A Transformational Incarnation

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Abstract: This article aims to provide an explication of the doctrine of the Incarnation. A 'Transformational Model' of the doctrine is formulated within the metaphysical and ontological framework of Jonathan Lowe (i.e. his Non-Cartesian Substance Dualism and Four-Category Ontology). Formulating this model within this specific framework will enable the doctrine of the Incarnation to be explicated in a clear and consistent manner, and the oft-raised objections against it can be answered.

Keywords: Incarnation, Non-Cartesian Dualism, Ontology, Powers

1. Introduction

According to the doctrine of the Incarnation, God has intervened in our spatiotemporal reality in a particular and unique manner. More specifically, the doctrine claims that God the Son (hereafter, GS), the second person of the Trinity, intervened in human history by becoming incarnate in the person of Jesus of Nazareth (hereafter, Christ). This specific doctrine was first formally defined at the Council of Chalcedon (451 AD), which established a conceptual and linguistic foundation centred on two constraints:

Chalcedon	(i)	At the moment of the Incarnation, GS became a human that was a single person.
	(ii)	As a human, GS was truly (i.e. fully and genuinely) divine and truly (i.e. fully and genuinely) human.

According to (Chalcedon), an 'orthodox' construal of the doctrine of the Incarnation must posit, in line with (ii), that Christ had two *distinct* yet *united* natures (*physes*): a divine and human nature. Furthermore, an 'orthodox' construal of the doctrine must also posit, in line with (i), that Christ was a single person (*hypostasis*).[1] Yet, despite this specific orthodox construal of the doctrine

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[1] I take an orthodox construal of the doctrine of the Incarnation to be, at a minimal level, one that expresses the central tenets of the Chalcedonian definition, in line with the teaching of

of the incarnation, in the Christian Scriptures, in the conception of Christ that is derived from the New Testament, Christ, in his public actions, seems to possess specific limitations in his power, knowledge and being open to moral failure. This thus appears to suggest that Christ specifically lacked certain essential divine properties (such as omnipotence, omniscience and perfect goodness), which thus shows, *contra* (Chalcedon), that Jesus did not possess a divine nature. Thus, the issue raised here is that of the Chalcedonian definition of the Incarnation *not* being theologically grounded in the biblical portrayal of the person of Christ—which clearly asserts that *Jesus, in particular*, possesses limitations that are (apparently) inconsistent with Chalcedon's construal of Christ as an unlimited divine being.[2] Hence, the aim of an 'orthodox', construal of the Incarnation is not only for it to fit within the constraints set by the Chalcedonian definition but also for it to provide a means for one to show how this view of the Incarnation fits with the biblical witness that evinces Christ's humanness—let's call this challenging task the *Clarification Task*.

In the field of contemporary 'analytic theology', certain individuals have sought to complete the Clarification Task by proposing particular 'models' of the Incarnation that provide a possible means in which the doctrine could, in fact, be true—in a manner that fits with the New Testament's portrayal of Christ. One prominent type of model within the contemporary literature that has sought to do this is that of the 'Transformational' Model (hereafter, TM),[3] which has recently been championed by Richard Swinburne (1994, 2008, 2011) and Alvin Plantinga (1999), among others. The central aspects of the TM can be construed precisely as follows:

Transformational

(i) At the moment of the Incarnation, GS transformed into a human soul.

(ii) As a human soul, GS's 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, and possessed one concrete will that can be conceived of in two ways: in a divine way and in a human way.

Central to the TM 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. At a general level, this type of (complete) metamorphosis is present in the natural world with entities such as caterpillars, who—over the different stages of their life cycles—lose certain properties that make them a caterpillar and gain some new properties that make it a butterfly—with the same entity persisting through this change in kinds. Thus, in the context of the Incarnation, the TM is one that postulates that GS performed the action of becoming a human by being *transformed* into one. More specifically, the TM postulates that in the Incarnation, GS actually *became* human through gaining some necessary and sufficient properties which make him into a human soul—without, however, ceasing to be divine.[4] We see Richard Swinburne (1994, 212–13) expressing this view when he states that

> in the Incarnation the divine soul of Christ, in acquiring a human nature, acquires those additional properties that are necessary for the humanity of any other individual…He also acquired a particular body…[Christ's] human nature must be universal, in no way peculiar to Christ—it is just a set of properties which he acquires.

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,

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[4] Within this type of account is a further distinction that can be made between a *physicalist* TM, favoured by individuals such as Trenton Merricks (2007), and a *dualist* TM, favoured by Swinburne and Plantinga—where the primary difference between them is grounded on how one understands what a human being is. That is, for the physicalist TM, a human being would be a material object, and thus the transformation that takes place in the Incarnation would be that of GS being transformed into a material object. However, for a dualist TM (where one would hold to some type of substance dualist view of human beings and thus hold to humans being composed of two distinct types of substances: a physical body and a soul (or mind)), for GS to become a human, as Hill states, 'means being transformed not into a human body, but into a human mind, which is embodied *in* a human body' (Hill, 2011, 9, emphasis in text). However, we will see later on that the account proposed in this article does not neatly fall into either of these categories.

according to the adherents of the TM, an abstract human nature is a set of *abstract* properties that are necessary and sufficient for being human; as Alvin Plantinga writes, 'the term 'human nature' denotes a property (or, if you like, group of properties): the property P which is such that necessarily, every human being has P, and necessarily, whatever has P is a human being'. The case of GS assuming a human nature in the Incarnation is that of, in addition to having a human body, him coming to possess a set of abstract properties that enable him to be classed *as* a human soul—again, without him ceasing to also be divine. Thus, in the Incarnation, according to the TM, 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 moment of the Incarnation.[5] We can illustrate the central tenets of the TM through the following diagram:

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

Fig 1. Central Elements of the Transformational Model

With the TM, we have a clear explication of (Chalcedon) that centres on the transformational action of God 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 (Chalcedon)—and thus not falling into Nestorianism—as the TM posits the existence of solely *one* subject in Christ: GS. Furthermore, TM is also successful in *not* over stressing (ii) of (Chalcedon)—and thus not falling into Eutychianism—as the TM 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

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[5] In Church History, two-part models have usually been disdained due to their ties with Apollinarius of Laodicea, who, in a similar manner to the TM, posited that Christ had two parts, with the human soul being replaced by GS—which resulted in GS functioning as the one soul of Christ. However, we can clearly cut ties with Apollinarianism by emphasising the fact that within the TM, GS did not replace the human soul of Christ, but, as noted previously, GS actually became a human soul that was then embodied within a physical human body.

Incarnation. Furthermore, in regard to the nature of the wills that are possessed by GS in the incarnation, Plantinga asks the question:

> shall we say that *duothelitism* is the idea that the will of Christ had both the nature of a human will and the nature of a divine will, in the abstract sense of 'nature'? The partisans of the abstract view would happily accept that. (1999, 185)

As a fellow 'partisan of the abstract view' Swinburne (1994, 198) furthers this position by writing that in the Incarnation, 'there was a human kind of willing and acting and a divine kind, and Christ had both, since he acted and willed in both divine and human ways' (Swinburne, 1994, 198). 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 TM, 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 TM believe is sufficient to ground the fact of GS having two wills (i.e. *duothelitism*). The TM thus appears to be a model of the Incarnation that is situated within the bounds of orthodoxy. However, appearances can be deceiving, as, despite the success of the TM in warding off these issues, when this model is actually put under further analysis, we can see that it is of no help to us in completing the Clarification Task, as it faces three important problems—let's term these problems the Transformation Problem, the Assumption Problem and the Incompatibility Problem.

