7-1-2017

Unity Of Action: A Latin Social Model Of The Trinity

Scott Williams

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LATIN SOCIAL MODEL OF THE TRINITY

Scott M. Williams

I develop a Latin Social model of the Trinity that is an extension of my previous work on indexicals and the Trinity. I focus on the theological desideratum of the necessity of the divine persons' unity of action. After giving my account of this unity, I compare my account with Swinburne's and Hasker's social models and Leftow's non-social model. I argue that their accounts of the divine persons' unity of action are theologically unsatisfactory and that this unsatisfactoriness derives from a modern conception of personhood according to which distinct and incommunicable intellectual acts and volitional acts are necessary conditions for one's being a person. I argue that the Latin Social model is preferable to the modern-personhood models because it is simpler in explanatory economy with regard to securing the necessity of the divine persons' unity of action.

1. Introduction

Christians traditionally believe that the world is contingent. God could have chosen otherwise than God did in creating this world. In choosing to create this world, God chose that, e.g., the Earth revolve around the sun in the direction it actually does. God could have chosen that the Earth revolve around the sun in a different direction. This choice is arbitrary; there is no overriding reason why God made this particular choice. Call such cases cases of "permissible alternatives." Each option is morally permissible in the sense that God's choosing a direction of revolution and not another direction of revolution is not morally better or worse. Christians also traditionally believe that the divine persons are necessarily unified or necessarily agree regarding all things, including permissible alternatives. They cannot fail to be unified and agree. Call this the "necessary agreement" thesis [= NA].

Orthodox Christians have several reasons for affirming NA. Respected Christian theologians have taken pains to distinguish Trinitarianism from Tri-theism, or polytheism. One difference between these views is supposed to be that the former, and not the latter, endorses NA.[1] Arguments for God's existence typically aim for a conclusion that there is just one

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[1]See McCall and Rea, "Introduction," 6.

ultimate source for all created existing things, and not three separate or independent ultimate sources that just so happen to agree on creating this particular world.[2] Further, for many orthodox Trinitarians, there is a desire to show how a doctrine of the Trinity is consistent with, or a completion of, Jewish monotheism.[3] It is difficult to see how a model of the Trinity is consistent with Jewish monotheism if it were not also consistent with NA.

Some social models of the Trinity explain the divine persons' unity of action regarding permissible alternatives by saying that the divine persons agree on a moral reason or rule for deciding what to will.[4] The divine persons agreeing on some moral reason or rule would determine which option would be chosen if one were chosen. Richard Swinburne's social model and (to some extent) William Hasker's social model are examples of using this strategy for securing NA.[5]

I find appeals to an agreed upon moral reason or rule for such cases to be theologically and philosophically unsatisfying. It is better to say that the divine persons share numerically one will and that they just will something with regard to permissible alternatives. On this view the divine persons' unity of action is a metaphysically necessary agreement and not a voluntary moral agreement. If the divine persons' unity of action in such cases can be explained on a metaphysical basis, then it is unnecessary to posit an additional voluntary moral agreement about how to decide what is to be willed regarding permissible alternatives. Although Swinburne's and Hasker's social models are the main target, Brian Leftow's non-social model is open to the same criticism.

In what follows I develop a model of the Trinity, which I call a Latin Social model, that secures NA on a metaphysical basis by employing Richard of St. Victor's concept of personhood, a distinction between mental tokens and propositions to which they refer, and an externalist account of the essential indexical "I." Further, I argue that there is a common source for Swinburne's, Hasker's, and Leftow's models of the Trinity being open to the criticism that they insufficiently secure NA, namely their "modern" or Lockean conceptions of a divine person according to which distinct and incommunicable intellectual acts and volitional acts are necessary conditions for one to be a certain divine person.

2. Notional and Essential Acts, and Theological Authorities

From an orthodox Christian point of view, it is right to believe that the divine persons have a unity of action except with regard to the activities or relations that distinguish them as divine persons.[6] The Father's *beget-*

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[2]See Swinburne, *Is There a God?*, 40–43.

[3]See discussion in Leftow, "Anti Social Trinitarianism," 235–241.

[4]For discussion, see McCall and Rea, "Introduction," 4–5.

[5]Cf. Swinburne, *The Christian God*, 172–176, and Hasker, *The Metaphysics of the Tri-Personal God*, 208–209.

[6]Cf. Coakley, "'Persons' in the 'Social' Doctrine of the Trinity," 123–144, esp. 137.

ting the Son, the Son's *being begotten*, and the Holy Spirit's *being spirated* are the activities or relations that distinguish the persons. (I am not concerned here with a fine-grained analysis of these—whether they are actions or just relations.) These activities or relations are traditionally called "notional acts." The divine persons' activities that are unified are called "essential acts." Essential acts include acts of intellect and acts of will. It is common to find within the history of Christian theology the claim that, e.g., the Father's (essential) act of loving X, the Son's (essential) act of loving X, and the Holy Spirit's (essential) act of loving X, are numerically the same or identically the same (essential) act of loving X.[7] The same goes for an essential act of understanding X.[8] Sometimes theologians have inferred from the divine persons' (numerically) same divine nature or essence to the persons' (numerically) same divine will. But sometimes the explanatory order is the reverse: if the divine persons share (numerically) the same divine will, then they share (numerically) the same divine nature or essence.[9] In one passage, quoted by Michel Barnes, Gregory of Nyssa could be interpreted as committing the fallacy of affirming the consequent, but another interpretation—one that I think is more likely given other things that Gregory says—is that he is positing a biconditional: if there is unity of divine nature or essence, then there is unity of will, and, if there is unity of will, then there is unity of divine nature or essence.

> For the community of nature gives us warrant that the will of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is one, and thus, if the Holy Spirit wills that which seems good to the Son, the community of will clearly points to unity of essence.[10]

In another text Gregory of Nyssa declares that

> No postponement occurs, or is thought of, in the movement from the divine will from the Father through the Son to the Spirit. But deity is one of the

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[7]See Hugh of St. Victor, *Quaestiones et Decisiones in Epistolas D. Pauli: In Epistolam ad Romanos, Quaestio* 286. For discussion of Thomas Aquinas on "essential acts" and references, see Emery, *The Trinitarian Theology of Thomas Aquinas*, 74–75. Also, for coverage of scholastic theologians see Friedman, *Intellectual Traditions at the Medieval University*, 275–279, 412–415, 458–460, 465–467, 590–591. Also, Cross, *Duns Scotus on God*, 223–232. See quotations from Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzus below too. For discussion of John of Damascus on the divine persons' unity of substance and action, see Twombly, *Perichoresis and Personhood*, 31–46.

[8]The medieval doctrine of appropriation reflects this quite forcefully. See Emery, *The Trinitarian Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 312–337, esp. 337: "Appropriation is concerned exclusively with the region of that which is absolutely common to the three persons, that is to say, with that which is 'attributed to the nature.'" For example, Richard of St. Victor, *De Trinitate*, 247, line 4–248, line 54, appropriates power to the Father, wisdom to the Son, and goodness to the Holy Spirit.

[9]See Augustine, *De Trinitate*, 245, line 56–247, line 111, 476, lines 45–48, and 502, lines 28–53. See Gregory of Nyssa, "Concerning We Should Think of Saying That These are Not Three Gods to Ablabius," 157. For discussion see Barnes, "Divine Unity and the Divided Self," 489–490.

