

Incarnating the Impassible God: A Scotistic Transcendental Account of the Passions of the Soul¹ /

Liran Gordon

Abstract: The problem of divine impassibility, i.e., of whether the divine nature in Christ could suffer, stands at the center of a debate regarding the nature of God and his relation to us. Whereas philosophical reasoning regarding the divine nature maintains that the divine is immutable and perfect in every respect, theological needs generated an ever-growing demand for a passionate God truly able to participate in the suffering of his creatures. Correlating with the different approaches of Thomas Aquinas and John Duns Scotus, this paper aims to develop, in a speculative manner, key Scotistic insights in order to reconcile the need to preserve God's perfection with the passionate God who loves and suffers with his creatures.

The problem of the divine passibility, i.e., of whether the divine nature suffers as a result of an action external to it, becomes extremely problematic in the Christianity that revolves the figure of Christ: the incarnated *logos* who has both divine and human natures.² In the last decades there have been many who claimed that there was a need to abandon the historical account that Christ was passible in his human nature

¹ Abbreviations for Scotus: *Lect.*= Lectura, I-III. Opera Omnia. edited by Commissio Scotistica. Vol. 16-21: Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis: 1950-2013; *Ord.* = Ordinatio, Prologue, I-IV. Opera Omnia. edited by Commissio Scotistica. Vol. 1-14: Città del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis: 1950-2013; *Quodl.* = God and Creatures: The Quodlibetal Questions, trans. Allan B Wolter and Felix Alluntis (Princeton University Press, 1975); *QM* = Questions on the Metaphysics of Aristotle by John Duns Scotus, Bk. I-IX, Vol. 1-2. Translated by Girard J Etzkorn and Allan B Wolter. Text Series 19. St. Bonaventure, N.Y: Franciscan Institute Publications, 1997, 1998.

² The question of Christ's two natures was, as is well known, debated extensively by the early Fathers and was determined by the Creed of Chalcedon: "We... teach men to confess ... Jesus Christ ... truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body... to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same...". translated by Philip Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*(Harper&Brothers, 1877), 62-63. There were of course many who rejected it, e.g. Severus of Antioch who founded anti-Chalcedonian Syriac Orthodox Church. For further reading on Severus see Yonatan Moss, *Incorruptible Bodies: Christology, Society, and Authority in Late Antiquity*, vol. 1(University of California Press, 2016).

and impassible in his divine nature because it is “out of harmony with the evidence, to introduce an intolerable dualism in the person of Christ, and to rob the incarnation of most of its religious and moral value.”³ Thus, the endgame of this study will be to use a speculative Scotistic account in order to develop a new model for the incarnation that aims to respond to the theological concerns as well as to offer philosophy new perspectives as to how impassible and passible nature can reside in one person.

The paper will be divided into four parts. After a brief survey of key positions regarding divine impassibility, the first part will present two major problems that accompany these positions, namely a seeming dualism between the passible human nature and the impassible divine nature, and an accidental account of the passions of the soul. The second part will present the Thomistic and Scotistic accounts of the question “why incarnation?” The third part will present Scotus's contention that there are in fact passions of the soul from the perspective of the incarnation. In the fourth and last part, the paper will employ previous elaborations of Scotus’s doctrine of the will in order to tie the passions of the soul into his transcendental system and to claim that the passions of the soul express an essential element of the transcendental system. This will make it possible to present a new explanation of the incarnation of Christ that gives a comprehensive account of Christ’s suffering.

As to the scholarly nature of this study I would like to emphasize two matters. 1. It is important to note that the first three parts are instrumental, aimed at establishing the grounds for the maneuver that takes place in the last part which is the primary innovation of this study. 2. Though this study primarily accords with the thought of Duns Scotus, the latter functions primarily as an inspiration to understand problems and thus, the solution I present does not claim to present a strict interpretation of Scotus.

³ Bertrand Brasnett, *The Suffering of the Impassible God*(S.P.C.K, 1928), 34.

I. Historical Introduction to the Problem of Impassibility

This part will briefly introduce key historical accounts of the problem of impassibility and two related problems that derive from them: 1. a seeming dualism between the divine and human nature, and 2. the Aristotelian psycho-physical account, as developed by Thomas Aquinas, that leads to an accidental account of the passions of the soul.

The paper does not aim to contribute to the historical discussion and will rely upon the studies carried out by other scholars, for example, the excellent studies on the passions by Paul Gondreau, Robert Miner and Dominik Perler. Nor does the paper aim to enter into a debate with contemporary discussions like those found in the work of Thomas G. Weinandy and others, but rather to use and sublimate both historical and contemporary theological discussions into philosophical problems – chief among these was to look for a fresh account of how corporeality can affect the mental realm.⁴ As such the account that will be given is minimal and aims to equip the reader with the required knowledge to tackle the problem from an historical viewpoint.⁵

⁴ Paul Gondreau, *The Passions of Christ's Soul in the Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Scranton: University of Scranton Press, 2009); Robert C. Miner, *Thomas Aquinas on the Passions: A Study of Summa Theologiae : 1a2ae 22-48* (Cambridge, UK: New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Thomas G Weinandy, *Does God Suffer?* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2000). See also Nicholas E. Lombardo, *The Logic of Desire : Aquinas on Emotion* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2011); Robert Pasnau, *Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature: A Philosophical Study of Summa Theologiae, 1a 75-89* (Cambridge University Press, 2002); Martha C. Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge : New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); James F Keating and Thomas Joseph White, *Divine Impassibility and the Mystery of Human Suffering* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2009); Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology* (Augsburg: Fortress, 1993); John Sanders, *The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence* (InterVarsity Press, 1998), chapter 5.

⁵ For further reading on the historical development of the passions see among others Simo Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy* (Oxford : New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); *Emotions and Choice from Boethius to Descartes*, ed. Henrik Lagerlund and Mikko Yrjönsuuri, Boston : Mass. (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002); Richard Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation* (Oxford : New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Sarah C. Byers, "Augustine and the Cognitive Cause of Stoic 'Preliminary Passions' (*Propatheiai*)," *The Journal of the History of Philosophy* 41, no. 4 (2003); Thomas Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category* (Cambridge : New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Amélie Oksenberg Rorty, "Aristotle on the Metaphysical Status of "*Pathe*"," *The Review of Metaphysics* 37, no. 3 (1984).

Ever since its beginning, philosophical thinking was concerned with the nature of the divine that underlies all that is. It was Parmenides who in the early fifth century BC contracted the nature of the divine with the nature of truth and the nature of thought. By so doing he had defined the basic Greek conception of the divine. In his poem, Parmenides contrasted two paths, the path of truth that is concerned with the divine which “is complete, immovable, and without end”, and the path of mortals who are concerned with opinions and appearances. This dichotomy shaped the basic asymmetrical structure and dynamics of Western ontological thinking. The divine being is perfect and immutable actuality which affect all other beings and cannot be affected by others. This divine being opposes all imperfect beings who to some degree are affected by something external to their nature. The more they are affected the greater is their imperfection. The basic Greek understanding is that suffering, like any other type of external alteration, is a expression of imperfection. As opposed to this Greek fundamental understanding, the suffering of Christ is not only a decisive part of Christ’s life and mission, it is an outcome of his unique hypostatic union that is both human and divine.