First, the Transformation Problem focuses on the transformational action that is posited by the TM. As noted previously, a paradigm example of the type of transformation featured in this account is that of a caterpillar transforming into a butterfly. However, when a caterpillar makes this transformation, the butterfly ceases to be a caterpillar—it gains certain properties (namely the set of properties that are necessary and sufficient for being a butterfly)—and it loses certain properties (namely the set of properties that are necessary and sufficient for being a caterpillar). Yet, if this action of gaining and losing properties is an integral feature of the process of transformation, then it would entail the fact that, in GS becoming human (i.e. him gaining the set of properties that are necessary and sufficient for being a human), he also ceased to be divine (i.e. he lost the properties that are necessary and sufficient for being divine) (Arcadi, 2017). Thus, one is faced with the dilemma of either affirming that GS did not truly transform into a human—and thus we lose grip of the central aspect of the transformational model—or, one affirms a true transformation of GS into a human—and thus him, plausibly, gaining the properties that are necessary for being a human and losing

the properties that are necessary for being divine—which appears to be problematic for anyone who wants to hold to (Chalcedon). In short, if we affirm the transformational action of GS in the Incarnation, then we must disaffirm the divinity of him, and thus the TM fails to complete the Clarification Task.

Second, the Assumption Problem raises an issue concerning the type of human soul that GS has in the Incarnation. According to the TM, the soul that GS takes on in the Incarnation is an abstract soul. An abstract soul, according to Swinburne (2008, 41), is to be understood as simply that of GS having 'acquired a new way of thinking and acting'. Concerning the nature of this human way of 'thinking and acting', Swinburne further writes that they are merely 'a set of properties, a human way of thinking and acting instantiated in the second person of the Trinity and conjoined in a human body' (Swinburne, 2011, 160). Thus, according to the TM, GS is simply a soul who, in the Incarnation, has assumed a human way of thinking and acting as an *abstract property*. The human soul of Christ is *non-substantial* by it being reducible to the instantiation of a set of properties by GS. This is clearly problematic, as this position results in GS assuming an *incomplete* human nature due to the fact that, at a general level, human souls—if humans possess souls—are clearly not a set of abstract properties that enable one to think and act in a certain way, but are usually conceived of as *substances* (i.e. particular objects) of a platonic (or Cartesian) nature.[6] Thus, the *type* of human soul possessed by GS is clearly not the type of soul that is possessed by the rest of humanity—that is, in the Incarnation, Christ becomes a *non-human* soul. Moreover, at a general level, the wills that are possessed by humans are not simply 'aspectival' wills but are concrete wills. And thus, in a similar vein, the *type* of human will possessed by GS is not the type of will that is possessed by the rest of humanity—Christ thus possesses a *non-human* will (in addition to his divine will). Thus, there is a discontinuity between GS and humanity in such a manner as to result in Christ not being truly human, which is a clear transgression of (Chalcedon).[7] In short, if we affirm the abstract nature conception of the human nature that was assumed by GS in the Incarnation, then we must disaffirm the humanity of GS—which again shows that TM fails to complete the Clarification Task.

Third, the Incompatibility Problem highlights the fact that, as there is a single subject in Christ (i.e. GS),[8] the TM is ineffective in showing how the essential

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[6] Keeping a hylomorphic view of the soul to one side.

[7] This discontinuity between GS and humanity also has an important soteriological implication, as famously noted by Gregory of Nazianzus 'that which He has not assumed He has not healed' (*Ep. CI.* (NPNF2 I:861)), thus if Christ did not assume a complete human nature, then the sin that inflicts humanity has not been atoned for.

[8] In previous writing: (Sijuwade, 2022), I posited an alternative way of dealing with this problem that focuses on utilising the method of reduplicative predication. In utilising this methodology,

divine and human attributes possessed by Christ are, in fact, compatible. That is, at a general level,[9] a divine person has traditionally been taken to possess essential properties of divinity, such as being omnipotent, omniscient and eternal. Whereas humans have (usually) been understood to necessarily possess the converse of these properties, such as being limited in power, limited in knowledge and having a beginning in time. Each of these sets of attributes is incompatible, and hence it is (metaphysically) impossible for a single being to jointly possess divine and human natures that instantiate these inconsistent sets of attributes (Hick, 1993). Now, a model of the Incarnation should show how this is only an *apparent* contradiction and not a *real* contradiction. For example, if one assumed a compositional Christology, where Christ is a composite whole that possesses a divine part: GS, and also a human part: a human body and soul, then one can attribute the essential divine properties to the former and the essential human properties to the latter. Each of the set of properties would thus be attributed to Christ as a whole, who possesses these properties in a derivative fashion.[10] However, as Christ is not taken to be a composite whole by the TM, but a single subject that is identical to GS, Christ has both sets of properties—he bears all the essential divine properties and all the essential human properties—which seems to lead one into a contradiction, and thus leaves one without any means to coherently affirm (Chalcedon). In short, in affirming the veracity of the TM, one is left without a means to show how Christ can coherently possess a divine and a human nature—which again shows that the TM fails to complete the Clarification Task.

The question that is now presented to us is whether there is any way to deal with these three specific problems? I believe that there is, through one providing a further ontological and metaphysical precisification of the TM. This precisification task will focus on situating the TM within a specific philosophical framework developed by Jonathan Lowe, which can provide a

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one is able to show how (Chalcedon) is not subject to any charge of incoherence. However, despite the apparent success of this method, it still does seem to be a 'metaphysically-thin' (logical/semantical) approach. Hence, it will be helpful to now investigate whether there is a more 'metaphysically-robust' approach that can be put forward in combination with the method of reduplicative predication.

[9] Throughout this article, I will be interchanging between the terms 'attribute' and 'property' without any change in meaning. Furthermore, I will be conceiving of these terms in a 'metaphysically-lightweight' fashion, which allows for an entity to possess a property/attribute, without being composed by them (and thus it being able to be metaphysically simple).

[10] Compositional Christological models of the Incarnation have been defended recently by Brian Leftow (2011) and Oliver Crisp (2011). Though these types of models are not subject to the Incompatibility Problem, they face a more difficult issue in trying to ward off the charge of Nestorianism—and thus, for this specific reason alone, adopting a TM is to be favoured over that of a compositional model.

metaphysical/ontological basis for the transformative process that GS undergoes in becoming incarnate. This transformative process will be conceived of within this framework as that of a 'kenotic' process (from the Greek *ekénōsen*: self-emptying), such that, in becoming incarnate, GS (literally) transforms into a human person, and thus divests himself of certain divine properties. In doing this, however, *contra* the traditional form of kenoticism found within the work of Gottfried Thomasius,[11] Christ is able to remain divine—despite him lacking these properties. In all, this will ultimately result in the TM being able to ward off the problems noted above and finally provide a way to complete the Clarification Task.