[10]Barnes, "Divine Unity and the Divided Self," 489.

good names and thoughts, and not reasonably is the name to be used in the plural, since the unity of activity prevents a plural counting.[11]

From this it is evident that Gregory of Nyssa maintains that there is (numerically) one divine will and the divine persons share (numerically) the same divine volitions. We find the same claim made by Gregory of Nazianzus, as reported by Barnes:

> Gregory of Nazianzus is perhaps even clearer on this point when he comments on the Scripture passage, "The Son came down from Heaven, not to do His own Will, but the Will of Him That sent Him." "But since, as this [Scripture passage] is the language of Him Who assumed our Nature (for He it was Who came down), and not of the Nature which He assumed, we must meet the objection in this way, that the passage does not mean that the Son has a special will of His own, besides that of the Father, but that He has not; so that the meaning would be, "not to do Mine own Will, for there is none of Mine apart from, but that which is common to, Me and Thee; for as We have one Godhead, so We have one Will."[12]

In this passage Gregory of Nazianzus posits one divine will, but he uses different pronouns: the Son uses "me" to refer to the Son and uses "thee" to refer to the Father. He might be interpreted as suggesting that the divine persons have their own thoughts and their own intellectual power(s) because a divine person uses a personal pronoun and its reference is fixed by the context of its use. But on the Latin Social model developed below, it is not required that each person have his own intellectual power(s) in order to use mental tokens that include indexical terms like "I" and "me."

We might wonder why one should make the inference from (numerical) unity of nature to (numerical) unity of will (or unity of intellect) and vice versa. In sections 3–5. I develop a Latin Social model of the Trinity that answers these questions and entails NA. In the subsequent sections I critique Swinburne's and Hasker's social models and Leftow's non-social model, showing that they do not entail NA.

3. Developing a Latin Social Model

I assume, without argument here, that there is just one concrete instance or trope of the divine nature, that the one divine nature is a constituent of each divine person, that each divine person is constituted by the one divine nature and by some incommunicable attribute (e.g., *begetting*, *being begotten*, or *being spirated*).[13] What the divine persons share in common

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[11]Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, "Concerning We Should Think of Saying That There are Not Three Gods to *Ablabius*," 157.

[12]Barnes, "Divine Unity and the Divided Self," 489–490.

[13]Talk of the "constitution of divine persons" can be clearly found in scholastic theologians like Henry of Ghent and John Duns Scotus, and more recently with Jeffrey Brower, Michael Rea, and William Hasker. While the model on offer doesn't require one version or another of a constitution account of the Trinity, I'm inclined to think that overall Duns Scotus's is preferable. The model on offer does not require a commitment to the persons' incommunicable attributes being real relations or absolute properties. Either one may do. For

is the one communicable divine nature, and what ontologically distinguishes them are their incommunicable attributes, which are traditionally called "personal" properties. I hold that each divine person is constituted as a person ontologically and explanatorily prior to any thoughts or volitions that *that* person has or might have, such as being self-aware, aware of others, or loving another. (For example, I deny that e.g., God the Son's understanding X constitutes [or partially constitutes] God the Son as a person.) The divine persons have their rational powers (i.e., intellect, will) in virtue of the one divine nature. Consequently, the divine persons share numerically the same rational powers of intellect and will. Further, I hold that each divine person is essentially numerically the same divine nature as the one divine nature without being identical to it.[14] A divine person is not identical to the one divine nature because the divine person has a constituent, namely a personal property that is not identical to the one divine nature.

These claims put the model outside the fold of some social models of the Trinity that hold that the divine persons do not share numerically the same powers of intellect and will.[15] However, as will become clear, one way to name the model in the contemporary analytic theology context is that it is a Latin Social model of the Trinity. For this model has it that all of the persons can use a mental token of "I" to refer to themselves. But as will be seen, the "Latin" part of the model has it that divine persons share all uses of all divine mental tokens, including mental tokens of "I," such that in numerically the same use of a mental token of "I" the Father refers to the Father, the Son refers to the Son, and the Holy Spirit refers to the Holy Spirit. (See section 4 for details.) Analogous reasoning applies to divine volitions. (See section 5 for details.)

It might be important to add some clarifications about the divine nature and the constitution of the divine persons. The model on offer is influenced by the Trinitarian theologies of the scholastic theologians Richard of St. Victor, Henry of Ghent and John Duns Scotus. It is from Henry that I am developing a Latin *social* model.[16] (Henry's Trinitarian theology is unknown to most because of a dearth of systematic literature on it.) And, although it is in Henry of Ghent, it is in Duns Scotus who most succinctly and clearly describes the singular divine nature and divine persons.

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an excellent discussion of relative versus absolute person constitution in scholastic theology, see Friedman, *Intellectual Traditions at the Medieval University*," 341–375. The terms "paternity" (*paternitas*), "filiation" (*filiatio*) and "passive spiration" (*spiratio passiva*) are commonly used in scholastic theology for the incommunicable personal properties.

[14]See Williams, "Indexicals and the Trinity," 84 and references there. I discuss the notion of "essential numerical sameness without identity" in "Henry of Ghent on Real Relations and the Trinity," 111–115.

[15]Cf. Moreland and Craig, *Philosophical Foundations of a Christian Worldview*, 583: "The central commitment of social trinitarianism is that in God there are three distinct centers of self-consciousness, each with its proper intellect and will." Cited in Hasker, *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God*, 25.

[16]See Williams, *Henry of Ghent on the Trinity*.

For Duns Scotus, the one divine nature is like an Aristotelian primary substance and like a secondary substance in only certain respects.[17] There is no straightforward parallel from Aristotelian primary substances and secondary substances to the divine persons and the one divine nature.[18] On Duns Scotus's view, the divine nature or substance is like a primary substance in the sense that it is numerically one, exists *per se* (as opposed to contingently inhering in a subject), and is concrete (rather than abstract). But it is not like a primary substance in the sense that it is incommunicable. The divine nature is and so can be communicated from, e.g., God the Father to God the Son. Further, the divine nature is like a secondary substance in the sense that it is communicable—it is and so can be communicated from one divine person (or persons) to another divine person. Lastly, while Duns Scotus himself maintains that the divine nature is not a subject of accidents (contingent properties), I wish to remain neutral on this question. The Latin Social model developed here is meant to be neutral with regard to divine immutability, so that proponents of divine immutability or divine mutability can find the model plausible.

Further, each divine person is like a primary substance in the sense that each exists *per se* (in virtue of the one divine nature that is a constituent of the persons), each is concrete (rather than abstract), and each is incommunicable (in virtue of an incommunicable attribute that is not identical to the divine nature).

The description of "person" that this model uses is that of Richard of St. Victor, according to whom a person is "an incommunicable existence of an intellectual nature."[19] "Intellectual nature" refers to intellectual power(s) and will power(s). I take "power" to entail a possibility for an act, whether the act is likely or unlikely (perhaps because of some impediment) for the metaphysical subject in question. If a metaphysical subject is a person, then the subject is a person explanatorily prior to any intellectual act or volitional act she might have.

This description of a person can be satisfied by primarily diverse entities. A human being, Peter, is a person because his humanity (I am neutral here on the question of dualism or materialism) is an incommunicable existence and is an intellectual nature. If pushed, we might say Peter's humanity (as opposed to humanity as such) is the truth-maker for his personhood. In contrast, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit is each a person because the one divine nature is the truth-maker for their intellectual nature, and each personal property is the truth-maker for their incommunicability. Each divine person, as a person, is constituted by the one communicable divine nature and an incommunicable *personal* property.[20] If there were no

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[17]See Cross, *Duns Scotus on God*, 233–244.

