incarnation with a statement in a formal language comprising only the two 'relative identity' predicates 'is the same being as' and 'is the same person as' and a small stock of additional predicates. (The formal language contains no names or descriptions; it contains no terms but variables.) He has shown that the set of statements in the formal language that are correlated with the set of statements that orthodoxy endorses are formally consistent (given a certain explicitly stated set of rules that defines valid inference in the formal language). This 'solution' to the problem of the apparent logical inconsistency of the doctrine of the Incarnation, unlike the other solutions we have examined, has no ontological content. Van Inwagen makes no attempt at a metaphysical analysis of divinity or humanity; his

project is simply to set out a formal representation of the orthodox doctrine that is provably formally consistent.

His solution raises at least two serious questions (if, indeed, metaphysically empty as it is, it is proper to call it a solution). First, do the two 'closely related presuppositions' mentioned above (that it is possible for x to be the same person as y but not the same substance; and that if x is the same person as y , and x has the property F , it does not follow that y has F) really make any logical sense? Second, van Inwagen's constructions represent the statements of traditional Incarnational theology as having very different logical forms from those they appear to have. (For example, given the appropriate theological assumptions, the sentence 'Jesus Christ is eternal *qua* God' is true on his analysis – but not because 'Jesus Christ' is a singular referring expression that denotes an object that has, on those assumptions, the property expressed by the predicate 'is eternal *qua* God'.) In view of this fact, can these constructions plausibly be held to represent the intended content of the traditional statements?

See also: ATONEMENT; IDENTITY; IMMUTABILITY §3; SIMPLICITY, DIVINE

References and further reading

Bettenson, H. (ed.) (1963) *Documents of the Christian Church*, Oxford and London: Oxford University Press, 2nd edn. (A useful collection. Contains materials relating to Apollinarianism, Nestorianism and – under the heading 'Eutychianism' – monophysitism.)

Geach, P.T. (1977) *Providence and Evil*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (An interesting discussion of the logic of 'predication *qua*', with applications to Christology; see especially pages 24–8.)

* Gregory of Nazianzus (mid-to-late 4th century) 'Letter 101', in J.P. Migne (ed.) *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 37, Paris, 1857–66, 162 vols; also in A.E. McGrath (ed.) *The Christian Theology Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1995, 141–2. (The source for the quotation discussed in §1, a famous line standardly quoted in discussions of Apollinarianism. McGrath's book contains an English translation of relevant parts of Gregory's letter.)

* Herbert, R.T. (1979) *Paradox and Identity in Theology*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. (An excellent discussion of the logical problems of the Incarnation, which contains Herbert's 'ambiguous figure' model; see especially chapter 4, 'The Absolute Paradox: The God-Man'.)

* Kelly, J.N.D. (1960) *Early Christian Doctrines*, London: A. & C. Black, 2nd edn. (The source of the translation of the Definition of Chalcedon quoted in the text; see especially pages 339–41.)

* — (1964) *The Athanasian Creed*, London: A. & C. Black. (The source of the translation quoted in the text; see especially pages 19–20.)

McGrath, A.E. (1994) *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, Oxford: Blackwell. (Recommended for readers with no background in theology or Church history. Clear and reliable. See especially chapter 9, 'The Doctrine of the Person of Christ'.)

* Morris, T.V. (1986) *The Logic of God Incarnate*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. (The most important recent work on the Incarnation by a philosopher at time of writing. Contains discussions of most of the issues addressed in this article, as well as a presentation of Morris' 'two minds' Christology. May be consulted for references to a wide range of recent philosophical work on the Incarnation.)

* Van Inwagen, P. (1994) 'Not by Confusion of Substance, but by Unity of Person', in A.G. Padgett (ed.) *Reason and the Christian Religion: Essays in Honour of Richard Swinburne*, Oxford: Clarendon Press. (An application of the 'logic of relative identity' to the problems of Christology. Contains what could be described as an analysis of '*qua* God' and '*qua* man' in terms of relative identities.)

PETER VAN INWAGEN

INCOMMENSURABILITY

When one scientific theory or tradition is replaced by another in a scientific revolution, the concepts involved often change in fundamental ways. For example, among other differences, in Newtonian mechanics an object's mass is independent of its velocity, while in relativity mechanics, mass increases as the velocity approaches that of light. Earlier philosophers of science maintained that Einsteinian mechanics reduces to Newtonian mechanics in the limit of high velocities. However, Thomas Kuhn (1962) and Paul Feyerabend (1962, 1965) introduced a rival view. Kuhn argued that different scientific traditions are defined by their adherence to different paradigms, fundamental perspectives which shape or determine not only substantive beliefs about the world, but also methods, problems, standards of solution or explanation, and even what counts as an observation or fact. Scientific revolutions (changes of paradigm) alter all these profoundly.