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The Trinity is still unconstitutional

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Abstract: **I argue that we should not model the Trinity using the concept of constitution, and reply to William Hasker's recent defence of the constitutionalist position, also developing my own views in some respects.**

All Gaul is divided into three parts, said Caesar, and so is William Hasker's 'Constituting the Trinity'.[1] First there is a reply to arguments I have lobbed at him, then an exposition of Hasker's view, then a discussion of my own view. I begin with a brief introduction to the Trinity, constitution, and Hasker's view, then discuss the latter, then finally offer tats to Hasker's tits.

The Trinity, briefly

The Athanasian Creed states that

The Father is God,

the Son is God,

the Holy Spirit is God.

Yet there are not three gods; there is but one God.[2]

This is the doctrine of the Trinity in a nutshell. It is problematic. Read 'is God' as an identity-statement and these claims entail there is one Person. There are supposed to be three. Read 'is God' as a predication (in effect, 'is divine') and either there are three Gods, and so there is a contradiction in the Creed, or $1 + 1 + 1 = 1$. Christians offer models of the Trinity *inter alia* to dispel these problems. The concept of constitution plays a prominent role in Hasker's.

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Constitution

Suppose that I mould a hunk of clay, Hunk, into a statue, Athena. If first the clay was there, unmoulded, then plausibly Hunk existed before Athena. If it did, they have different temporal properties. Plausibly they also have different modal properties. Hunk can be lump-shaped; Athena cannot. Statues cannot survive crushing and hunks can: if Athena is crushed, there is no longer a statue, but there is still a hunk of clay.

Objects which exist simultaneously but differ in property are not identical. So it seems that Hunk ≠ Athena. But if so, where Athena is, there are non-identical but completely coincident objects. We jib at this. When I mould Hunk into Athena, the weight in Hunk's place does not double. So it would be nice if we could both acknowledge that Hunk ≠ Athena and give full scope to our intuition that there aren't two things there. This is what constitution is supposed to do. While they both exist, we are told, Hunk *constitutes* Athena, and while this relation is not identity, it is supposed to be a stronger unity than simple coincidence in place and account for our sense that there is just one something in Hunk's place. I call any account of what's going on with Hunk and Athena a theory of constitution.[3]

Hasker on constitution

There are many accounts of the constitution-relation in the literature.[4] Hasker's is this: *x* constitutes *y* at time *t* just in case *x* is of primary kind F, *y* is of primary kind G,[5] and at *t*

1. *x* and *y* have all parts in common,[6]
2. *x* is in 'G-favorable circumstances',
3. necessarily, if x of primary kind F is in G-favourable circumstances, an object of primary kind G shares all its parts with x; and
4. 'causal activity is required … for there to be (such a) G … the form of activity depending on the natures of F and G' (Hasker (2021), 528).

G-favourable circumstances are those in which Fs constitute Gs. Hasker adds about (1) that if *x* and *y* have no proper parts, sharing their improper part will do.[7] As Hasker sees it, in the Trinity, one entity, the divine soul, constitutes three Persons. The divine soul is the *x* above. The Person-favourable circumstances are that it sustains three streams of mental states,[8] as a strange human soul might always sustain three distinct, stable personalities. By doing so, the soul constitutes the Persons, who share the soul's sole improper part but are not identical with it.[9] The Persons together compose God, 'the entire complex of Father plus Son plus Holy Spirit'.[10]

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Against (1)

As (1) expressly includes improper parts, (1) implies that Athena is part of Hunk. This is unintuitive. It also implies that Hunk is part of Athena. Mutual parthood of distinct objects is puzzling. As the divine soul and the Persons lack proper parts, (1) has them share their improper part(s). Hasker does not explain his idea of improper parthood. We can say only two firm things about it. One is that for Hasker, a constituted object has more than one improper part: the divine soul is an improper part of the Father, but at least on the standard usage of 'improper part', so is the Father, and the Father is not the soul. Also, if distinct objects can share improper parts, improper parthood isn't asymmetric. But these two things aren't enough to explain Hasker's relation. Let's ask what it is.

Within extensional mereologies, improper parthood is identity.[11] But anyone who lets distinct objects share all their parts is *ipso facto* a non-extensional mereologist: it's axiomatic (literally) within extensional mereologies that objects sharing all parts are identical. Improper parthood can't be identity for Hasker – this would identify the divine soul with each Person, and so identify all Persons, collapsing the Trinity.

Some might say that improper parthood is constitution. But Hasker can't say this. Since (1) is really

> $(z)($ (z is a proper part of $x \equiv z$ is a proper part of y) $\wedge$ (z is an improper part of $x \equiv z$ is an improper part of y)),

this would turn (1) into

> $(z)($ (z is a proper part of $x \equiv z$ is a proper part of y) $\wedge$ (z constitutes $x \equiv z$ constitutes y))

and so make Hasker's definition circular.

Another approach to parthood takes overlap as the basic mereological notion.[12] Given that, y is a proper part of x just in case x overlaps y and there exists a z which overlaps x but not y, and y is an improper part of x just in case x overlaps y and there is no such z. However, as far as I can see, if overlap is more basic than parthood, then the only things that can overlap are extended (spatial, temporal or what have you), or points of the same kind as extended things, or apparently extended things (visual fields, items in dreams…) and their points. We might *say* that a choir of angels overlaps the angels in the choir, but if we can't explain that by using a more basic notion of parthood and saying that the angels are parts of the choir, I just don't see what it would mean. God and the Persons are neither extended nor points. So, while overlap as a primitive does let one explain improper parthood, Hasker probably can't apply this approach to the Trinity.

A final move takes an undifferentiated parthood relation, P, as primitive and defines improper part in terms of that.[13] On a standard approach, P amounts to the disjunction of proper parthood and identity, which quickly emerge from P

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by easy definitions.[14] (That P is 'really' a disjunction is shown even by the standard use of the mathematical symbol '$\leq$' for it.) Hasker could adapt this by allowing P content amounting to a third disjunct, improper parthood without identity. But on the standard approach, our understanding of P is strictly parasitic on the relations it in effect disjoins. So Hasker could not use an expansion of the standard approach to create any understanding of his new sort of improper part and parthood relation. He would have to bring it from elsewhere.

Suppose finally that P really is not just (in effect) a disjunctive property. Then one might say that

x is a proper part of y = df. $Pxy \wedge ((z)(Pzx \supset Pzy) \wedge \neg(z)(Pzy \supset Pzx))$,

and

x is an improper part of y = df. $Pxy \wedge (z)(Pzx \equiv Pzy)$.

