On the metaphysics of the incarnation

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Abstract

This article aims to provide an elucidation of the doctrine of the Incarnation. A new 'reduplication strategy' and 'compositional model' is formulated through the utilisation of certain concepts and theses from contemporary metaphysics, which will enable the doctrine of the Incarnation to be explicated in a clear and consistent manner, and the oft-raised objections against it being fully dealt with.

Keywords Christology · Composition · Pluralism · Dualism · Ontology

Introduction

The nature of Christology and metaphysics

According to St. Thomas Aquinas, natural reason can fulfil an important role in the faith of a Christian believer. That is, as Aquinas (1948) (*ST* I, q.1, a.7, ad 2) writes, 'Since grace does not destroy nature but perfects it, natural reason should minister to faith as the natural bent of the will ministers to charity'. A way in which natural reason has been able to do this, within a contemporary context, is within the academic field of 'Analytic Theology' (AT), which has been pioneered by Swinburne (1994), Crisp and Rea (2009). AT, as a field of inquiry, focuses on utilising the tools and techniques of contemporary analytic philosophy to investigate the meaning and justification of theological doctrines. Christian AT, in particular, thus focuses on utilising the tools and techniques of contemporary analytic philosophy to investigate the meaning and justification of Christian doctrines. Traditionally, three particular doctrines have been at the centre of enquiry within this field: the doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation and Atonement. We can now focus our attention on the second doctrine: the Incarnation, which, in its historically precisified form, has been termed by Pawl (2016, 2019) 'Conciliar Christology'. At a more specific level, Conciliar Christology is the specific theological teaching that is derived from the central definitions

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and expositions of the creeds, canons, and anathemas of the first seven ecumenical councils (325 CE to 787 CE).[1] Central to the theological teaching found within these documents, with regards to the Incarnation, is that of the fact of God the Son (GS), the second person of the Trinity, intervening in human history by becoming incarnate in the person of Jesus of Nazareth (Christ). This specific doctrine was first formally defined at the Council of Chalcedon (451 CE), which established, through the 'Chalcedonian Definition', a conceptual and linguistic foundation centred on two constraints:

(1)	(Chal-cedon)	(i) At the moment of the Incarnation, GS became a human that was a single person (i.e., subject of experience)
		(ii) In his incarnate state, GS was truly (i.e., fully and genuinely) divine and truly (i.e., fully and genuinely) human

As articulated by (1), a doctrinally 'orthodox' understanding of the Incarnation necessitates, in adherence to the second condition, the acknowledgement that Christ possessed two distinct yet inseparably united natures: divine and human. In addition, such an 'orthodox' interpretation, conforming to the first condition, must assert that Christ existed as a singular entity—that is, a singular person or subject of experience (hypostasis). Over time, scholars have attempted to elucidate (1) in a manner that upholds the full divinity and humanity of Christ while maintaining the singularity of his personhood. Notwithstanding the extensive efforts invested in this endeavour, it has invariably presented challenges. That is, the elucidations offered tend to, on one side, excessively emphasise the distinction between the natures, leading to Nestorianism (i.e., the position that Christ is comprised of two distinct experiential subjects or persons: one divine and one human). On the other side, the explanations have excessively emphasised the confluence of the natures, leading to Eutychianism (i.e., the position that Christ's divine nature either 'mixes' with or in some manner 'swamps' his human nature). Therefore, the objective of an 'orthodox' or 'Conciliar' interpretation of the Incarnation is to clarify the nature of (1) without, however, fragmenting the singular person of Christ or amalgamating/confusing his two natures—let's call this demanding endeavour the *Clarification Task*.

Now, over the course of time, various theologians have identified a conceptual issue that forestalls one from completing the Clarification Task, which has been termed the 'Fundamental Problem'. The Fundamental Problem (FP) has been a focus of the work of Cross (2011), Morris (1989), Adams (2006), Swinburne (1994) and Pawl (2016). And it raises the issue of certain predicates that are aptly said of Christ—such as the candidate predications of 'Christ is impassible' and 'Christ is passible'—are inconsistent. And thus, given this inconsistency, irrespective of the Clarification Task, Conciliar Christology must be taken to be false. This logical problem can be expressed succinctly as follows:

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[1] For a magisterial introduction and defense of the various tenets of 'Conciliar Christology', see (Pawl, 2016, 11–28).

(2)	(Fundamental Problem)	By the action of GS becoming incarnate as Christ, the following predicates are apt of him:
		(i) Christ is: 'omniscient', 'omnipotent', 'omnipresent', 'eternal', 'infinite' and the 'creator of the universe'
		(ii) Christ is: 'limited in knowledge', 'limited in power', 'bounded by location', 'has a beginning in time', 'finite' and 'part of God's creation'

At a general level, any entity that possesses one divine nature and one human nature will have inconsistent predicates that are true of it and thus face the logical problem stated in (2). However, no entity can have inconsistent predicates that are true of it. And thus, any theory that takes this to be the case must be false. And thus, as Conciliar Christology, as defined by the Chalcedonian Definition, requires one to assert that Christ, a single being, does, in fact, possess a dual nature—that instantiates these incompatible attributes—it seems that the doctrine must indeed be incoherent, and thus false And so, in taking this issue of the FP into account, Hick (1977, 178) famously quipped that 'for one to say, without explanation, that the historical Jesus of Nazareth was also God is as devoid of meaning as to say that this circle drawn with a pencil on paper is also a square'. The task presented to the analytic theologian by the FP is thus that of providing an explanation that shows how the candidate predicates—and others like it—are not, in fact, incompatible in the case of Christ.

Now, in the field of AT, certain individuals have sought to accomplish the Clarification Task and deal with the conceptual issues raised by the FP by utilising the tools and techniques of contemporary analytic metaphysics. At a general level, metaphysics, as a central branch of analytic philosophy, concerns itself primarily with the fundamental nature of reality, and thus, one can conceive of metaphysics as a field that focuses on investigating the fundamental nature and structure of reality as a whole.[2] In doing this, metaphysics is thus an all-encompassing field—unlike that of the natural sciences that, only concerns itself with, for example, the physical structure of reality or the nature and workings of biological organisms. Metaphysics is thus in the service of answering 'ultimate questions', or the 'deepest questions' concerning reality, and thus delves into profound questions surrounding existence, objects and their properties, space and time, modality, causality, etc. Metaphysics is thus a vibrant and essential part of philosophy that pushes the boundaries of human understanding of the fundamental nature and structure of reality. On the basis of the wide scope and applicability of metaphysics, analytic theologians such as Adams (2006), Morris (1989) and Swinburne (1994), amongst many others, have seen the fruit of employing metaphysics within a Christological context to help deal with major issues that can be raised against the central Christian teaching expressed by (1). The article will thus follow suit in utilising certain metaphysical theses—namely, 'Ontological Pluralism', 'aspects', 'Non-Cartesian Substance Dualism', and the 'four-category ontology'—to formulate a methodology that can begin to (i) diffuse the issues raised by the FP and (ii) fulfil the Clarification Task. More precisely, how the FP can be dealt with is by utilising the theses of Ontological Pluralism and

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[2] For a detailed unpacking of the nature of metaphysics construed in this way, see (Lowe, 2002).

aspects to provide a reformulated version of the classical method of 'Reduplicative Predication' that seeks to demonstrate that the predicates that are apt of Christ are, in fact, not inconsistent. And how the Clarification Task can be completed is by formulating a particular 'model' of the Incarnation—where a 'model' of the Incarnation is one that provides a possible means by which the doctrine could, in fact, be true—and thus the teaching expressed by (1) will be able to be fully clarified, without falling into the issues of Nestorianism and Eutychianism. We will now focus on these issues and their proposed metaphysical solutions in turn.

The reduplicative strategy and the fundamental problem

The nature of the reduplicative strategy

The strategy of Reduplicative Predication (also known as the 'Qua' move) is a classical method of dealing with the FP, as attested to by its usage by Cyril of Alexandria in the fourth century when he wrote in his Second Letter to Nestorius:

> we say that he suffered and rose again, not that the Word of God suffered blows or piercings with nails or any other wounds in his own nature (for the divine, being without body, is incapable of suffering), but because the body which became his own suffered these things, he is said to have suffered them for us (Tanner, 1990, 42).

Moreover, this strategy also finds its roots in the conciliar documents themselves—specifically that of Chalcedonian Definition—where it states that Christ was 'begotten before the ages from the Father *as regards his divinity*, and in the last days the same for us and for our salvation from Mary, the virgin God-bearer, *as regards his humanity*' (Tanner, 1990, I 86, emphasis added). For Cyril, and the formulators of the Chalcedonian Definition, it is 'qua' the assumed human nature that Christ suffers and is begotten of the Virgin Mary, and 'qua' the divine nature that he is incapable of suffering and is begotten of the Father. Reduplicative Predication (RP) thus provides a specific way in which one can begin to address the FP by focusing on the ways in which the apt predications are made of Christ. This method for dealing with our problem can thus be stated succinctly as follows:

| (3) | (Reduplication) | Christ *qua* his human nature is P, and Christ *qua* his divine nature is ~ P |

The method of RP predicates attributes to Christ based on his divine or human nature—such that one can logically predicate opposing predicates to the same individual, with respective to a certain nature, which thus diffuses any incoherence issues. However, a challenge, termed the 'underdevelopment issue', can be raised that questions the clarity of statements like 'Christ qua divine is impassible' versus 'Christ qua human is passible', as Pawl (2016, 120) suggests this approach seems superficial and only addressing this issue at a linguistic level, and thus lacks metaphysical depth. However, Pawl (2016, 24–30) also offers further clarity on the role

of 'qua' clauses in RP, through the Subject (S) method, which can be stated succinctly as follows:

(4)	(Reduplication (S))	Christ-qua-Human is P, and Christ-qua-Divine is ~P

Using the (S) method of RP, 'Christ is passible qua human' is now reframed as 'Christ-qua-human is passible', and 'Christ is impassible qua divine' becomes 'Christ-qua-divine is impassible'. This posits the existence of distinct subjects: Christ-qua-divine and Christ-qua-human, with each referring to Christ's respective natures. And thus, by doing so, the contradictions seem eliminated. However, despite this initial success, this contradicts Conciliar Christology, which insists that both divine and human attributes of Christ refer to a singular entity. As highlighted by Pawl (2016, 128), both attributes must relate to 'Christ simpliciter'. Hence, the (S) method may not align with Conciliar Christology unless it can both address the contradiction and correspond to conciliar teaching. And thus, this is where contemporary metaphysics can come in with the thesis of Ontological Pluralism and the concept of an 'aspect', which will potentially offer a way to deal with the FP, whilst also reconciling (S) with Conciliar Christology.