Thus, the plan is as follows: in section two ('A Non-Cartesian Substance Dualism'), I explicate a specific metaphysical thesis concerning the nature of human persons—termed 'Non-Cartesian Substance Dualism', which has been introduced by Jonathan Lowe in the field of philosophy of mind. In section three ('A Non-Cartesian Transformation'), I apply the thesis of Non-Cartesian Substance Dualism to the Incarnation, which will provide a new transformational model, a first step towards dealing with the Assumption Problem and grounds for dealing with the Transformation and Incompatibility Problems in the next section. In section four ('A Neo-Aristotelian Ontology'), I unpack a specific formal ontological framework—termed 'the four-category ontology', which has been introduced by Lowe in the field of formal ontology. In section five ('A Neo-Aristotelian Transformation'), I then apply the four-category ontology to the Incarnation, which will provide a further development of the transformational model featured in the previous sections and a means to deal with the Transformation and Incompatibility Problems, which will ultimately enable us to complete the Clarification Task. Finally, after this section, there will be a concluding section ('Conclusion') which will summarise the above results and conclude the article.

2. A Non-Cartesian Substance Dualism

According to Jonathan Lowe (1996, 2008, 2018), Non-Cartesian Substance Dualism (hereafter, NCSD) is a specific type of interactionist substance dualism that posits the existence of two intimately related substances: a person and a body. More specifically, we can construe the thesis of NCSD as follows:

Non-Cartesian   A person (or 'self') is a simple, psychological substance: a conscious subject of experience, that is (non-separably)

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[11] For Thomasius' position, see (Welch, 1965, 40-9). For detailed objections to this construal of kenoticism, and potential responses, see (Forrest, 2000). Furthermore, for a different type of kenotic model that is *not* a TM, see (Davis, 2011).

> distinct from, yet intimately related to, a physical substance: an organised physical body.

At a general level, a substance is a persisting concrete object that serves as a bearer of properties and is capable of undergoing a change in respect of at least some of its properties over time.[12] According to Lowe (2008), there are at least two types of substances: psychological substances and physical substances. A psychological substance is a bearer of mental or psychological properties. More specifically, a psychological substance, according to Lowe (2018, 169), is a 'substantial individual belonging to a natural kind which is governed by distinctively psychological laws, with the consequence that individuals of this kind possess persistence conditions which are likewise distinctively psychological in character'. A psychological substance is thus a 'subject of experience'—where the term 'experience' is construed broadly so as to include not just sensory or perceptual experience but also cognitive and introspective states. Whilst a physical substance—the organised physical body and parts of a biological organism—is a bearer of physical properties—with the paradigm example being human bodies and their organic parts (such as the brain and the neurons and cells that make up the brain).

Cartesian Substance Dualism (hereafter, CSD) contends that the bearers of mental properties—such as the property of pain or the property of desire—are distinct from (i.e. non-identical to) the bearer of physical properties—such as the property of mass or the property of velocity. That is, the bearers of mental properties are to be conceived of as subjects of experience that are *necessarily immaterial* and *non-physical*. In contradistinction to this, however, NCSD takes it to be the case that—even though a person is a psychological substance—it can indeed possess physical characteristics (i.e. exemplify physical properties), which, according to Lowe (2006, 9), fits with our intuition that 'we *ourselves*, not just *our bodies*, occupy space and have properties of shape, size, mass, and spatial location'. Now, a person may not possess any of these physical characteristics essentially—such that the persistence conditions preclude it from surviving the loss of this characteristic. However, this does not imply that a person essentially possesses *no* physical characteristic, as a person may possess certain physical properties *in virtue* of possessing a body that possesses those physical properties (such as having a certain *shape* and *size* because of the body possessed by that person).[13] Importantly, however, a person is to be *identified* as a subject of

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[12] Throughout this article, I will be interchanging between the terms 'individual substance'/'substance' and 'particular object''/'object', without any change in meaning.

[13] This does not mean that *every* physical property possessed by the body must also be possessed by the person whose body it is—as some of these properties may entail that the entity

experience, rather than as a biological organism due to both types of substances possessing different identity and existence conditions. Hence, in any given human being, there exists two distinct (i.e. non-identical) substances: a person and a body.

Under NCSD, persons, on the one hand, are to be conceived of as psychological substances—rather than as a hybrid of two radically different substances—by them experiencing cognitive states or mental properties, such as thoughts, feelings, intentions and desires. Whilst, on the other hand, persons are to be conceived of as physical substances—rather than being purely mental (or immaterial) beings—through them possessing physical properties, such as shape, height and weight (Lowe, 2018). Importantly, however, even though persons possess (at least some) of their body's physical characteristics, they are not to be construed as complex entities. Instead, a person is conceived of as a *simple substance* that is not composed of any parts. NCSD is thus a dualism of persons and their organised physical bodies—where a person is conceived of as a simple, psychological substance that is not identical to its body.

Moreover, there is a specific relation: the relation of 'embodiment', that ties together these two distinct substances. A way to think of the embodiment relation is by analogy with the often-cited case of the relation of a bronze statue and the lump of bronze that composes it at any given time (Lowe, 2018). Plausibly, the statue and the lump are non-identical due to the fact that each has different persistence conditions (e.g. the lump could survive being squashed but the statue could not, whilst the statue could survive its arm or leg being replaced, whereas the lump could not through it being replaced with a different lump of matter). This is not a perfect analogy, however, as, first, according to NCSD, the 'embodiment' is construed as a unique *primitive* relationship that cannot be reduced to a causal relationship nor a relationship of identity, constitution or composition. Furthermore, as just noted, a person is a 'simple' substance and thus is not composed of parts, which is not true for the lump and statue. Nonetheless, despite these differences, this analogy suffices to highlight the possibility of two individual substances being distinct (i.e. non-identical), yet being so intimately related that they exactly coincide spatially at each moment of their existence and necessarily share, at any given time, many of their physical properties (such as their shape, size and mass etc.) (Lowe, 2018).

As a metaphysical thesis, NCSD is thus to be distinguished from the notion of physicalism, as a person is a subject of experience that is not identifiable with his or her body (or any part of it). Furthermore, NCSD is also to be distinguished from the notion of CSD, as a person is not a pure mental substance—an entity

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possessing them is a body (such as the property of being wholly composed of bodily parts), which would be denied by a proponent of NCSD.

that does *not* possess any physical characteristics and is *not* necessarily separable from the organic physical body that it is united to. That is, even though NCSD maintains, alongside CD, the fact of a person (and not their body) being the bearer of mental properties *and* a person being distinct from their body (or any part of it), it does not insist that either that the person is spatially un-extended or that it is necessarily separable from anything physical. Given these important features, we can illustrate the central elements of this schematic framework as such (where Person stands for the human person, Body stands for their organised physical body, M stands for mental properties, and P stands for physical properties):
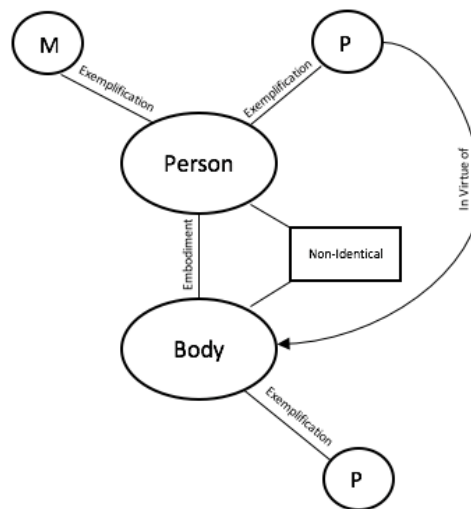

Fig 2. Non-Cartesian Substance Dualism

Thus, in summary, according to NCSD, there exists two distinct substances: a psychological substance, which is a person that is a subject of experience and a bearer of physical and psychological properties, and a physical substance, which is the organised physical body of that person and the bearer of solely physical properties. These two substances are not identical, given their different persistence/identity conditions, which implies that a person is also a simple, non-composite substance (which grounds the unity of the person and their consciousness). Persons are related to their bodies through a primitive embodiment relation and are not necessarily separable from their bodies, in the sense of them being capable of disembodied existence. On the basis of this explication of the notion of NCSD, we can now apply this thesis within a theological context in order to provide a means to begin to deal with the task at hand—that of completing the Clarification Task.