The problem of divine impassibility and its dualism lies at the heart of the Christian dogma that Christ was “truly God and truly man”.⁶ Not all theologians have felt comfortable with such dualism. Hilary of Poitiers's account of Christ's impassibility, that rejects this dualism, is of considerable importance as a focal point to which Christian theologians returned again and again throughout the centuries. A venerable Doctor of the Church for his battle against Arianism, he held that Christ, as the son of God, could not feel pain.⁷ This

⁶ See cf. 2.

⁷ Hilary writes: "The man Jesus Christ... without ceasing to be Himself, that is, God, took true humanity after the likeness of our humanity. ... our Lord Jesus Christ suffered blows, hanging, crucifixion and death: but the suffering which attacked the body of the Lord, without ceasing to be suffering, had not the natural effect of suffering. It exercised its function of punishment with all its violence; but the body of Christ by its virtue suffered the violence of the punishment, without its consciousness. ... He had a body to suffer, and He suffered: but He had not a nature which could feel pain." Hilary of Poitiers, "On the Trinity," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Schaff and Wace (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing), bk. 10, ch. 23. Similarly he writes: " Although these kinds of suffering affect the weakness of the flesh, yet God the Word, made flesh, could not become changeable by suffering. Indeed, although the Word that was made flesh subjected himself to the passion, he nevertheless was not changed by the passibility of suffering. For he was able to suffer, and yet was not able to be passible, because passibility pertains to a weak nature; but passion is the bearing of those things which are inflicted." Hilary, *De synodis*, n. 49, quoted by Peter Lombard,

view endorses the notion that Christ's body was not truly integral to him and that his suffering resembles the suffering of a robot who imitates suffering according to the information it receives from its sensors, yet does not truly suffer pain. This position that seems to be "sailing somewhat close to the cliffs of Docetism",⁸ was addressed and rejected by all Catholic theologians.

John Damascene's position stands in opposition to Hilary's view. According to Damascene, Christ assumed all man's passions since "He assumed the whole man and everything that is his, except sin." As a result, Christ suffered from "hunger, thirst, fatigue, pain, the tears, the destruction, the shrinking from death, the fear, the agony ... and any other such things as are naturally inherent in all men."⁹ Damascene posited a strict distinction between the divine and human nature of Christ, maintaining that only the divine nature was impassible:

God's Word Himself, then, endured all things in His flesh, while His divine nature, which alone is impassible, remained unaffected. For, when the one Christ made up of both divinity and humanity suffered, the passible part of Him suffered, because it was of its nature to suffer, but the impassible did not suffer with it. Thus, since the soul is passible, it does feel pain and suffer with the body when the body is hurt, although it itself is not hurt. The divinity, however, being impassible, does not suffer with the body.¹⁰

This, of course, seems to lead him to a plain dualism. Damascene turns to the will as the key to bridge between the two natures and to understanding Christ's suffering. He explains that Christ did not suffer from these passions in the same way man does, for "it was by willing that He hungered and by willing that He thirsted, by willing that He was afraid and by willing that He died."¹¹ While with man the passions distract

"The Sentences Book 3: On the Incarnation of the Word,"(Edited by Giulio Silano. Ontario: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2008), 65.

⁸ Theodor Foerster, "Zur Theologie Des Hilarius," *Theologische Studien and Kritiken* 61(1888): 662.

⁹ John of Damascus, "An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith," in *Writings, The Fathers of the Church* (Catholic University of America Press, 1958), 323-4.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 331.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

and perhaps control reason, with Christ they were permitted willingly and according to reason. The will acts as a mediator between the external world, that acts on Christ's human body, and Christ's soul. In the third part of this paper Scotus's account of the passions of the soul will present a major explanation to the sense according to which the will can be responsible for such suffering.

Peter Lombard, who for centuries sketched the questions scholastic theologians dealt with, followed almost identically Damascene's dualistic Christological psychology:

For Christ had true fear and sorrow for human nature, but not like us, who have these at the highest levels. Because as a result of our sin we are, of necessity, subject to these defects, and in us these defects take the form of both propassions and passions. But in Christ they are only propassions.¹²

Lombard's distinction between *passions* and *propassions*, which he borrows from Jerome,¹³ encapsulates the distinction between the human and divine states, allowing him to preserve "the perfect rectitude of His [Christ's] soul's spiritual faculties."¹⁴ This distinction, to be adhered to afterwards by other key theologians such as Alexander of Hales, Albert the Great, Bonaventure and to some degree the later Aquinas, makes it possible to claim that while man suffers pain from the external world in a passive way, Christ's suffering, in which the passibility of his body is mediated in an active way by his will, is impassible.

Without dwelling on the historical account of the passions, Aquinas distinguishes between the narrow/proper account, which is in keeping with the Aristotelian material account, and a more general usage. "In its proper sense passion... is found only in the motion of alteration... in which one contrary form is received and the other is driven out." However, "in its general sense passion is the reception of something in any way at all."¹⁵ Thus he concludes that passions, taken properly, are to be found only "where there is

¹² III *Sent.*, d. 15, ch. 2. (III: 327-28) Bonaventura, *Opera Omnia*(Quaracchi 1882-1902). Translation mine.

¹³ Richard Sorabji discusses extensively the historical development of propassions and particularly in Jerome. See Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation*, 343-56.

¹⁴ Gondreau, *The Passions of Christ's Soul*, 368.

¹⁵ Aquinas, *Questiones Disputatae de Veritate*, 26.1, Henry Regnery Company 1952-4, trans. Mulligan, McGlynn and Schmidt. See also Miner, *Thomas Aquinas on the Passions: A Study of Summa Theologiae : 1a2ae 22-48*, 31-32; Craig Steven Titus, "Passions in Christ: Spontaneity, Development, and Virtue," *The Thomist* 73, no. 1 (2009): 62-64.

corporeal transmutation”.¹⁶ When Aquinas asks “whether there is any passion in the soul”¹⁷ – the question is asked from the point of view of Christianity and its theological needs. As such, when the objector claims from an Aristotelian point of view that passions cannot reside in the intellect since the intellect is immaterial and so is not passible, or when he argues that the soul is incorruptible but passions indicate corruptibility, Aquinas needs to find a way so that passions can indeed be attributed to the soul, and thereby the soul can be granted the space it requires to explain our daily mental affairs. On the other hand, he needs to protect the eternity of the soul while at the same time making room for the plain fact that death is indeed part of our lives. Thus, though he protects the narrow material sense of passion whereby “something is received while something else is taken away,” his objective is to allow passion to be attributed to the soul.

Aquinas’s solution is based on his understanding of the nature of the unity between the body and the soul. He writes: “it must be said that no part has the perfection of a nature, when separated from the whole. And hence the soul, since it is a part of a human nature, does not have the perfection of its own nature, save in union with the body”.¹⁸ Perler explains that from this essential unity it follows “that the emotions are not attributable simply to the soul, nor to a part of the soul, as a distinct entity, but to the whole person as a unity of form and matter”.¹⁹ Relying on the unity between the body and the soul, Aquinas allows for a mediated affection of the soul through the body as when the passion begins with the body, e.g., when it receives an injury, and as a result the soul suffers from the weakening of the union of the body; and secondly when the passion begins with a psychological event which results in a modification within the body.²⁰ The passions are thus attributed to the soul only secondarily, as an accidental subsequence of the unity between the body and the soul. Perler points that this leads to two undesired consequences: 1. that “nonphysical

¹⁶ *Summa Theologiae* I-II, q. 22, a. 3, Benziger Bros. edition, 1947, Trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province.

