16   Divine Simplicity and Eliminative Theism
Michael Almeida

Abstract: Discussions of divine simplicity generally overlook the distinction between identity claims that are reductivist and identity claims that are eliminativist. If, for instance, the identity claim that 'the chair = a configuration of particles' is merely reductive, then there exist chairs and there exist configurations of particles and it turns out that they are identical. The identity in this case does not reduce the ontological complexity of the world. But if the identity claim is eliminativist, then it is true again that chairs are configurations of particles, but chairs do not in fact exist. The chair reduces to the configuration of particles without remainder. The defense of divine simplicity in this paper argues that it is in this eliminativist sense that God is identical to God's intrinsic properties.

16.1 Introduction

On the traditional doctrine of divine simplicity there is no metaphysical complexity at all in God. The absolute simplicity of God is standardly assumed to entail that everything wholly within God—everything intrinsic to God—is identical to God himself. There exist no divine properties of omnipotence, omniscience, or moral perfection in addition to the existence of God.

But discussions of divine simplicity generally overlook the distinction between identity claims that are reductivist and identity claims that are eliminativist. If, for instance, the identity claim that 'the chair C = the configuration of particles P' is merely reductive, then there exist chairs and there exist configurations of particles and it turns out that they are identical. C = P, but C exists and so does P. The identity in this case does not reduce the ontological complexity of the world. It is not as though we believed there were chairs and now, given the discovery that chairs = configurations of particles, there are no chairs. There remain configurations of particles and there remain chairs despite the fact that chairs just are configurations of particles.[1]

But if the identity claim is eliminativist, then it is true again that chairs are configurations of particles, but chairs do not in fact exist. It is true that the illusory object that we call a chair reduces to the configuration of particles without remainder. The defense of divine simplicity in this paper argues that it is in this eliminativist sense that God is identical to God's intrinsic properties. God is in this eliminativist sense omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent, and the properties of omnipotence, omniscience and omnibenevolence are nothing over and above God. These properties are illusory in the same way that the eliminated chair is illusory. The defense of divine simplicity concludes that God exists and the divine attributes just turn out to be eliminatively identical to God.

The initial sections of the paper consider various reductive strategies in defense of divine simplicity. In Section 16.2 I discuss Plantinga and reductive identity. Section 16.3 considers divine simplicity and one category ontologies. In Section 16.4 I discuss divine simplicity and austere nominalism and finally in Section 16.5 I discuss simplicity and eliminative theism.

16.2 Plantinga and Reductive Identity

The doctrine of divine simplicity is the view that there is no metaphysical complexity in God. The absolute simplicity of God is standardly assumed to entail that everything intrinsic to God is identical to God himself. So, both constituent and non-constituent accounts of God's properties must be mistaken. The properties of God are not parts of God as the constituent view maintains and the properties of God are not exemplified or instantiated by God as the non-constituent or relationist view maintains. According to the classical account of divine simplicity in Aquinas and Augustine, God has no accidental properties at all and no parts of any kind: spatial, temporal, or material. And though there cannot be an exemplification relation or a composition relation holding between God and his essential properties—God's essence and existence—the classical doctrine of divine simplicity argues that there can be an identity relation. God's essence and existence are just identical to God. And from the fact that God's essential properties are identical to God it follows that God's essential properties are identical to each other.

---

[1] It is approximately equivalent to the view that Goliath = Lumpl and $\exists x(x = \text{Goliath})$ and $\exists y(y = \text{Lumpl})$.

But, according to Alvin Plantinga, God could not stand in the identity relation with his properties. Plantinga argues that the identity of God with the properties of God entails that God exemplifies all and only the properties exemplified by his properties.