But as it is a truth about P that $(x)(y)(Pxy \supset (z)(Pzx \supset Pzy))$ – this is the oft-noted transitivity of parthood[15] – one can simplify to

x is a proper part of y = df. $Pxy \wedge \neg(z)(Pzy \supset Pzx))$,

and

x is an improper part of y = df. $Pxy \wedge (z)(Pzy \supset Pzx)$.

However, while new primitives are not defined, they need *some* explanation. We particularly need this here, as the primitive is all we use to define improper parthood and it isn't really clear that we have such an undifferentiated notion, at an intuitive level.

Think back to when you were one of The Folk. Asked for an example of a part, you would have given some proper part. Asked if you were part of yourself, you would almost certainly have said 'no!' Our ordinary, pre-analytic part-concept is one of proper parthood. Improper parthood is a shock when introduced and comes over as an artifice to smooth formal mereology. A notion of parthood that is somehow neutral between proper and improper is still further from ordinary understanding. If what we start with is proper parthood, our understanding of the new primitive is again parasitic on notions we use it to define; the definition of 'improper part' is really that x is a part but not a proper part, and it's really our grip on proper part that gives us any grip on the supposed definition of proper part.

Again, consider: a parthood relation truly neutral between proper and improper cannot be symmetric. Only improper parthood is. It cannot be asymmetric: only proper parthood is. It cannot for Hasker be anti-asymmetric, as that would identify constituting and constituted objects. So, for Hasker, it must be just indeterminate with respect to symmetry. Again, it cannot be reflexive (only improper part is) or irreflexive (only proper part is); it must be non-reflexive. It cannot entail a supplementation principle (i.e. that nothing has just one part of this kind) or a non-supplementation principle (that everything has just one part of this kind). It could

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entail that everything has at least one part of this kind, but that claim is just vacuous. To say only that is to say nothing at all about supplementation. Something with so little content which is not a disjunction of things which are clearly part-concepts is not clearly a part-concept at all. If someone says that it is, it's fair to ask what makes it so, and if it is primitive and one can't appeal to properties of more familiar part relations, I do not see how to answer this question.

I do not see other routes for Hasker to take. So it is not clear to me that he can make a go of (1); at the least, he has work to do.

Against (4)

In any event, as it includes (4), Hasker's definition falls to counter-example. Consider Hasker's own case, some water constituting an ice cube.[16] Imagine a universe ending at the spatiotemporal boundaries of some water, which is always below freezing. The water always constitutes an ice cube. Some physical activity always goes into this: molecular motion which keeps the water's mean molecular kinetic energy below *n* keeps the water frozen. But for the mean molecular kinetic energy to be below *n* is for there not to be more molecular motion. That is, it seems that what makes constitution happen here is an absence of activity, not activity. Suppose further that (counter to actual natural law, but as is metaphysically possible) the water was always at absolute *z*ero, and that that entailed that its molecules did not even vibrate and its electrons just sat there, motionless. There would then be no activity at all, yet we'd still have ice. It would be more profoundly frozen than is actually physically possible, but it would be ice by any criterion – solid water below a certain temperature.

Others on constitution

It's natural to wonder whether some other theory of constitution might do better here. Some constitution theorists do not define constitution, treating it as primitive.[17] This is a bit too like magic for comfort, particularly if one uses it to resolve apparent contradictions. There are many theories of constitution in the literature.[18] Their applications to the Trinity must await another day. Here I discuss just the one other I've seen applied to the Trinity, that of Jeffrey Brower and Michael Rea (henceforth BR). This gives us a sample of two broad kinds of definition, Hasker's making constitution asymmetric, BR's making it symmetric, as we shall soon see.

BR say that though Hunk ≠ Athena, Hunk and Athena coincide in space and share all their matter. They are therefore (say BR) one material object and numerically one. That is, they count as one thing when we count material objects. BR's key claim is this:

> X is a material object iff *x* is a matter-form compound; exactly one material object fills a region R iff at least one matter-form compound fills R; and *x* is (numerically) the same material object

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> as *y* iff *x* and *y* are matter-form compounds sharing the same matter. (Brower & Rea (2009), 272)[19]

The picture is that one mass of matter in R hosts two 'forms', one making it *x*, one making it *y*. Identity of matter makes material objects numerically one. Numerical oneness without identity is BR's constitution relation.[20] If and only if *x* and *y* stand in it, say BR, *x* constitutes y. This relation is symmetric. If *x* is distinct from but numerically the same as *y*, then *y* is distinct from and numerically the same as *x*. Thus, for BR, Hunk constitutes Athena, but also (oddly) Athena constitutes Hunk.

The Trinitarian application

For BR, the Persons of the Trinity are immaterial analogues of matter-form compounds. They share something that plays the role of matter. Three forms in that something make there be three things.[21] In line with the claim just quoted, BR submit that

> X is a God iff *x* is a matter-form compound whose 'matter' is some divine essence; *x* is the same God as *y* iff *x* and *y* are matter-form compounds whose 'matter' is some divine essence and *x*'s 'matter' is the same 'matter' as *y*'s, and there is exactly one God iff there is an *x* such that *x* is God and every God is the same God as *x*. (*ibid.*, 277)

For BR, identity of divine essence entails numerical sameness of God as identity of matter entails numerical sameness of material objects.

As noted above, BR's constitution relation is symmetric. So, for BR, since all Persons are numerically one but non-identical, they all constitute each other: the Son constitutes the Father. This does not sound right. Since the revision of the original Nicene Creed in 381, it has been orthodox that the Father 'begets' the Son. This is supposed to account for the Son's existence. If the Father accounts for the Son's existence, how can the Son constitute the Father? The Father had to be there, fully constituted, earlier in the order of explanation than the Son existed, in order to produce the Son. Constitution accounts for the existence of what is constituted: Athena exists because Hunk comes to constitute it. It cannot account for existence if it is symmetric. So, the constitution relation (if there is one) should be asymmetric.

BR are not alone in treating Hunk and Athena in terms of a symmetric relation – in fact, most current theories do.[22] But I still think it's a mistake. Even if numerical sameness without identity is necessary for constitution, I do not think it is sufficient. One reason, just noted, is that, intuitively, constitution accounts for the existence of what's constituted. I now give another.