The nature of the ontological pluralism and aspects

Ontological Pluralism (OP), as developed by McDaniel (2009, 2017) and Turner (2010), posits that there are diverse, irreducible 'ways' or 'modes' of being. This means that entities can exist in different manners, represented by various distinct existential quantifiers. Yet, these entities are still taken to possess what is termed a 'generic existence'. In contrast, the notion of an 'aspect', introduced by Baxter (2016, 2018), is invoked within the context of 'qualitative self-differing', where an entity qualitatively differs from itself. Focusing our attention now on OP, the following two central tenets of this thesis are as follows. First, *ways of beings*: at the heart of the idea of a 'way of being' is the fact that an entity's specific ontological kind dictates *how* it exists. Consider numbers and tables; they differ ontologically—as while numbers fall under the abstract category, and thus exist in a certain way (such as being non-spatiotemporal), tables, on the other hand, are concrete, and exist in a distinct way (such as being spatiotemporal). This differentiation suggests that they exist in varying manners and ways—rather than that of a single manner and way. An adherent of OP thus posits the existence of multiple ways of being in order to account for the different types of entities that display distinct features from one another. This contrasts with Ontological Monism (OM), which proposes a singular way of being for all entities. Turner (2010) clarifies OP using a pegboard analogy, illustrating different ontological structures and properties. This can be illustrated in Fig. 1. as follows:

Monists view reality as one pegboard with interconnected pegs (entities) and bands (properties, relations). Pluralists envision multiple pegboards for different entities and ways of being. In OM, abstract and concrete entities coexist on a single pegboard, while in OP, they occupy different pegboards (Turner, 2010). Thus, as is
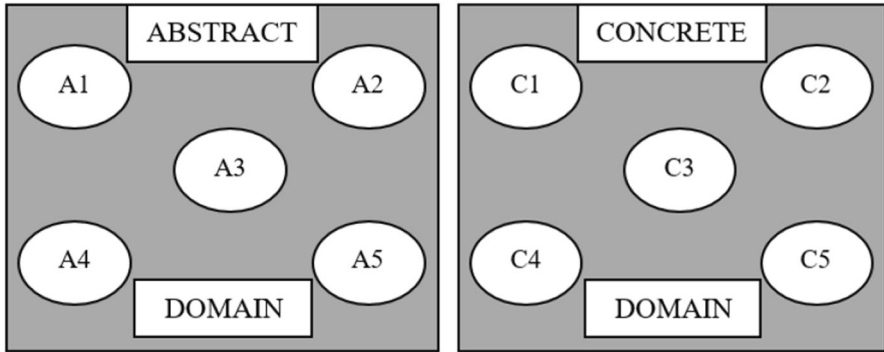
Fig. 1 Ontological Structure: Pegboard (i)

expressed by this particular analogy, the different ways of being featured within the framework of OP correspond to *different structures or domains of reality*.

Second, *elite quantifiers*: right at the intersection of existence and existential quantification lies the concept of 'elite quantifiers'. OP challenges the monistic view of a single existential quantifier ('∃'), instead positing the existence of several. These elite quantifiers are considered 'semantically primitive' and integral in carving out distinct domains of reality. For example, while one quantifier might be tailored to abstract entities ('∃a'), another might be suited for the concrete realm ('∃c'). This is rooted in Sider's (2011) extension of Lewis' (1983) 'perfect naturalness', implying these quantifiers 'carve nature at its joints'. So, abstract and concrete entities, having unique ways of being, can be expressed using distinct elite quantifiers, each semantically primitive and deeply indicative of nature's intrinsic structure. Having laid out the foundational components of OP, we can now turn our attention to the notion of an aspect.

The concept of 'aspect' focuses on qualitative self-differing, which can be illustrated as follows: let's say that there is an individual, David, who is a philosophy professor and a father. David faces a dilemma: he has a pending keynote speech for a philosophy conference, but he also promised his children, Jacob and Melissa, a camping trip for their A-level achievements. David, the dedicated professor, wants to prepare for the conference. Conversely, David, the committed father, wants to reward his children. David is in a situation of qualitative self-differing—and it's the notion of an aspect that can be taken to bring further light to the situation—as the conflicting desires of David do not represent David, but rather David's two aspects—the nature of which we will need to flesh out more later. Nevertheless, we thus have a motivation in place for positing the existence of aspects within these types of qualitative self-differing scenarios (and many others). Semantically, aspects use qualifiers like 'insofar as'—which, for precision, we can follow Turner (2014, 227) and use formalisation with aspect terms like '$a_y[\varphi(y)]$—and ontologically, they represent individual ways of being, which aligns with OP's core thesis. Unlike mere properties, aspects are abstract entities, numerically identical to their bearer but differing qualitatively. Moreover, it functions as the bearer's particular way of being, is

expressed through nominal qualifiers like 'insofar as', and is distinguished through aspectual distinction—that is, a distinction that picks out an aspect through nominal qualification.

With this understanding to hand, the example of David's dilemma can be formally articulated as follows: we can represent 'David as a philosopher' and 'David as a father' as two numerically identical but qualitatively distinct aspects, and use the aspect terms: $David_y[_y$ is a philosopher], which signifies 'David *insofar* as he is a philosopher', and $David_y[_y$ is a father], which represents 'David *insofar* as a father'. And thus, we now take it to be the case that it is $David_y[_y$ is a philosopher] that does not want to camp, and $David_y[_y$ is a father] that does want to camp. While at face value, these seem contradictory, however, the nominal qualification used here actually removes the explicit contradiction. For instance, $David_y[y$ is a philosopher] may not wish to camp, but this doesn't mean David, unqualified, feels the same. Aspects ensure there's no contradiction in such cases. There is thus a blocking of the *secundum quid ad simpliciter inference* expressed in an aspectival context, which means that just because an aspect of a complete individual is a certain way, it doesn't also mean the individual unqualifiedly is that way. Furthermore, every aspect is numerically identical to a complete individual—such that, for David, both his philosopher and father aspects are identical to him and to each other. This highlights how an individual can possess multiple, numerically identical but qualitatively differing aspects.

The challenge emerges with Leibniz's Law (Indiscernibility of Identicals)—which states that numerically identical entities must share qualities. Yet, aspects seem to violate it, as numerically identical entities can differ qualitatively. Baxter (2018) counters this, however, suggesting the law might not universally apply, distinguishing between versions for complete and incomplete entities. Aspects only challenge the latter, and thus commitment to aspects requires a nuanced view of Leibniz's Law—with a distinction being able to be drawn between the 'Indiscernibility of Identical Individuals' (i.e., if x is numerically identical with y, then for any quality F, F is possessed by x if and only if it is possessed by y) and the 'Indiscernibility of Identical Aspects' (i..e., if x is numerically identical with y, then for any quality F, an aspect numerically identical with x has it if and only if an aspect numerically identical with y has it). Aspects do not oppose the *Indiscernibility of Identical Individuals*, which remains silent on aspects. That is, identicals unqualifiedly are indiscernible, but qualifiedly might be discernible. Non-contradictory internal negation suggests Leibniz's Law doesn't necessarily apply to aspects. For instance, entities referred to by '$David_y[_y$ is a father]' (David insofar as he is a father) aren't the complete individual but aspects. Off of this, one can distinguish between 'aspectival reference' (a reference to aspects) and 'singular reference' (a reference to complete entities). And it is singular reference that isn't sensitive to aspectival differences. Leibniz's Law, in its original sense, includes all complete entities but not the incomplete entities numerically identical to some of them. Thus, Leibniz's Law doesn't prevent numerically identical aspects from being qualitatively different. That is, by being committed to the existence of aspects, it does not require that one reject Leibniz's Law outright—only an *unrestricted* understanding of Leibniz's Law that encompasses both complete and incomplete entities. Specifically, one only
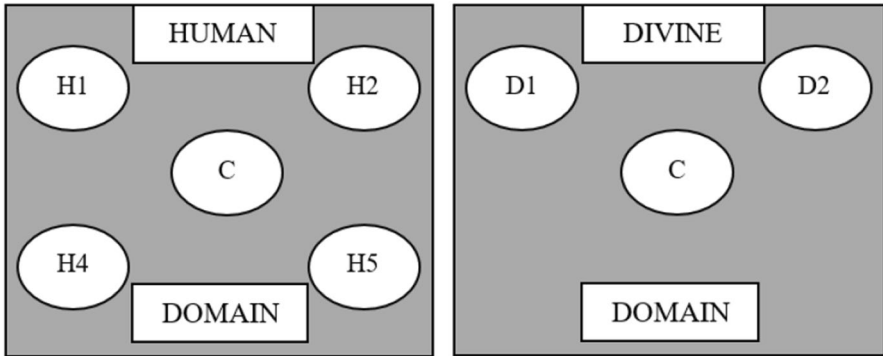
Fig. 2 Ontological Structure: Pegboard (ii)

transgresses Leibniz's Law when taken as both the Indiscernibility of Identical Individuals *and* the Indiscernibility of Identical Aspects. Leibniz's Law, thus, doesn't necessarily apply to aspects, making it feasible to posit the existence of numerically identical yet qualitatively differing aspects. Taking this all into account, we thus have a metaphysical foundation for a further precisification of the (S) method of the RP strategy. Taking this all into account, we thus have a metaphysical foundation for a further precisification of the (S) method of the RP strategy.

A contemporary reduplicative strategy

As noted previously, Conciliar Christology posits that Christ possesses two distinct natures: a divine and a human nature. Accordingly, specific incompatible predicates are thus apt of Christ's nature—for instance, Christ 'is impassible' and Christ 'is passible' are both apt of Christ in virtue of his dual nature. This dichotomy raises the FP, as no entity can possess contradictory attributes. To counter this, the RP strategy is employed, ascribing each contradicting predicate to its respective nature: Christ-qua-human is passible, and Christ-qua-divine is impassible. While this offers a linguistic solution, critics argue it lacks metaphysical depth and/or does not align with Conciliar Christology, thus urging for a more robust methodology that addresses the inherent inconsistencies.