[18]Cf. Cross, *Duns Scotus on God*, 165–170.

[19]For references and discussion, cf. Cross, *Duns Scotus on God*, 158–163.

[20]For Duns Scotus's discussion of this, see *The Examined Report of the Paris Lecture: Reportatio I-A*, 287–293.

incommunicable properties, then there would be no divine person despite there being the one divine nature that grounds intellectual power(s) and will power(s). Personhood requires something incommunicable and given that the divine nature is not incommunicable, it is not a person.

Given my commitment to a pro-Nicene Trinitarian theology and the above claims, I do not, for example, assume a modern notion of personhood according to which persons are "distinct centers of knowledge, will, love, and action . . . distinct centers of consciousness."[21] A feature of this conception, as I understand it, is that a person is a person by being constituted (at least in part) by cognitive acts, or by being identified with a stream of intellectual and volitional acts. Hence, there are non-identical persons only if there are subjects with incommunicable cognitive acts. I do not apply this notion to the divine persons. On the medieval view I endorse, a person is a person ontologically and explanatorily prior to any cognitive acts or volitions that *that* person in question has or might have.[22] The relevant incommunicable item is begetting for the Father, being begotten for the Son, and being spirated for the Holy Spirit. The persons' divine cognitive acts, on the view I endorse, are communicable (and not incommunicable). I wish to be sensitive to the way(s) in which orthodox Christian theologians have developed a notion of "person" applicable to divine persons.[23] After all, the terms "persona" and "hypostasis," as I understand them, are theological terms of art developed by ancient and medieval Christian theologians for the purpose of giving an account of the Trinity and of the Incarnation. Such accounts of personhood were not intended to be an explanation of legal and moral responsibility as is often the case in modern accounts such as John Locke's.

4. Mental Tokens, Indexicals, and a Latin Social Trinity

In a previous article, "Indexicals and the Trinity: Two Non-Social Models" I drew attention to details about context-sensitive tokens that can be put to use in Trinitarian theology.[24] I want to put these to use in a Latin Social account of NA. Following John Perry, I distinguished the production of a token and the act of using a token.[25] In everyday life the production of

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[21]Hasker, *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God*, 24, quoting Plantinga, "Social Trinity and Tritheism," 22.

[22]This is consistent with, but does not require, e.g., Thomas Aquinas's claim that God the Father generates God the Son by an intellectual act of self-understanding. The claim here is that e.g., God the Son's own act of understanding is not constitutive of his own personhood, even if God the Father's intellectual production of God the Son is constitutive of God the Son. I am not inclined to agree with Aquinas in light of criticisms by Henry of Ghent and Duns Scotus. For discussion, see Williams, "Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Henry of Ghent, and John Duns Scotus," 48–49.

[23]In a similar vein, I wish to preserve classical Trinitarian uses of pronouns such that "he," "she" and "one" can be used to refer to divine persons. I make no ontological ascription of gender to divine persons despite using various pronouns.

[24]Williams, "Indexicals and the Trinity," 74–94.

[25]Williams, "Indexicals and the Trinity," 78–83.

a spoken token and its use usually overlap. When I produce the verbal token of, "I am happy," I also use this token. But the identity conditions for the production of a token and its use are different. Perry gives the following example.

> An utterance [or use] may involve a token, but not be the act of producing it. My wife Frenchie and I were once Resident Fellows in a dormitory at Stanford, eating with the students each evening in the cafeteria. If she went to dinner before I returned, she would write on a small blackboard on the counter, "I have gone to the cafeteria," and set it on the table near the front door of our apartment. I would put it back on the counter. There was no need for her to write out the message anew each time I was late; if the blackboard had not been used for something else in the interim, she could simply move it from the counter back to the table. Frenchie used the same token to say different things on different days. Each use of the token was a separate utterance.[26]

When John arrives home and sees the written message placed on the table, part of the proposition that is thought is relative to the day in which his wife uses the written message and it is relative to the agent's using the token. Given that Frenchie uses the token on a certain day, the "I" refers to Frenchie because she's using the written sign, and "today" is relative to the day in which she uses the token. Now, suppose Frenchie is the one who arrives home late and John has already left for dinner. And, suppose John puts the written sign on the table such that he uses numerically the same token that Frenchie had produced. When Frenchie arrives home she will understand the "I" to refer to John (and not to her), even though she originally produced the written token on the chalkboard. The agent that produces a token typically uses the produced token, but so too could another agent use the token. A token of "I" is relative to the agent using it such that different agents could use numerically the same token. The agent using the token of "I," and not the agent that produced the token, fixes its reference.

It seems to me that there is an analogy from written sentences to mental sentences, given that both have syntactic structure and semantic content. They are not the same, of course, but they are analogous. If this is right, then we can say that an individual sentence, its production, and its use, are analogous to an individual mental sentence (called a mental token), its production, and its use. Given this, we can hazard a theological posit that non-identical humans using the same written indexical token is analogous to non-identical divine persons using the same mental indexical token. One difference between the human agents' uses of an individual written sentence and the divine persons' uses of a mental token is that in the former case the agents' uses of the individual sentence are numerically different but in the latter case the divine persons' use of a mental token are numerically the same. (For example, the Father's using the mental token

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[26]Perry, *The Problem of the Essential Indexical*, 318–319.

of "I am wise" is numerically the same use as the Son's using the same mental token of "I am wise.") The divine persons' uses of a mental token are numerically the same because they share numerically the same divine nature that is the ground of their rational powers.

Why is it that the persons' shared intellectual power is supposed to entail that the persons share numerically the same use of a mental token? Intellectual power can be divided into active intellectual power and passive intellectual power. (Henry of Ghent largely inspires this analysis of divine powers.[27]) Active intellectual power and passive intellectual power are correlatives; they mutually imply one another. (What follows should not be understood as an endorsement of potentiality and actuality as contraries in God. Talk of active and passive powers grounded in the divine essence should be interpreted as compatible with there being no change in God. Talk of active and passive powers should also be interpreted as being compatible with there being change in God. The Latin Social model is meant to be neutral on the question of whether God changes. Replace "power" with "possibility" if it reads more easily.) Active intellectual power is that by which a person can produce and can use mental tokens. If a person has active intellectual power and a mental token, then this person can use this mental token to think a proposition. (By "to think" I mean to be aware of, or to entertain, some proposition.) Furthermore, passive intellectual power is that by which a person can be united with a mental token and can be united with an individual use of a mental token. A rock cannot be united with the using of a mental token because it fails to have the required passive power. But a divine person can be united with the using of a mental token because the person has the required passive power. It is one thing to be united with using a mental token and another thing to use a mental token. The former requires passive intellectual power and the latter requires active intellectual power. Now, if there are several persons that share numerically the same divine nature, then these persons share numerically the same intellectual divine powers, namely numerically the same active intellectual power and numerically the same passive intellectual power. If a divine person (e.g., the Father) is united to the use of a mental token, then the one divine nature is united to this use of a mental token. If another divine person (e.g., the Son) is united to numerically the same divine nature, then any use of a mental token that is united to the one divine nature also is united to this other person (e.g., the Son). So, if God the Father uses a mental token and this use of the mental token is united to the one divine nature, and God the Son is united to numerically the same divine nature, then God the Son is united to this use of the mental token. Thus, if the Father uses a mental token and the Son uses the same mental