3. A Non-Cartesian Transformation

According to the TM account, GS became a human by transforming into one, without, however, ceasing to be divine. In explicating the nature of this type of account through the thesis of the NCSD—let's term this Transformational Model Two (hereafter, TM₂)—we can re-construe the TM account as follows:

Transformational₂	(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 an organised physical body.
	(ii)	As a human person, GS's nature was composed of two parts: a complete abstract divine nature, that included a set of abstract divine properties, and a complete concrete/abstract human nature, that included a concrete particular that possessed a set of abstract human properties, and two concrete wills: a divine concrete will and a human concrete will.

According to the TM₂, the specific case of GS becoming human in the Incarnation is that of him being transformed into a human 'person'. Through this transformation, GS became intimately related to—yet remained distinct from—a particular organised physical body—let's term this transformed entity God the Son Incarnate (hereafter, GSI).[14] Now, as a human person, GSI is, first, an individual substance—a persisting concrete object that serves as a bearer of properties and is capable of undergoing a change in respect of at least some of its properties over time. Second, the type of substance that GSI is is that of an 'embodied' psychological substance: an entity that bears mental or psychological properties. As an embodied psychological substance, GSI is thus a 'subject of

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[14] This specific account is a dualist account, rather than a physicalist or non-materialist account, due to the fact that it maintains the distinctness of two types of substances in the Incarnation: mental (i.e. psychological) substances and physical (i.e. biological) substances—the bearers of mental properties (or states) being persons and the bearers of physical properties (or states) being organised physical bodies (and their parts). Thus, this transformational model is clearly incompatible with (even very weak) forms of non-reductive physicalism, with persons and their bodies (or their parts) being non-identical and distinct entities in their own right.

experience' (with the type of experiences that he was a subject of including broadly sensory or perceptual experiences and cognitive and introspective states etc.) and a substantial individual that belonged to a natural kind that is governed by distinctively psychological laws.[15] Importantly, however, though GSI is an embodied being, he is *not* identical to his organised physical body—which is to be construed as a biological substance (i.e. a living organism that bears certain physical properties or characteristics)—neither with any part of his body (such as his brain). Moreover, the physical states associated with GSI are not identical to his mental states (such as him feeling certain pain when he was crucified or a desire to eat when he was hungry). Rather, it is GSI himself—instead of his body or brain—that solely experienced the various mental states. That is, GSI cognitive states or mental properties, such as his thoughts, feelings, intentions and desires etc., belong properly to him, not his body, with these states or properties being associated with his body only *in virtue* of the relationship which he bears to it—that is the primitive embodiment relationship. Importantly, however, one should not take GSI to be an entity that can *only* bear mental properties—which is the primary distinguishing factor between TM₂ and other (dualist) TMs. That is, even though God existed as a person (i.e. a psychological substance), he can, and indeed did, possess physical characteristics. In other words, GSI exemplified—alongside his mental properties—certain physical properties in a non-essential manner.[16]

Thus, within the TM₂, two distinct substances exist post-Incarnation: a person, GSI, who is a subject of experience and a bearer of physical and psychological properties (i.e. a psychological substance), and his organised physical body, which solely bore physical properties. GSI, who is related to his organised physical body through a primitive embodiment relation, is distinct from his body (i.e. is non-identical to it) due to GSI's simplicity and the different persistence/identity conditions that govern the types of entities that GSI and his organised physical body are. In the framework established by NCSD, the Assumption Problem— namely, the issue of GSI assuming an incomplete human nature by transforming into a soul, and possessing a will, that is dissimilar to the one had by the rest of humanity—does not apply to this specific model. As, under the NCSD conception of human persons, souls are identified *as* persons (i.e. psychological substances), and thus each human is a person in the sense of being a psychological substance (or subject of experience). GS, in becoming human, transforms into a person in that specific sense and thus is the same *type* of substance that each and every human person is. There is thus no incomplete

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[15] Being of this kind, GSI thus possessed persistence conditions, which were likewise distinctively psychological in character.

[16] Through the persistence conditions governing him and his organised differing and not precluding him from surviving the loss of his body or its physical characteristics.

human nature postulated here through GS assuming (through transforming into) a 'person' in the sense made available by the NCSD account.

Hence, unlike the TM of Swinburne and Plantinga, within the framework of the TM₂, 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 that is, first, intimately related to a particular human body and, second, who has, in virtue of this particular body, certain abstract properties that are necessary and sufficient for being human. The TM₂ 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 properties that render this person as human. Given this, we can thus provide a modification to our diagram that expresses the central tenets of the TM as follows:

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

Fig 2 Central Tenets of Transformational Model (2)

Though one still needs to provide a further explanation for how GSI can have two distinct concrete (rather than aspectival) wills—which will be done in the next section—the framework provided by the TM₂ establishes a 'first step' towards dealing with the Assumption Problem, and also opens up an avenue for one to begin deal with the Transformation Problem. That is, unlike the TM, which takes GS to have transformed into a human (soul) without, however, him having lost any specific properties, the TM₂ sees GS as truly transforming into a human—in a similar manner to the previously cited example of a caterpillar transforming into a butterfly, GS experiences a sequence of gaining *and* losing certain properties.

Prior to the Incarnation, GSI existed as a divine person that was an immaterial pure mental substance. However, once the Incarnation took place, GS *transformed* into a human person by being tied by a relation of embodiment to a specific

organised physical body. Thus, GSI *ceased* to exemplify the properties of *being immaterial*, *being a pure mental substance* and *being a divine person*, and *gained*—alongside the various mental properties that he had—certain *physical properties* (such as having a certain *shape* and *size*, and moving with a certain *velocity* because of the body possessed by him) in virtue of possessing a body that possesses those physical properties—and the property of *being a human person*.[17] In other words, what we have here, is that of GS gaining certain properties—namely, his physical properties (and other necessary and sufficient properties for being a human), and losing certain properties—properties that are related to his immateriality and the properties that render him as a divine person.[18] By GSI sequentially possessing a certain set of mental and divine properties, and then a certain set of mental *and* physical properties, is indeed a transformation in the *truest sense of the term*. We can illustrate the schematic framework provided by the TM₂ as such (where GS continues to stand for God the Son, M stands for Mental Properties, P stands for Physical Properties, Person for the human person and Body for the organised physical body):

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[17] This, however, does not mean that *every* physical property possessed by GSI's organised physical body was also possessed by GSI. As in line with the NCSD conception of human persons (and the traditional understanding of the nature of a divine person), GSI was a simple entity. And thus, even though he possessed (at least some) of his body's physical characteristics, he was, and is not, to be construed as a complex entity that is composed of parts. GSI was thus a human person (i.e. a psychological substance) that was intimately related, through a primitive embodiment relation, to an organised physical body. This body was his body through perceiving and acting through it—which thus also determined which of the body's physical characteristics belonged to him.