By introducing the thesis of OP, one might indeed have found some help. Within this metaphysical framework, reality includes within it various ontological structures—for example, an abstract and concrete structure—but also, within a theistic context, a human and a divine structure. These structures can again be visualised using pegboards, where each peg symbolises entities within that ontological domain. We can illustrate this in Fig. 2. as follows:

Within this framework, as Christ has two natures, he exists with *two ways of being*, a divine and human way of being, and exists in *two ontological structures*: a divine and human ontological structure. That is, Christ exists humanly ('∃h') in the human structure and divinely ('∃d') in the divine structure. So, on the basis of the different ways of being that are had by Christ, we take the qua-clauses utilised by the

method of RP to pick out these two ways of being, which allows us to re-construe (S) as follows:

(5)	(Reduplication (S$_1$))	Christ-qua-human way of being is P, and Christ-qua-divine way of being is ~ P

This differentiation avoids contradiction, in a metaphysically substantial way, by recognising Christ's distinct modes of existence, and aligning each of the apt predicates to these modes of existence. Thus, with this perspective in hand, one can see how the contradictions actually arose in the first place, which is due to the fact that one has assumed that Christ possesses only a *singular way of being within a singular ontological structure*. This assumption would force one to accept the paradox of Christ being both passible and impassible simultaneously. However, through OP, which acknowledges Christ's existence in multiple ontological structures—with corresponding ways of being—no contradiction emerges. Christ is passible through his human way of being, and in the human domain ('$\exists h$'), and impassible in his divine way of being, and the divine domain ('$\exists d$'). Consequently, RP transforms from just a linguistic tool to a metaphysical strategy, successfully sidestepping the FP. Yet, a challenge remains—namely, that of ensuring correspondence with the Conciliar position that predicates about Christ reference a singular entity. The next task for the analytic theologian is thus that of further precisifying this method to align closely with traditional Conciliar views, which can be done through further utilisation of the notion of 'aspects' in the Christological context, ultimately allowing one to address the correspondence issue and re-affirm the fact of the FP not undermining Conciliar Christology.

On the basis of the RP strategy that has been just elucidated, Christ has two natures, divine and human, existing in distinct ontological structures with respective ways of being. This allows the predicate 'is impassible' to be ascribed to Christ's divine nature, and way of being, and 'is passible' to his human nature, and way of being. This addresses the contradictory nature of these predicates. However, we can take a step further by reconstruing all of this now within an aspectival framework as follows:

(6)	(Reduplication (S$_2$))	Christ$_y$[$_y$ is divine] is P, and Christ$_y$[$_y$ is human] is ~P

This approach is based on the notion that Christ has distinct 'aspects' corresponding to his two natures and ways of being. These aspects aren't mere properties but are qualitatively differing abstract particular entities that are numerically identical to Christ. While Christ exists as a complete entity, his aspects are incomplete, dependent entities. Each aspect represents a way in which Christ exists, derived from his dual natures—and the ontological structures that he is a part of. By this interpretation, 'Christ$_y$[y is divine] is impassible' thus means that Christ, in his divine aspect, is impassible, while 'Christ$_y$[y is human] is passible' indicates that Christ, in his human aspect, is passible. The contradiction arises if one claims that Christ, as a singular entity, is both impassible and passible. But, using the concept of aspects, one can qualify the predicates in relation to Christ's distinct ways of being: Christ$_y$[y is divine] and Christ$_y$[y is human]. The use of qualifiers, like 'insofar as,' prevents

direct contradictions, as instead of stating Christ is simultaneously impassible and passible, it's specified that Christ's divine aspect is impassible and his human aspect is passible. The contradiction is thus negated by specifying the context in which each predicate is valid. Furthermore, both aspects, though distinct in qualities, are *numerically identical* to Christ:

(7)	$Christ = Christ_y[y \text{ is divine}]$ and $Christ_y[y \text{ is human}]$.

This means Christ, in his divine or human way of being, is still Christ. And, due to the transitivity of identity, the two aspects are also identical:

(8)	$Christ_y[y \text{ is divine}] = Christ_y[y \text{ is human}]$.

In this aspectival context, Christ can be understood in multiple ways without inconsistency. There is one Christ, identical to two aspects that are also identical to each other. Thus, Christ's possession of two ways of being, which informs the predicates ascribed to him, is seen as possessing two qualitatively different, yet numerically identical, aspects. This aspectival distinction allows for the recognition of two qualitative aspects within Christ. Yet numerically, there's just one entity: Christ, viewed differently in a qualitative sense. Thus, within the metaphysical picture painted here, the predicates related to Christ's human nature and way of being (e.g., 'is passible') and divine nature and way of being (e.g., 'is impassible') are ascribed to the same entity, without contradiction. This *aspectival* RP strategy thus provides a means for one to deal with the FP, and it is able to do this whilst still staying true to the teaching of Conciliar Christology. It will be important to now turn our attention to how one can also utilise contemporary metaphysical notions and theses to help one also fulfil the Clarification Task.

The compositional model and the clarification task

The nature of the compositional model

The primary strategy posited here for fulfilling the Clarification Task is through formulating a philosophical 'model' that seeks to demonstrate how the theological teaching expressed by (1) could, in fact, be true. One prominent set of models within the contemporary literature is that of 'compositional' models, which have recently been championed by a number of analytic theologians such as Crisp (2007, 2009, 2011), Pawl (2016, 2019, 2020), Leftow (2002, 2011a, 2011b), Stump (2011), Loke (2014), Flint (2011) and Hasker (2017). At a general level, a compositional model (CM) is what Hill (2011) terms a 'relational account' of the Incarnation. In that, it is an account that postulates that GS *became related* to a human X—rather than transforming into X. In other words, GS become incarnated as a human (i.e., took on X) by entering into a specific relationship with a human being that *would have* been a fully endowed being if it was not for that relationship (Leftow, 2011a). Thus, as Crisp (2009, 56) notes, according to this account, GS 'assumes a concrete

particular at the first moment of the incarnation comprising a human body + soul'.[3] One can thus state the central tenets of this model more succinctly as follows:

(9)	(Compositional model)	(i) At the moment of the Incarnation, GS became a part of Christ, who was a single person
		(ii) In his incarnate state, Christ was a whole consisting of three parts: GS + B [the particular human body that was assumed by GS] + S [the particular human soul assumed by GS]

Central to the CM is that of it positing a 'concrete' and 'three-part' Christology. For concreteness, Christ's human nature is viewed not as a 'property-pile' but as a concrete particular, a tangible entity with a rational soul. The three-part nature divides this particularity into three segments: GS, B, and S. Jesus' human nature, a blend of B and S, has a contingent relationship with GS. The Incarnation thus depicts GS adopting a human nature, becoming a composite entity: Christ, consisting of GS, B, and S, and thus this model aligns with the Chalcedonian and broader 'Conciliar' understanding, as highlighted by Pawl (2016, 18–20), and thus is rooted in the first seven ecumenical councils' teachings. However, even though this model is grounded within the conciliar tradition, it faces a number of issues—most pertinently that of them failing in the Clarification Task by falling into Nestorianism. Nestorianism, as noted previously, seemingly being two subjects of experience or persons in Christ, and thus Compositional Christology, as expressed by (9), failing to correctly model (1) by transgressing the second condition of the Chalcedonian Definition. That is, the specific claim, that in addition to taking on a B, GS also became (somehow) related to S brings with it a rather serious difficulty. As in the standard case, as noted by Senor (2007, 53, square parenthesis added), a 'human body and mind [S] combination composes a human person. So, one might think that the human body and mind [S] of Christ will compose a human person too'. This is indeed problematic as, if the B and S of Christ compose a person on their own, then it looks as though the CM will clearly be Nestorian through postulating that the action of God becoming incarnate was, in fact, the joining of two distinct persons. Adherents of the CM, such as Leftow (2002), have seen this problem and have provided responses centred around, firstly, the action of GS becoming incarnate at the moment of conception offsetting the production of the person that would have come about *if* GS was not joined to that particular body and soul. And, secondly, the principle that a person cannot be a proper part of another person. This is indeed an intriguing response; however, issues can, and have been, raised against it. So, not to dive into the debate itself, one can simply respond to this problem, by re-situating the CM within a different metaphysical framework. Specifically, rather than taking the CM to be one that is a *relational, three-part account*, one can instead

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[3] Flint (2011) differentiates between two compositional models: 'Model T' and 'Model A'. Model A, rooted in Bl. John Duns Scotus and supported by Crisp, Leftow, and Loke, views Christ as a whole with three parts: GS + B [body] + S [soul]. Conversely, Model T, linked to Aquinas and advocated by Stump, Hasker, and Pawl, sees GS as combining his divine substance with his human nature. As Arcadi (2018, 6) notes, in Model T, 'Christ' is identical to GS, who has 'added on or assumed an instance of human nature', implying an expansive rather than combinatory action as in Model A.

construe this model as *a transformational*, *two-part* account. More specifically, at a general level, a transformational account, as conceived of by analytic theologians such as Morris (1989), Swinburne (1994, 2008, 2011) and Plantinga (1999),[4] focuses on conceptualising the Incarnation of GS as that of a 'transformation', that draws parallels with natural metamorphoses like caterpillars turning into butterflies. In the Incarnation context, GS becomes human by adopting certain essential human properties, without forsaking his divine properties. Thus, instead of construing the CM as a 'Relational-Compositional Model', we can reconceive the CM as a particular type of transformational account, termed the 'Transformational-Compositional Model', which can now be started succinctly as follows:

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(10) (T-Compositional Model) (i) At the moment of the Incarnation, GS transformed into a human soul, and was related to the body of Christ

(ii) In his incarnate state, Christ was a whole consisting of two parts: S [the particular human soul that GS had transformed into], and B [the particular human body that was assumed by GS]

(iii) As a human soul, GS' nature was composed of two parts: a complete abstract divine nature, that included a set of abstract divine properties, and a complete abstract human nature, that included a set of abstract human properties. This soul possessed one concrete will that can be conceived of in two ways: in a divine way and in a human way

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Central to the Transformational-Compositional Model (TCM) is the notion of transformation (or metamorphosis), where an entity transforms into another entity by losing certain properties that it possesses and acquiring certain new properties. Thus, in the context of the Incarnation, the TCM is one that postulates that GS performed the action of becoming a human by being *transformed* into one. More specifically, the TCM postulates that in the Incarnation, GS actually *became* human through gaining some necessary and sufficient properties that make him into a human soul—without, however, ceasing to be divine. At the heart of the transformative action of the Incarnation is thus a specific conception of the *human nature* that was assumed by GS in the Incarnation—namely, there existing an *abstract* human nature, rather than a *concrete particular* human nature (i.e., a real, flesh and blood entity that is endowed with a rational soul), which GS began to possess at the moment of the Incarnation. That is, according to the adherents of the TCM, an abstract human nature is a set of *abstract* properties that are necessary and sufficient for being human—and thus provide one with a human way of 'thinking and acting'. Thus, in the Incarnation, according to the TCM, there are *two parts* to the person of Christ: GS, who has now been transformed into a human soul by acquiring a set of abstract properties, *and* a human body—both of which came into existence at the

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[4] Plantinga (1999, 184) sees this type of model to be identified as an acceptable interpretation of the conciliar model of the Incarnation. However, see Pawl (2016, 36–46) for an important argument against this identification.