As we usually conceive it, composition is a relation between a thing and what it consists of, considered as many: its many proper parts. Constitution is a relation between a thing and what it consists of, considered as one: its quantity of stuff or constituting object. On a prominent strain of thought within the Abrahamic

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religions, there may be a transition from one to the other. According to the large majority of Abrahamic theists, we have souls. I suspect that the large majority of *those*, asked 'is your body part of you?', would say yes. So the majority view within these religions, I suspect, is that (against Plato and Descartes) we are not identical with souls, but instead composed of body and soul. Now suppose that the body dies, and ask what there is to us then. One option is that we are scattered objects, one part the soul, the other a rotting corpse. Somehow I don't think that after death, as I await Judgement, a proper part of me is rotting. Rather, I think, my body just isn't part of me anymore. If I still exist, I consist only of my soul. But my soul and I cannot be identical. We weren't identical when I had a body, and identity can't be temporary. Seemingly our relation can't be proper part/whole either, since that's not a one–one relation. Given a Hasker- or BR-style relation of constitution, the natural move is to say that my soul then constitutes me. The soul–person relation has gone from composition to constitution simply by my losing parts. Seemingly it must: when I have only one 'part' left, seemingly I can't stand in a many–one relation to it. But I do not see how the relation between my soul and I could cease to be asymmetric and cease to (at least help) account for my existence just because I have lost some parts. The proper part/whole relation is obviously asymmetric: parts compose a whole and not vice versa, parts account for the whole's existence by being put together to compose it. If constitution is just a one–one analogue of this, or what comes to relate part and whole when the part is the only part left, it should be asymmetric too. The soul/person case may have analogues. Consider a compound of two equal-sized simple objects, A + B. Many things survive the loss of halves: if half of a battalion is killed, the battalion still exists. Suppose that A + B is like this, and B is destroyed. Then given a Hasker- or BR-style relation of constitution, it would be natural to say that A + B still exists, but A now constitutes rather than helps compose A + B.

If they accepted that constitution should be asymmetric and so numerical sameness without identity is only necessary, not sufficient, for constitution, BR could say that the Trinity is only a case of numerical sameness without identity. But if they did, their view would be just a (moderate[23]) version of relative-identity Trinitarianism: just that Father and Son are the same God but not the same Person (these being relative-identity statements), with the absolute identity of their divine essence explaining this. Material constitution would no longer provide a model or analogy for how this can be.

An ultimacy problem

If constitution is asymmetric, then in a strong sense, what constitutes is more basic in reality than what is constituted. Athena is clay because she's made of clay; she's made of clay because she's made of Hunk, which is clay; so Athena is clay because Hunk is. Hunk is the more basic clay thing which 'passes' being clay to Athena. Athena weighs a pound because she's made of a

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one-pound hunk. And so on. So, if constitution is asymmetric and a divine essence (BR) or a divine soul (Hasker) constitutes, the most basic thing in reality is the divine essence or soul. This seems unacceptable. *God* is the ultimate reality. Desire to assure this was a big motivation for mediaeval claims that the divine essence is not distinct from God.[24] Hasker's story about the Trinity starts this way:

> We begin … with the Person of the Father … The divine nature is, in the first instance, the nature of the Father … So the divine essence eternally, and necessarily, sustains the Father life-stream. (Hasker (2021), 528)

Read one way, the third sentence undercuts the first. The story starts with the divine soul (nature, essence). The soul produces causal activity. This constitutes the Father in existence. The Father's entry is act two. This gives what I claimed it gives: the divine soul as more basic in reality than any Person, and a fortiori than God, who 'is the entire complex of Father plus Son plus Holy Spirit'.[25] Sometimes, an activity produces a constituted entity: raising my arms produces a touchdown signal. Where this happens, saying that the activity generates the entity's existence seems quite fair, and the activity and what produces it are clearly more basic in reality than the generated entity. The divine soul – which is neither God nor Person – is the most basic reality in Hasker's picture. That, I have claimed, is just unacceptable.

There is another level to Hasker's story. Hasker thinks the Persons are temporal and everlasting; whenever they exist, they also persist. For Hasker, the Persons efficiently cause their own persistence. They use the divine soul to do so, as a Lockean person might cause itself to persist by using its brain to think. The efficient-causal and constitution stories are compatible. They explain different things: while the Persons account for their persistence, the divine soul accounts for their existence – it's why there ever are any Persons to persist. However, the efficient-causal level does not require supplementation by talk of constitution. It can stand on its own, as a purely Lockean view of the Persons, the divine nature–essence–soul serving simply as the means of the needed causation. The Persons' existence can be an ultimate (and I'd say necessary) brute fact; explanation must run out somewhere, and to a theist, God looks like the best place. Hasker would do better, I think, to go full-on Lockean.

Deflating constitution

The most basic question for constitution Trinitarians is whether constitution does the job in reality they think it does. I doubt that. I think that no actual non-Trinitarian cases of constitution link distinct mind-independent objects. As my reasons to say this would (as far as I can tell) be equally good in any other possible world, I think no such cases are possible. What push us towards positing such cases are intuitions that two or more material things[26] are in exactly the same place at once and intuitions that there is really only one thing there. Let us examine such cases.

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My story about Hunk and Athena goes this way. Hunk is mind-independent. There are hunks of matter, and would be were there no finite minds at all. Their parts compose them in convention-independent ways. There are hunks only where ordinary pre-philosophical thought sees real objects: they are not the sort of thing only a mereological universalist would love.[27] Athena is an artefact. Artefacts are mind-dependent. They are what they are due entirely to their makers' actions and intentions. If a sculptor scrapes a line in a rock, meaning to make a sculpture (titled 'Marked Rock'), that makes it a sculpture. It is one simply because the sculptor meant it to be. If I marked a rock the same way, not meaning to produce art, it would not be a sculpture. Doric columns are not statues. The sole reason is that they were not meant to be. Had someone carved what looks like a Doric column and meant it to be a statue, it would be a statue. Statues, like artefacts generally, are conventional objects. To be a statue is just to satisfy the conventions for being a statue. Our conventions require *inter alia* that someone meant the statue to be a statue. Had a bolt of lightning blasted Athena into shape, she might look like a statue, but she would not be. Any conventional object is mind-dependent, since conventions cannot exist without minds to make them and exist only as long as minds observe them.

