

answer is based on Robert Adam's social concept of obligation that has difficulties of its own.

The topic of this book is old and has been debated almost ever since there is philosophy (just think about Plato's Euthyphro-problem: Does God command good actions because they are good, or are actions good because God commands them?). The book does not offer any substantial new perspectives or aspects on this topic; this is partly due to the fact that it is very hard to come up with anything new anyway, partly due to the fact that those thoughts that are somewhat fresh (say by Craig, Hare, Murphy, or Swinburne) have been published, and published in much more detail, in similar ways by these and other philosophers elsewhere. Still the book is laudable: It provides a good overview of what the main problems and arguments in this field are, and most papers are written by philosophers who know their stuff and express their thoughts in integrating contemporary moral philosophy and epistemology.

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Anna Marmodoro and Jonathan Hill (eds.), *The Metaphysics of the Incarnation*, Oxford University Press, 2011.

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... and the Word became flesh and lived among us', so writes John the Evangelist in the prologue of his Gospel. But how could the Word become flesh? That is, how could God become human? Answering this question is the primary concern of this anthology.

According to the Gospel of Luke, when the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would bear a son, she replied 'How can this be?' since she was a virgin. The angel replied that it would be by an overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. One can view the papers in this anthology as possible continuations of the angel's answer, for having given an account of how a virgin could conceive and bear a son, the question remains how the son she is to bear could be God the Son. For this anthology aims to provide an account of how it is that God, or more precisely, God the Son, the second person of the Trinity, could become human while remaining divine and a single person. In this anthology, Jonathan Hill provides

an excellent introduction to the range of answers the angel could offer, giving a most helpful summary of the various answers the angel might give, and the subsequent papers develop some of these answers, making considerable advances in how we can understand how Mary's son could be God incarnate.

Very briefly, there are two ways of understanding the metaphysics of the incarnation which have received the most attention since Mary's 'How could this be?', namely, a compositional account and a transformational account, using Hill's terminology. The two approaches differ primarily, in my view, in their answer to this question: is Mary's son God the Son, that is, is Christ identical with the second person of the Trinity? The compositional account says 'No', but the transformational account says 'Yes'. In what follows, I will give a brief summary of these accounts with reference to how the papers in the anthology advance them.

On a compositional account, an account defended by Brian Leftow, Oliver Crisp, and Thomas Flint in this anthology, the baby born of Mary, Christ, is composed of two parts: a divine part, God the Son, and a human part, a body and/or a soul, and the human part is the instrument of the divine part. What happens at the incarnation is that God the Son is joined to a human body (and soul), and Christ, the baby born of Mary, is composed of these two parts. Now, there seem to be two main objections to this account, namely, that it seems to entail that God never really does become human and that Christ is not one person but two.

In his 'The Humanity of God', Brian Leftow defends the compositional account from the charge that God never really does become human. He argues that, even though God the Son never comes to consist of a human body or a soul nor do they ever become parts of God the Son, God the Son nevertheless is fully human since, by being joined to a body and a soul, he comes to have a body and a soul. By making creative use of an analogy to a brain stem being grafted on to a body, Leftow argues that the Word becomes flesh by having flesh grafted on him, and, in this way, God the Son does indeed become fully human.

Oliver D. Crisp takes a similar view of the metaphysics of the incarnation in his 'Compositional Christology without Nestorianism', defending it against a series of objections, in particular, against the objection that Christ is not one person but two, a view known as Nestorianism. Nestorianism seems to be entailed on this account because it does entail that Christ is not identical with God the Son, since God the Son is a proper part of Christ. In response, Crisp maintains that

Nestorianism is not entailed since, though the account is inconsistent with Christ being identical with God the Son, it is consistent with the person who is Christ being identical with God the Son, and this is enough, claims Crisp, for Christ to be one person and not two.

Continuing in this line of thought, Thomas P. Flint argues in 'Should Concretists Part with Mereological Models of the Incarnation?' that those who think that, when God the Son became incarnate, he assumed a concrete, created individual nature, a human body and/or a soul, that would have been a human in and of itself had the incarnation not occurred, should nevertheless maintain a mereological model of the incarnation as that described above. Just how the human part of Christ is related to the divine part, and in particular how the human part of Christ is understood to be an instrument of the divine part of Christ is explored in detail in Richard Cross's 'Vehicle Externalism and the Metaphysics of the Incarnation: a Medieval Contribution'.

On a transformational account, God the Son becomes human by being transformed into a human, that is, God the Son undergoes change, losing some properties and gaining others, in a manner similar to a caterpillar's transformation into a butterfly. Thomas Senor combines elements of the aforementioned compositional approach with this transformational approach in his 'Drawing on Many Traditions: an Ecumenical Kenotic Christology', by maintaining that God the Son, having assumed a human body and mind at the incarnation, acted through this human body and mind on earth, and at the incarnation, God the Son lost some properties he had when he instantiated only the supernatural kind, divinity, and gained some properties associated with the natural kind, humanity.