> […] if God is identical with each of his properties then since each of his properties is a property, he is a property—a self-exemplifying property. Accordingly God has just one property: himself. This view is subject to a difficulty both obvious and overwhelming. No property could have created the world; no property could be omniscient or, indeed, know anything at all. If God is a property, then he isn't a person but an abstract object; he has no knowledge, awareness, power, love or life. So taken, the simplicity doctrine seems an utter mistake. (Plantinga, 1980, pp. 47–48)

The identity of God and God's properties is an example of a reductive or retentive identity. Of course, the indiscernibility of identicals requires that God and God's properties exemplify the same properties, but the law tells us nothing about which properties must be exemplified by those objects. If it is true that pains are reductively identical to brain events, for instance, then it might be true that what were regarded as non-physical events—pains in the mind—turn out to be physical events. But it might also be true that what were regarded as physical events—neuronal events in the brain—turn out to be non-physical events in the mind. Leibniz's Laws ensure only that the pains and the brain events share the same properties, whether those are all and only the properties of neuronal events or not.

Plantinga concludes that, since God is identical to a property, God must be an abstract object. But that argument is invalid. From the premise that God is a property we might conclude instead that God's properties must be concrete objects. And for exactly similar reasons, none of Plantinga's additional conclusions follow from the premise that God is a property.

> No property could have created the world; no property could be omniscient or, indeed, know anything at all. If God is a property, then he isn't a person but an abstract object; he has no knowledge, awareness, power, love or life. (Plantinga, 1980, pp. 47–48)

In general, we cannot conclude from the fact that God's properties are reductively identical to God that God exemplifies all of the intuitive *properties of* God's properties. It might be true instead that God's properties exemplify all of the intuitive *properties of* God. In either case, God and God's properties would exemplify exactly the same properties. It is obvious that it cannot be true both that God exemplifies all of the properties of an abstract object and that God's properties exemplify all of the properties of a concrete object. But this is common in reductive identities: it is obvious that it cannot be true that a material event—a neuronal event—exemplifies all of the properties of a non-material event—a pain event—and a non-material pain event exemplifies all of the properties of a material neuronal event. But that's no reason to believe the reduction fails.

If God's properties are reductively identical to God, then God's properties might indeed have created the world and might possess knowledge, awareness, power, love, and life. There are in fact well-known ontologies—some one category ontologies, for instance—according to which everything—including God—is a property or composed of properties.[4] So there are well-known ontologies on which a property or a set of properties might have created the world and possessed knowledge.

16.3 Divine Simplicity and One Category Ontologies

Plantinga's argument against divine simplicity is invalid. But the metaphysics of divine simplicity remains problematic. On traditional one category ontologies such as Russellian bundle theory or trope bundle theory, bundles of universals or property particulars are understood as constitutive of objects. Objects are constituted by a compresence or co-location of properties. On this view the

---

[4] For what it's worth, the conclusion that God is a property is not especially problematic since there are one category ontologies that do not exhibit obvious and overwhelming difficulties according to which everything—including God—is fundamentally a property or composed of properties. See for instance, Paul (2017).

properties of omniscience, omnipotence, and moral perfection might constitute God. But on these traditional views there remains a perhaps fundamental ontological distinction between the constituted object and the constituting or compresent properties. These ontologies are not unequivocally one category. Properties alone are supposed to be ontologically fundamental on this account, but there is a structural distinction between the abstract constituents of God—the properties of God—and the concrete constituted object—God. Even on the assumption that God is reductively identical to his constituting properties—on the assumption, that is, that constitution just is identity—there remains the structural distinction between constitutive properties and constituted object. The structural distinction is inconsistent with the doctrine of divine simplicity which rules out any ontological distinction at all between God and the constituents of God. The ontological distinction between God and God's constituents entails a complexity intrinsic to God that is inconsistent with the simplicity of God.

Similar problems arise for more recent one-category property theories—mereological bundle theories, for instance—according to which there is no fundamental ontological distinction between constitutive properties and constituted objects. Ordinary everyday objects like chairs, tables, people, are in fact just fusions of qualities or properties.