As I see it, the sculptor shaped Hunk. This produced a shaped hunk of clay. The shaped hunk is a statue because it falls under the statue convention: Athena's coming to exist depends on a convention. Athena's persistence also involves convention. As long as there is a hunk in the right place whose shape is close enough to Athena's original shape, our concepts say that Athena persists – and the standards for 'close enough' are up to us. That's it.[28]

This account defines artefacts in terms of hunks and conventions. It does not eliminate them, but treats them as non-fundamental. On this account, statues exist, but I deflate what it is for them to exist: for a statue to exist is just for a hunk to satisfy a convention. A statue's existence-condition thus includes there being a convention. A hunk's does not. Thus, their existence-conditions differ; thus, they are not identical. For Athena and Hunk to have different temporal properties is just for Hunk to exist when a convention does not apply or for a convention not to apply to Hunk or anything that results from Hunk by changes of part. For them to have different modal properties is just for a convention's application-conditions to differ from a hunk's persistence conditions. I do not eliminate Hunk or Athena or posit a metaphysically thick sort of coincidence in place. Instead, I deflate: I say all there is to Hunk and Athena sharing the same place is that Hunk is there and a convention applies. There is nothing mysterious about that, or about coincidence so understood. This is deflated coincidence. Some might say that I have really eliminated artefacts, if this is all there is to their existing. I disagree, but I leave that to the reader; if I have, I am not sorry to see them go. What matters to me is just that artefacts are mind-dependent and at best ontologically lightweight. Since nothing in the Trinity has this character, nothing in this account is useful for thinking about the Trinity.

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This story about constitution applies only to convention-involving cases. But it has virtues for those cases. It posits no new conceptual machinery. It does not posit new objects either; hunks are part of our ordinary ontology. I allow that there are hunks and statues. I allow that Hunk ≠ Athena and that they differ in temporal and modal properties. I also take the intuition that there is 'really' just one object in the region Hunk and Athena share completely seriously. My account preserves all the intuitions BR's or Hasker's accounts do, and does it more simply and without an objectionable sort of spatial coincidence. There is more to be said for it than for BR's or Hasker's, I submit.

I give a different story for live things and other non-convention-involving cases, though the story differs depending on whether what constitutes has parts. Some might call this an objectionable loss of simplicity, but it is just as likely a priori that a one-size-fits-all account objectionably glosses over significant differences between phenomena. It should not be surprising if the relevance of convention to a sort of constituted object makes a significant ontological difference. Suppose, then, that what is said to constitute does have parts. Some posit constituting masses of matter to endure through substantial change: if there is first a dog, then a corpse, one substance succeeds another, they say, but the change is in one thing, because one constant mass of matter first constitutes Fido and then constitutes his corpse. Well, the change could be in one thing if it were in Fido, who is first a dog and then merely the matter from which a corpse emerges.[29] But *I* say that what is constant is a many: first many particles compose Fido and then they compose his corpse. Persisting parts provide all the continuity we need. So no special relation of constitution, nor even (I think) anything that looks like one, nor anything that would help with the Trinity. This account too has virtues. It too posits no new conceptual machinery. It does not posit new objects either; if anything, it is the constitutionalist who does that here, because we do not ordinarily think of the mass of matter making up our living bodies as a single object distinct from those bodies. I allow that there are dogs and corpses. I take the intuition that there is 'really' just one object in Fido's region completely seriously. I do not preserve the idea that there is a single object here which differs modally and temporally from Fido, but that is not a pre-analytic datum that needs preserving. Again, there is more to be said for my account than for BR's or Hasker's, I submit.

This leaves non-convention-involving cases where a single simple thing might constitute another thing.[30] For a material case of non-conventional constitution by a simple, we might imagine a living extended simple able to mould its own shape.[31] It would not do to have it mould itself into a statue or a painting – convention would obtrude again, and we want a case of a simple material thing constituting another mind-independent material thing. But perhaps it could mould itself into the shape of a dog. If it carried this through even on what would appear to be the internal micro-level, I think it would have brought a dog into existence. I think it just is a dog, once it's done that, albeit a dog that is only accidentally canine, can cease to be a dog, and (surprisingly)

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has no parts, but only what look like parts. The result is not a case of two coincident objects. It's a single live simple dog. If the simple did not carry the process all the way through – say, it's perfectly doggy on (what seems to be[32]) the outside, but on (what seems to be) the inside it's just whatever you'd find 'inside' an extended simple – we might be tempted to call the result a sort of dog-statue, but then convention would again enter the picture. What it would be mind-independently is a thing that looks like a dog. If this is all it is, I do not see that a new object has entered the picture. For 'a thing that looks like a dog' raises the question 'what thing?', and the answer seems to be 'the simple organism'.

Now to immaterial simples. Numbers, attributes, etc., and angels (if any) might well be simple. But their relations to their singleton sets is not constitution but membership. An angel constituting (say) an archangel sounds a bit too much like me constituting a second person who shares all my mental life: why would anyone believe this happens? But if there are souls, plausibly they are simples; thus I must now discuss the soul/person case above. To me, it never does involve a distinctive relation of constitution. I suspect that (as many believe Aquinas held) if my soul alone exists and I am not my soul, I do not exist, the soul being instead a sort of key part from which I can be reconstituted. (Add body, stir gently …) If that's right, there is no case here to worry about. But suppose that I do still exist in that situation. Then I submit that the soul/person relation remains proper part–whole, because the existence of some wholes, at least, involves more than just their proper parts properly arranged. (We've already seen this: it takes more than Athena's parts, properly arranged, to have Athena.)

Suppose that C Company goes into battle and is almost wiped out: there is only one survivor, Smith. Then either (a) C Company no longer exists, (b) C Company still exists and is now identical with Smith, (c) C Company still exists; Smith now constitutes it, or (d) C Company still exists and Smith is its sole proper part. That identity cannot be temporary rules out (b). (A) might be reasonable. But C Company still exists 'on paper': the regimental organizational chart and structure of command, pay, supply, etc. still include it. That given, the military might add replacement troops to Smith to get the numbers of an infantry company, but not say they are creating a new company. They may say the replacements refit C Company for action. Companies are conventional entities, and the conventions around their existence may get fuz*zy* in this case, but at the least, (a) could well be the wrong judgement. Believers in constitution might opt for (c). But let us consider a version of (d).