Table 1 Central elements of the transformational-compositional model (1)

Action	Transformation	Transforming into a human soul
Nature	Abstract	Properties that are necessary and sufficient for being human

moment of the Incarnation.[5] We can illustrate the central tenets of the TCM through Table 1:

The TCM, rather than being a 'concrete' 'two-part' Christology' is an 'abstract' 'two-part' Christology, and thus, in the Incarnation, GS thus assumed an abstract nature in the sense of a human way of thinking and acting alongside that of a physical body. Moreover, through the Incarnation, in a similar manner to his thinking and acting, GS possessed a divided (or dual) will. However, this divided will is not to be construed as that of GS possessing a *concrete human will* and a *concrete divine will*—since being a single soul, GS would only possess a *single* concrete will. Instead, according to the TCM, GS possesses a single concrete will that has been (in some manner) divided into two 'aspects' by the Incarnation—a human aspect and a divine aspect—which the proponents of the TCM believe is sufficient to ground the fact of GS having two wills (i.e. *duothelitism*).[6] With the TCM, we have a clear explication of (1) that centres on the transformational action of GS and his acquisition of an abstract human nature and human body. Importantly, this specific model of the Incarnation is successful in *not* overstressing (i) of (1)—and thus not falling into Nestorianism—as the TCM posits the existence of solely *one* subject in Christ: GS. Furthermore, the TCM is also successful in *not* overstressing (ii) of (1)—and thus not falling into Eutychianism—as the TCM conceives of Christ as possessing *two* natures: a human nature—a set of abstract human properties—and a divine nature—a set of abstract divine properties, which is retained by GS after his Incarnation.

The TCM thus seems to be able to fulfil the Clarification Task; however, in doing so, it does face two important problems: the 'Transformation Problem' and the 'Assumption Problem'. Firstly, the Transformation Problem raises the question of how GS could become human without compromising his divinity, given transformation, in a general sense of the term, involves losing and gaining properties. A proponent of this objection would thus state that "GS, through his transformation, must have ceased to be divine by losing the divine properties and gaining the human ones that are necessary and sufficient for him being categorised as a human soul!" Secondly, the Assumption Problem raises an issue concerning GS's human nature in Incarnation. According to the TCM, GS adopts an abstract human nature, essentially gaining a new way of 'thinking and acting'. This conflicts with traditional conceptions where human natures aren't just property sets but are substantial entities—'real

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[5] In Church History, two-part models are often associated with Apollinarius of Laodicea, who suggested Christ had two parts, with GS replacing the human soul. However, the TCM diverges from Apollinarianism, as GS *becomes* a human soul embodied within a physical body, rather than replaces it—such that Christ does have a human soul: identified as GS.

[6] With the term 'aspect' here not being understood in the same way as the usage of the term before.

flesh and blood entities'. Moreover, as the TCM takes GS to have a single concrete will—with two aspects—rather than two concrete wills, it seems as if GS did not assume a true human nature. Now, addressing these challenges requires refining the TCM's ontology in light of contemporary metaphysics—which will be done by integrating it with Jonathan Lowe's philosophical framework. This would thus position GS's transformative process as a 'kenotic' type of model, that centres on a certain type of 'self-emptying'. Yet, unlike traditional kenoticism, this interpretation allows Christ to remain divine—with all his divine properties in tow (and without one having to posit suspicious—and thus provides a pathway to address the TCM's challenges and finally fulfil the Clarification Task.

The nature of the non-cartesian substance dualism and the four category ontology

Non-Cartesian Substance Dualism (NCSD), introduced by Lowe (2008, 2018), is a form of interactionist substance dualism, that posits the existence of two related substances: a person (or self) and a body. NCSD defines a person as a simple psychological substance—a conscious subject distinct from but closely related to a physical substance (the body). Substances, in general, are persisting objects with properties that can change over time. There are two types of substances posited by NCSD: psychological and physical. Psychological substances bear mental attributes and have distinct psychological laws governing their existence. That is, they are subjects of varied experiences, including sensory, cognitive, and introspective states. Physical substances, such as the human body and its components (e.g., brain cells), bear physical properties. Cartesian Substance Dualism (CSD) asserts that entities bearing mental properties are inherently immaterial and separate from those with physical properties. In contrast, NCSD suggests that a person, although a psychological entity, can have physical attributes, aligning with our intuition of humans occupying space with specific physical properties like shape and size (Lowe, 2008). Yet, identity is rooted in being a subject of experience, not merely being a biological entity, emphasising the distinction between a person and a body. In NCSD, persons experience cognitive states like thoughts and emotions, but they also have physical traits. Differentiating from physicalism and CSD, NCSD presents a person as an experiential subject not identical to the body but not entirely separated either. Moreover, contrary to CSD in particular, persons under NCSD are not complex entities but simple substances, not equivalent to their bodies. The connection between a person and the body is termed 'embodiment', which is analogous to the relation between a statue and its composing bronze (Lowe, 2018). While not perfect, this comparison illustrates two entities being distinct but deeply intertwined, sharing properties like shape and size. We can thus illustrate in Fig. 3. the thesis of NCSD as follows:

In essence, NCSD posits two unique substances: a person (with both physical and psychological properties) and a body (with solely physical properties). They're distinct due to differing persistence conditions, with the embodiment relation connecting them. The person, as a non-composite entity, grounds the unity of consciousness and isn't necessarily detachable from the body. We can now further extend Lowe's

Fig. 3 Non-Cartesian substance dualism
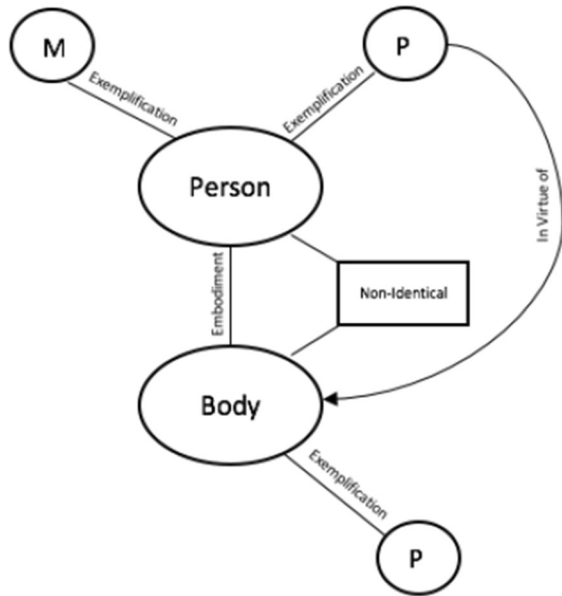
conception of a person here by employing Baker's (2013) notion of a 'first-person perspective'. According to Baker (2013), the essence of a person lies in their 'first-person perspective', which is a property or attribute that is possessed (exemplified) by an individual and that comes in two forms: a rudimentary form, akin to basic consciousness, and a robust form that embodies self-awareness through a self-concept—a concept of oneself from one's own point of view. Thus, a self-concept, such as 'I'm glad that I am a father', manifests an individual's robust first-person perspective—it attributes to oneself a first-person reference. Thus, the possibility to conceive of as oneself in the first-person through the use of a self-concept is the primary dividing line between a rudimentary and a robust first-person perspective. A person, within the framework of NCSD, can thus be taken to be one that bears a robust first-person perspective— it has the ability to conceive of oneself as oneself, in the first-person—which is necessary and sufficient for the substance that bears it to be classed as a person. On the basis of this explication of NCSD—and extension of it through the notion of a first-person perspective—we can now turn our attention to the second metaphysical framework that will aid us in our task: the four-category ontology.

The four-category ontology is a formal neo-Aristotelian categorial ontology, which seeks to provide a metaphysical basis for the natural sciences. At the heart of this framework lie four cross-categorial fundamental ontological categories, which we can understand as follows: first, objects, or substances, are particular entities that possess properties, and are distinct in their existence and identity conditions. Unlike other entities within the other categories, objects do not derive from or belong to other entities, and are characterised by modes while being instances of kinds—which signifies an object's rigid dependence on these kinds—and exemplify attributes.

Second, Kinds, or substantial universals, serve as second-order objects where membership is predicated upon definitive identity and existence conditions. These conditions outline the essence or identity of its members, being the 'blueprint' of what defines membership in a kind. Noteworthy is a given kind's identity being dependent upon attributes, and their non-rigid dependency on particular objects—a dependency that suggests kinds do not mandate a specific entity's existence but necessitates entities that exhibit particular traits. Third, Attributes, or non-substantial universals, represent universal ways entities exist. While they parallel objects in some ways, they have modes as instances, and non-rigidly depend on kinds.[7] Third, Modes stand as particularised properties or entities' distinct manners of existence—they define how an entity exists in a particular fashion. Moreover, they are instances of attributes, rigidly depending on them, and are identity dependent on the objects of which they are modes. Closely related to the notion of an attribute and mode is that of a 'power'. Powers, within the four-category ontology, enable objects to act and manifest specific actions, and can be distinguished as 'token powers' or 'power types', each of which is defined by its manifestations and bearers. Powers can be categorised further into causal/non-causal and active/passive; however, what is important for our task is that of Lowe (2013) conceiving of a human will as a unique 'two-way power', that is, active, non-causal, spontaneous, and influenced by rational considerations.