¹⁷ *Summa Theologiae* I-II, q. 22, a. 1. See also *de Veritate* 26.

¹⁸ *De spiritualibus creaturis*, a. 2, ad 5.

¹⁹ Dominik Perler, *Feelings Transformed: Philosophical Theories of the Emotions, 1270-1670*, trans. Tony Crawford (Oxford University Press, 2018), 30.

²⁰ *De Veritate* 26.2.

beings such as angels or God cannot have emotions... . They do not act and feel as persons”.²¹ 2. That the passions are not an essential part of the soul. This does not mean that the soul and its intellective power have no role. Aquinas explains that the ability to comprehend and interpret events in different perspectives frames the given impressions differently, i.e. a perceived dog can be framed as a threat or as a pet. Through such framing of events, which consider things “under different conditions... sensuality is moved to joy or to sorrow”.²²

Though the passions have a fundamental role within Aquinas's study of human morality,²³ the passions of the soul do not belong to the soul in a primary way but only secondarily. For this reason Aquinas, following Augustine, explains that "when love and joy and the like are ascribed to God or the angels, or to man in respect of his intellectual appetite, they signify simple acts of the will having like effects, but without passion."²⁴ In the end, though affecting our soul and mental lives, the passions of the soul are accidental, indirect and are fundamentally rooted in our bodily activities. This can be seen in the manner Aquinas exploits the difference between passion and *propassion*. Aquinas made a significant use of *propassion* only in his later writings to interpret the line in the Gospel of Matthew (Mt 26:37) that states that “Jesus began to be sorrowful and to be sad.”²⁵ *Propassion* is used in a very specific manner to distinguish between actually being sorrowful and sad and beginning to be sorrowful and sad. He writes:

It is to be observed that sorrow can occur either as a passion or as a *propassion*. A passion transforms one, whereas a *propassion* does not transform one. For, when passions arise in us and cause the reason to be altered, such passions are complete, but when they do not cause the reason

²¹ Ibid.

²² *De Veritate* 25.4.

²³ See e.g. Paul Gondreau, "The Passions and the Moral Life: Appreciating the Originality of Aquinas," *The Thomist* 71, no. 3 (2007): 426-30; Servais Pinckaers, "Reappropriating Aquinas's Account of the Passions," in *The Pinckaers Reader: Renewing Thomistic Moral Theology*, ed. John Berkman and Craig Steven Titus (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 275-79. See also that Bonaventure and Scotus reject this view in their commentaries on dist. 33 of the Lombard's book III of the sentences.

²⁴ *Summa Theologiae* I-II, q. 22, a. 3, ad. 3.

²⁵ Vulgate: “Et adsumpto Petro et duobus filiis Zebedaei coepit contristari et maestus esse.” See Gondreau, *The Passions of Christ's Soul*. 370-2.

to be altered, they are called propassions. Since Christ's reason was in no way altered, he experienced only propassions rather than passions, which is what the Evangelist means when he says that Jesus "began to be sorrowful."²⁶

Whereas passion designates an effect which starts with the body and continues to exert force on the rational mind itself, propassion designates only the first stage of passion, i.e., the sensual reception of pain which is not completed and so does not affect the mind. Thus, following Jerome's distinction, Aquinas is able to protect Christ's rational soul from being passible in the strong sense. Man's rational soul, on the contrary, and due to the Fall, can be affected by the suffering of the body and so is passible in a mediated sense. It is important for Aquinas to note that the fact that Christ only suffered an imperfect passion does not imply that He suffered less than a common man – the contrary is true. According to Aquinas, since Christ had the most perfect body, and thus His senses were most acute, and since He took upon Himself the primordial sin, and since He understood more than anyone else and so truly suffered the illnesses of the world, etc., He suffered more than anyone else.

I would like to conclude this part with an observation that will become essential later. As we have seen above, according to Aquinas, Christ's rational soul remained unpenetrated and His sufferings are accidental. Aquinas's account, particularly in the case of Christ, aims to protect the rational soul from the passions, which are suffered only in a mediated and secondary manner. This view seems to bypass the dualism between the divine and human natures by attributing passions to the union. However this solution only emphasizes the dualistic problem: for by attributing the passions to the union while protecting the soul, Aquinas only amplifies the difficulty, i.e. in in what sense the body and the soul can be united in such a manner that the passions of the body have no effect on the soul. As we will see later, Scotus examines the passions from an entirely different perspective which is guided by a new reading as to what rationality is and, as a result, links the relations between the passions and the soul differently. Generally, Scotus accepts

²⁶ *Summa Theologiae* III, q. 15, a. 4.

the accidental psycho-physiological account of the passions that was presented so far. Though he definitely has things to say about it, his systematic view considers such a view secondary, precisely because it considers the passions from the point of view of accidentality. This accidental point of view, by definition, fails, at the outset, to take into account the possibility of understanding the passions as a part of mental life which does not contradict the nature of the rational soul but rather expresses it.

II. Changing Perspectives

In this part we will examine the opposing opinions on the *raison d'être* of the *incarnation*. This will allow us to consider Scotus's contribution to the passions, that will come afterward, from an uncommon angle. Aquinas holds that though the incarnation could occur for different reasons, it is reasonable to accept the repeated statements of sacred scripture that Adam's sin is the reason for the incarnation:

For such things as spring from God's will, and beyond the creature's due, can be made known to us only through being revealed in the Sacred Scripture, in which the Divine Will is made known to us. Hence, since everywhere in the Sacred Scripture the sin of the first man is assigned as the reason of the Incarnation, it is more in accordance with this to say that the work of the Incarnation was ordained by God as a remedy for sin; so that, had sin not existed, the Incarnation would not have been. And yet the power of God is not limited to this; even had sin not existed, God could have become incarnate.²⁷

Examining the incarnation from the point of view of eternity, Scotus comes to an opposing understanding. According to Scotus since God predestined the world according to the order of ends it must follow that Christ was intended prior to any determination of Adam, whether he would fall into sin or not, and so that the incarnation of Christ was necessarily predestined prior to the fall of Adam:

²⁷ *Summa Theologiae* III, q. 1, a. 3.