> […] the mosaic theorist fiercely denies that fusing properties together to create located quality bundles gives us an emergent or otherwise irreducible category of "objects" […] The world is purely qualitative, and spatiotemporal parts are fusions of properties (not emergent objects of any sort). We are simply building the world with n-adic properties, albeit with different sorts of properties at different compositional "levels." (Paul, 2017, p. 45)

Nevertheless, there is on these views a *non-fundamental* ontological distinction between constituent properties and constituted object. It is not that there are no objects, according to this version of mereological bundle theory, it is rather that there are no *fundamental* objects diverse from qualities. So, it certainly appears that there remains a distinction between objects and properties that is inconsistent with the doctrine of divine simplicity. Even non-fundamental ontological distinctions entail an ontological complexity that is inconsistent with absolute simplicity. It cannot be true, according to the doctrine of divine simplicity, that there is any—even a non-fundamental—ontological distinction between the properties of God and God.

Mereological bundle theories can be developed in ways that avoid the problem of generating a non-fundamental ontological distinction. Bundle theories might deny the existence of extended spatiotemporal objects altogether. If we extend this version of bundle theory to denying the existence of non-spatiotemporal objects as well, we can simply reject any fundamental or non-fundamental distinction between constituted objects and constituting qualities. There is in this case no ontological distinction at all between the properties of God and God. The result is a form of eliminativist bundle theory that better approximates the simplicity of God.

But among the unwelcome ontological consequences of eliminativist bundle theory is that we can say truly that the properties composing God exist, but we cannot say truly that the composed object, God, exists. As noted above, eliminativist identities contrast in important ways with reductive identities. If pains are merely reductively identical with brain events, then there exist pains, but they turn out to be neuronal events in the brain. But if pains are eliminatively identical to brain events, then there exist no pains at all. There exist only brain events and the appearance of the non-brain events we call pains are just illusions.

> [E]liminativism [about the mind is the] claim that our common-sense understanding of psychological states and processes is deeply mistaken and that some or all of our ordinary notions of mental states will have no home, at any level of analysis, in a sophisticated and accurate account of the mind. In other words, it is the view that certain common-sense mental states, such as [pains and] beliefs and desires, do not exist. (Ney, 2021)

There is no question that eliminativist identities are ontologically simplifying. Eliminativist materialism might eliminate the entire ontology of folk-psychology, for instance. And there is also no question that the eliminativist identity of God and the properties of God simplifies the divine

ontology. But even supposing that the properties composing God—essential omniscience, omnipotence, and moral perfection—are identical to each other, the radical form of mereological bundle theory cannot provide an adequate account of the doctrine of divine simplicity. The eliminativist identity of God and the properties of God entails that 'God' is a non-referring term. The term 'God' is eliminated from theological discourse for roughly the same reason that 'phlogiston' has been eliminated from scientific discourse. We discovered that there exists nothing corresponding to the term 'phlogiston' and we discovered that there exists nothing corresponding to the term 'God.' God has been replaced with the fusion of essential omnipotence, omniscience, and moral perfection. But the doctrine of divine simplicity rejects the tradeoff of simplicity for God's existence.

16.4 Divine Simplicity and Austere Nominalism

The doctrine of divine simplicity demands more of divine reality than absolute simplicity. The absolute simplicity of, for instance, a simple property of essential omnipotence, omniscience, and moral perfection does not satisfy the requirements of the doctrine. The doctrine of divine simplicity entails that divine reality is an absolutely simple *object* and not an absolutely simple property. The absolute simplicity entails that there is no distinction—fundamental or non-fundamental—between God and God's properties. So, in general, no non-eliminativist reductive identity of God and God's properties will satisfy the doctrine. The reductive identity of God and God's properties guarantees the existence of the properties of essential omnipotence, omniscience, and moral perfection despite their identity to God. So, there will remain an ontological distinction in God between the properties of God, and the ontologically fundamental object, God.