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[27]Henry of Ghent cleverly distinguished active and passive potencies (powers) in God as logical possibilities that are compatible with actuality, and not as contraries of "potency" and "actuality" as most other scholastics had assumed. See Henry of Ghent, *Summa of Ordinary Questions, Articles 35, 36, 42, 45*, 31–37, 49–50. For discussion of this, see Williams, *Henry of Ghent on the Trinity*.

token and the Holy Spirit uses the same mental token, then the Father's use, the Son's use, and the Holy Spirit's use of the same mental token are numerically the same use of the mental token. The Father cannot, so to speak, get away with using a mental token and not sharing that use of that mental token with every other divine person united to numerically the same divine nature. The Father's sharing numerically the same use of a mental token is a metaphysical necessity because his intellectual powers that are grounded in the one divine nature are communicable and communicated to every other divine person. Thus, the divine persons share numerically the same use of a divine mental token.

The divine persons share numerically the same use of a mental token because they share numerically the same active and passive intellectual powers (which are correlatives), and they share numerically the same intellectual powers because they share numerically the same divine nature that grounds their intellectual powers. Given this view, the Father's use of the mental token of, "I am wise," is numerically the same use as the Son's use of this mental token and the Holy Spirit's use of this mental token. The Father's using the mental token, "I am wise," entails that the Father thinks that the Father is wise. The Son's using the same mental token of, "I am wise," entails that the Son thinks that the Son is wise. Likewise, the Holy Spirit's using the same mental token of, "I am wise," entails that the Holy Spirit thinks that the Holy Spirit is wise. The divine persons are aware of different propositions if they use a mental token with the indexical "I" in it. In cases where the divine mental token includes no indexicals, what the persons think in using a mental token is the same. If God the Father uses the mental token, "Love is a good," then the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit think the same proposition. Each person thinks the proposition that love is a good.

One worry about the claim that the persons share numerically the same use of the same mental token and think different propositions is that there seems to be a problem with the identity conditions of a use of a mental token. In using a mental token of "I am God," God the Father thinks that God the Father is God. (I leave the sense of the copula ambiguous for now.) Likewise, in using a mental token of "I am God," God the Son thinks that God the Son is God. Isn't a use of a mental token tied to the particular proposition that is thought? Isn't it the case that the identity of a use of mental token includes the proposition that is thought? Although it often is the case that a use of a token entails that one proposition is thought, it is not always the case. There can be one use of a token by which several propositions are thought, so long as the semantics and syntactic structure of the token, and its context, allows for the thinking of several propositions to obtain. Before I gave the example of Bilbo Baggins saying "Good Morning!" to Gandalf.[28] We are told that Bilbo thinks several propositions in this one use of the token "Good Morning!" He says that he wishes

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[28]Cf. Williams, "Indexicals and the Trinity," 82.

Gandalf a good morning, that it is a good morning, that Bilbo feels good this morning, and that it is a morning to be good on. What licenses one use of the token to correspond to different propositions are various contexts or indices of the use of the token. Contexts include the agent Bilbo, the morning, the green grass, the sun shining, and Bilbo's speaking to Gandalf. If one use of a token can entail different propositions depending on the right contexts of the use of the token, then we can say, analogously, that numerically the same use of a divine mental token can entail different propositions just so long as the use of the mental token has the relevant contexts, namely the relevant divine agents using the mental token, and the semantics and syntax allow it.

Sometimes the predicate in a mental token is "God." A traditional theological analysis of this term, which can be found in John of Damascus,[29] is that "God" can be used to refer to the divine nature as such or it can be used to refer to a person who is divine. I agree with this understanding of the term "God." If divine persons were to use "God" in these ways, then the following would be the analysis of that. The Father's using a mental token of "I am God" entails that the Father thinks that the Father is a divine person, or, it entails that the Father thinks that the Father is essentially numerically the same as the divine nature without being identical to it, or, it entails both. Similar reasoning applies to the Son's and Holy Spirit's use of the same mental token. When a believer addresses God in saying "Dear God . . ." she may either be addressing the divine nature as such or a person who is divine. I suspect that most believers typically intend the latter, though the former is also possible.

In cases in which the predicate in the mental token refers to a particular divine person, e.g., God the Father, what the copula expresses is relative to the *agent* using the token. If the agent is the same person as the person referred to in the predicate, then the copula expresses identity. If the agent is not the same person as the person referred to in the predicate, then the copula expresses essential numerical sameness without identity. (I am unaware of any creaturely analogue to this. It is the divine persons' sharing numerically the same nature, numerically the same uses of a mental token, and omniscience, that render this a unique case.) For example, if the Father uses a mental token of "I am God the Father" and in so doing affirms a proposition, then the Father affirms that God the Father is identical to God the Father. If the Son uses the same mental token of "I am God the Father" so as to affirm a proposition and never affirms something false (given omniscience), then relative to the Son, the Son affirms the proposition that the Son is essentially numerically the same divine nature as the Father without being identical to the Father.

If we held that God the Father didn't have or use a mental token of "I am God the Father," then God the Father would not, as it were, know who

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[29]John of Damascus, *Writings*, 275. Henry of Ghent makes the same claim; for references see Scott Williams, "Indexicals and the Trinity," 85n15.

he is, but that seems unlikely given divine omniscience. So, a way around this worry is to note that a proposition affirmed in using a mental token is relative to the agent using the mental token. Each divine person uses numerically the same mental token of "I am God the Father" but only the Father affirms identity with God the Father, and the Son and Holy Spirit affirm something different. The Son affirms that the Son is essentially numerically the same divine nature as God the Father without being identical to God the Father. The Holy Spirit affirms that the Holy Spirit is essentially numerically the same divine nature as God the Father without being identical to God the Father. Each divine person affirms something true in numerically the same use of numerically the same divine mental token of "I am God the Father." The Father is aware of one thing, the Son is aware of something different, and the Holy Spirit is aware of something different.

This way of analyzing mental tokens that include the indexical "I" and the ambiguous copula is a general theory for divine mental tokens. It can be generalized to all cases of divine mental tokens that the include the indexical "I" and the ambiguous copula. One challenge for this theory is whether a use of a mental token can be ascribed to a divine person but the theory predicts (so to speak) that a divine person affirms something false or contrary to revelation. Consider a case where the indexical "me" is in a mental token, e.g., a mental token of "The Father loves me." In using this mental token the Father would think that the Father loves the Father, the Son would think that the Father loves the Son, and the Holy Spirit would think that the Father loves the Holy Spirit. Some supposed counterexamples would require a complicated analysis from this general theory. Nonetheless, I strongly suspect that responses can be given. For any putative verb can be reduced to a copula plus the verb. The theory on offer can analyze what each divine person would affirm in using such a mental token (if they use such a mental token) such that each person affirms something true and does not contradict revelation. For example, a mental token of "The Son and I are sent, and the Father is not sent"[30] would be revised as "The Son and I are ones who are sent, and the Father is not sent." In this case, the Father would affirm that the Son is sent and the Father is essentially numerically the same divine nature as without being identical to one who is sent, and the Father is not sent. The Son would affirm that the Son is sent and the Son is essentially numerically the same divine nature as without being identical to one who is sent, and the Father is not sent. The Holy Spirit would affirm that the Son is sent and the Holy Spirit is sent, and the Father is not sent. In each case the "I" refers to the agent using the mental token; but what is expressed by the copula is relative to the agent using the copula and the sense expressed by the copula is constrained by the fact that the divine persons cannot affirm falsehoods. I do not claim that the divine persons in fact use such a