Without prejudging the matter, it may be said that, so far as the objects intended by God are concerned, since the predestination of anyone to glory is prior by nature to the prevision of anyone's sin or damnation ... For it seems to be universally true that he who wills in an orderly manner, intends first that which is nearer the end; and just as he first intends one to have glory before grace, so among those predestined to glory, he who wills in an orderly manner would seem to intend first the glory of the one he wishes to be near the end, and thus he wills glory for this soul [of Christ] before he wills glory for any other soul, and for every other soul he wills glory and grace before he foresees those things which are the opposite of these habits [i.e., sin or damnation].²⁸

Scotus explains that “in the action of an artificer the process of execution of the work is opposite to the order of intention,”²⁹ i.e., in the creative process the end of the process comes first while it comes last in the order of execution. To hold that Christ's incarnation was willed in order to redeem men from his sins is to hold “that God wills the means before the end.”³⁰ As a result of that Scotus maintains that Christ could not be predestined primarily as a redeemer for that would presuppose the fall of Adam. Rather Christ was first predestined according to Christ's glory³¹ independently of Sin and regardless of whether Adam would fall or not (and so that there was never a breach that was created by the Fall), and was only secondarily predestined as redeemer once Adam was in fact predestined to fall. Against Aquinas's conception of the incarnation as a cure, Scotus explains that the cure in itself cannot be designed primarily but only secondarily: “Christ in the flesh was foreseen and predestined to grace and glory before Christ's Passion

²⁸ *Ord. III, d. 7, q. 3, n. 58 (IX:284-85)*. Translated by Juniper B Carol, *Why Jesus Christ? Thomistic, Scotistic and Conciliatory Perspectives*(Manassas, Virginia: Trinity Communications, 1986), 122-3.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, n. 69 (IX:289)

³⁰ Trent Pomplun, "The Immaculate World: Predestination and Passibility in Contemporary Scotism," *Modern Theology* 30, no. 4 (2014): 532.

³¹ See Francis Xavier Pancheri, *The Universal Primacy of Christ*, trans. Juniper B. Carol(Christendom Publications, 1983), 20.

was foreseen as a medicine against the fall, just as a physician wills the health of a man before he wills the medicine to cure him.”³²

Though *Reportatio Parisiensis* III-A is not a *Reportatio examinata*, and so raises questions at to its accuracy, Juniper B. Carol notes that they are of significance “to determine with greater precision the authentic mind of Scotus”:³³

I declare, however, that the Fall was not the cause of Christ’s predestination. In fact, even if no man or angel had fallen, nor any man but Christ were to be created, Christ would still have been predestined this way... . If the Fall were the reason for Christ’s predestination, it would follow that the greatest work of God [the Incarnation] was mostly occasioned, because the glory of all is not as great in intensity as was the glory of Christ; and it seems very unreasonable that God would have left so great a work [i.e., the Incarnation] undone on account of a good deed performed by Adam, for example, if he had not sinned.³⁴

Following Scotus’s doctrine of the *Immaculate Conception*, Pomplun explains “the primary purpose of redemption is not to liberate us from **sin**—although that is true *pro statu isto*—but to provide the conditions for the possibility of loving God more fully.”³⁵ The Incarnation, Pancheri explains, does not presuppose sin but rather the free will of God.³⁶

Jürgen Moltmann, surveying the Thomistic view, raises the problem that the incarnation as an ad-hoc remedy for the Fall, “has no significance of its own.” Consequently, he continues:

[T]he bond between God and man in Christ will be dissolved once reconciliation has been completed and sin, with its consequences, has been eliminated. ... Once the incarnate Son of God

³² *Ordinatio*, III (suppl.) d. 19; cod. Assisi com. 137, fol. 161v; ed. Vivès (Parisiis, 1894) XIV, 714. Translation from *Why Jesus Christ?*, p. 125.

³³ Carol, *Why Jesus Christ?*, 125.

³⁴ *Opus Parisiense*, Lib. III, d. 7, q. 4; ed. Balic, 13-15. Translated by Carol in *Why Jesus Christ*, p. 126.

³⁵ Pomplun, “The Immaculate World.” 534-5

³⁶ Pancheri, *The Universal Primacy of Christ*. 43.

has achieved the reconciliation of the world with God, he himself becomes superfluous. His mediation between the gracious God and sinful men and women is bound to come to an end when he himself ceases to have a function. . . . Once creation has been redeemed, purified from sin and liberated from death, the God-Man no longer has any place in it.³⁷

When the incarnation is taken in the Scotistic way, it is an act which completes and perfects the creation itself. The incarnation thus becomes part of every event and not simply a correction of a wrong turn on the way. This does not mean that the incarnation was executed for the sake of the created: “the universe and man were willed for the sake of Christ, and not the other way around.”³⁸

Perhaps the best way to understand the difference between the Scotistic and Thomistic views can be borrowed from the world of economics. The Thomistic view is more microeconomic and human centric. It is focused on specific values and transactions, or in our case, on particular acts of pain or sin and consequently on specific transactions of pain that follow it (Christ’s pain as a cure). Once the assets and liabilities are balanced the transaction obviates its own need.³⁹ As such it aims to attain a balance of the sin-pain relationship. The Scotistic view is more macroeconomic and is focused on the whole economy of creation. As such it does not consider the incarnation only as a specific act of transaction but rather as a part of a complete economic policy which aims to attain growth, better distribution of wealth and social welfare. While the Thomistic view aims to clear the balance, the Scotistic view sees the incarnation as an economic policy through which “the invisible God” becomes manifested in the world. One may call it a policy of love or charity, others may call it a policy which assists man to be perfected and to maximize the good in the world. Thus, Christ’s life as told by Holy Scriptures is but a side story to the real one, which is the perfection of the cosmological creation.

³⁷ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom: The Doctrine of God*(Fortress Press, 1981)., 114-5.

³⁸ Pancheri, 37.

³⁹ This follows Anselm’s doctrine of satisfaction.

III. Scotus

The discussion that was presented above about the differences between Aquinas's and Scotus's perceptions of the *raison d'être* of the incarnation aimed to reduce Aquinas's physiological account of the passions to Scotus's account which emphasizes the decisive role of intentionality and the will. This does not mean that Scotus neglects the physiological account, however he understands it to be accidental. For just as Scotus understands Christ's coming to be grounded primarily in creation itself, and the crucifixion only as a secondary factor, so the essence of the passions does not lie primarily in our physiology but rather in our essence as creatures endowed with free will. As a result, though Scotus accepts the bottom-up discussion of the passions generally true to this specific world, all-in-all it is secondary if one aims to understand the real importance of the passions. It is important to make clear that since the solution I present in the next part requires a lot of speculative space, and since Scotus's account of the passions in his commentary to III *Sent.* d. 15 has been discussed extensively elsewhere,⁴⁰ the following will primarily concentrate on the intentional aspects.