There are ontologies according to which there exist no abstract objects at all. It is part of austere nominalism, for instance, that we can in general regiment our talk about the properties of God in ways that eliminate all abstract singular terms. We can just as well treat all abstract singular terms as empty or non-referring terms. On this view singular terms like 'omnipotence,' 'omniscience,' 'moral perfection' do not refer to properties that God exemplifies and they do not refer to properties that stand in the constituting relationship with God. There in fact exist no exemplifiable or instantiable or constituting properties at all. There are no abstract universals or abstract particulars or tropes. There exists nothing in the world, according to the austere nominalist, except concrete particulars like plants, people and God.

But austere nominalism nonetheless affirms the truth of sentences like 'God is omnipotent' that obviously attribute properties to God. It is true that God is omnipotent, on this account, because God satisfies the predicate 'is omnipotent.' In general, atomic sentences—subject-predicate sentences like 'God is omnipotent'—are true just if they *correspond* to fundamental, irreducible, unarticulated facts in the world. The irreducible fact, in this case, is of course God's being omnipotent. There are no more basic facts that explain why it is true that God is omnipotent. Nevertheless, the world does contain the fundamental fact that God is omnipotent.

According to austere nominalism, then, it is a fundamental fact about God that God is essentially omnipotent, omniscient, and morally perfect. The fact that God is essentially omnipotent, omniscient, and morally perfect is not explained by the further fact of God's bearing any relation to another ontological feature of the world. God does satisfy the predicate, 'is omniscient, omnipotent, and morally perfect' though there is no abstract universal or particular property of being omnipotent, omniscient, and morally perfect.

So austere nominalism does provide an account of divine simplicity that ensures that the fact that God is omnipotent does not entail that there is any ontological complexity in God involving the exemplification of abstract particulars or abstract universals. Properties are not exemplified or instantiated by God and properties do not constitute God and properties are not compresent or co-located in God. The truth of propositions attributing properties to God are fundamental facts about God for which there is no ontological explanation. These fundamental facts about God involve no further ontological articulation in God. Nevertheless, austere nominalism guarantees that we can correctly and incorrectly attribute properties to objects in the world. These property attributions describe fundamental facts, but there nonetheless remains a basic ontological diversity between objects and properties. It is true that God is omnipotent and it

is false that God is identical to any of his properties. It is a fundamental ontological fact about the world that objects have properties and so it is a fundamental feature of the world that God has the properties of omnipotence, omniscience, and moral perfection. There remains an ontological distinction—albeit an inexplicable ontological distinction—between God and God's properties. The proposition is true that God is diverse from God's properties, but there is no further ontological explanation of that diversity.

Of course, the doctrine of divine simplicity rejects the thesis that God is ontologically diverse from God's properties. That proposition is false even on the assumption that the ontological diversity is fundamental and inexplicable. There is no ontological explanation in God for the diversity of God from God's properties, still it is true on austere nominalism that God is diverse from God's properties. The doctrine of divine simplicity requires that there is no fundamental or non-fundamental ontological diversity in God at all.

16.5 Simplicity and Eliminative Theism

According to the doctrine of divine simplicity God is absolutely simple only if there is no ontological complexity in God. But there might be an ontological diversity between God and God's properties—God might not be identical to God's properties—even if there is no ontological complexity in God. According to austere nominalism, for instance, there is no ontological complexity in God, since there are no ontological features of God that ground or explain why sentences attributing properties to God are true. There are indeed true sentences predicating essential omnipotence, omniscience, and moral perfection to God. But these sentences correspond to ontologically fundamental facts. It is also an ontologically fundamental fact that God is not identical to his essential properties. So, on this view, there is ontological diversity between God and God's properties, a diversity that has no further ontological explanation in God. The properties of God on austere nominalism are distinguishable from God in spite of the fact that the diversity has no further ontological explanation.