For the four ontological categories as a whole, one can see that these categories gain clarity via three dependence relations: rigid-existential dependence (e.g. the existence of an object requires the existence of a kind), non-rigid existential dependence (e.g., the existence of an attribute requires the existence of some mode), and identity-dependence (e.g., the identity of a mode requires the existence of a particular object), and are further fleshed out by formal ontological relations such as instantiation (i.e., kinds are instantiated by objects and attributes are instantiated by modes), characterisation (i.e., objects are characterised by modes and kinds are characterised by attributes), and exemplification (i.e., attributes are exemplified by objects).[8] For the latter type of relation, exemplification, a distinction can be made within the four-category ontology between the 'dispositional' and 'occurrent 'exemplification of an attribute, where a given object *dispositionally* exemplifies an attribute by it instantiating a kind, that is, in turn, characterised by an attribute.[9] Conversely, an object *occurrently* exemplifies an attribute by it being characterised by a mode that then, in turn, instantiates an attribute. These distinct forms of dependence, and the different relationships that hold between the categories form the basis of

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[7] It's important to note that Lowe's (2006) framework leans towards immanent realism, emphasising that attributes must always be instantiated, negating the possibility of un-instantiated attributes.

[8] For a further explication of the nature of these ontological relations, see Lowe (2006).

[9] It is important to emphasise here the fact that dispositionality, within the four-category ontology, is not equivalent to potentiality, but rather is a shorthand for the state of affairs (expressed by a certain type of predication) of a particular object (i.e. individual substance) instantiating some kind which is characterised by certain attributes. There is thus a terminological mix-up if one mistakenly takes the term 'dispositional' to be equivalent to 'potential' (which indicates that the object under question does not really 'possess' the attribute under question) as, again, dispositionality revolves around a way in which an individual substance can be related ontologically to an attribute, and this way (rather than the occurrent way) provides the identity conditions for that specific substance.
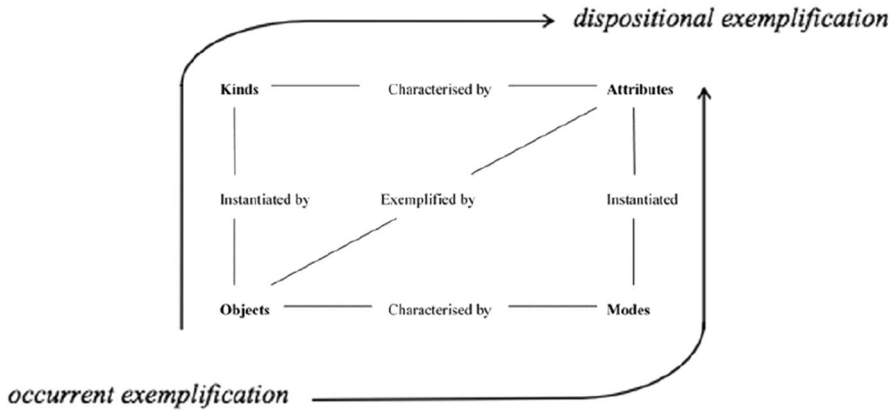
Fig. 4 Ontological Square (Version 1)

Lowe's 'Ontological Square', which is helpful in visually expressing the central elements of the four-category ontology, and thus can be expressed through Fig. 4. as follows:

The four-category ontology is thus a nuanced framework mapping out the interplay and nature of diverse entities, enriched with various dependence and formal ontological relations, that underpin a deep ontology for the natural sciences, as with the theological realm, which will be shown now. And thus, with the metaphysical theses of NCSD and the four-category ontology in hand, we can now focus on addressing the issues that were raised against the TCM.

A contemporary compositional model

The TCM account posits that the GS became a human by transforming into one, without, however, ceasing to be divine. In now further explicating the nature of this type of account through the thesis of the NCSD—which we can term the Transformational-Compositional Model Two (TCM$_2$)—we can re-construe the TCM account as follows:

(11)	(T-Compositional$_2$)	(i) At the moment of the Incarnation, GS transformed into a human 'person' (or subject of experience) and became intimately related, through a relation of embodiment, to the organised physical body of Christ
		(ii) In his incarnate state, Christ was a whole consisting of two parts: P [the particular human person that GS had transformed into], and B [the particular human body that was assumed by GS]
		(iii) As a human person, GS's nature was composed of two parts: a complete abstract divine nature and a complete concrete and abstract human nature, that included a concrete particular that possessed a set of abstract human properties. This person had two concrete wills: a divine concrete will and a human concrete will

TCM$_2$ posits that the act of the Incarnation is focused on GS's transformation into a human 'person', that is distinct from his organised physical body. In this

state, GS has psychological attributes— both sensory experiences and cognitive states—while connected to a physical entity. Importantly, GS's mental experiences are not synonymous with his body's physical states. Instead, his cognitive and emotional states belong to him and interact with his body through a unique embodiment relationship. Moreover, GS has a robust first-person perspective such that he has the ability to think of himself as himself in the first-person—which allows him to be classed as a person. Thus, the TCM_2 differentiates between two substances post-incarnation: GS, with both physical and psychological properties (and a robust first-person perspective), and his organised physical body, with only physical attributes.

Now, in dealing with the Assumption Problem, this model is able to keep this issue at bay as GS does not assume an incomplete human nature; rather, here, GS becomes a fully-fledged human—and thus has a concrete human nature—which aligns with NCSD's definition of personhood. Hence, unlike the TCM of Swinburne and Plantinga, within the framework of the TCM_2, GS does not become human by only beginning to possess a human way of thinking and acting. Rather, GS becomes human by becoming a *human concrete particular*: a human person—a psychological substance with a robust first-person perspective—that is, first, intimately related to a particular human body and, second, who has, in virtue of this particular body, certain abstract (physical and mental) properties that are necessary and sufficient for being human. The TCM_2 thus conceives of the human nature that is assumed by Christ to be a concrete *and* abstract nature: a human person who is a real, flesh and blood entity, who possesses abstract (physical and mental) properties that render this person as human. Given this, we can thus provide a modification to our table through Table 2. that expresses the central tenets of the TCM_2:

TCM_2 is thus a concrete *and* abstract, two-part Christology. Moreover, one also has a means of addressing the Transformation Problem within this model, as, before the Incarnation, GS was solely a divine *immaterial* entity. However, through the Incarnation, GS underwent a transformation, losing certain attributes—specifically, his immateriality—and gaining certain attributes—which was that of becoming a material object (i.e., possessing certain physical attributes in virtue of being connected to an organised physical body). The gaining and losing of properties thus enables this account to affirm the fact of a real transformation having taken place in the Incarnation. And thus, again, contrary to the TCM, TCM_2 contends GS became human not merely by adopting human thinking but by wholly becoming a human entity—a human person—connected to a specific body that has essential human psychological and physical attributes. That is, *GS transforms from a divine person to a human person*. Importantly, however, in this transformation, GS is still the same person that he was prior to the Incarnation, by him continuing to possess the *same* robust first-person perspective in his incarnate state. Hence, there is only a change to the *type* of person that GS is in his incarnate state—divine person to human person—instead of a change to which person there is in this state. We can illustrate in Fig. 5. the schematic framework provided by the TCM_2 as such:

Yet, despite GS transforming from a divine person to a human person, the TCM_2 still wants to maintain the fact of GS *remaining divine in a certain sense*. However, a challenge remains: how can GS transform from a divine person to a human

Table 2 Central Tenets of Transformational-Compositional Model (2)

Action	Transformation	Transforming into a human soul
Nature	Concrete and abstract	A concrete particular that has properties that are necessary and sufficient for being human

person yet stay divine? To address this and related issues, we turn to Lowe's ontological framework. Thus, the metaphysical thesis of NCSD, which is at the basis of the TCM_2, lays the groundwork for addressing the Clarification Task, as now we can affirm the fact of GS becoming a human by transforming into a human person that was intimately related to a particular organised physical body—without, however, him ceasing to be divine. And for that latter clause (and for the nature of the wills possessed by Christ—which we have been so far silent about) we need some further metaphysical work to be provided to finally complete the task.

So, in explicating the nature of this type of account through the four-category ontology—let's term this further developed and precisified account the Transformational-Compositional Model Three (TCM_3)—we can now provide a final re-construal of the TCM account as follows[10]:

(12) (T-Compositonal₃)	(i) At the moment of the Incarnation, GS transformed into a human 'person' (i.e. a subject of experience) and became intimately related, through a relation of embodiment, to the organised physical body of Christ
	(ii) In his incarnate state, Christ was a whole consisting of two parts: P [the particular human person that GS had transformed into], and B [the particular human body that was assumed by GS]
	(iii) As a human person, GS's nature had two parts: a complete abstract divine nature, that included a set of non-substantial universals: the deity-attributes (that also included within it a divine concrete will (i.e. an active, non-causal power)), which he dispositionally exemplified. And a complete concrete and abstract human nature, that included a concrete particular that possessed a set of non-substantial universals: the human-attributes (that also included within it a human concrete will (i.e. an active, non-causal power)), that he dispositionally and occurrently exemplified

The TCM_3's foundation rests upon the four-category ontology, and so thus within this ontology, GS, post-transformation,[11] instantiates two kinds: Deity and Humanity. These kinds (i.e., kinds of *being*) have their membership determined by certain distinctive existence and identity conditions that are determinable a priori—where the conditions for a candidate being an *actual instance* of Deity could be that of them *being an entity that is (in some sense) necessary, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, perfectly free, perfectly good*, *the source of moral goodness, eternal, the creator of any universe that there is*, *holy and worthy of worship* (Swinburne, 2016). And the conditions for a candidate being an *actual instance* of Humanity,

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[10] The concreteness of this nature (featured in (ii)) is grounded on the intimate relation that GS has to his organised physical body.