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[30]Thanks to Michael Rea for this example.

mental token, but only that if they do, then this analysis is coherent and is consistent with revelation.[31]

Another worry about this Latin Social model is the appeal to mental tokens (individual mental sentences) rather than to propositions alone. Why not say that the divine persons affirm and will different propositions and leave out mental tokens of sentences entirely? Suppose we say that divine persons affirm and will propositions without using a mental token of a sentence type. If the divine persons affirm only true propositions, then there would be some intellectual acts by which the Father affirms propositions true only of the Father. Consequently, the Son and Holy Spirit would have different intellectual acts from one another and from the Father. On this account, the divine persons would not share intellectual acts. The Father would have one intellectual act, e.g., the act of affirming that he is identical to the Father, and that the Son would not have this intellectual act. This account suggests that the persons have distinct and incommunicable intellectual and volitional acts only if each person has distinct and incommunicable intellectual power(s) and volitional power(s). But in order to posit distinct and incommunicable intellectual power(s) and volitional power(s) we need an argument for numerically distinct and incommunicable rational powers for each divine person. In section 6, I consider Hasker's argument from the essential indexical "I" for there being numerically distinct and incommunicable intellectual power(s) and volitional power(s) for each divine person. I contend that this argument fails. If I am right, then we do not have independent reason to suppose that there are numerically distinct and incommunicable intellectual power(s) and volitional power(s) for each divine person. If the Latin Social model accounts for the divine persons' affirming and willing some different propositions without positing additional intellectual power(s) and volitional power(s) and it entails NA while the other account does not entail NA, then the Latin Social model is simpler with regard to the number of intellectual and volitional powers and so is more likely.

5. Volitions and Necessary Agreement

The account of divine acts of using mental tokens sets the framework for understanding divine volitions. Just as there are intellectual powers, uses of mental tokens, and the propositions that are thought, so too are there volitional powers, volitions, and propositions that are willed.

On the Latin Social model on offer, there is just one divine nature and it grounds divine volitional powers. Like intellectual powers, volitional powers can be divided into active volitional power and passive volitional power (which are correlatives). Active volitional power is the power to

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[31]Perhaps this unexpected scenario is a consequence of the divine persons' "perichoresis." There is some sense in which the divine persons are "in" each other. Note John 14:11 where Jesus says, "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me." The translation is from the *New Oxford Annotated Bible*, 3rd ed., 2001. See also Hilary of Poitiers, *De Trinitate*, p. 75, lines 14–16. For references and discussion, see Cross, *Duns Scotus on God*, 170–172.

produce a volition, and passive volitional power is the power to be united to a volition. A human being can produce volitions and be united to the volitions she produces. Olivia, for example, can bring about a willing to eat vanilla ice cream, and Olivia has this willing to eat ice cream only if she can be united to it.

An agent's volition is an act of willing (or rejecting, or "niling") directed toward a proposition that is thought by the agent in using a mental token. Typically we affirm a proposition or reject a proposition or are indifferent toward a proposition. What a person wills depends on what she thinks. I will that p only if I think that p. (Recall that by "to think" I mean that someone is aware of, or entertains, some proposition.) For a volition to be directed at a proposition, that proposition must be somehow cognitively present to the person. The proposition must be present to the willer, and the proposition is present to the willer (in part) by means of the willer's intellect and the relevant mental token. So, for a volition to be directed at a proposition, the proposition depends on its being somehow thought by the person. A proposition can be cognitively present to a willer either dispositionally or occurrently. In both cases, if the proposition in question is expressed by a mental token that includes an indexical term (e.g., "I") or an ambiguous copula then the proposition in question depends on certain contexts, e.g., the agent. Consider a divine mental token of "I am one who loves God the Son." Suppose each divine person intellectually uses this mental token and wills what is thought in using it. By intellectually using this mental token, God the Father thinks that God the Father loves God the Son; God the Son thinks that God the Son loves God the Son; and, God the Holy Spirit thinks that God the Holy Spirit loves God the Son. If God the Father wills what is thought in using this mental token and what is thought in this case is relative to the agent, then God the Father wills that God the Father loves God the Son. Similarly, God the Son wills that God the Son loves God the Son; and, God the Holy Spirit wills that God the Holy Spirit loves God the Son.

What remains to be seen is whether the divine persons share numerically the same volitions, that is, whether they share the same act of willing what is thought in using a mental token. Recall that on this model there is just one instance of the divine nature and so just one active divine will power and one passive divine will power. Whatever volitions are elicited by a divine person are united to the divine person because the divine person is united to the one divine nature. Since all divine persons are united to numerically the same divine nature and will power(s), it follows that all divine persons are united to all divine volitions that are united to the one divine nature. So, all divine volitions are shared by the divine persons, even if *what* each divine person wills differs in cases in which what is willed depends on a person's using a mental token that includes the indexical "I" or an ambiguous copula.

In sum, there is a parallel structure between a thought (which consists of an agent using a mental token) and a volition (which consists of an

agent willing, or rejecting, or niling whatever proposition (or propositions) is thought in an agent's using a mental token). Just as the divine persons' using a mental token that includes the indexical "I" entails different propositions that are thought, so too divine persons' use of a mental token that includes the indexical "I" entails different propositions that are willed (or rejected or niled) if what is thought is willed (or rejected or niled). The divine persons share numerically the same use of the same mental token but think different propositions relative to the agent using the mental token. Likewise, they share numerically the same volition of willing what is thought in the same use of the same mental token but will different propositions relative to what the particular agent thinks.

A theologically desirable consequence of this model of shared divine volitions is that it is not metaphysically possible for the divine persons to fail to agree in their volitions, including cases of permissible alternatives. Agreement of volition is secured metaphysically prior to any particular volition. For, the Father cannot, so to speak, get away with having an act of willing what is thought in using a mental token without the Son and Holy Spirit also having numerically the same act of willing what is thought in numerically the same use of numerically the same mental token. If God the Father wills that the Earth revolve around the sun in a clockwise direction, and divine persons necessarily share numerically the same divine volitions, then God the Son and God the Holy Spirit will that the Earth revolve around the sun in a clockwise direction. There is no sense in which the persons must negotiate with one another regarding what is to be willed in the case of permissible alternatives. In fact, negotiation between the divine persons (in using divine mental tokens) is metaphysically impossible. There is no cognitive or volitional gap, so to speak, between the divine persons, just as Gregory of Nyssa said, "No postponement occurs, or is thought of, in the movement of the divine will from the Father through the Son to the Spirit."[32]

The ways in which persons would fail to agree in their volitions is whether they will contradictory things or what they will entails contradictory things. Persons have a lack of agreement of volitions if and only if (i) one wills p and another wills $\sim p$, or (ii) one wills p and another wills q and q entails $\sim p$, or (iii) one person wills p and another nils p. (For (iii), imagine Bob wills that he and his wife Sally go to restaurant X for dinner, but Sally nils what Bob wills. In such a case, Sally does not agree with Bob and a dispute or negotiation can arise.) Swinburne gives an example of (ii) in which God the Father wills that the Earth revolve one way around the sun and God the Son wills that the Earth revolve the opposite way around the sun. The Son's volition entails the denial of what the Father wills. But on the Latin Social model it is not metaphysically possible for the divine persons to fail to agree because they share numerically the same volitional powers

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[32]Gregory of Nyssa, "Concerning We Should Think of Saying That There are Not Three Gods to *Ablabius*," 157.

that are grounded in the one divine nature and so they share numerically the same divine volitions. If the Father uses a mental token and wills what is thought in using the mental token, then the Son and Holy Spirit also use the mental token and will what is thought in using the mental token. So, if the Father wills that the Earth revolve clockwise around the sun, then the Son and the Holy Spirit will the same thing by numerically the same volition.