An adequate account of divine simplicity must explain the absolute ontological simplicity of God and also the identity of God's essential properties with God. But there is no non-eliminativist identity of God with the properties of God that preserves God's ontological simplicity. The reductive identity of God and God's essential properties in fact preserves the ontological diversity of God's properties and God. Compare the identity of a chair with the configuration of particles composing the chair. If the identity is reductive, then the chair exists and the configuration of particles exists, despite the fact that there is nothing more to the chair than the configuration of particles. The reduction preserves the ontological diversity of the chair and the particles.

But if the identity of the chair and the configuration of particles is eliminatively identical then the chair is nothing more than the configuration of particles. The chair turns out not to exist, so the eliminative identity does not preserve the ontological diversity of the chair and the configuration of particles. In the case of eliminative identities, the illusory object that we call a chair does not exist, just the configuration of particles.

Eliminative theism offers an account of divine simplicity that depends on the eliminative identity of God's essential properties with God. It is in this eliminativist sense that God is identical to God's essential properties. So, essential omnipotence, omniscience, and moral perfection are identical to God, but there in fact exist no properties of essential omnipotence, omniscience and moral perfection. These illusory properties, on further analysis, turn out to be God, just as the chair, on further analysis, turns out to be a configuration of particles. The reduction of the chair to the configuration is eliminativist.

The view that the essential properties of God are eliminatively identical to God is not merely an *ad hoc* solution to the puzzle of divine simplicity. Eliminative theists have an argument that the essential properties of God cannot exist. According to eliminative theism, if these properties did exist, then they would be *accidental* properties of a sort and there exist no accidental properties of God. The traditional properties of essential omnipotence, omniscience, and moral perfection would be, according to eliminative theism, *contingently essential* properties. Contingently essential properties are essential properties might have been different.

According to the S5 theorem $\Box F_G \rightarrow \Box\Box F_G$ it is not possible that God should lose an essential property that he does exemplify. If God is essentially omniscient, for instance, there is no possible world in which God exists and is not essentially omniscient. According to the S5 theorem $\Diamond\Box F_G \rightarrow \Box F_G$ it is not possible that God should acquire an essential property he does not already exemplify. If God is not essentially impassible, for instance, it is not possible that God should acquire the property of essential impassibility. But the S5 theorems do not govern the logic of the traditional essential properties of omnipotence, omniscience, and moral perfection.

The abstract singular terms 'omnipotence,' 'omniscience' and 'moral perfection' are paradigmatically vague terms. There is no discrete transition, for instance, from being morally perfect to being morally imperfect. Since these properties are imprecise, there are worlds in which God is more or less determinately morally perfect. Of course, this is a reflection of the fact that the concept of moral perfection is vague. It is not a reflection of any ontological vagueness in God.

There are at least some ways to precisify the concept of moral perfection, for instance, according to which it is less than morally perfect to permit horrendous evils, no matter the reasons for permitting them. And there are worlds in which God permits horrendous evils. But this is just to say that God does not determinately fall under *our* concepts of moral perfection, omniscience, and omnipotence in every possible world, and that is not a surprising consequence. Our concepts of omnipotence, omniscience, and moral perfection include wide-ranging borderline cases.

But God can survive small changes in the determinacy of essential properties only if God's essential properties are either impossible properties or *contingent* essential properties.[5] Since God does not exemplify contingent properties or impossible properties, God does not exemplify the essential properties of omnipotence, omniscience, and moral perfection.

Let Fx be a conjunction of properties including omnipotence, omniscience, and moral perfection. On traditional theistic views God exemplifies Fx in every possible world or $\Box F_G$. If we assume $\Box F_G$ is true in w_0 and assume a logic at least as strong as S5, it follows that there is some world in which $\Box F_G$ and $\sim\Box F_G$ are both true. The assumption that God exemplifies Fx essentially entails a contradiction and so $\Box Fx$ is an impossible property.