[11] I will interchange between the terms 'post-transformation' and 'post-incarnation' without any change in meaning.
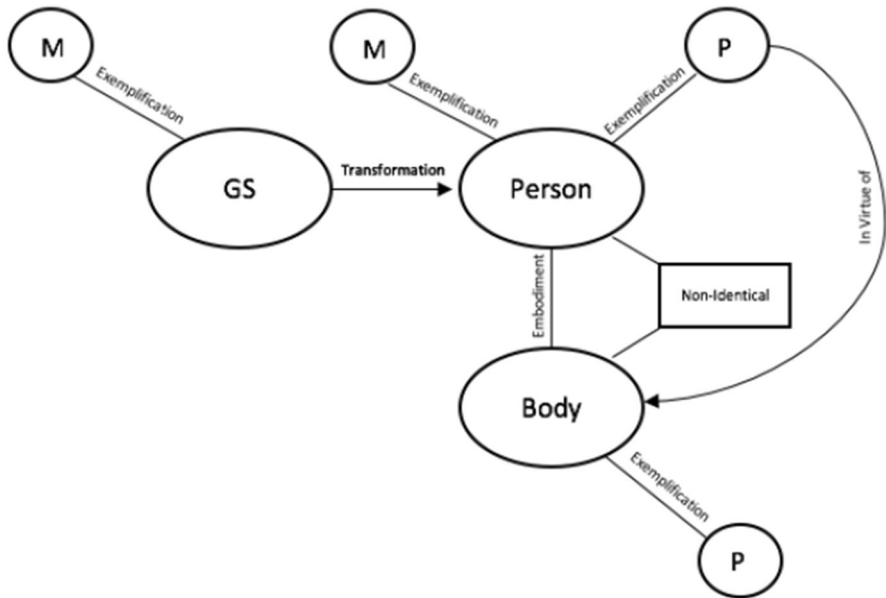
Fig. 5 Non-Cartesian Transformationalist Incarnation

could be that of them *being an entity that has (actually or potentially) certain limited powers of bodily control and knowledge acquisition through senses, being to some extent rational, and belonging to the same biological species as the other earth-inhabitants* (Swinburne, 2011). Thus, what members of the kinds Deity and Human *are*—that is, their nature (essence) or the very identity of those members—is determined by them instantiating those specific kinds. In addition to this, Deity and Humanity would also each be characterised by attributes—which we can term *D-attributes* (i.e., Deity-attributes) for Deity, and *H*-attributes (i.e., Human-attributes) for Humanity. D-attributes would be the collection of attributes essential for being a deity, such as *being an entity that is (in some sense) necessary, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent,* etc. And, H-attributes would be a collection of attributes essential for being human, such as *being an entity that has (actually or potentially) certain limited powers of bodily control and knowledge acquisition through senses, being to some extent rational,* etc. These attributes are essential 'features' or 'characteristics' of the kind Deity and the kind Humanity.

Now, prior to the Incarnation, GS was solely an instance of Deity, and exemplified all of the D-attributes dispositionally—through being an instance of Deity, which is then, in turn, characterised by the D-attributes—and occurrently—through being characterised by 'D-modes', which are, in turn, instances of the D-attributes.[12] However, post-Incarnation, a transformational shift becomes evident: GS begins

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[12] It is important again to emphasise that, within the four-category ontology, dispostional is not equivalent to potential, and thus the dispositional exemplficiation of a given attribute is a 'real' exemplifcation (possession) of it.

to instantiate two kinds: Deity *and* Humanity, and thus exemplifies *both* the D and H-attributes. However, of vital importance here is that of GS now only *dispositionally* exemplifying the D-attributes post-Incarnation—by being an instance of Deity, which is then, in turn, characterised by the D-attributes—and solely dispositionally *and* occurrently exemplifying the H-attributes—by, for the latter form of exemplification, GS being characterised by 'H-modes', which are, in turn, instances of the H-attributes. This transformation, however, doesn't signify an abandonment of GS's divine nature. As GS is still an instance of the kind Deity *and* exemplifies the D-attributes—albeit in a dispositional manner. Hence, even in his post-transformation phase, GS preserves his two natures—by being of two kinds and exemplifying two attributes. However, he has still transformed into a human person by *ceasing* to possess the D-modes—and thus ceasing to exemplify the D-attributes occurrently—and *begins* to possess H-modes—and thus begins to exemplify the H-attributes occurrently. We can illustrate in Fig. 6. the possession, and dispositional/occurrent exemplification, of these attributes by GS in his incarnate state as follows:

Consequently, GS, post-Incarnation, is thus related differently to the D-attributes and H-attributes—which are the attributes essential for an object *being* divine or *being* human—through GS *being* a deity-instance, that is instantiating Deity, and by him being characterised by H-modes (which are particular ways of *being* human). GS thus *changes* from being a particular object that is dispositionally and occurrently divine to now being a particular object that is, on the one hand, divine and human (i.e. is a deity and human-instance), yet, on the other hand, is solely occurrently a particular human. There is thus a change in *what* GS (dispositionally) is: divine to divine and human, and a change of *how* GS is (occurrently) characterised: divine to human.

In addition to all of this, GS, by being a concrete entity (i.e., a human person that is connected to an organised physical body) that exemplifies the D-attributes and H-attributes properties, he would also exemplify a set of powers that reside within each of these sets of attributes. That is, as a will is conceived of within this ontological framework as a power, these attributes would encompass both a human will and a divine will—the human will is a component of the h-attributes, while the divine will is part of the d-attributes. And each will is a unique power differentiated by its manifestation type, its bearer (GS), and the time it is possessed. Specifically, GS's human will is defined by its capacity to freely (spontaneously) perform human actions, while its divine will is distinguished by its capability to freely (spontaneously) perform divine actions. Now, the divine will, being part of the D-attributes, is dispositionally exemplified by GS—which means that it is a characteristic of Deity, which GS instantiates. In contrast, the human will, from the H-attributes, is occurrently exemplified by GS—and thus, it is not only a characteristic of Humanity instantiated by GS but also has direct instances, or H-modes, that characterise GS. Consequently, GS possesses two distinct wills: a divine and a human. These wills, being powers (and thus attributes and modes), are concrete and distinct entities that are individually exemplified by GS.

Taking all of this into account, we can thus see that the metaphysical theses of NCSD and the four-category ontology, when applied to the Incarnation, offer a comprehensive framework for conceiving of the dual nature that is possessed by Christ.
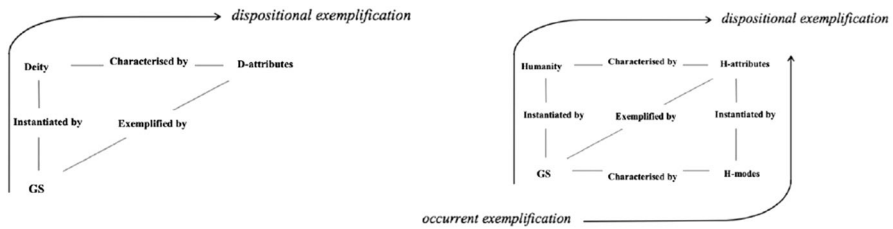
Fig. 6 Ontological Square (Post-Incarnation Exemplification)

And thus, the issues faced by the previous iterations of the model are not forthcoming as the TCM_3 is able to sidestep the Transformation and Assumption Problems, given that the transformative act of the Incarnation is able to be truly realised here as GS is able to truly transform into a (concrete) human 'person', that is intimately connected to an organised physical body—and this is able to be underwritten by the possession of the (abstract) h-attributes, which grounds the acquisition of a complete human nature. Moreover, irrespective of the transformation that takes place during the Incarnation, GS's dual nature remains post-Incarnation, on the basis of the consistent exemplification of the D-attributes—which ensures the continued possession of GS's divine nature. And one is also able to affirm the possession of two concrete wills by GS that are taken to be independent, spontaneous powers that are possessed (exemplified) by him in his incarnate state.

The christological proposal and exegetical strategy

Stages of the christological proposal

Now that we have detailed the nature of the TCM_3 and how it successfully fulfils the Clarification Task, it will be now helpful to adopt a bird's eye view on the two solutions to the issues facing the Incarnation—which we can now bring together and call the 'Christological Proposal'. The Christological Proposal can be expressed over the following two stages:

Stage 1—Precisifying Reduplicative Predication for the Fundamental Problem. The first stage of the Christological Proposal provides a logical-semantical analysis that aims to address the Fundamental Problem using Reduplicative Predication grounded in the metaphysical theses of Ontological Pluralism and aspects.[13] Ontological Pluralism proposes that there are multiple ontological structures of reality. This allows conceiving of Christ as existing in both a divine and human structure. Christ can thus be said to exist in different ways corresponding to each structure—in a divine way of being (and structure) expressed by '∃d' and in a human way of being (and structure) expressed by '∃h'. This differentiation of structures provides the basis to ascribe opposing predicates like 'impassible' and 'passible' to Christ

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[13] Given the use of these metaphysical concepts, this analysis provided in Stage 1, though focused on logic and semantics, is, nevertheless, metaphysically robust.

with respect to his divine or human nature, without explicit contradiction—not Christ 'is impassible' and 'is passible', but Christ in his divine way of being (and structure) 'is impassible' and Christ in his human way of being (and structure) 'is passible'. The strategy is further reinforced by utilising the metaphysical notion of aspects. Aspects are qualitatively distinct ways of being that are numerically identical to the entity they are aspects of—and thus aspects can be taken here to further correspond (and thus express) the central tenets of thesis of Ontological Pluralism, through a different metaphysical perspective. Christ is thus taken to have two aspects: a divine aspect and a human aspect. These aspects are qualitatively distinct—the divine aspect exhibits impassibility while the human aspect exhibits passibility—that is, Christy[y is divine] 'is impassible' and Christy[y is human] 'is passible'. Yet the aspects are numerically identical to Christ and each other—that is, Christ = Christy[y is divine] = Christy[y is human]. This identity while allowing qualitative difference enables ascribing contrary attributes to the different aspects without logical inconsistency. That is, the use of qualifiers specifying which aspect predicates refer to prevents contradictions about Christ simultaneously exemplifying opposing attributes. Instead, the context is qualified to clarify which aspect exhibits which attribute. By representing Christ's dual natures as distinct yet unified ways of being (expressing different ontological structures) and aspects, ascription of incompatible predicates can be logically reconciled. In other words, the qualitative difference of ways of being and aspects accounts for conflicting predicates, while the numerical identity of these aspects (and the ways of being expressed by them) upholds singularity of subject—which allows it to correspond with certain tenets of the Conciliar tradition. In this way, Ontological Pluralism and aspects provide the metaphysical basis to deal with the Fundamental Problem of attributing opposing predicates to Christ's personhood in a coherent manner, by framing the natures as unified ways of beings (structures) and aspects. Moreover, one is provided with the necessary conceptual groundwork that the second stage then builds on to construct a robust metaphysical model aiming to successfully complete the Clarification Task. In all, the metaphysical frameworks of Ontological Pluralism and aspects together provide a logical-semantic foundation through Reduplicative Predication that successfully deals with the Fundamental Problem of attributing apparently incompatible predicates to the singular person of Christ. As stage 1 has swept away the logical problem with the Incarnation—which for any truth claim will need to be addressed from the onset—one is now able to move on to Stage 2 to the more challenging task of 'model building', and thus fulfilling the Clarification Task.

Stage 2—Reformulating the Compositional Model for the Clarification Task. The second stage of the Christological Proposal provides a metaphysical analysis that builds on the analysis performed in Stage 1 and aims to fulfil the Clarification Task by further explicating the metaphysics behind the Chalcedonian Definition's view of Christ. In particular, the multiple ontological structures posited in Stage 1 give the ontological basis for Christ having the dual natures that are critical for Stage 2's Transformational-Compositional Model. The TCM_3, using the metaphysical framework of Non-Cartesian Substance Dualism, depicts GS transforming into a human person (i.e., a psychological substance) intimately related to an organised physical body, with a robust first-person perspective, at the Incarnation.