[18] In understanding this further, what we have here is that of GSI *being a human person* who has a *divine nature*, rather than (the more frequently held position of him) *being a divine person* who has a *human nature*. This is not to say, however, that he does not also have a human nature, for the former position, and a divine nature, for the latter position. Rather, the focus here is one of emphasis—with an affirmation of the former position, instead of the latter, being what is needed for a true transformation of GS into a human (without, however, him ceasing to also *be divine* once this transformation has occurred)—more on this below.
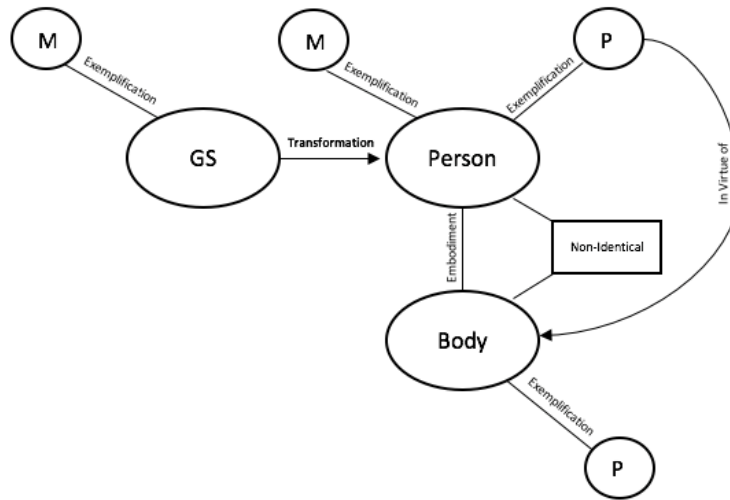
Fig 3. Non-Cartesian Transformational Incarnation

Yet, despite GSI transforming from a divine person to a human person, the TM₂ still wants to maintain the fact of GSI *remaining divine in a certain sense*. However, one can indeed ask how GSI was able to lose the properties that render him as a divine person without, however, ceasing to be divine? There seems to be a problem here—as how can one be divine without being a divine person? This question must be answered if the cogency and 'orthodoxy' of the proposed account are to be affirmed. However, the NCSD does not have the resources to fully answer this question.

Nevertheless, we can indeed successfully answer this question, and thus complete our response to the Assumption Problem, and deal with the Transformation Problem and Incompatibility Problem as well, by turning our attention onto a particular ontological framework that has been introduced by Lowe into the field of formal ontology. Thus, as it stands, we can take the TM₂, and the metaphysical framework provided by NCSD, to have provided a preliminary step towards dealing with the Clarification Task (as it was successful in providing a first step towards dealing with the Assumption Problem), with the following further development and precisification of the TM₂ allowing us to finally complete this challenging task.

4. A Neo-Aristotelian Ontology

In recent writings, Jonathan Lowe (2006, 2009 and 2012a,b) has developed a formal, neo-Aristotelian categorial ontology, termed the *four-category ontology*,[19]

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[19] This ontology is neo-Aristotelian as it finds its roots in Aristotle's ontological categorisation in his work *Categories*. Furthermore, this ontology is situated within the branch of analytical metaphysics called formal ontology. Formal ontology focuses on identifying the ontological

which aims to provide a metaphysical foundation for the natural sciences. We can state the central elements of this ontological framework succinctly as follows:

Four-Category   There exist four cross-categorial fundamental ontological categories: objects (substances), modes (property-instances), kinds (substantial universals) and attributes (non-substantial universal).

According to Lowe, the four fundamental categories are defined in terms of three dependence relations: rigid-existential dependence, non-rigid existential dependence and identity-dependence, and, most importantly, by formal ontological relations: instantiation, characterisation and exemplification, with the four categories and formal ontological relations being helpfully represented through a diagram, which has been termed by Lowe (2006) and others, the Ontological Square.[20] This diagram can be represented as such:
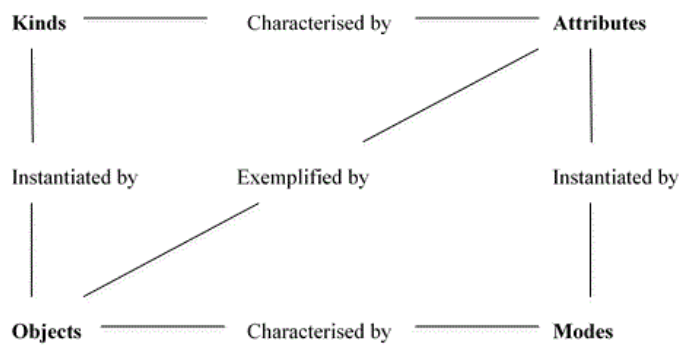

Fig 4. Ontological Square (Version 1) (Lowe, 2006)

The defining features of the four fundamental categories are thus as follows: firstly, particular (substantial) objects are property-bearing particulars that have determinate existence and identity conditions. They are countable entities and are not themselves borne or possessed by anything else.[21] Furthermore, particular objects are characterised by modes and, more importantly, they are instances of kinds. They are *rigidly* existentially dependent upon these kinds, where the term 'rigid' used here indicates a lack of flexibility in this dependence relation. That is, the existence of an entity (a given *x*) requires the existence of another *specific* entity (a given *y*) (Tahko and Lowe, 2015). The dependence of *x* upon *y*, in this

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categories and formal relations that obtain between members of those different categories (Lowe, 2006).

[20] With the ontological dependence relations (i.e. dependence profiles) being included *within* the categories of the Ontological Square.

[21] For a further helpful explanation of the conditions of objecthood, see: (Lowe, 1998, Ch.2).

form of ontological dependence, is thus a *strict implication*, mainly *x*'s existence strictly implying *y*'s existence. Thus, within this context, it is necessary that a particular object's existence is dependent upon the existence of that *specific* kind. Secondly, kinds (or substantial universals) are universals that are (secondary) objects and kinds of *being*.[22] Kinds thus have their membership determined by certain distinctive existence and identity conditions, which can be determined *a priori*.[23] Additionally, kinds can be construed as *forms* (in a hylomorphic sense) that constitute the essence or very identity of a member of that kind (i.e. what it is *to be* a member of that kind).[24] The particular instances of a given kind are thus (identical to) *particular forms*, and, more specifically, these instances are particular objects upon which the kind is *non-rigidly* existentially dependent. The term 'non-rigid', in contradistinction to rigid existential dependence, is instead used here to express *flexibility* in this dependence relation, in that the existence of *x* does not require the existence of a *specific* entity, but only an entity that possesses characteristics of a certain class (Fs). That is, this dependence relation only requires simply that at least some Fs exist, rather than with the rigid requirement of a specific object existing. Therefore, within this context, it is necessary that a kind's existence is dependent upon the existence of *some* instance of that kind. In addition to this, kinds are also characterised by attributes, which they depend upon for their identity. This specific notion of *identity-dependence*, as noted by Lowe, centres around the fact that 'the identity of *x* depends on the identity of *y* —or, more briefly, that *x* depends for its identity upon y—is to say that *which* thing of its kind *y* is fixes (or metaphysically determines) *which* thing of its kind *x* is'. (Lowe, 1998, 147, emphasis added). In this context, it is thus of the *essence* of the kind in question to derive its identity from the specific attributes that characterise it.