An infantry company is a structured whole whose distinctive structure has 'slots' for (say) 150 parts – its troops.[33] The structure exists as long as the company exists 'on paper'. The company exists as long as it exists on paper and enough of its troop-slots are filled. My point here does not require the relevant conventions to say that one is enough. For we can understand what would be the case if it *were*

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enough, and that understanding is all I need to call on. If I still exist when only my soul is there to make me up, then my view of the soul/person case is this: a human is a structured whole whose structure has slots for a body and a soul. The human exists as long as the structure exists and has enough slots filled. The structure exists as long as the soul exists. The soul has enough parts to keep the person in existence. So my soul does support my continued existence, but not by constituting me. Rather, my soul is the sole part filling a slot in my human structure. Thus it is a proper part of me even though it is the only part currently filling any slot in the structure. What governs proper-part relations for slot-structured wholes is not a supplementation principle (that in every whole, for any proper part, there is another[34]) but a slot supplementation principle (that in every whole, for any proper part slot, there is another). This account posits no new conceptual machinery. The notion of a structure with slots is not new or outré; we meet it in organizational charts. It does not posit new objects either; structures can be handled nominalistically. It does require an adjustment to our understanding of supplementation principles. That seems to me less of a cost than allowing distinct, coincident objects.

If constitution never links mind-independent objects elsewhere in reality, the case for thinking it does so in the Trinity is weak. Further, if my rival story is true, it's necessarily true. For it is hard to see how it could be contingent that statues are conventional objects, or that pluralities of parts provide sufficient continuity for substantial change, and so it seems that what recommends my account would be equally true in any possible world. For those attracted by anything like my proposal, any account of the Trinity that has constitution link distinct mind-independent objects looks unmotivated. That includes Hasker's.

Replies to replies

Hasker chides me because I have said that on his view, the divine soul 'generates' the Persons:

> the constituting entity need not, and in this case does not, *generate* the constituted entity. (The lump of gold does not generate the statue.) On my view, as for the trinitarian tradition … the Father … generates the Son and the Holy Spirit. God, or the Trinity, is the entire complex of Father plus Son plus Holy Spirit. (Hasker (2021), 525)

If he means to suggest that I have plugged his divine soul into the traditional place of the Father, or made it a relatum of the standard intra-Trinitarian relations, he is a bit uncharitable. I said no such thing. On Hasker's view, 'a specific form of causal activity' (*ibid.*, 528) causes streams of mental states and thereby accounts for the Persons' existence. That's all I meant, and it remains true.

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I also said that 'the divine soul helps make up a divine Person'. Hasker comments:

> the 'helps to make up' relation is … too vague to support any reasonable inference concerning its implications. Nor is constitution sufficiently similar to proper parthood to sustain … inferences. (*ibid.*, 525)

Well, I certainly could have said more. So I will now. I think of this relation as disjunctive: A helps to make up B iff A is part of B or constitutes B or is a metaphysical constituent of B (some think of attributes as constituents of their bearers). I don't believe in all the disjuncts here, but I mean the relation to be usable in conversation with people I don't agree with. The relation sustains any inference which all three disjuncts support. As to constitution and proper parthood, per my soul/death case above, the basic difference I see is one–one versus many–one, with cognate logical differences following. That leaves enough likeness to sustain many inferences indeed. If I go from consisting of body and soul to consisting of a soul alone, then even if this does involve a distinctive constitution relation, as I have denied, many truths about my relation to my soul do not change at all and many inferences about this remain good.

The inferences I drew concerned whether one might sensibly worship or venerate the divine soul in addition to the Persons or God. Hasker comments:

> the Soul as such does not perform mental acts apart from the Persons it constitutes, so it is not, properly, an object of worship. [I had allowed for this; I had said that if it cannot properly be worshipped, it might still be venerated, like a saint's bone.] But it does not, in general, make sense to add two entities – one that constitutes, and the other … constituted – together to get two instances of some property they have in common … If the statue and the lump … each weigh 178 pounds, the weights cannot be added to make 356 pounds … When Leftow, in his own illustration, admires the clay but not the sculpture … there are not two objects … one beautiful and the other ugly. Rather, there is just one object that he is assessing in two different respects, in one case favourably and in the other case not. And the divine Soul is not an additional divine entity that competes with the Persons and the Trinity for the veneration or worship that might be directed to it. The soul *is* each Person, and it *is* the Trinity; the 'is' in each case being the 'is' of constitution and not the 'is' of identity. (*ibid.*, 525)

Here I am puzzled. If the 'is' of constitution is not the 'is' of identity, then using it *does not identify* constituting and constituted objects. If it does not, then if we count by identity, they are two, not one. Hasker bases his account of constitution on Lynn Rudder Baker's. She insists that constituting and constituted are two objects, and Hasker's modifications don't change that.[35] If statues and clay hunks are examples of *this* relation, they are two, not one, and it is not one object that I have two views of, but two objects with one opinion each. Hasker may mean (following Baker[36]) to insist that constitution provides a form of unity sufficient to let us count sometimes not by identity but by (say) BR's numerical sameness, but this does not imply that we cannot count the same things by identity. This leaves the divine soul just as available for distinct veneration as I supposed.

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As to its *desert* of veneration, well, it is what lies deepest in God. It's the ultimate source of everything else in God. (Tillich or Boehme might call it 'the God beyond God'.) It is not an agent, but its activity accounts for all Persons' existence. God is a Trinity of Persons by nature, which per Hasker is to say due to the divine soul, which *is* the divine nature: so again, it accounts for the Persons' existence. The Persons account for their own *continued* existence by causing it to be active. So to speak, they use it to persist. Again, it is not itself omniscient, but it is the source of their omniscience. Consider Einstein's brain. It never did 'perform mental acts apart from' Einstein, but one can see pieces of it in the Mutter Museum in Philadelphia, and should approach them with a bit of awe, and a respect which, though not of the kind we have for persons, is a function of our respect for Einstein. It was not intelligent, but it was the source and repository of Einstein's intelligence, and the thing he used to *be* intelligent. That's enough. If these attitudes are correct there, they are correct *in excelsis* for the source and tool of God's intellect. Again, the divine soul *makes up* everything in God more completely than a saint's bone made up a saint: the saint had other parts, but the Trinity is made up by only one divine soul. Given all this, it has a much stronger connection to all else that is venerable in God than the bones do to what is venerable in the saint.

Some do venerate saints' bones. By so doing they revere the saint, but there is also a sense in which they revere the bones. Those who revere the bones do so because the bones are derivatively holy, holy through their connection with a holy individual. The Greek '*hagios*', translated 'holy', means 'set aside' or 'set apart (from the ordinary)': saints' bones are set apart from the ordinary because they were part of a person who was. *If* the divine soul's holiness is derivative, how much more, then, the derivative holiness of what has a much closer connection to a much holier individual. But I'm not sure its holiness would be derivative. The divine soul is for Hasker the source of all that makes the Persons and God holy. Further, the Persons and God are holy by nature. That is, their holiness comes to them from their nature. For Hasker, that nature is the divine soul. So it seems that for Hasker, the divine soul is the source of all divine holiness.