Meanwhile, the employment of the four-category ontology explicates the dual nature by showing Christ exemplifying both divine and human attributes after the Incarnation—with the concrete transformation that takes place centring on a changing occurrent exemplification of the Deity and Humanity-attributes—with Christ dispositionally exemplifying the Deity and Humanity-attributes—and thus him possessing a divine and human nature—and solely now occurrently exemplifying the Humanity-attributes—and thus him being a genuine human person, during his time on Earth, on the basis of this occurrent exemplification. This model provides a substantive mechanics behind the Incarnation while avoiding Nestorian and Eutychian deviations. That is, the TCM_3 manages to uphold unified personhood while also substantiating Christ's dual nature, allowing it to steer clear of Nestorian and Eutychian errors. In terms of Nestorianism, which claims Christ was two separate persons, as the TCM_3 has GS transforming into a human person at the Incarnation. There is one unified subject persisting through the transformation, rather than two divided subjects. The retention of personal identity, through the possession of the same robust first-person perspective, across the change from the exemplification of solely Deity-attributes to Deity and Humanity-attributes maintains numerical oneness and avoids a Nestorian separation into two persons or subjects of experience. Regarding Eutychianism, which asserts that Christ's human nature was absorbed or mixed into divinity, the TCM_3 has GS acquiring concrete human attributes while still retaining his divine attributes. This demonstrates both natures continuing intact post-incarnation without confusion or blending. Especially important is the shift to occurrent human exemplification, which demonstrates the reality and completeness of the assumed human nature rather than its negation. Together, these components allow the TCM_3 to substantiate traditional two-natures Christology in a metaphysically coherent manner that steers clear of Nestorian fragmentation and Eutychian absorption. Overall, by adopting the logical-semantic Reduplicative Predication approach from Stage 1 and the metaphysical TCM_3 here in Stage 2, the Fundamental Problem is warded off and the Clarification Task of providing a philosophically clear and consistent model of the Chalcedonian Definition's Christological vision is fulfilled. This is that Stage 1 resolves the logical issues surrounding the Incarnation in a way that enables Stage 2 to construct a substantive metaphysics of the Incarnation without those problems re-emerging. The metaphysical model of Stage 2 is thus built on the logical groundwork of Stage 1—while also enabling it to be enriched ontologically.

On the basis of the Christological Proposal, one is thus able to have a logically coherent and metaphysically robust account of the Incarnation. Moreover, the strong theological grounding of this proposal can be seen not only by its ability to ward off Nestorianism and Eutychianism but also that of the further influential heresy of Apollinarianism. Apollinarianism was an early Christological heresy forwarded by Apollinaris of Laodicea that held that, in Christ, GS took the place of the human soul or mind; hence, Christ had a human body but a divine mind. That is, the core tenet of this viewpoint was that in the person of Christ, GS, assumed the role typically reserved for his human soul or intellect. As a result, Christ was seen to be a composite being with a human body animated by a divine mind. Such a stance

precipitates the Assumption Problem, by implying that Christ's human nature was incomplete since he supposedly lacked a fully human mind—and thus, he did *not* take on a complete human nature through the Incarnation—thereby compromising the fullness of the Incarnation (and the atoning work of Christ—as the famous theological phrase of St. Gregory Nazianzen says "what was not assumed was not healed").

Importantly, however, one can see that the Christological Proposal can clearly avoid Apollinarianism in a couple of key ways: first, in Stage 1, the Reduplicative Predication strategy firmly establishes that Christ has *both* a divine nature and a human nature—due to the fact that it posits distinct ways and structures of being for each nature. This thus avoids the Apollinarian claim that Christ had only a divine nature—as Christ is a member of the divine *and* human structure, and has a divine *and* human way of being (with the membership within the human structure and the possession of a human way of being only being possible if Christ was, in fact, a complete human). Additionally, the aspects posited in Stage 1 that correspond to the natures of Christ reinforce the fact of him possessing both qualities—the divine aspect grounding divine attributes while the human aspect grounding human attributes. This thus also further substantiates the dual nature that was possessed by Christ. Second, Stage 2's TCM_3 posits GS transforming into a human person, and thus not replacing the human mind/soul, as Apollinarius claimed. This model conceptualises GS as undergoing a transformation to become truly and fully a human person, without the substitution or eradication of the human soul or intellect. This directly refutes the premise of Apollinarianism, as it affirms the existence of a fully functional human mind within the incarnate Christ. In addition to this, the incorporation of four-category ontology within this stage further solidifies Christ's human nature post-Incarnation. As the ontology presupposes that Christ indeed (dispositionally and occurrently) exemplifies human attributes, thereby demonstrating his unimpaired human nature. That is, the occurrent exemplification of the attributes necessary and sufficient for being human shows the assumed human nature of Christ to be genuinely actualised and expressed in the life of Christ.

Taking all of these things into account, Stage 1 establishes the logical coherence of Christ having two complete natures, while Stage 2 provides metaphysical support for the affirmation of the fact of the natures being truly present and not compromised à la Apollinarius. In other words, the integrated account of the Christological Proposal leaves no room for an Apollinarian reduction of Christ's humanity. The integration of these two stages establishes that the Christological Proposal robustly opposes Apollinarianism. That is, it clearly maintains the distinction and integrity of Christ's dual natures, enabling a comprehensive and coherent understanding of the Incarnation. The combination of Reduplicative Predication's logical precision in affirming two distinct natures, alongside the metaphysical richness of the TCM_3 that depicts Christ's genuine humanity, offers a compelling Christology that departs from heretical interpretations, and instead contributes to a more profound comprehension of the mystery of Christ.

The Christian Proposal is thus theologically grounded by it being able to ward off three of the main Christological heresies—Nestorianism, Eutychianism and Apollinarianism. However, one can now ask if that is indeed so? As one can, in fact, see

that there is a potential tension between Stage 2's claim that GS transformed into a human person and the Conciliar position that Christ is a divine person. As the Chalcedonian Definition states:

> ...one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, recognised in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person [prosopon] and subsistence [hypostasis], not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ (Tanner, 1990, I 86, square parenthesis added).

Thus, according to Stage 2, GS transforms into a human person through the Incarnation, which on the surface, seems contradictory to him remaining a divine person—which seems to be required by Chalcedon. However, an initial way for us to deal with this issue is through making a key distinction between personhood and nature/attributes. Conciliar Christology holds that Christ's fundamental personhood is divine, while his natures/attributes became dual—both divine and human. The TCM_3 claims GS acquired a human nature/attributes while retaining his divine nature/attributes. Now, one can understand that Christ's fundamental personhood preceding the Incarnation was divine, and this did not change even as he took on human properties. So, while GS gained a human nature, including psychological properties befitting a human person, his core, numerally identical personhood remained divine as per Conciliar Christology. Thus, Stage 2 can assert that GS transformed into a human person in one sense by taking on all the attributes of a human. Yet in the most fundamental sense consonant with Conciliar Christology, his underlying personhood and identity remained unchanged as the divine second person of the Trinity. We can now tackle this from a different perspective by utilising the previously introduced notion of a robust first-person perspective—which is an *attribute* that provides one with the ability to conceive of oneself as oneself, in the first-person (and thus renders one as a person). Importantly, within the framework that we are operating within, as a first-person perspective is an attribute (and thus *personhood* is an attribute), it can be *dispositionally* or *occurrently* exemplified. That is, in incorporating the concept of a robust first-person perspective, Stage 2 of the Christological Proposal can be understood as maintaining ab exemplification distinction concerning the personhood of Christ. This stage suggests that GS undergoes a transformation in the Incarnation, assuming a genuine human nature—and thus becoming a genuine human person—yet without relinquishing his divine personhood. This divine personhood is characterised by a continuous, self-reflective first-person perspective that is unique to GS, and this perspective does not eease to be 'possessed' by GS, even as he acquires a human way of experiencing the world. Conciliar Christology posits that Christ's fundamental personhood is divine—this is his first-person perspective as the second person of the Trinity, which remains intact. With the Incarnation, however, GS now comes to possess a human first-person perspective. This human perspective allows Christ to experience emotions, growth, suffering, and the human condition fully and genuinely, as any human does. When Christ takes on human nature, this entails not just physical attributes

but also psychological properties appropriate to a human person—these include a robust human first-person perspective, complete with its own experiential and cognitive dimensions. Importantly, however, there would *not* be two persons in Christ à la Nestorianism—even though he has a divine and human first-person perspective, and thus is a divine and human person—as there would still only be a *single, unified subject and bearer of these perspectives*: GS—and Nestorianism requires two persons and subjects of experiences.

Now, given all of this, it becomes necessary to further address the state of the divine and human first-person perspectives during the Incarnation—and how, importantly, both types of first-person perspectives are *not* exemplified in the same way during it. As the Deity-attributes are not occurrently exemplified in the humanity of Christ, one could posit that the divine first-person perspective remains 'dormant' in some respects during Christ's earthly ministry, by being *dispositionally exemplified*. This dormancy does not suggest a cessation of the divine nature but rather a voluntary limitation via cessation of the d-modes that were previously exemplified by GS. This self-limitation is a key element in understanding the Kenotic Theory, which suggests that the GS 'emptied' himself in some sense (Philippians 2:7), not by discarding his divinity, but by choosing not to exercise some aspects of his divine power while living as a man. In this sense, the divine first-person perspective is not lost or fundamentally altered, but is wilfully restrained to allow for the authentic experience of human life, with its limitations and vulnerabilities. Nevertheless, even in a state that might be termed 'dormant,' the divine first-person perspective is not inactive or nullified. Rather, the divine first-person perspective is an attribute that is dispositionally exemplified (such that Christ is not characterised by any modes that are instances of this attribute of a divine first-person perspective)—whilst the human first-person perspective is occurrently exemplified (such that he is characterised by modes that are instances of this attribute of a human first-person perspective). This dispositional exemplification suggests that although the divine first-person perspective is not occurrently possessed, and thus is not operational, in Christ's human experience, it is inherently present by virtue of his divine nature. That is, Christ, while on earth, remains an instance of the kind Deity, which is characterised by the attribute of a divine first-person perspective. This means that the divine first-person perspective is inherently part of Christ's *identity* and is exemplified by the very fact that Christ is divine, even though this perspective is not occurrently exemplified in his earthly life. Hence, on the basis of the occurrent exemplification of the human first-person perspective and dispositional exemplification of the divine first-person perspective, Christ is allowed to be occurrently (and thus genuinely) a human, while his divine personhood remains intact. This understanding adds depth to the notion that Christ is fully human and fully divine by being capable of surrendering the overt use of his divine attributes without compromising his divine identity. Therefore, Stage 2 asserts that GS, while transforming into a human person in the sense of acquiring a human first-person perspective (and the psychological and physical properties necessary and sufficient for being human), by being characterised by modes of this attribute—that thus render him as a particular (occurrent) human person—he retains his core divine first-person perspective, and thus his divine personhood, by him being an instance of the kind Deity that