Scotus states clearly that in addition to passions that affect the soul indirectly as a product of the union of the soul and the body, there are passions of the soul which are utterly independent of the body:

There are certain passions, which are accompanied by a mutation and an alteration of the sensitive part, which does not arrive without a change in the organ, and these are the passions of the united

⁴⁰ See Olivier Boulnois, "Duns Scot: Existe-T-Il Des Passions De La Volonté?," in *Les Passions Antiques Et Médiévales*, ed. Besnier, Moreau, and Renault(Paris: PUF, 2003); Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*; "The Psychology of the Incarnation in John Duns Scotus," in *Philosophy and Theology in the Long Middle Ages: A Tribute to Stephen F. Brown*, ed. Stephen F Brown, et al.(Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2011); Dominik Perler, "Duns Scotus Über Schmerz Und Traurigkeit," in *Johannes Duns Scotus 1308-2008*, ed. Honnefelder(St. Bonaventure, NY: Aschendorff, 2010); Ian Drummond, "John Duns Scotus on the Passions of the Will," in *Emotion and Cognitive Life in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy* ed. Pickavé and Shapiro(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

whole; other passions are only spiritual, they can be without a change in the organ, and such are the passions of the soul.⁴¹

Whereas the will is subordinated to the intellect in Aquinas's thought, Scotus contends that the will is utterly independent of the intellect. Not only that, Scotus holds that rationality is imperfect at the level of the intellect and it receives its perfection only by the will as an active and free power. It is this active freedom that allows the will to position itself in regard to the perceived objects, and so to measure them, and consequently to will or nill them:

Even if something is of its own nature in agreement with the will, for example the ultimate end, it is ultimately in agreement by an act of the will which accepts and finds it complacent. And such an agreement is made by willing the object, or a disagreement by refusing the object . . . an approximation follows this object, namely an apprehension of the object to be willed or nilled, and from this last thing, it seems that a passion of the will seem to follow from the presence of the object, joy or distress.⁴²

However, it is one thing to will or nill an event or an object that has not yet come about, where the will is free to determine its willing, and another thing to accept or reject an event or an object that has already taken place and which is presented to the apprehension of the will as a fact. For the will does not find a thing or an event acceptable simply as it appears but is rather disposed in advance to accept it, according to what it willed or nilled, and so while the apprehension is taking place, the acceptance or rejection of what is perceived is quasi-necessitated:

⁴¹ *Ord.* IV, d. 49, q. 7, §5, Wadding 10, 495. It is important to note that this text cannot be found in the new critical edition since it is missing from the A manuscript, also known as the "Assisi Manuscript". This however does not imply that it is not authentic. Translation mine.

⁴² *Ord.* III, d. 15, n. 47 (Vat. IX:498). Translation mine.

The will is not necessitated absolutely by the object, however, among those things that are shown to it, there can be a necessity of consequence, just as in 'if I want, I want'.⁴³

Thus, since the will's act of willing or nilling pre-wills or nills, the coming of the willed/nilled object, a passion of satisfaction or dissatisfaction necessarily arises when the willed or nilled object appears. This extends to the will's relation to its body, as when the will accept or rejects sensual pleasures, or when one may feel satisfied after significant labor that caused pain to the body.⁴⁴ The crux of Scotus's account lies in the fact that though the will as a willing power determines what it wills or nills, the passion that accompanies the apprehension of the willed or nilled object cannot be produced by the will itself, "for if the will was its efficient cause, then it would be its own operation, just as 'to will' is caused by it and is within it." But this is evidently not the case in passions such as sadness or other negative passions that arise unwillingly.⁴⁵

What is important for our further discussion is to appreciate the way the passions are related to the essence of the will in Scotus's thought. While the passions of the soul are accidental insofar as they are caused by an external object that could be otherwise, they are not accidental in the same manner as those we have encountered with Aquinas. In Aquinas's account the rational soul suffers passions indirectly due to its unification with the body via its sensual capacities. Such sufferings are essential to the nature of such a union between body and soul, but they are not essential to the nature of the rational soul, i.e., they are accidental to it due to its state in the world *pro statu isto*. In Scotus's case, though the specific passion and its cause are accidental, being subjugated to such passions is essential to the rational soul as a willing thinking being. For that reason Scotus quotes Augustine who said "the will by which we cannot be miserable cannot be said to be no will, nor to be not free."⁴⁶ While in Aquinas's account the soul might be

⁴³ *Ord.* III, d. 15, n. 49 (Vat. IX:499-500). Translation mine. See also n. 50 (Vat IX:500).

⁴⁴ *Ord.* III, d. 34, q.1, n. 48 (Vat. X, 199-200)

⁴⁵ "This passion is not in the will by its own effect, because then it would be immediately under the power of the will, just as volitions and nolitions are under the power of the will. But this is false; for if one nills, and that which was nilled happens, one does not seem to have sadness immediately under one's power; for if the will was its efficient cause, then it would be its own operation, just as "to will" is caused by it and is within it." *Ibid.* Translation mine.

⁴⁶ Augustine, *Enchiridion ad Laurentium* c. 86, quoted in *Lectura I*, d. 10, n. 25.

released from the need to suffer passions if it were to be actualized in a different unification setting, e.g. after the separated souls are restored into their bodies in the future; for Scotus, being subjugated to passions is not a punishment but the essential consequence of willing. For willing requires intention, anticipation and care, and if one were to be utterly indifferent to what is to come in the outer world, one would be in a position whereby one is utterly unaffected by anything external.

Before we proceed to the last part, which is the centerpiece of this study, it will be useful to present a brief summary of the preceding parts. The first part introduced the passions of the soul and its historical development, particularly their function in the problem of divine impassibility. Concluding with Aquinas, it was emphasized that, though Aquinas offers us an extremely well-developed doctrine of the passions, the passions of the soul are based in the body and the way it is composed with the soul. Consequently, it was argued, that due to Aquinas's needs to protect the rational soul, he does not offer a substantial account of the passions as well as the passibility of Christ, but rather an accidental one. Part two presented a different account of the *raison d'être* of the incarnation and then moved on to Scotus's account of the passions. Through a comparison between Aquinas's and Scotus's accounts of the incarnation, this part situated the thinking subject not simply as a responsive creature but rather as an intentional one. This served to reevaluate the overall consideration of the discussion of the passions from a passive one, which reacts to external stimuli, to an intentional and active perspective. Consequently, the focus of our consideration of the passions was altered from the physiological center to the intentional one which is grounded in the nature of the will. This allowed the discussion of the third part to leave Scotus's physiological account of the passions and to focus, instead, on the decisive role of the will. It was shown that as opposed to the accidental account of Aquinas, the passions of the soul are an essential product of the will and its relation to the world. The aim of what now follows is to present a new model of the incarnation. I believe that this model, which is strongly grounded in the medieval doctrine of the transcendentals, offers new insight on the manner in which Christ's two natures come together, and presents us with a God who is both impassible and passible in different respects.

IV. Trancendentalizing the Passions of the Soul

In the following, an incarnation model will be developed that aims, on the one hand, to solve the dualistic problem between the divine and human natures, and on the other hand to make room for both impassible and passible elements in God, and so to make room within the patristic impassible model for genuine suffering in God. Due to the complexity of this maneuver, this part will be divided into four sections.

1. *Richard Cross's Stalemate*

In *The Metaphysics of the Incarnation*, Richard Cross presents a view, expressed also by many theologians such as Bonaventure, Aquinas and Scotus,⁴⁷ according to which incarnation can be understood as a kind of relation which is similar to Aristotle's third kind of relation. As oppose to a real relation where both side of the relation are affected, the third kind of relation presented by Aristotle, is one in which, though one side is really related to the other, the other remains unaffected and so immutable. An example of such a relation is the relation between the sun and earth. Whereas the earth is warmed by the sun, and so affected by it, the sun is unchanged (aside from gravitation). Scotus explains that the hypostatic union is a non-mutual relation that is real on the one extreme and which has no real relation on the other extreme.⁴⁸ So it is argued that "the human nature is really related to the Word without there being a corresponding real relation in the Word."⁴⁹ According to the relational view God became man not as a result of a change within God but rather due to a change in the created order. This view, Cross explains, seems to empty "the Incarnation of any real content."⁵⁰ As such the "becoming" of Christ is a result of the union between the divine and human

⁴⁷ Richard Cross, *The Metaphysics of the Incarnation: Thomas Aquinas to Duns Scotus*(Oxford;New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), Ch. 9.