Now God is the source of the holiness of everything else holy. So, for Hasker, the divine soul is the ultimate source of all holiness. What makes the holiest of all things holy, and thus communicates holiness to all holy things, is not merely derivatively holy. It is 'set apart' intrinsically, just by having that role. Consider Otto's classic account of the holy as the numinous, the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*. Hasker's divine soul is mysterious just of itself, underivatively: just of itself, it is hidden within God, the nature virtually all theologians agree we will never fully know. It is more mysterious than God: God has appeared, but no-one thinks His nature has, many argue that in this life it cannot, and Hasker's divine soul had been in Witness Protection since Creation, until Hasker blew its cover. The divine soul deserves awe just for being the source of all holiness, of all divine power and so of all power, etc., apart from and 'before' whatever

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further kudos it comes to deserve by how it plays the role. Thus it deserves awe intrinsically, just of itself. It is a thing before which we would feel small and unworthy: more eternal than mountains, a source for more power than any creature … All of this gives us the *tremendum*, also on a purely intrinsic basis. Otto's *fascinans* is that in the holy which lures, which draws our desire – what the mystics yearn to possess.[37] One need only read Eckhart or Ruysbroeck to feel their intense pursuit of 'the God beyond God', the ground of God Himself – which is precisely the place in reality of the divine soul. If it's there, it's what drew them: again, by its own intrinsic character. Thus it seems to me that Hasker's divine soul would not be merely derivatively holy, but rather the intrinsically holy source of God's own holiness, which is derivative from its: God is holy not only by nature, but by His holy nature. (Note how natural that phrase sounds.)

Again, the divine soul is not an agent, but more things than agents have power, and how great the power of the very source of omnipotence! It has power over all things through God who wields its power. Continue along these lines, as I did in my original piece, and things get uncomfortable for those who think that only God and the Persons (however related) deserve religious attitudes beyond what we might have for any creature. It's OK to worship the Trinity, because by worshipping it, one cannot but worship God. Ditto the Persons. But if one venerates the divine soul, one need not be venerating anything else. One can sensibly extoll its and only its glories. The Trinity cannot compete for worship with God, to any competent worshipper. But if it's there, the divine soul can compete for the veneration of any competent venerator. Hasker's passage above does not disclaim the non-identity of the soul with the rest of what's in the Godhead. That plus its relation to the rest of what's in God are all my case about our religious relation to Hasker's divine soul requires. So that case has as much point as I thought it did in penning it.

Self-defence

I come now to Hasker's treatment of my own view. I approach the Trinity via a time-travel analogy. I do not see time-travel as breaking metaphysical rules: its 'paradoxes' can be disarmed, the laws of current physics allow it, and it is a merely empirical matter whether we could ever pull it off (depending, I've heard, on the amount of dark matter in the universe). On my account, for there to be a Trinity is for God's life eternally, necessarily to run in three streams at once, somewhat as a time-traveller's life might for some period. If I travelled back in time and met my earlier self on 1 December 1999, then for a while my life would run in two streams at once: 1999 episodes of Brian's life would occur on 1 December 1999 and episodes of Brian's life which are wholly later than its 2019 episodes on my personal timeline would occur on 1 December 1999. Or, equally, episodes of 1999 Brian's life would occur then and episodes of 2020

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Brian's life would occur then. This is a fairly natural way to express the situation; if I converse with my earlier self, terms like '1999 Brian' would be a natural way to keep the speakers straight in recording the conversation.

I have suggested that at any time, three episodes of God's life occur at once. One stream of such episodes is His life as Father, another His life as Son, etc. The episodes are related like a time-traveller's in that episodes at different points in God's personal timeline occur at one public time. They are unlike a time-traveller's in the key respect that God's (say) life as Son is not in the personal past or future of His life as Father. The life-streams do not continue one another and cannot merge. So, in God's case, though not in a time-traveller's, we could also say that He eternally, necessarily lives three lives at once. At every time, God is multiply located: God is located at each time as an immanent universal with three instances at that time would be.

Again, thinking of a concrete object as wholly present in multiple temporal locations 'at once' makes good sense on the conjunction of eternalism about time and endurantism. On eternalism, all time there is, was, or will be always exists, full stop, in four dimensions. On endurantism, we are three-dimensional objects, wholly present at every time at which we exist. Conjoin the two, and from the eternity's eye view, the 'all at once' of a being standing outside time and seeing it whole, we're there many times 'at once'. Or again, consider amoebas, which multiply by dividing. When Mama divides into Baby 1 and Baby 2, we tend to say that Mama no longer exists. But this is just convention. We don't really know. It would make decent sense, I think, to adopt a different convention and say that Mama now exists *as* Baby 1 and Baby 2. A quick response would be 'how can that make sense? It seems to imply that Mama ≠ Mama or that Baby 1 = Baby 2 or that Mama is both where 1 is and not where 1 is.' It does not imply the first: 1 and 2 are both Mama, and Mama = Mama. It's just that Mama is now multiply located. It does not imply the second: Baby 1 began as Mama's left half and Baby 2 as Mama's right. As the halves were spatially distinct, so are the Babies – and the Babies are just Mama as spatially distinct from Mama, Mama in multiple locations. It does not imply the third: Mama is where 1 is and where 2 is, but as Mama is both 1 and 2, being where 2 is does not imply that Mama is not where 1 is. We don't speak this way, but we have no assurance that the way we do speak, rather than this alternative convention, divides nature at the joints. As far as I can see, either might. The chief point of the time-travel analogy is simultaneous multiple location of the same item, *however* it is achieved. It is possibly achieved if time-travel is absolutely possible, and I would argue that it is. Thus again, no metaphysical rules are broken, and this is true a fortiori if immanent realism, eternalism + endurantism, or my alternate story about amoebas happen to be correct.

An issue arises for my view: in time-travel tales, both 1999 Brian and 2020 Brian are Brian *inter alia* because Brian's life in 2020 continues the life Brian led in 1999. I have ruled that out in the Trinity. So one may well wonder what assures that the

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God who is living the Father's life is the God who is living the Son's life.[38] Well, according to the Nicene Creed, the 'Son of God' is 'begotten from the Father before all ages, God from God …'[39] This may be where 'begetting' and the other 'procession' relation that yields the Holy Spirit can do some work.[40] On any view, what Trinitarian procession is and how it works are a mystery. So the best one can offer here, I think, is an analogy.