Thirdly, attributes (or non-substantial universals/properties) are—like kinds— universals, that are to be construed as *universal ways of being* of a given entity. Specifically, attributes function as characterising property universals. Any given two entities can thus be qualitatively the same whilst being numerically distinct. Attributes have modes as their instances, rather than particular objects, and are non-rigidly existentially dependent upon the category of kinds (which

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[22] Lowe (2006) makes a distinction within this ontology between 'first' or 'particular' objects and 'secondary' objects—identified as kinds—given that both types of entities fulfil the requirements of objecthood (i.e. are property-bearers, have determinate existence and identity conditions, are countable and are not themselves borne by any other entities).

[23] The *a priori* determination of these conditions distinguishes a kind of being from a natural kind, which would have the conditions for its membership determined *a posteriori* (Lowe 2006).

[24] More on the nature of an essence below. Furthermore, Lowe (1998 and 2012a) puts forward an original interpretation of the Aristotelian thesis of hylomorphism, by taking a form to be a universal (i.e. a substantial universal/kind) and de-ontologises the category of matter. Entities are thus not a combination of matter and form but solely are identified as particularised forms.

they also characterise). It is thus important to note that this specific ontological framework is a version of *immanent realism*, according to which there exist no un-instantiated attributes (i.e. universals). Therefore, it is an essential feature of any attribute that it has particular instances which ground its existence.

Fourthly, and finally, modes (or property-instances) are particularised properties that are to be construed as the *particular ways of being* of a given entity. Specifically, modes function as *particular ways* in which a given particular object may be a certain thing. Any given two entities can thus be qualitatively similar whilst being numerically distinct. Modes are instances of attributes, upon which they are rigidly existentially dependent, and they serve the role of characterising objects, upon which they are also identity and rigidly existentially dependent. We can now focus in on a specific entity that falls within the attributes/modes category: powers—which will be shown later to be an important entity within the four-category ontology for the task at hand.[25]
According to Lowe (2008, 2013), powers are best conceived of as attributes (or modes) exemplified by particular objects. A particular object, as previously noted, is a particular that bears properties that plausibly now can be taken to include a set of powers. Particular objects are ontologically independent entities, and thus different kinds of particular objects are primarily distinguished by their distinctive identity conditions *and* their distinctive powers. We can state the nature of a power more succinctly as follows:

Power   A power is an attribute (or mode) that enables a particular object to act, when manifested, and can come in four, cross-categorial types: causal, non-causal, active and passive.

So, powers are attributes (or modes) exemplified by particular objects, with the type of attribute that a power is, is one which enables its bearer to act—powers are powers *to do something* (Lowe, 2008). When a particular object possesses a power to do something, one says that their doing that thing is the 'manifestation' or 'exercising' of that power. Generally, powers can be distinguished in two ways: 'token powers' and 'power types'. A token power is a particular power of a particular object which belongs essentially to that substance and thus cannot be 'transferred' to any other particular object (Lowe, 2008). An example of a token power is the power of a particular copper wire to conduct electricity which is an essential property of that particular wire and thus cannot be transferred to any

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[25] Even though, in the contemporary literature, the term 'disposition' and 'power' are often taken to be synonymous, for Lowe, these terms are to be held as distinct, with the former term solely referring to a manner of exemplification, as noted earlier. Furthermore, the bringing together of Lowe's view on powers and his four-category ontology is, as far as I can see, original to this article.

other wire. A power type is the type of power of which a particular power of a particular object is a token (Lowe, 2008). An example of a power type would be the type electrical conductivity in which the particular wire's power is a token. Different particular objects can share the same power type, however, each of these substances will have a different token power of that type. For both forms of powers, a power is—at a minimum—partly individuated by *what it is a power to do*, which, more specifically, is its 'manifestation type'. It is part of the essence of a given power that it is a power to do a specific thing—it is part of the essence of magnetism that it is a substance's power to attract ferrous metals close to that substance (Lowe, 2008).[26] Power types are solely, and completely, individuated by their manifestation types—for example, the power type of electrical conductivity is individuated by its manifestation type of conducting an electrical current. However, token powers, which are concrete particulars, unlike power types, are individuated by their *manifestation types*, their *bearers* and their *time of existence*—for example, a particular copper wire's token power of electrical conductivity is individuated by its manifestation type, conducting an electrical current, in conjunction with the particular copper wire which is its bearer, and the time at which this particular wire possesses this token power. Thus, the identity of a token power is fixed or entirely determined by its power to what it does, when possessed by a particular object at a specific time.

Focusing our attention on token powers, powers can be further divided between causal powers and non-causal powers. *Causal powers* are ones whose manifestations consist in their bearers acting on one (or more) particular object so as to bring about a distinctive kind of change in them—for example, water's power to dissolve salt is a causal power as it is a matter of this power acting on the salt in such a manner that it causes it to dissolve (Lowe, 2008). Thus, in the case of the exercising of a causal power, it is the power of a particular object to bring about a certain change in another particular object. In contrast to this, *non-causal* powers are ones whose manifestations do not consist in their bearers acting on one (or more) particular object so as to bring about a distinctive kind of change in them—for example, the power of a spherical object to roll down an inclined plane is a non-causal power of that object, given that the manifestation of this power—the action of rolling down an inclined plane—does not consist in the spherical object bringing about any distinctive kind of change in anything. Rather, it solely consists of a certain kind of translational motion, which is simply its movement from one location to another (Lowe, 2013). However, by so moving, as Lowe (2013, 158) notes, 'the spherical object might cause some change to occur in another object'. A particular object is thus one that possesses certain causal and

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[26] Importantly, however, a particular object's powers (such as its magnetism), need not always be manifesting, in order for it to be partly individuated by that manifestation type.

non-causal powers, with the manifestation of the latter being distinct from that of the former. From this distinction between causal and non-causal powers, a further distinction can be made between 'active' powers and 'passive' powers. *Active* powers are ones whose manifestation is always caused by one (or more) particular object acting upon the bearer of the power—for example, matter's power of gravitation attraction is a causal power *and* an active power as it does not only cause a change in another particular object, but also its manifestation is not caused by anything acting on the bearer of that power (Lowe, 2013). In contrast, *passive* powers are ones whose manifestation is always caused by one or more particular object acting upon the bearer of the power—for example, water's power to dissolve salt is a causal power *and* a passive power as (like the causal power of matter) it not only causes a change in another particular object, but its manifestation, which is that of dissolving, is also caused by one (or more) particular object, such as some salt, acting upon the bearer of that power. From the distinction drawn between causal/non-casual powers and active/passive powers, we can also see that there is a *cross-over* of the different types of powers that there are, which can be further illustrated by the following fourfold categorisation of powers:

	Causal	*Non-causal*
Active	E.g., matter's gravitational power of attraction	E.g., radium's power of spontaneous radioactive decay
Passive	E.g., water's power to dissolve	E.g., a sphere's power to roll down an inclined plane

Fig 5. Fourfold Categorisation of Powers (Lowe 2013)