If $\Box F_G$ true in w_0 then, $\Box\Box F_G$ is also true in w_0, so $\Box F_G$ is true in every world accessible to w_0. Since every possible world simpliciter is accessible to w_0, $\Box F_G$ is true in every possible world. But, since God can survive infinitely small changes in the determinateness of essential properties, there will be some world w_n in which it is true that $\sim\Box F_G$. That is, there will be some world w_n accessible to w_0 in which God does not exemplify—or does not determinately exemplify—essential omnipotence, omniscience, and moral perfection. So, there is some world w_n in which it is true both that $\Box F_G$ and $\sim\Box F_G$. In the small model of this situation every possible world is assumed to have access to every possible world. God is determinately Fx in w_0 and w_1, but determinately $\sim$Fx in w_n.

$\curvearrowleft$
$w_{0:}$ $\Box F_G$, F_G
$\curvearrowleft$ $\updownarrow$ $\searrow$ $\curvearrowleft$
$w_{1:}$ $\Box F_G$, $F_G \leftrightarrow \ldots \leftrightarrow w_n$ $\Box F_{G,:} \sim\Box F_G$, $\sim F_G$!@# Contradiction
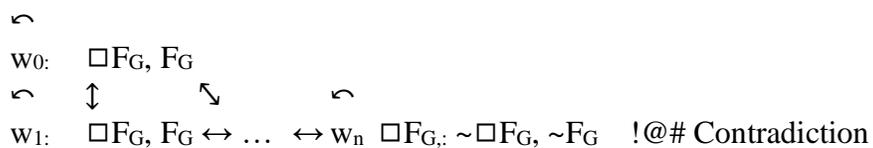
But how do we know there is some world w_n in which it is true that $\sim\Box F_G$? Since the traditional God can survive infinitely small changes in the determinacy of his essential properties, we know that there is some possible world w_n in which the traditional God is determinately $\sim F_G$. If the traditional God is determinately $\sim F_G$ in w_n, then it is true in w_n both that $\Box F_G$ and $\sim\Box F_G$. But that's impossible. The assumption that the traditional God exemplifies $\Box F_G$ in some world w_0 entails a contradiction. So the property $\Box F_G$, like the property of being a round square, cannot be exemplified.

Since $\Box Fx$ is an impossible property, there is no world in which God exemplifies $\Box Fx$. God exists, but the property $\Box Fx$ does not, and that is one way in which $\Box Fx$ might be eliminatively identical to God. It turns out that $\Box Fx$ does not exist at all, just as phlogiston does not exist. The attribution of $\Box Fx$ was an inaccurate description of God all along, just as the release of combustible

[5] For a similar argument that vague properties are impossible see, for instance, Unger (2006).

bodies misdescribed combustion. It is not at all unlikely that our property attributions in the case of God are badly inaccurate descriptions. There exists no fire-like elements and there exists no property $\Box Fx$.

Alternatively, we might discover that $\Box Fx$ is a *contingently essential* property. If $\Box Fx$ is a contingently essential property, then there are some possible worlds in which it is true that $\Box F_G$ and some possible worlds in which it is true that $\sim\Box F_G$. There are some worlds in which God exemplifies essential omnipotence, omniscience, and moral perfection, and there are some worlds in which God does not exemplify essential omnipotence, omniscience, and moral perfection.

In the logic $K_{\rho\sigma}$ the S5 theorems, $\Box F_G \rightarrow \Box\Box F_G$ and $\Diamond\Box F_G \rightarrow \Box F_G$ are invalid. Since it is invalid that $\Box F_G \rightarrow \Box\Box F_G$ it's possible that God, and of course anything else that exemplifies some essential properties, might lose an essential property. Since God is essentially omniscient, for instance, it is possible that God is not essentially omniscient. Since it is invalid that $\Diamond\Box F_G \rightarrow \Box F_G$ it is possible that God might acquire an essential property he does not now exemplify. God might acquire a human nature or essence, for instance, if he does not now exemplify a human nature or essence. Since the S5 theorems are invalid in $K_{\rho\sigma}$, there are contingent essences in $K_{\rho\sigma}$. In models for $K_{\rho\sigma}$, accessibility is not in general transitive, but reflexive and symmetric.