In contrast to Senor, Stephen T. Davis gives a purely transformational account in 'The Metaphysics of Kenosis', where 'kenosis' is the Greek word for emptying, recalling Philippians 2: 6-7 which states that though Christ 'was in the form of God, [he] . . . emptied himself, . . . being born in human likeness'. The primary challenge of a transformational account is showing that, following the incarnation, God the Son, who is identical with Christ, remains divine despite the changes entailed by the incarnation. Davis aims to do just this, and, furthermore, argues that all orthodox accounts of the incarnation, that is, all accounts which affirm Christ's full humanity and full divinity, must be kenotic accounts, since God the Son must have given up something in the incarnation. Also giving a transformational metaphysics of the incarnation, Michael C. Rea, in 'Hylomorphism and the Incarnation', employs an

Aristotelian metaphysics of material objects on which they are matter-form compounds and builds on his prior work on the metaphysics of the Trinity to argue that, prior to the incarnation, God the Son is identical with the matter-form compound divinity/Sonship and after the incarnation he is identical with the matter-form compound Christ's-physical-matter/divinity and humanity, together with the individuating property, Sonship.

A particularly puzzling aspect of any account of the incarnation is Christ's mental life. Richard Swinburne then gives what might be broadly construed as a transformational account of the incarnation in his contribution, 'The Coherence of the Chalcedonian Definition of the Incarnation', where he focuses on Christ's mental life, in particular, his having a divided mind. Swinburne makes a most valuable contribution to understanding how Christ could be tempted, as the Gospels maintain he was, since, it seems, if he was truly tempted, he was not divine, but if he was not tempted, he was not human. Swinburne's solution is to say that Christ was tempted in so far as he was tempted not to do the best act, that is, something supererogatory. Joseph Jedwab further considers Christ's mental life in his 'The Incarnation and Unity of Consciousness', where he argues that Christ has not two spheres of consciousness, a divine and human sphere, but rather one sphere of consciousness, one part of which is typical of a divine consciousness and one part of which is typical of a human consciousness.

Making use of recent work in the philosophy of mind, Anna Marmodoro, in 'The Metaphysics of the Extended Mind in Ontological Entanglements', argues that just as minds and external objects, such as notebooks functioning like memory, can be 'entangled' in such a way that it is impossible to individuate them, so could God the Son and Jesus be 'entangled'. The final contribution to the anthology is Robin Le Poidevin's 'Multiple Incarnations and Distributed Persons' where he argues that there could be multiple incarnations, a question any account of the metaphysics of the incarnation must address.

This anthology is essential reading for all who are interested in a metaphysically precise understanding of the incarnation. The papers are of uniformly high standard and are rich with new ideas. It seems to me that our understanding of the incarnation might be further advanced, building on the ideas presented here in this anthology, by considering the metaphysics of the incarnation in light of recent advances in the understanding of the metaphysics of the Trinity, of original sin, and

of the Eucharist. By engaging in systematic philosophical theology, we might hope to advance our understanding of all these doctrines together.

For example, as discussed by Flint, the simplest compositional account of the incarnation, one defended by Aquinas, is one on which God the Son gains a part, a human part, such that the pre-incarnate God the Son is identical with Christ. The best objection to this account is that it seems to entail that Christ both is and is not identical with the divine nature since: the pre-incarnate God the Son is identical with the divine nature, and the pre-incarnate God the Son is identical with Christ, it follows, given the symmetry and transitivity of identity that Christ is identical with the divine nature, but the divine nature is only a proper part of Christ, on this account, and so the divine nature is not identical with Christ. This is why the extent compositional accounts answer 'No' to the question, 'Is Mary's Son God the Son?'. However, such an answer is not compulsory. It seems to me that there could be a compositional account of the incarnation on which Mary's Son is indeed God the Son.

As also discussed by Flint, one way to avoid the above contradiction is to deny the transitivity of identity, and one way to deny the transitivity of identity is by maintaining that identity is relative to a sortal. On such an account of identity, of relative identity, the pre-incarnate God the Son is the same nature as the divine nature and the same person as Christ, and it is not possible to derive a contradiction from these claims. Now, this response is not explored much by Flint. But it has been much explored in the metaphysics of the Trinity, particularly in trying to render consistent the Athanasian Creed, on which each of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are God, but none of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are identical with one another. Thus, it seems, there is mutual motivation for understanding identity as relative from an Athanasian approach to the Trinity and a Thomist approach to the incarnation. Perhaps if these were done together, building, perhaps, on the seminal work of Peter van Inwagen, mutual advancement might occur in understanding the problems and prospects of the doctrines of the Trinity and of the incarnation. Nevertheless, this is a first-rate anthology which will be a benchmark for future discussion of the metaphysics of the incarnation.