Focusing now on the (intriguing) category of active, non-causal powers, the radioactivity of a radium atom is an active power as the decaying of this atom is not 'triggered' by the power of any other substance. Furthermore, it is a non-causal power because its manifestation solely consists of a change in the properties of the atom itself, without it also causing a change in anything external to itself. This category of active, non-causal powers and the paradigm example of the radioactivity of a radium atom is intriguing simply because Lowe places the human will *within* this category and likens it to this specific example. That is,

according to Lowe (2013), the human will is a power, with volitions or acts of will as its manifestations or exercises. The type of power that the will is, is that of an *active, non-causal power*. The will is an active power as its manifestation or exercise is never caused by some other entity acting upon the substance whose will it is. Secondly, the will is a non-causal power as its manifestation or exercise does not consist in the causing of anything to happen— for example, willing to raise one's arm does not consist in causing it to happen, as one may will to raise their arm, and it may fail to raise. That is, in keeping with this example, if one's will consist in the cause of something to happen, then in the case of one willing to raise their arm, one's will could not occur without their arm being raised. Of course, by willing, a substance can indeed exercise or manifest a causal power for its arm to rise. However, this is a *distinct* power as whether a substance willing for their arm to rise that they indeed succeed in raising their arm will entirely depend upon the arm's possession of a suitable *passive causal* power to rise, which is solely 'triggered' by the object's act of will (Lowe, 2013). The manifestation of a substance's power to raise its arm, or any other similar type of power—such as the power to walk—is solely by means of manifesting its power to will. Thus, the power to will is distinct from the many distinct powers that humans have to cause their body parts to move in certain ways—the former type of power is an active, non-causal power, or, more specifically, a 'spontaneous power', and the latter type of powers are passive, causal powers. Thus, the will, unlike the radioactivity of a radium atom, is thus a *spontaneous power*. More specifically, the will is a *two-way power*—a power *to will* or *to refrain from willing* a particular action. Moreover, it is a *rational power*—it is a power whose exercises or manifestations are *responsive to reason*. That is, the will is exercised 'in the light of' reasons, where a reason for an action, according to Lowe (2013, 165), is 'any consideration which speaks in favour of the agent's acting in a certain way in certain circumstances'. In other words, the agent's actions, which are determined by their will, have a *rational explanation*—the specific reasons that the agent has taken to be sufficient for them to act in a particular way on that occasion. Thus, even though a human agent's will is a *spontaneous* power, this spontaneity does not result in their willing or refraining from willing a particular action being one of pure 'chance'. Since in either willing or refraining from willing a particular action, the human agent would have exercised their will in the light of the reasons that have been presented to them, and as the weight of reason for either option is not an incontestable fact—rather it is largely a matter of judgement—the agent will have typically acted rationally, instead of arbitrarily, in either of these cases. Thus, the will, unlike the power of a radioactive atom, is a *spontaneous, two-way power* that is exercised in *light of reason*.

Turning our attention back on to the four fundamental ontological categories of objects, kinds, attributes and modes, we can also see that these categories are

related by (and are partly defined in terms of) the asymmetrical formal ontological relations of characterisation, instantiation and exemplification.[27] These ontological relations, according to Lowe (2006), are *irreducible* and *primitive* notions. The implication here is that we cannot provide a reductive analysis or definition of their nature. Yet, we can still draw certain distinctions between them. Firstly, characterisation, which is traditionally termed 'inherence', is a relationship that takes the characterising entities (i.e. modes and attributes) not as constituents (or parts of) the entities in which they characterise (i.e. objects and kinds), but as 'characteristics', 'features' or 'aspects' of these entities. For example, a redness-attribute characterises the kind Tomato, and thus the colour 'redness' is to be taken as a 'characteristic', 'feature' or 'aspect' of the kind Tomato. Additionally, a redness-mode, which is an instance of a redness-attribute, characterises a particular tomato, and thus the colour 'redness' is a particular 'characteristic', 'feature' or 'aspect' of that tomato. Secondly, instantiation is a relationship between a particular entity and a universal. However, the particular entities (i.e. objects and modes) are again not to be taken as constituents of universals (i.e. kinds and attributes), but simply are particular *instances* of them. That is, a particular tomato is to be taken as an instance of the kind Tomato.

Thirdly, exemplification is a relationship between an object and an attribute. Exemplification, however, is not a *primitive* formal ontological relation but is instead an *indirect* relationship between an object and an attribute. It is non-primitive (and non-direct), given that it is a resultant relationship derivable from the two other formal ontological relations of instantiation and characterisation. These formal ontological relations are species of the relationship of exemplification, which provide two fundamentally *different ways* in which a particular object can be indirectly related to an attribute. That is, either the particular object exemplifies an attribute through instantiating a kind which, in turn, is characterised by the attribute or, the object exemplifies an attribute through being characterised by a mode which, in turn, instantiates the attribute itself. For example, a particular tomato exemplifies a redness-attribute by either instantiating the kind Tomato, which is itself characterised by a redness-attribute or, by being characterised by a redness-mode, which is an instance of the *same* redness-attribute.

Furthermore, these two distinct species of exemplification, according to Lowe (2009), obtain in two different varieties, modes or manners, which are termed 'dispositional exemplification' and 'occurrent exemplification. However, for Lowe, the distinction between the dispositional and the occurrent does not

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[27] These asymmetrical formal ontological relations play a role in defining the entities within the four fundamental categories; however, this is only a partial role due to this defining role being shared with the various dependence relations.

represent a distinction between two different types of *properties*.[28] Rather the distinction is between dispositional and occurrent *prediction, relations* and *state of affairs*. Thus, the four-category ontology disposes of dispositional and occurrent properties and instead describes things at three levels:

Dispositional/Occurrent Distinction	State of Affairs Level: Dispositional & occurrent state of affairs
	Relational Level: Dispositional & occurrent exemplification
	Linguistic Level: Dispositional & occurrent predication.

In light of these three levels, a dispositional state of affairs is one in which a particular object instantiates a kind. This is, in turn, characterised by an attribute, resulting in the object *dispositionally* exemplifying that attribute,[29] This then can be expressed linguistically through dispositional predication, which is stated formally by Lowe (2009, 178) as such (with 'Dis[a, F]' standing for 'a exemplifies attribute F *dispositionally*' and '/' standing for instantiation):

Dispositional $\textbf{Dis}[a, F] =_{df.} (\exists\phi)(\phi F \ \& \ a/\phi.$

Whereas an occurrent state of affairs is one in which a particular object is characterised by a mode which, in turn, instantiates an attribute, resulting in the particular object *occurrently* exemplifying that attribute. This then can also be expressed linguistically through occurrent predication, which is again stated formally by Lowe (2009, 178) as such (with 'Occ[a, F]' standing for 'a exemplifies attribute F *occurrently*', 'r' standing for 'kind', and a juxtaposition of the constants or variables (e.g. 'βG'), representing 'characterisation'):

Occurrent $\textbf{Occ}[a, F] =_{df.} (\exists r)(ar \ \& \ r/F).$

Particular objects can thus exemplify a given attribute in either of these two ways: dispositionally or occurrently, which is thus the obtaining of either a dispositional or occurrent state of affairs, that is expressed, linguistically, through dispositional or occurrent predication. For example, a particular tomato dispositionally exemplifies a redness-attribute through it being an instance of the

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[28] The majority of metaphysicians favour the term 'categorical' rather than 'occurrent' for properties that are not dispositional. However, Lowe sees this term as being metaphysically loaded, and so prefers the latter.