Scenarios (i), (ii), and (iii) are incompatible with the Latin Social model because the model (a) denies that there are numerically distinct and incommunicable active will powers and numerically distinct and incommunicable passive will powers, (b) affirms that there is just one active divine will power and one passive divine will power, and (c) affirms that all divine volitions are shared among the divine persons. A consequence of (a)–(c) is that the all divine volitions are communicable and communicated among the divine persons. There is no possible world in which, e.g., the Father wills that *p* and the Son wills that *~p*, or the Father wills that *p* and the Son and Holy Spirit do not will that *p*, or the Father wills that *p* and the Holy Spirit wills that *q* which entails *~p*, or the Son wills that *p* and the Holy Spirit nils that *p*. If the Son wills that *p*, then it follows from the fact that the persons share numerically the same will powers and volitions that the Father and Holy Spirit will that *p*.

However, suppose there is strong independent reason to posit three divine will powers. If that is so, then perhaps the Latin Social model is to be abandoned. Hasker argues from the nature of the essential indexical "I" to the conclusion that there *must* be three divine will powers. I discuss this argument in the next section and argue that it fails. The analysis of the essential indexical "I" provided by the Latin Social model removes the purported necessity in positing three divine will powers.

6. The Argument from the Essential Indexical "I"

Hasker offers an argument from the essential indexical "I" to the conclusion that there are numerically different (and incommunicable) intellectual power(s) and volitional power(s).[33] Hasker reports that pro-Nicene parties agree that all divine persons will that God the Son shall become incarnate. God the Father wills that God the Son shall become incarnate. God the Son wills that God the Son shall become incarnate. And, God the Holy Spirit wills that God the Son shall become incarnate. Hasker claims that only God the Son willed that "I shall become incarnate." Hasker assumes, in accord with Christian revelation, that neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit willed that "I shall become incarnate." This assumption seems to make sense and coheres with revelation. After all, the referent of "I" in the sentence is only God the Son, is it not? Given the claim that neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit willed that "I shall become incarnate," Hasker infers that the divine persons *must* have numerically different faculties

[33]Cf. Hasker, *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God*, 206–207.

(powers) of intellect and will in order for God the Son to will something that the Father and Holy Spirit do not will. I reconstruct Hasker's argument as follows:

1. If the Son wills that *i* (where *i* stands for the proposition that I shall become incarnate) and the Father and Holy Spirit do not will that *i*, then the divine persons have numerically distinct (and incommunicable) will powers.

2. The Son wills that *i* and the Father and Holy Spirit do not will that *i*.

3. Therefore, the divine persons have numerically distinct (and incommunicable) will powers.

A similar modus ponens can be constructed for distinct (and incommunicable) intellectual powers by replacing "wills" with "knows" and "will power" with "intellectual power."

This argument from the essential indexical "I" has some persuasive force to it and even seems obvious. However, it loses its force once one realizes that there is an alternative analysis of divine thoughts and volitions that does not support Hasker's conclusion. Given the Latin Social analysis of divine mental tokens that include the indexical "I" and the ambiguous copula, we have reason to deny the conditional statement and so judge the argument to be unsound. The analysis given by a Latin Social model can be stated in three points. First, the statement, "I shall become incarnate" is to be understood as a mental token and not a proposition, and it is better rendered "I shall be one who becomes incarnate." Second, the proposition that a divine person thinks in using this mental token, and wills, is relative to the agent given the presence of the indexical "I" and the ambiguous copula ("shall be"). The Father's using this mental token entails that the Father thinks that the Father shall be essentially numerically the same divine nature as the one who becomes incarnate without being identical to the one who becomes incarnate. Likewise, the Holy Spirit's using this mental token entails that the Holy Spirit thinks that the Holy Spirit shall be essentially numerically the same divine nature as the one who becomes incarnate without being identical to the one who becomes incarnate. But, the Son's using this mental token entails that the Son thinks that the Son shall be identical to the one who becomes incarnate. Third, the proposition willed by a divine person depends on what the person thinks in using the mental token. The Father wills what the Father thinks; the Son wills what the Son thinks; and the Holy Spirit wills what the Holy Spirit thinks. The divine persons think and will different propositions in sharing numerically the same use of the same mental token of "I shall be one who becomes incarnate" and in sharing numerically the same act of willing what is thought in using this mental token. Nevertheless, the divine persons share numerically the same active intellectual power and passive intellectual power, and numerically the same active will power and passive will power. Consequently, to posit numerically distinct (and

incommunicable) rational powers for each divine person is not necessary, and so is superfluous, for the persons to think and will different propositions.

Further, the Latin Social model would revise the antecedent of the conditional statement. The interlocutor should grant this revision because it is consistent with the interlocutor's own position. The antecedent would be revised by adding that the Father wills that the Father shall be essentially numerically the same divine nature as the one who shall become incarnate without being identical to the one who shall become incarnate, and the Holy Spirit wills that the Holy Spirit shall be essentially numerically the same divine nature as the one who shall become incarnate without being identical to the one who shall become incarnate. (If the interlocutor is unwilling to accept the notion of essential numerical sameness without identity, then all that is needed is some sense of the copula that is not identity or predication and involves numerical sameness.) Call the add-on for what the Father wills "*a*" and for what the Holy Spirit wills "*b*." Now 1 becomes 1′:

1′. If the Son wills that *i* and the Father and Holy Spirit do not will that *i*, and the Father wills that *a* and the Holy Spirit wills that *b*, then the divine persons have numerically distinct (and incommunicable) will powers.

But the antecedent in 1′ is sufficient for a disjunction, given the Latin Social model. That is, 1″:

1″. If the Son wills that *i* and the Father and Holy Spirit do not will that *i*, and the Father wills that *a* and the Holy Spirit wills that *b*, then either the divine persons have numerically distinct (and incommunicable) intellectual powers, will powers, acts of intellect and acts of will, or the divine persons have numerically the same intellectual powers, will powers, uses of mental tokens, and acts of will.

By positing the antecedent of 1″ in the second premise, what follows in the conclusion is the disjunction. Consequently, the argument from the essential indexical "I" does not establish the necessity of the persons having numerically distinct intellectual power(s) and will power(s). Given that this argument fails to establish the necessity of the persons having numerically distinct powers, we do not have independent reason to hold that there are numerically distinct intellectual power(s) and will power(s) among the divine persons.