$$w_0: \ \Box F_G, F_G$$
$$w_1: \ \Box F_G, F_G \leftrightarrow \ldots \leftrightarrow w_n \sim\Box F_G, \sim F_G$$
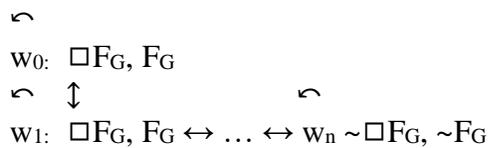
In w_0, God is essentially omnipotent, omniscient, and morally perfect. In w_n, God is not essentially omnipotent, omniscient, and morally perfect. On this model, all of God's properties—setting aside logically essential properties like $\Box F_G \lor \sim\Box F_G$ or $\Box F_G \rightarrow \Box F_G$—are contingent.[6] If a property is essential, it is contingently essential. That of course is not true in S5. In S5, all of God's properties are necessary—necessarily essential or necessarily contingent. For any contingent property that God might exemplify, $\sim\Box C_G$, for instance, it is true that $\Box\sim\Box C_G$.[7] It is necessarily true that the property is a contingent property of God. It is impossible that it should be an essential property of God.[8] There are in S5 no contingent properties of any object that could be an essential property of that object. But in $K_{\rho\sigma}$ there are objects that are contingently Cx in some worlds and essentially Cx in other worlds—there are objects b such that $\sim\Box Cb$ in w and $\Box Cb$ in w'. There are objects, for instance, that are essentially water in one world and essentially wine in another, and there are objects that are essentially non-divine in one world and essentially divine in another.

But if God's essential properties are contingently essential, then God cannot exemplify essential properties for the same reason that he cannot exemplify contingent properties generally. The presence of contingent properties in God entails that God might change from one world to the next and that is inconsistent with divine simplicity.

Since $\Box Fx$ is a contingent (essential) property, there is no world in which God exemplifies $\Box Fx$. That is another sense in which we might discover that is $\Box Fx$ eliminatively identical to God. Just like all contingent properties, it turns out that $\Box Fx$ is not exemplified by God at all. The attribution of $\Box Fx$ to God is just another inaccurate description of God. It is again not at all unlikely that there are serious limitations on cataphatic theology and that our property attributions in the case of God are just inaccurate descriptions.

References

Loux, Michael and Crisp, Thomas (2017), *Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction*, New York: Routledge.

---

[6] I will use 'essential property' to refer to non-logical essential properties unless otherwise indicated.

[7] Strictly, Cx is a contingent property just if $\sim\Box C_G \ \& \ \Diamond C_G$, or perhaps $\sim\Box C_G \ \& \ C_G$. So the corresponding theorem in S5 is $(\sim\Box C_G \ \& \ \Diamond C_G) \rightarrow \Box(\sim\Box C_G \ \& \ \Diamond C_G)$. This is not true in $K_{\rho\sigma}$.

[8] Though, of course, Cx might be an essential property of some other object. It might be that you are essentially rational, for instance, but your dog is contingently rational.

Ney, Alyssa (2021), "Reductionism," in *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, https://iep.utm.edu/red-ism/#H4, last accessed September 5, 2021.

Paul, L. A. (2017), "A One Category Ontology," in John A. Keller, *Being, Freedom, and Method*, Oxford: Oxford University Press$$$ Please provide page numbers. $$$.

Plantinga, Alvin (1980), *Does God Have a Nature?*, Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 47–48.

Unger, Peter (2006), "Why There Are No People," in Peter Unger, *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, Oxford: Oxford University Press$$$ Please provide page numbers. $$$.