⁴⁸ Scotus, *Ord.* III, d. 1. q. 1, n. 14 (Vat. IX:5-6).

⁴⁹ Cross, *The Metaphysics of the Incarnation*, 206.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 207.

nature, which is not a real becoming but rather is a relation.⁵¹ Consequently a truth regarding something can be changed not because the thing itself changes but rather as a result of a change in the object which is related to it. In this way no casual relation necessitates God.

Cross presents the following schematization of the relationship between the divine and the human natures so as to “allow for the Word to change, to suffer, and to be temporal.” This, he explains, is a product of what he calls *extrinsic relations*, that he labels relational mutability or ‘R-Mutability’.⁵² On the other hand he assigns the terms ‘I-mutability’ and ‘I-immutability’ to designate what is intrinsically mutable and immutable. According to the relational understanding of the incarnation, while Christ is R-mutable, He is I-immutable. As to impassibility Cross explains that the relational view of incarnation deals quite easily with the becoming of the incarnation: “Becoming man is merely a sort of change” and is not a result of a change within the divine nature but rather with the world.⁵³ In this respect being impassible is equivalent to I-immutable. However Cross explains that it is more difficult to explain whether the actual incarnate being is impassible. The two relations that Cross presents – the intrinsic and extrinsic ones – seem to leave us in a stalemate. On the one hand, the extrinsic relation leaves the divine nature utterly independent of human nature and immutable, which seems to support Hilary’s claim that the divine Christ did not really suffer on the cross. On the other hand, the intrinsic relation cannot give an account of how the impassible divine nature can truly suffer. In the following I will argue that a third relation can be added that mitigates the two intrinsic and extrinsic relations that Cross presented and that such a relation can overcome the stalemate we were left in.

2. *A Solution to the Stalemate*

⁵¹ Ibid., 210.

⁵² Ibid., 214.

⁵³ Ibid.

In a previous study⁵⁴ I have pointed to the fact that though Scotistic thought penetrates all levels of philosophy and theology, oddly it is missing a doctrine of truth which brings to the fore the implications of Scotus's thought on the notion of truth. In that study I took the liberty of developing in a speculative manner a doctrine of truth which accords with Scotus's fundamental position that rationality reaches its completion not at the level of the intellect but at that of the will. Scotus explains that while natural action must act with necessity when a proximate reception relation is constituted with the thing acted upon, free action can elicit opposite effects without necessity whenever there is no impediment between the agent and that which it acts upon. Thus he concludes the while natural acts are determined by an external cause, a free agent "has of itself the ability to elicit contrary actions as regards the same thing".⁵⁵ Thus, whereas the will is a rational power *absolutely*, for it wills or nills between opposites, the intellect, as a natural agent, is a rational power only in a qualified manner since it cannot but be "determined of itself in regard to what it directs":⁵⁶ "[T]o have opposites in its power is something a rational potency possesses primarily and per se as a proper attribute of it qua rational. For this is what distinguishes it from an irrational potency".⁵⁷ Thus, if we take seriously Scotus's position that rationality attains completion not at the level of the intellect but at that of the will, the notion of truth needs to be reevaluated so that the will genuinely perfects our understanding of truth.

Following Kant's famous distinction between analytic a priori truths (e.g., "all bachelors are unmarried") and synthetic a priori truths (e.g., "a triangle has 180°"), I claimed in that study that while the former corresponds to the intellect, synthetic a priori truths, specifically those of geometry, correspond with the power of the will insofar as they are *not determined according to necessity* but could be otherwise. This ontological "Scotistic" reading of the Kantian distinction, which puts more emphasize on the *manner* of

⁵⁴ Liran Shia Gordon, "On Truth, the Truth of Existence, and the Existence of Truth: A Dialogue with the Thought of Duns Scotus," *Philosophy & Theology* 27, no. 2 (2015).

⁵⁵ *QM IX*, ch.15, n. 73 (4:698)

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, n.38 (4:685)

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, n.61 (4:694)

existence,⁵⁸ offers a third kind of relation that posits a new avenue to consider both incarnation and impassibility. Let us consider the key argument:

modern mathematics has constructed different possible geometries and thus concludes that in non-Euclidian geometries, a triangle has, in a synthetic a posteriori manner, more or less than 180° . This means that just as the proposition “a triangle has 180° ” is true only in regard to the existence of a specific geometry, so are there numerous amounts of mathematical truths that are true synthetically a priori due to existence. Willing the world to be Euclidian or non-Euclidian is thus tied to the truth of existence which is not just a matter of predication, to exist or not to exist, but rather refers to a manner of existence which applies to existing things in a synthetic a priori manner.⁵⁹

Though being Euclidean or non-Euclidean is determined analytically, the fact that this world is Euclidean or non-Euclidean is a synthetic a priori truth that could have been otherwise. Hence, if one “wills” a triangle to exist in a non-Euclidean world, rather than a Euclidean one, then one causes a change in a synthetic truth about the triangle. Such a change lies somewhere in between an intrinsic change in the nature of the triangle and a purely extrinsic change in how the triangle relates to some other object.

The truthfulness of truths of the will and truths of the intellect are radically different. Whereas the latter is determined internally and obeys solely the law of non-contradiction, the truthfulness of the former is grounded externally. Supposing that we cannot seriously claim to have anything to do with determining the world to be Euclidean or non-Euclidean, regardless of which geometry is actually applied to the world, or to our thought, this is simply a fact of reality. For, otherwise, the intellect could have known by its own powers why it is that Euclidean or non-Euclidean geometry is applied. But this it cannot do, and

⁵⁸ For further reading on the ontological implications of this Scotistic reading of analytic vs. synthetic truths, and its departure from Kant, see Gordon, "On Truth, the Truth of Existence, and the Existence of Truth: A Dialogue with the Thought of Duns Scotus," 411-13.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 410-11.

consequently it follows that our ability to attain such knowledge is grounded in something external to the intellect – reality itself.

Let us consider this from the perspective of Cross's internal-external relations. Insofar as internal relations go, it can be said that the fact that a triangle has three angles is an internal relation which is derived from its definition as a polygon with three sides. However, and as Kant has shown us, the fact that a triangle has 180° is not a result of an intrinsic relation. In fact, it can be said that insofar as the triangle is taken from its internal definition, it is indifferent to whether the geometry is Euclidean or non-Euclidean, or in other words, the triangle is I-immutable to any specific geometry. However, it is clear that in different geometrical worlds the triangle may assume different "truths" according to the manner in which it expands, one for a Euclidean world and others for non-Euclidean worlds. This solution preserves, on the one hand, a change which is "merely a sort of change"⁶⁰ that does not involve a change in the sense of warming up or cooling down, for the assumption does not involve that from which it is changed. On the other hand, it evades the fate of Cross's relational consideration of the incarnation, which leaves it empty of any real content.