At this point the reader may wonder what I have to say about the Incarnation. So far I have spoken only of *divine* mental tokens, and I have not spoken of *created* mental tokens. In the Incarnation God the Son comes to have and use created mental tokens. It is outside the scope of this paper to address the metaphysics of the Incarnation. Suffice it to say, *if* there is a possibility of conflict between God the Father and God the Son with regard to e.g., God the Son's suffering on the cross, then this possibility

would depend on the fact that God the Son has and uses created mental tokens that the God the Father does not have or use. I say nothing here about whether the antecedent is true. I only wish to indicate that on my view a consequence of the Incarnation is that God the Son has and uses created mental tokens in addition to divine mental tokens.

7. Against Social "Modern" Persons and Non-Social "Lockean" Persons

Richard Swinburne, William Hasker, and Brian Leftow have constructed models of the Trinity in which a divine person is either like a "modern person" or like a "Locke-person." Both Swinburne and Hasker claim that divine persons are like a "modern person" in the sense that a person is a subject that has distinct and incommunicable intellectual power(s) and volitional power(s) and has distinct and incommunicable acts of intellect and acts of will.[34] Leftow claims that divine persons are like Locke-persons in the sense that a person

> is conscious, acts, and loves. . . . [P]ersons comes to exist when their 'consciousness' begins. A Locke-person, then, is a subject of mental states who exists if a substance or substance(s) generate(s) certain mental states or events.[35]

What the social models of Swinburne and Hasker share with the non-social model of Leftow is that distinct and incommunicable intellectual acts and volitional acts are necessary conditions for one's being a person. Swinburne and Hasker do not suppose these conditions are sufficient because the subject also requires distinct and incommunicable intellectual power(s) and will power(s). (Perhaps one source for this way of thinking about personhood is Locke's suggestion that a person is an "incommunicable consciousness."[36]) Given the assumption that these intellectual and volitional acts are incommunicable, such models must secure NA on a basis other than on the basis of the Latin Social model's contention that such acts are communicable and metaphysically necessarily shared among the divine persons. In other words, if the divine persons do not share acts of will in general and in particular with regard to permissible alternatives, what prevents them from failing to agree on what to will in every possible world?

To block the possibility of a failure to agree on permissible alternatives, Hasker offers two replies. The first is an appeal to Swinburne's contention that it is a morally necessary truth that the persons must agree on what to do.[37] It would be wrong for morally perfect, omniscient, and omnipotent persons to disagree about any course of action. If the persons are omniscient, omnipotent, and morally perfect, then they would not disagree

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[34]Cf. Swinburne, *The Coherence of Theism*, 99–102; Swinburne, *Is There a God?*, 5–8; Swinburne, *The Existence of God*, 20–21; Swinburne, *The Christian God*, 31. Cf. Hasker, *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God*, 19–26, 242.

[35]Leftow, "Modes without Modalism," 367.

[36]Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 344.

[37]Hasker, *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God*, 148–151, 208.

when it comes to cases in which moral necessary truths would fix which choice might be made.[38] But, in the case of morally permissible alternatives, a different reply is required. According to Swinburne,

> Such unity of action could be secured if the first individual solemnly vows to the second individual in causing his existence that he will not initiate any act (of will) in a certain sphere of activity that he allocates to him, while at the same time the first individual requests the second individual not to initiate any such act outside that sphere. The vow of the first individual would create an obligation on him not to initiate any act (of will) within the second individual's allocated sphere of activity. . . . Each of the postulated divine individuals would be omnipotent in the sense that each could at any period of time do anything logically possible-for example, bring it about that the Earth moves round the Sun in a clockwise direction. But the omnipotence of each individual is limited by his perfect goodness, and if one individual has promised the other individual that he will not perform actions (when there is not a unique best action) in this area (e.g., the area of movements of heavenly bodies), then his perfect goodness limits his omnipotence so that he does not do such an act.[39]

Earlier in the text Swinburne claims that the Father decides the spheres over which each divine person will have allocated authority. It is the Father, and not the Son or Holy Spirit, who decides which divine person has allocated authority over a given sphere because the Father is the source of the Son and Holy Spirit. Further, given that the Father is the parent or source of the other divine persons, Swinburne infers that the Son and Holy Spirit have a moral obligation to agree to the Father's decision regarding who has allocated authority over which sphere. In short, NA with regard to permissible alternatives is purportedly secured on the basis of a moral obligation to one's source's (or parent's) preference regarding the allocation of authority in certain spheres. If the Father decided that the Son should have allocated authority over the direction of heavenly bodies, then the Father and Holy Spirit have a moral obligation to agree with the Son's preference regarding the direction of revolution of the Earth around the sun. Given the Father's decision on the allocation of authority regarding certain spheres, the divine persons would voluntarily agree in every possible world regarding permissible alternatives because the relevant moral obligation(s) obtains in every possible world that fixes which alternative among permissible alternatives is chosen.

I am not persuaded by Swinburne's and Hasker's appeal to respecting one's source's (or parent's) preference about which divine person has allocated authority in a certain sphere with regard to cases of morally permissible alternatives. (It should be noted that Hasker is more satisfied with the second reply that I discuss below.) Although it is a desirable moral value that one's source (or parent[s]) should be respected and so respect

[38]Hasker, *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God*, 209.

[39]Swinburne, *The Christian God*, 174–175.

his or her or their preference(s), it is not obviously or clearly an obligation that defeats competing moral values in the context of permissible alternatives. Suppose God the Father and God the Son have equally good reasons for their own preferred plan about which divine person has allocated authority in a certain sphere. The Father prefers that the Son have allocated authority regarding the direction of the Earth's revolution around the sun, and the Son prefers that the Father have allocated authority regarding the direction of the Earth's revolution around the sun. Suppose further that if the Father has allocated authority in this sphere that he prefers that the Earth revolve clockwise and that if the Son has allocated authority in this sphere that he prefers that the Earth revolve counter-clockwise. These are metaphysically possible scenarios on a modern-personhood model of the Trinity. Hence, the Father and Son not only might have contradictory preferences about who should decide which person has allocated authority about the direction of the Earth's revolution around the sun but also contradictory preferences about the direction of the Earth's revolution around the sun.

Swinburne would contend that the Father's preference regarding allocated authority should win out because the Father is the source or parent. But consider the moral value that a parent should do what his or her or their child prefers in morally permissible cases just because it is one's child (and *not* because of some additional value like providing your child opportunities for learning responsibility and the like; I assume that the divine persons are equally morally perfect, omniscient, and omnipotent). It is plausible that parental love implies preferring what the beloved child prefers in morally permissible cases. Hence, there could be a lack of agreement between divine persons regarding morally permissible alternatives because they (initially) endorse different moral values (honoring your parent[s] versus honoring your child).

In one possible world the Father initially affirms and wills that honoring the preference of one's child should determine what is to be willed regarding permissible alternatives, and the Son initially affirms and wills that honoring one's source (or parent) should determine what is to be willed regarding permissible alternatives. They don't initially agree on a moral value that would determine which option among permissible alternative allocated authorities over a given sphere should be willed and so must negotiate. In such a possible world, the persons come to a stalemate by deferring to the other, and so fail to agree. In short, the persons can lack agreement in what they think, in what they affirm, and in what they will. Even if there are very few possible worlds in which lack of agreement obtains because somehow divine omniscience or omnipotence or perfect goodness prevents a lack of agreement in most possible worlds, it follows that NA is not secured.