Consider Mama dividing. Just before *t*, Mama is shaped like a dumbbell with the thinnest possible handle connecting its 'lobes'; at *t*, there is simultaneously a cause (the snapping of the last thread between the lobes) and its effect, which is either the existence of Baby 1 and Baby 2 or Mama's multiple location. If God is atemporal, it is as if we have that sort of moment, frozen outside time: the procession events are as it were snappings of threads, and the correct description of the result is God multiply located. If God is temporal, it is as if the thread snaps at every instant, God always begetting God. God must constantly conserve every creature – we would all lapse back into nothingness if He simply withdrew His hand – and so it is no great stretch to suppose that God who 'divides', i.e. renders Himself multiply located, must constantly do something to continue the multiple location and His 'divided-off' self. As to just how this works, again, Trinitarians generally call procession a mystery. So even if I say nothing here, this does not disadvantage me vis-à-vis other models of the Trinity.

According to Hasker, on my view,

> the Father *can* truthfully say, 'I am the person who, *while living the Son life-strand*, suffered and died on the cross.' The Father and the Son are indeed the *same identical individual*, although that person is designated … 'Father' or 'Son' according to the different roles he plays. (This) endangers … the assertion that the Father is not identical with the Son … (Hasker (2021), 530)

This is not quite right. Further, 'roles' insinuates Modalism, although my insistence that the distinction of Persons is eternal and necessary rules Modalism out,[41] and 'the person' insinuates what the Athanasian Creed calls 'confusing the Persons', which I will be at pains to show does not follow from my view.

Consider the Apostle's Creed- 'I believe in God, the Father almighty …'[42] – or the Nicene Creed: 'We believe in one God, the Father …'[43] These use 'God' and 'Father' to refer to the same individual, following Jesus' own usage. *Pace* Hasker,[44] they treat God and the Father as identical, and use 'God' to name a Person. But every reason to treat 'God' and 'Father' this way is a reason to treat 'God' and 'Son' this way: there is but one God, orthodoxy requires that 'the Son is God' be true in just the sense in which 'the Father is God' is true, and so 'God' and 'Son' can also name the same Person. 'God the Son' is as orthodox a usage as 'God the Father', and can in fact translate the Athanasian Creed's 'Deus Filius'. So on orthodoxy, the Father can truthfully say 'I am the God who … suffered and died on the Cross.' If God is a person, the Father can also say 'I am the person who …', but He cannot truthfully say that He is the *Person* who,

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and orthodo*xy* requires only distinction of Persons. I explore the person/Person distinction shortly.

As I parse the Trinity, God is Father in one life and Son in another; the Persons are the same God in discrete lives which are parts of the life of God. Just as 2020 Brian can say 'I am the Brian who while living his 1999 life bought tickets to a New Year's show at the Iridium' and yet be distinct from the 1999 Brian with whom he is conversing, God the Father can say 'I am the God who in His life as Son …' and yet be distinct from the Son He watches suffer on the Cross. The distinction of Father and Son is as real and safe as the distinction between 1999 and 2020 Brian on 1 December 1999. In 1999, there are two of something, but one Brian; in the Trinity are three Persons and one God. In each case, the distinctness is as real and permanent as the distinctness of the parts of lives involved. To be the Father is to be God living the Father-life. To be the Son is to be God living the Son-life. God living the Father-life is the same God as God living the Son-life. But on His personal timeline, the one that 'counts' in time-travel and like cases, the one life does not continue the other. The lives remain distinct, and so then do God living the one and God living the other.

Let us explore what that implies about distinctness of persons and Persons. 1999 Brian and 2020 Brian are and are not the same person. They're both me, so in one sense, they are. But in another, they are not. Each in 1999 has his own consciousness and self-consciousness, to which the other has no current first-person access. Brian *had* such access in 1999 and Brian *will have* such access in his personal 2020, but Brian living the 1999 part of his life never has current first-person access to his 2020 mind and Brian living the 2020 part of his life never has current first-person access to his 1999 mind.[45] Each makes his own decisions. The other cannot make them for him; 2020 Brian may have to persuade 1999 Brian to make a particular choice. 1999 Brian *is* not morally responsible for any decision 2020 Brian makes that day, though Brian both is and will come to be. Similarly, 2020 Brian *is* not responsible for any decisions 1999 Brian makes as they talk, though Brian *was* responsible for them in a different part of his life. The two can be friends and support one another.

A person (let's say) is a self-conscious morally responsible agent capable of social interaction. If so, distinctness of persons goes with distinctness of self-consciousness and responsibility and the ability to be a distinct term in a social relation with another person. And if so, these things argue that 1999 and 2020 Brian are not the same person. In this time-travel case, Brian relates to Brian as to another person: Brian bears to Brian relations which ordinarily only two persons can bear to one another, and so there is 'personal distinction' within the life of the one person. Thus, our ordinary ideas about persons do not well fit time-travel cases. This is no surprise. They are not crafted to deal with them. We would need to modify those ideas and introduce special terms and concepts to cover such cases should they occur. We might, in fact, distinguish two senses of 'person' and say that 1999 and 2020 Brian are in one sense one person and in

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another two. A person in the second sense would be close to what a Person in the Trinity is, on my account, at least in the respects we're discussing. Thus, as I see it, 'Person' in Trinitarian use does not imply just what 'person' does in ordinary use. But this is hardly a novel thought – analogical predication, anyone? – and orthodoxy requires only distinction of Persons.

Hasker finally tries to rap my knuckles with a Bible:

> Jesus, the Son, prays to the Father, submits his will to the Father's will, and speaks … about the Father as if about a person distinct from himself … the words … 'My God, why have you forsaken me?' … on Leftow's view … should come out as 'Why have I-as-Father forsaken myself-as-Son?' To this Leftow responds, 'It should not seem odd to us that someone would feel that he had forsaken himself if he was not aware that it was he himself who (he felt) was doing the forsaking' … (Note that this episode occurred *at the very end* of whatever developmental process our Lord may have undergone with respect to recognizing his own divine identity.) So we have … two incompatible views concerning Jesus's relationship to the Father: Jesus's own view, and Leftow's. (Hasker (2021), 530)

If 2020 Brian was in disguise, unrecognized by 1999 Brian, then when 2020 Brian got up to leave, 1999 Brian, dismayed at losing such charming company, might well have asked 'why are you forsaking me?' Further, he might have asked it in just those words had he understood the whole situation. 1999 Brian and 2020 Brian would naturally use 'I' and 'you' so that 'I' referred to the Brian who is speaking and 'you' to the Brian addressed. 'I' always refers to the current speaker. 'You' always refers to someone the speaker is addressing. If either wanted to use 'I' to refer to the other or to both, the usage would be unnatural, and he would have to explain, else cause confusion. Perhaps Hasker's translation is the 'metaphysical bottom line'[46] on my account, but we need not always speak in accord with the metaphysical bottom line, and it would often be misleading to do so. Bottom-line truth is not the only truth.