3. *Rethinking the Incarnation*

The modified Scotistic reading of synthetic a priori truths as truths of the will entails a new avenue for considering the incarnation. It is no big secret that the doctrine of the incarnation does not leave us with much understanding as to the manner in which the divine and human natures truly "concur[ring] in one Person and one Subsistence, [are] not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same".⁶¹ Instead of thinking of the incarnation as a sort of mixture or composite of the divine and human natures, I suggest thinking of the triangle example as a model of the incarnation. Just as the actualization of the triangle in a specific geometry, such as Euclidean, applies a set of geometrical synthetic a priori truths to the analytic

⁶⁰ Cross, *The Metaphysics of the Incarnation*, 214.

⁶¹ From the Creed of Chalcedon. Translated by Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, 62-63.

truths of the triangle, so the incarnation can be understood as a specific manner of actualization, e.g., being “human” and all that follows stems from such a nature, that applies synthetic a priori truths to the analytic truths of the divine nature.

As we have seen, Euclidean geometry, though it does not necessarily apply to this world, is a transcendental conditioning of any extended being in this specific world. This factual truth, that could have been otherwise, could not have been determined internally from the nature of extension but is rather determined externally by reality itself. Consequently, and though we cannot give an account of the *why* or the *how*, such a determination falls under the category of the will insofar as it requires a power that "has of itself the ability to elicit contrary actions".⁶² Though, in themselves, truths of the intellect are immutable, they transcendently assume, in a synthetic a priori manner, new attributes that are applied to them in this specific *world-incarnation*. This synthetic and transcendental relation constitutes real existential truths which are external to the thing's essence and to which it remains in itself indifferent. Consequently, though truths of the will do not alter the nature of a thing, an additional real element is added in a synthetic way that perfects it.

Considering again the incarnation of Christ as two natures in one person, it can be said that these two natures represent two levels of truth. One corresponds to the immutable truths of the intellect, which are eternal and transcend any worldly particularization. The other nature, the “human” nature, is a worldly nature insofar as it manifests the sets of synthetic truths that are applied and made true in *this* contingent and specific world. As such, by its nature, it is a nature that expresses contingent truths that are as they are because they are the product of will that is applied to the actualization of this world. And just as the nature of the triangle is not altered as a result of its manifestation in a Euclidean or non-Euclidean world, so are the divine nature and the human nature brought together in one unified manner that does not jeopardize divine immutability.

⁶² *QM IX*, ch.15, n. 73 (4:698)

A change in synthetic truths about the divine is neither an intrinsic change in the divine nature, which would compromise divine immutability, nor the mere bringing of the divine nature into an extrinsic relation to human nature, which would empty the incarnation of content. Rather, it is a determination of a “truth of the will” about the divine, i.e., a specific incarnation/determination of the divine nature in a specific world, whose contingent characteristics are products of divine will.

It is important to recall that Christ's incarnation needs to be perceived as twofold. As we saw in the Second Part, Scotus teaches that Christ's incarnation was predestined primarily in order to perfect creation itself and only secondarily to redeem man. As a result, it can be said that Christ's "human" nature primarily needs to be understood cosmologically insofar as it perfects the cosmos, and only secondarily in a human sense insofar as he perfects or redeems Man from his fallen state. Consequently, Christ's human nature thus incarnates the divine nature with "cosmological truths" as well as with "human truths" and values.

4. *Rethinking Impassibility*

The suggested new model for understanding the incarnation, which is grounded in a new understanding of the dual layers of truth and the way they are built into one other, offers us a new path to consider the passions of the soul as imbedded within what are known as the transcendentals.

There are four things that the perplexed reader needs to know about the complicated medieval doctrine of the transcendentals: 1. the transcendentals are primitive notions that precede the division into the categories, and consequently apply to all of them. Thus the doctrine of the transcendentals is the most fundamental doctrine regarding *beings* insofar as they are *beings* and regardless of any further determination. 2. Though there are different transcendental models, in general the transcendental notions are *being, thing, one, true* and *good*. 3. The transcendentals are different significations of the same thing, e.g., when one speaks of a

being one also presupposes that that being has a nature. Consequently, the transcendentals are coextensive, that is to say that the notions echo in one another.⁶³

All this becomes relevant to our discussion since *truth* and *good* are transcendentals and consequently coextensive. It follows that the presented distinction between truth of the intellect and truth of the will needs to be echoed in the notion of *good*. This will offer us a transcendental avenue to consider the passions and specifically the relation between the passibility and impassibility of God. As opposed to the typical psycho-physical treatments of the passions and impassibility, a transcendental account will allow us to situate them within the most fundamental structure of reality.

Following Aristotle, Scotus maintains that the good and the perfect are the same.⁶⁴ Scotus distinguishes between two meanings of perfection. The first kind is what he calls intrinsic perfection or essential goodness that addresses a thing's form or essence and designates the integrity of the thing, i.e., the lack of imperfection. The second one, the extrinsic, designates perfection toward an end or a harmony with something else.⁶⁵ The first kind of goodness refers to the perfection of the thing as it exists. As such there is no sense in speaking of a contrary which is a thing in itself but rather only of a degree of perfection the thing is actualized in. Thus, under this kind of self-relating goodness, the perfection of the thing can be designated insofar as a thing is good or deprived of its perfection and so *non-good*; for example an apple can be measured as a more or less perfect apple. The same thing can be said about a man, who can be judged according to his perfection. Needless to say, Christ is perfect. The second goodness: an outcome, which is

⁶³ See my treatment of the transcendentals in Liran Shia Gordon, "Some Thoughts About Aquinas's Conception of Truth as Adequation," *The Heythrop Journal* 57, no. 2 (2016). For further discussion on the Transcendentals see J.A. Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought: From Philip the Chancellor (Ca. 1225) to Francisco Suárez*, vol. 107, Studien Und Texte Zur Geistesgeschichte Des Mittelalters (Brill, 2012); *Medieval Philosophy and the Transcendentals: The Case of Thomas Aquinas*, Studien Und Texte Zur Geistesgeschichte Des Mittelalters (Brill, 1996); Allan B Wolter, *The Transcendentals and Their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1946); John F. Wippel, "Truth in Thomas Aquinas (I)," *Review of Metaphysics* 43, no. 2 (1989).

⁶⁴ *Rep. Par.* 2, 34, 3 (Vivès, XXIII, 170). See in Wolter's *The Transcendentals and their Functions*, 121.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* See also Quaestiones Quodlibetales, q. 18, 9 [3] in Felix Alluntis and Allan B Wolter, *God and Creatures: The Quodlibetal Questions* (Washington: CUA, 1975), 400-1. and *Ord. IV*, d. 31, q. 1, n. 4 (Vivès, XIX:304).