Table 3 Christ's Human Characteristics

Human characteristics	Verse Details
Ignorance of the last hour	"But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." (Mark 13:32, NIV)
Temptations	"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathise with our weakness, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin." (Hebrews 4:15, NIV)
Emotional responses	"Jesus wept." (John 11:35, NIV) and "And he said to them, 'My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch." (Mark 14:34, ESV)
Physical needs	"Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well." (John 4:6, NIV)
Growth and development	"And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." (Luke 2:52, NIV)
Jesus' death	"And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit." (Matthew 27:505, ESV)

is, in turn, characterised by these attributes—and thus he is dispositionally a divine person. In the most profound sense, aligned with Conciliar Christology, his underlying divine personhood and identity remain unchanged. Now, on the basis of all of this, we can now postulate that following the death and resurrection of Christ, a significant shift occurs in the mode of exemplification of his attributes. With the accomplishment of his earthly mission, Christ would *now* occurrently exemplify the d-attributes such as omniscience and omnipotence etc. This signifies a resumption of the active, present expression of divine qualities that were previously dispositionally exemplified but not occurrently exemplified during his earthly ministry. Simultaneously, certain human attributes (H-attributes) that were essential for his life and work on earth would cease to be occurrently exemplified—such as being limited in power and knowledge etc.[14] These attributes, necessary for the full experience and expression of human nature, including limitations and suffering, would now transition to a dispositional mode of exemplification. Christ remains an instance of humanity, characterised by h-attributes, but (some) of these human properties are no longer at the forefront of his experiential existence. In this new state, the divine first-person perspective with its full scope—including omniscience and omnipotence—is now actively and occurrently exemplified (which is evidenced in John 20:19 by his ability to disappear and reappear at an instance etc.). The human first-person perspective, essential for the Incarnation and redemption, would now continue to be dispositionally exemplified in the glorified state of Christ's existence. This is due to the enduring truth that Christ remains fully human in his resurrected form, and thus, he retains the exemplification of the h-attributes (though, for the incompatible attributes now in a dispositional way) in alignment with his continued identification with humanity. Given all of this, one can indeed re-affirm the logical coherence, metaphysical robustness and theological grounding of the two-stage Christological

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[14] It is stated 'certain' h-attributes here as a number of the h-attributes that are *not* incompatible with the d-attributes would still be occurrently exemplified by Christ in his glorified state.

Proposal. And on the basis of this conclusion, one can now go further in demonstrating the practical utility of this proposal by showing how it is able to also provide a helpful exegetical strategy for certain challenging biblical passages concerning the person of Christ. To this final issue, we now turn.

Utility of the christological proposal: exegetical strategy

As noted previously, Christ is taken by individuals to have exemplified various human characteristics, as attested to by Scripture. Some of these characteristics and their supporting scriptural passages can be seen in Table 3 as follows:

   In interpreting these verses, the underlying principle that various individuals within the framework of Conciliar Christology have had in church history is the belief in the hypostatic union: that Jesus is both truly God and truly man. Thus, whilst these human experiences highlight Jesus' humanity, they do not negate his divinity from a Conciliar Christological perspective—rather, they underscore the depth of his identification with the human condition. One specific model that has been proposed recently within this type of framework is that of a *psychological* model of the Incarnation introduced by Loke (2014) termed the 'Divine Preconscious Model' (DPM). According to the DPM, which is a *possible* rather than an actual model of the Incarnation, GS existed, prior to the Incarnation, as an unembodied, undivided mind. Then, at the moment of the Incarnation, GS acquired a newly created human body and his mind was divided into two parts: the conscious and the preconscious. The conscious is, according to Loke (2014), the part of the mind that exhibits conscious self-awareness, and awareness of one's environment. And the preconscious is the part of the mind that has mental content not present in the consciousness but is accessible to it by directed attention. The divine properties of omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence (amongst others) were thus transferred from the conscious into the preconscious (which became part A of Jesus' preconscious). At the same time, the conscious then acquired newly created human properties while a human preconscious (which became part B of Jesus' preconscious) was also created. Hence, in the Incarnation, GS possessed a human body, a human conscious and a preconscious that had two distinct parts: part A, which had the entire necessary and sufficient properties of divinity and part B, which the entire necessary and sufficient properties for a human preconscious), and a human body. By GS having a divided mind—a conscious and a preconscious—and him having transferred his divine properties into the preconscious at the moment of the Incarnation, he was able to retain his divine nature while simultaneously being human. Thus, focusing on omniscience, this attribute was present in his preconscious (i.e. part A of his preconscious), and thus, when GS chose to direct his attention to this knowledge—that is, when he chooses to think one of these true propositions, then he can become consciously aware of it. Therefore, GS could indeed be ignorant (i.e., limited in his knowledge), in his human consciousness, in the sense of him lacking *conscious awareness* of a certain true proposition in his human conscious—though this ignorance could be overcome by him directing his attention to this proposition that resided in his preconscious. More precisely, while the GS possesses all knowledge,

Table 4 Christ's Human Characteristics Transformational Interpretation

Characteristics	Transformation (Literal) Interpretation
Ignorance of the last hour	By ceasing to be occurently divine (but still remaining dispositionally divine), Christ did not know the hour of the end.
Temptations	By ceasing to be occurently divine (but still remaining dispositionally divine), Christ was vulnerable to temptations, but did not sin.
Emotional responses	By ceasing to be occurently divine (but still remaining dispositionally divine), Christ was able to experience and express genuine human emotions, from sorrow to joy, without restrictions.
Physical needs	By ceasing to be occurently divine (but still remaining dispositionally divine), Christ felt genuine human needs such as thirst, hunger, and fatigue.
Growth and development	By ceasing to be occurently divine (but still remaining dispositionally divine), Christ experienced genuine human growth, both in wisdom and stature, and maturing as any other human being.
Jesus' death	By ceasing to be occurently divine (but still remaining dispositionally divine), Christ was able to genuinely die on the cross, experiencing the fullness of human death.

Christ, in Loke's (2014) thought, did not always actively access the full scope of his divine knowledge, even though it remained present within his preconscious.

In applying this model to the passage of Mark 13:32, as Christ, GS, speaks of not knowing the hour, it is, according to Loke (2014), not a denial of his inherent omniscience as part of his divine preconscious. Instead, in his incarnate state, Christ was not presently aware of the exact moment of his return, which Loke (2014) takes to be correct based on the possible semantic range of the Greek term: οἶδεν—which is translated as 'know' in this passage as that of 'aware'. Hence, exegetically, within the framework provided by the DPM, one can render this passage legitimately as: 'But of that day or hour no one is aware, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.' Thus, in this passage, Christ is only negating his awareness of the end times and not his knowledge of it, which he possesses within his divine preconscious. This exegetical strategy is indeed interesting; however, issues can indeed be raised with regard to the DPM more generally and the exegetical strategy it offers. That is, within the DPM, there is a rejection of the possession of a human unconscious in the person of Christ, based on the fact that, as the unconscious is a part of the mind that includes within it various repressed states that are not directly assessable, if Christ possessed a human unconscious he would have a part of his mind that lacks access to and thus he would cease to possess the attributes of omnipotence and omniscience based on this. However, as Crisp (2019) notes, if one follows Loke (2014) in denying Christ's possession of an unconscious, then Christ would not have assumed a true human nature shared by all other humans that would include a human unconsciousn—and thus by not having assumed this the human unconscious of others would not be truly healed. Now, concerning the exegetical strategy offered by the DPM concerning Christ's ignorance of the hour, even if the semantic range of οἶδεν is wide, rendering it as aware rather than know, does indeed seem like an

ad hoc move, especially given that in all of the 319 occurrences of this verb in the New Testament, each occurrence is always translated—in interlinear translations—as 'know' rather than 'aware'. Thus, it does seem right to continue to translate this verb in this troublesome verse as such. Hence, given the issues faced by the DPM, and the exegetical strategy offered by it, one should seek a different model and strategy to deal with this problem—namely, that of utilising the TCM_3 and adopting the strategy of interpreting all of the previous verses in the *literal sense*, which can be stated succinctly in Table 4. as such:

By adopting the TCM_3, one is able to interpret all of the verses concerning the person of Christ literally such that, in Mark 13:32, Christ really did not know (οἶδεν) the hour—rather than having to interpret this in exegetically ad hoc fashion. That is, as GS really did *transform* into a human person (he possessed a true human unconscious—as with all other humans) and ceased occurrently exemplify the D-attributes at the time in which the verses pick out, and thus as a human person he really did not know the hour in the normal, everyday understanding of knowledge. However, this does not take away from the fact that he was *still* divine in virtue of him being an instance of the kind Deity and thus also dispositionally exemplify the D-attributes at those specific times. The model proposed here thus offers an insightful exploration into the profound transformation of GS that takes place through the Incarnation, which corresponds well with the literal interpretation of Scripture—whilst one not being required to negate the divinity of Christ in adopting this interpretative position. In all, the scriptural witness concerning the person of Christ can now be taken to be perspicuous through the use of various concepts of contemporary metaphysics which have helped us to unravel the seemingly complex interplay between the two natures of Christ—thus providing a comprehensive understanding of the Incarnation, as required by the Chalcedonian Definition, and Conciliar Christology as a whole.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the central focus of this article was that of providing an elucidation of the doctrine of the Incarnation. A new 'reduplication strategy' and 'compositional model' was formulated through the utilisation of certain concepts and theses from contemporary metaphysics—namely, that of Ontological Pluralism, aspects, Non-Cartesian Substance Dualism, and the four-category ontology, which provided a way for the doctrine to be explicated in a clear and consistent manner, and the oft-raised Fundamental, Transformational and Assumption Problems being all having finally ben dealt with.

Declarations

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