In any event, in claiming that Jesus' pre-mortem view was distinct from mine, Hasker claims quite astonishing insight into Jesus' mind, and in particular, knowledge that Jesus at that point clearly distinguished persons from Persons (as I used those terms above), and thought of the Father as a distinct person, not a distinct Person. Jesus was quite aware that he was distinct from the Father and able to address Him: that is what the texts cited show. He was (at least at times?) just as aware that he was God: He said 'before Abraham was, I am'.[47] Just how much of what these things imply – that is, just how much Trinitarian doctrine – He was explicitly aware of pre-mortem is something on which the texts are silent. But we can be confident at least that He *said* nothing or very little beyond what the texts give us. Had He said substantially more, it would surely have been passed down, given the subject's importance, and the Church would not have had to spend centuries feeling its way to Nicaea. It also might seem odd if He had much more in His human mind and left it unsaid, given the subject's importance. Be that as it may, I feel some incredulity at Hasker's apparent thought that He had such niceties in mind while dying in torment.

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'I am' was God's reply to Moses' request for His name. (This is a bit unfortunate for Hasker: if God is most properly the Trinity and so most properly is 'not literally a person',[48] either the answer should have been 'We are' (if God were speaking in accord with the 'metaphysical bottom line') or our picture of the scene is incomplete till we know which of the three was speaking and whether the other two would have given the same answer.) Thus in 'before Abraham was, I am', Jesus applies to Himself what is as close to God's name for Himself as we will ever get. His audience understood that, and so took Him to be blaspheming.[49] On the face of it, then, Jesus applies to Himself the name for the divine individual. A time-travel analogy makes this unproblematic: both Brians can truly call themselves 'Brian'. Hasker's social theory does not. For on his view, God is not a person but a community.[50] If that community has a name, it is like names for corporations, e.g. 'Microsoft' or 'Apple'. Had Steve Jobs called himself 'Apple', we might find ways to understand this, but none would involve his literally being the corporation. Jesus' 'I am' seems to say what Jobs' 'Apple' would not.

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Notes

1. Hasker (2021).
2. https://www.crcna.org/welcome/beliefs/creeds/athanasian-creed,
3. A different usage counts only certain kinds of account of this as constitution theories.
4. For an overview, see Rea (1997).
5. For present purposes, we can leave 'primary kind' undefined.
6. Hasker (2021), 526.

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7. Hasker (2013), 243.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*, 242.
10. Hasker (2021), 525. Hasker holds that 'the full and final answer to the question "What is God?" is … "God is the Holy Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit" ' (Hasker (2013), 249). I had expressed this by saying that for him, only the Trinity is properly God, a phrase Hasker notes that he never actually uses. Fair enough. But 'God = the Trinity' *is* the only identity-statement Hasker allows and the use of 'God' which reflects (as he puts it) the 'metaphysical bottom line' (*ibid.*). Hasker denies that 'the Father is God' is an identity-statement; rather, he insists, it predicates deity (*ibid.*, 188). This seems to make using 'God' to refer to the Father a case of synecdoche – an allowed figure of speech rather than a metaphysically proper use.
11. Simons (1987), 11.
12. So Goodman (1951). My thanks to Dean Zimmerman here.
13. Rolf Eberle (1970). My thanks to Dean Zimmerman here.
14. See e.g. Cotnoir & Bacon (2012), 191.
15. Oft-noted but not beyond challenge. For discussion, see Gilmore (2007), Effingham (2010), Gilmore (2014), Kleinschmidt (2011).
16. Hasker (2021), 524.
17. So e.g. Wiggins (1980).
18. For these see Rea (1997).
19. They have 'hylomorphic' where I put 'matter-form'.
20. There can also be numerical sameness *with* identity (*ibid.*, 279). If x is a material object and $x = y$, then x and y are form–matter compounds sharing the same matter.
21. According to Dale Tuggy, Rea must say that they make up more. See Tuggy (2013), 134–135.
22. For these see Rea (1997).
23. This because they allow cases of absolute identity.
24. So e.g. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* Ia 3, 3.
25. Hasker (2021), 525.
26. Take this broadly enough to include actions involving agents' bodies and thoughts realized in brains.
27. On universalism, any plurality whatsoever composes an object.
28. Similar things are true for convention-dependent thoughts and actions.
29. Another approach here would be to say that it is in Fido, who is first a dog, then a corpse: but this would deny that it is a case of what Aristotelians call substantial change.
30. I thank Marcin Iwanicki for drawing my attention to this.
31. Here I'm indebted to comments by Dean Zimmerman.
32. A genuine extended simple would have no parts, and so no inside or outside, since those are (perhaps ill-defined) parts. That's one reason many find extended simples hard to swallow (especially the large ones).
33. 'Slot' may bring Karen Bennett's 'slot mereology' to mind (see Bennett (2020). I had this thought on my own, though, and only became aware of her views afterward.
34. For discussion of such principles see e.g. Simons (1987).
35. For the last version of her view – Hasker discusses only her earlier account – see Baker (2007).
36. *Ibid.*, 40–43.
37. Otto (1923), 36.
38. This has been put to me by Marcin Iwanicki and Natalja Deng.
39. <https://www.crcna.org/welcome/beliefs/creeds/nicene-creed> [accessed 2 July 20].
40. My thanks here to Toby Bollig.
41. On this see Leftow (2004), 326–328.
42. <https://www.rca.org/resources/apostles-creed>.
43. <https://www.rca.org/resources/nicene-creed>.
44. Hasker (2013), 249.
45. He might remember it, but current first-person access is access while those mental states presently occur.
46. *Ibid.*
47. John 8:58.
48. Hasker (2013), 249.
49. John 8:59.
50. Hasker (2013), 258.

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