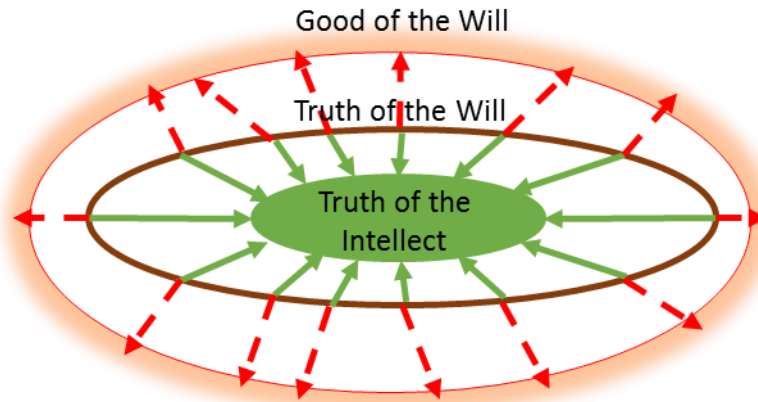
measured according to whether the desired good is attained or according to a desired harmony, has as a contrary a real possible outcome. So it follows that such a good “has evil as its privative opposite.”⁶⁶ The reason for that is that this kind of goodness is based upon an outcome which is desired, and in which exists, by definition, an opposing state of affairs which is considered bad. For example, if one desires to feed the poor and the outcome is that one couldn’t do that, what is manifested is evidently bad.

These two meanings of good as essential and intrinsic, and extrinsic good having an end or establishing harmonious relations with others, seem to match the distinction between truth of the intellect and truth of the will, respectively. The first, that can be called *good of the intellect*, corresponds to and measures the adequation between the thing and the immutable “divine” truths of its form. The second, that can be called *good of the will*, measures the adequation between the desired end and the external actuality.

Whereas good of the intellect and truth of the intellect have a plain measured relationship whereby the thing as it exists is equated with its form, the relationship between the good of the will and truth of the will is more complex. On the one hand, truth of the will is based upon the truth of the intellect, as when the 180° of the triangle presupposes the analytic nature of the triangle. On the other hand, the 180° are not simply chosen as a product of an arbitrary act of willing. It requires an external justification or a reason according to the desired end, for as we have seen in the second part, “he who wills in an orderly manner, intends first that which is nearer the end.”⁶⁷ Thus it follows that the truths of the will are co-derived from contingent desired goods, and from the necessary truths of the intellect that are disposed for use, like the concept of a triangle.

⁶⁶ *Rep. Par.* 2, 34, 3. (Vivès, XXIII:170)

⁶⁷ *Ord. III*, d. 7, q. 3, n. 58 (IX:284-85).



Moreover, these two types of good correspond differently to their actualization. Whereas good of the intellect presents a self-to-self adequation between the thing as it exists and the thing according to its nature, and so is utterly blinded to any externality, and consequently is impassible, the good of the will is by its nature passible since it is, by definition, intentional and so reaches out to the world in a manner that is sensitive to whether its desires are fulfilled or not. The transcendental analysis which distinguishes between the essential good of the intellect and the desirable good of the will, opens up an intentional sphere within the transcendental system that is logically passible insofar as it is, by definition, attenuated and quasi-conditioned by a pre-desired end. Though the discussion of the passions primarily revolves around the relation between our bodies and our minds, it is rooted not in our bodies nor in our psychological structure but is rather grounded within the logic that governs the most fundamental nature of thought, the transcendentals: a positive passion simply marks an adequation between a desired end which comes about while a negative passion marks a lack of adequation between the desired end and reality. Even without further elaboration, this transcendental account of the passions offers some food for thought for artificial intelligence scientists to grapple with what thinking is.

Let us summarize the maneuver that we have conducted in this part. The first section presented Richard Cross's relational account of the incarnation. Just as the earth is affected by the sun whereas the sun is unaffected by the earth, incarnation could be seen as a relationship whereby one side has an effect on the

other while the other remains unaffected and so immutable. However, such a view empties "the Incarnation of any real content" since it is the world that changes while God does not. In the second section, a so called Scotistic doctrine of truth was presented that distinguishes between truth of the intellect and truth of the will. This distinction was exemplified by the triangle where the analytical definition of the triangle as a polygon was distinguished from the contingent yet a priori truth of having 180° that is grounded in the geometry that the triangle is actualized in. Whereas the former kind of truth cannot suffer change, the latter can suffer "a sort of change" insofar as it can be actualized in different geometries. In the third section it was claimed that this understanding of truth can be used to present a new model of the incarnation that answers Cross's stalemate; for, just as Euclidean geometry actualizes the triangle in a specific manner, so we can consider the incarnation in the flesh to be a specific actualization of the divine nature. This reading thus divides the divine into a necessary element which is immutable and a contingent element that can suffer "a sort of change". Relying upon transcendental considerations, the fourth section extended the implication of the presented incarnation model from the realm of the truth to the realm of the good. This transcendental shift presented an intentional space within the logic of the transcendentals and a new avenue to consider an impassible and caring God who is transcendently disposed towards his creatures and creation.

Epilogue

It is clear that Christ as the incarnated *logos* is not a product of necessity but was rather desired by the Divine Will as a part of His desired good. Thus it follows that the incarnation of Christ, which can be seen both from a cosmological perspective as well as a human one, is an incarnation of the divine nature, and contingent truths of the will. Christ's contingent truths of the will can be taken according to Aquinas's view of the incarnation, which primarily sees Christ from man's point of view, or from the Scotistic perspective that sees Christ primarily from the cosmological-creationist point of view and only secondarily as a man. Be that as it may, it can be said that the incarnation of Christ is an incarnation of an impassible and necessary

nature that we designate as the divine nature, and a contingent and passible element of human nature as well as the physical nature of the cosmos. And this is what is called the human-cosmological nature. The assumption of human nature does not simply imply that God assumed a human body but most of all assumed humanity as a set of values and moral attitudes. Thus, whereas the divine part is indifferent to worldly matters, the human part is very concerned with worldly matters and passions such as joy or sorrow that accompany the correspondence between his disposition toward the world and the world as it is manifested to it.

The discussion, though centered around Christ's im/passibility and passions, can easily be modified to approach the body-mind problem since the essence of the problems is the same. For our lives are “acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence.”⁶⁸ The cosmological reading of the incarnation allows us to view the body-mind problem not as a problem between two natures but rather three, one which is necessary and eternal, the divine, and the other two, the human and physical natures, that are contingent, temporal and passible. Some might argue that the present account does not change anything in regard to the body-mind problem, for we still need to give an account of how the human and physical natures are brought together. This is evidently true. However, this paper is metaphysical in its nature and is not interested in exactly how things interact.⁶⁹ What this paper has tried to accomplish is to reduce the tension between the body and the mind. The classical body-mind problem does not have problems with the human and physical natures simply taken, but rather with the contradiction between what is eternal, infinite, indivisible, immutable, etc., and what is temporal, limited, divisible and mutable, etc. The account presented here has

⁶⁸ Creed of Chalcedon, translated by Schaff, *Creeeds of Christendom*, 62-3.

⁶⁹ An attempt to present a Scotistic mechanism was carried out in Liran Shia Gordon, "Matter, Place, and Being from a Scotistic Point of View: A Bypass to the Psycho-Physical Problem?," *Philosophy and Theology* 28, no. 1 (2016).

tried to show how such contradictory attributes can be incarnated, whereas the human and physical natures are placed on the same side, so they are not as alien as they were once thought to be.

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