Still, a defender of Swinburne might claim that it is random which divine person has allocated authority in a given sphere. The above objection to Swinburne from different moral values only shows that the Father

isn't obviously the candidate who decides the divine persons' allocated authority over a given sphere. All that is needed, says a defender of Swinburne, is that the divine persons agree that some mechanism randomly assigns or explains allocated authority over different spheres and that the divine persons necessarily agree with whichever divine person has allocated authority over a given sphere because of their perfect moral goodness.[40]

In reply, I want to know what the mechanism would be that randomly assigns or explains the divine persons' allocated authorities. It cannot be some divine attribute like omniscience, omnipotence, or perfect moral goodness, given that we are concerned here with permissible alternatives. It cannot be a divine person's will, given that neither the Father's will, the Son's will, or the Holy Spirit's will, would decide whose will decides the allocated authorities. The appeal to a mechanism that randomly assigns or explains the persons' allocated authorities might be interpreted as an appeal to a brute fact. But if the mechanism is a brute fact, then the modern-personhood model on offer adds a new item to its explanatory economy in trying to secure NA. Consequently, this modern-personhood model is less simple in explanatory economy than the Latin Social model and so is less likely.

Hasker's second reply to cases of morally permissible alternatives focuses on the divine persons' perfect wisdom and moral goodness.

> Each of the persons, being perfectly wise and good, would recognize that it would be a bad thing for him to insist on his own preferences in disregard of those of another divine person. Because of this, each would refrain from acting on his own preferences until some mutually satisfactory solution could be agreed upon. This does not seem too much to ask from perfect wisdom and goodness![41]

Here Hasker appeals to the divine persons' perfect wisdom and goodness (and not some stipulated and agreed upon rule that determines allocated authority over a given sphere, as in the first sort of reply) as a way to secure NA regarding permissible alternatives. This seems to me a better reply than the first. Still, it is not satisfying. Given Hasker's commitment to the divine persons' libertarian free wills, and their power to create a world (even worlds), why did they create this world? Hasker doesn't accept a "best possible world" hypothesis.[42] So, it might just be an arbitrary good choice on their part to create this world rather than some other possible world. They know of better possible worlds to create, so perhaps they just agreed that some world should be created. Are the divine persons just exponentially lucky that they happened to create the same world among all the possible worlds known to the divine persons? (If they were not

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[40]Thanks to Mark Murphy for this objection.

[41]Hasker, *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God*, 208.

[42]Hasker, *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God*, 208–209.

so lucky, then only one divine person would have created this particular world. But this goes against orthodox desiderata.) It seems possible for there to be a lack of agreement between the divine persons because none of them could offer overriding reasons that they should create this world as opposed to any other better possible world. Moreover, in the possible world that I indicated above, the persons defer to the other and yet fail to agree. Appealing to the divine persons' wisdom and goodness does not offer a specific enough explanation to show that lack of agreement—even lack of agreement between perfectly good and wise divine persons—is not even remotely possible between the divine persons. Even more, Hasker concedes that the divine persons might have to negotiate on what to will in order to come to "a mutually satisfactory solution." In other words, he seems to concede that it is possible for the divine persons to lack agreement in what they think and prefer and are obligated to strive to come to agree on what to will if they are going to will anything regarding permissible alternatives. But as Henry of Ghent and Duns Scotus would have replied, this does not sound like a perfect divine will but rather an imperfect divine will.

Hasker claims that lack of agreement is possible between the divine persons even on Brian Leftow's non-social model of the Trinity. For Leftow, God lives three simultaneous, necessary, and eternal, but non-overlapping streams of consciousness.[43] God's living one stream of consciousness is God the Father; God's living another stream of consciousness is God the Son; and God's living another stream of consciousness is God the Holy Spirit.[44] Hasker observes, "There does not seem to be anything contradictory in the supposition that the one person, God, should have different preferences in his different life-streams."[45] Suppose in one stream of God's conscious life that God affirms that the Earth should revolve around the sun in one direction, and in another stream of God's conscious life that God affirms that the Earth should revolve around the sun in a different direction. What explanation might be given to show that such a lack of agreement is not even remotely possible? There seems to be none. Hasker takes this to be reason to believe that Leftow's non-social model is no better off than his own social model in securing NA with regard to permissible alternatives.

While Hasker is right to object to Leftow's non-social model on the grounds that it too cannot secure NA, what Hasker overlooks is a common cause for not securing NA in his own social model, in Swinburne's social model, and in Leftow's non-social model. The insufficient support of NA derives from the assumption that a divine person is like a "modern

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[43]I discuss Leftow's model of the Trinity in "Indexicals and the Trinity," 83–84, 90–92. There I point out that Leftow seems to use two concepts of personhood, a Boethian concept and a Lockean concept.

[44]Leftow, "Modes without Modalism," 373–375.

[45]Hasker, *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God*, 214.

person" or like a Lockean person in the sense that a divine person is (partially) constituted by incommunicable intellectual acts and incommunicable volitional acts. (I include "[partially]" because Swinburne and Hasker hold that a person also requires a distinct [and incommunicable] intellectual power[s] and volitional power[s].) If a model of the Trinity has this assumption, then it is a modern-personhood model, even if this genus is divided into social models in which there are numerically distinct rational powers and into a non-social model in which there is just one set of rational powers. If the divine persons do not share numerically the same use of a mental token and numerically the same act of willing (or rejecting or niling) what is thought in using a mental token, then the divine persons can lack agreement in what they think, affirm, and will. It does not matter whether one posits a social Trinity with modern persons (as with Swinburne and Hasker) or a non-social Trinity with Locke-persons (as with Leftow). Given this assumption and the metaphysical possibility of permissible alternatives, it follows that it is at least remotely possible that the divine persons can lack agreement with regard to permissible alternatives; consequently, NA is not secured.

But suppose that Swinburne and Hasker were right that divine persons always agree regarding permissible alternatives because of some stipulated and agreed upon moral guideline that derives from perfect divine goodness, omniscience, and omnipotence. By comparing the models, it is clear that the Latin Social model is simpler in explanatory economy because it does not need the additional posit of a voluntarily agreed upon moral guideline in order to secure NA. (Nor does the Latin Social model need the additional explanatory posit of a mechanism that randomly assigns the divine persons' allocated authority over a given sphere.) On the Latin Social model, the divine persons do not need to negotiate, nor can they negotiate, between each other on what to will. Lastly, the Latin Social model posits fewer divine intellectual powers and volitional powers than the social models discussed here and nonetheless explains the way in which the divine persons can think different propositions and will different propositions. Although the Latin Social model requires a distinction between divine mental tokens and propositions (that are thought and willed), it remains overall simpler in explanatory economy than these modern-personhood models in trying to secure NA; and it secures NA.

In many respects this Latin Social model of the Trinity is traditional. It holds that there is just one divine nature that grounds the divine intellectual and volitional powers. It holds that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct persons by virtue of some incommunicable properties, namely *begetting*, *being begotten*, *being spirated*, respectively. It holds the traditional distinction between incommunicable notional acts and communicable essential acts of intellect and will. Where this model distinguishes itself is in its employment of a contemporary externalist understanding of the indexical "I" and its analysis of the ambiguous copula that can express the "is" of essential numerical sameness without identity. Lastly, it is a

development of Henry of Ghent's and Duns Scotus's models of the Trinity. I take it that these add-ons are improved articulations of the sorts of insights we find in theologians like Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus, Richard of St. Victor, Henry of Ghent, and John Duns Scotus.

University of North Carolina, Asheville

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