[29] Thus, a state of affairs here is simply the *indirect* 'possession' of a property (attribute) by an object.

kind Tomato, which is, in turn, characterised by a redness-attribute.[30] However, a particular tomato occurrently exemplifies a redness-attribute by it being characterised by a redness-mode which is, in turn, an instance of a redness-attribute.[31] We can further illustrate this dispositional/occurrent distinction through another version of the Ontological Square which can be illustrated as follows:
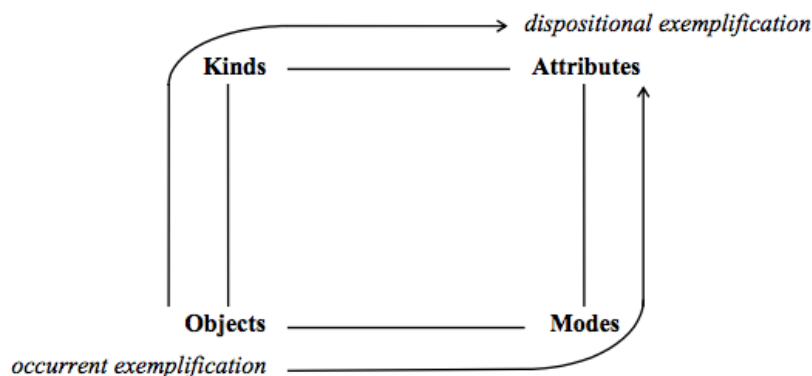

Fig 6. Ontological Square (Version 2) (Lowe 2009)

Given this, there is thus a distinction between *dispositional* and *occurrent* states/relations/predicates that ground the exemplification of an attribute by a particular object.

In summary, within the ontological framework of the four-category ontology, there are thus four fundamental ontological categories: objects, kinds, attributes and modes. These are defined by three ontological dependence relations: rigid existential dependence, non-rigid existential dependence and identity-dependence. These are related to each other by three fundamental formal ontological relations: instantiation, characterisation and exemplification. The four-category ontology thus provides a clear ontological framework for assessing the nature and relationships of various types of entities. We can now focus our attention on the ontological framework detailed above and apply it to the task at hand.

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[30] In a predicative sense, one would communicate this state of affairs by simply saying that 'the tomato *is red*', which in the above schema is: Dis[t, R] where 't' stands for tomato and 'R' for the attribute of redness.

[31] In a predicative sense, one would communicate this state of affairs by simply saying that 'the tomato *is redding*', which in the above schema, is: Occ[t, R] where 't' again stands for tomato and 'R' for the attribute of redness.

5. A Neo-Aristotelian Transformation

According to the TM₂ account, GS became a human by transforming into a human person that was intimately related to a particular organised human body—without, however, him ceasing to be divine. 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 Model Three (hereafter, TM₃)—we can now provide a final re-construal of the TM account as follows:[32]

Transformational₃	(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 an organised physical body.
	(ii)	As a human person, GS's nature had two parts: a complete abstract divine nature, that included a set of non-substantial universals: the d-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/abstract human nature, that included a concrete particular that possessed a set of non-substantial universals: the h-attributes (that also included within it a human concrete will (i.e. an active, non-causal power)), that he dispositionally and occurrently exemplified

According to the TM₃, we can categorise GS within the four-category ontology as follows: GSI is a particular object by him, firstly, being a property bearer (i.e. he bears the attribute of divinity) with determinate existence and identity conditions, and, secondly, through him not being borne or possessed by any other entity. As a particular object, GSI instantiates two kinds (or forms), one we

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

can term *Deity*, which is instantiated pre-Incarnation and post-Incarnation, and one which we can term *Human*, which is instantiated solely post-Incarnation. 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 the kind 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 human-candidate being an *actual instance* of the kind Humanity, 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 (kind or general) essence or the very identity of those members—is determined by them instantiating those specific kinds. Hence, an answer to a 'what-is question'—which, in this case, would be, what is GS pre-Incarnation? And what is the GS post-Incarnation?—would be that GSI, pre-Incarnation, is a particular divine object (i.e. divine person), and GSI, post-Incarnation, is a particular human object (i.e. human person), who is still *divine* by him continuing to instantiate the kind Deity (i.e. he is still a deity-instance).

Now, as kinds, Deity and Humanity would, firstly, each be non-rigidly existentially dependent on the existence of, at least, one (particular) deity and human-instance. Conversely, a deity or human instance is itself rigidly-existentially dependent on the existence of its kinds, in that it only exists *if* the kind Deity or kind Humanity exists as well. Secondly, Deity and Humanity would also each be characterised by attributes—which we can term *d-attributes* (i.e. deity-attributes) for the kind Deity, and *h*-attributes for the kind Humanity (i.e. human-attributes). 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. With these attributes thus each being essential 'features', 'characteristics' or 'aspects' of the kind Deity and the kind Humanity. That is, in some sense, these attributes would essentially be possessed by, or 'inhere' within, the kind Deity and the kind Humanity. Resulting in every entity within the kind Deity, if they are to be *a deity* (i.e. a *deity-instance*), and every entity within the kind Humanity, if they are to be a *human* (i.e. a *human-instance*), being essentially propertied in the way that their respective kinds are—thus, GSI, through instantiating the kinds Deity and Human is simply taken *to be* a deity-instance and a human-instance (or a particularised deity-form and human-form).

Plausibly we can identify the 'nature' of a particular object with the attributes that it exemplifies. Thus, as GSI is of the kinds Deity and Humanity, he exemplifies *two sets of attributes*: the d-attributes and the h-attributes, which allows us to take GSI to possess two natures: a divine and human nature. We thus have one particular object: GS, being of two natures within this framework. Now, for the instantiation of attributes by modes, an important move needs to be made within the present ontological framework in order to provide a basis for dealing with the problems that plagued the TM. That is, it is taken to be the case that, within the specific case of the Incarnation, the set of h-attributes, and *not* the set d-attributes, are necessarily instantiated by some modes—which, for these h-attributes, we can term h-modes (i.e. humanity-modes). Focusing our attention now on the nature of these h-modes: as particular instances of the h-attributes, the existence of the h-modes would be rigidly existentially dependent upon the existence of the h-attributes, in that the h-modes necessarily exist only if the h-attributes exist. Conversely, the existence of the h-attributes would each be non-rigidly existentially dependent on the existence of the h-modes, in that the h-attributes necessarily exist if at least some h-modes exist. The h-modes, as modes, are particular ways of being. Specifically, they are particular ways in which its bearers would be characterised. Thus, the h-modes would be the collection of the particular attributes essential for being a *particular* human, for example, *being a particular entity that has (actually or potentially) certain limited powers of bodily control and knowledge acquisition through senses, being to some extent rational* etc. Hence, the h-modes would each exist as entities that characterise their bearers through bestowing upon them a certain character: the character of *being a particular human*. In identifying the possible bearer of the h-modes, we take it to be GSI, who, as a particular object, is characterised by some particular h-modes. That is, each of these h-modes exists as essential 'properties', 'features' or 'characteristics' of GSI—they directly bestow the character of 'humanity' onto GSI, resulting in him being characterised as a particular human. Moreover, these h-modes would be identity-dependent on GSI, in that it is *part of the essence* of a given h-mode to be the mode that it is (i.e. the mode of *that* specific bearer) in virtue of its relation to the GSI.

Now, as the h-attributes—and not the d-attributes—have modes as instances, we take it to be the case that the d-attributes are solely related to GSI in a *dispositional* way—rather than an occurrent way. That is, according to the present account, there are solely two states of affairs pre-Incarnation: a dispositional state of affairs, in which GS is dispositionally exemplifying the d-attributes, and an occurrent state of affairs, in which GSI is occurrently exemplifying the d-attributes. More precisely, GS is exemplifying the d-attributes dispositionally through instantiating the kind Deity, which is characterised by the d-attributes, resulting in GS—at that specific time—being a deity-instance. Moreover, GS is

also exemplifying the d-attributes *occurrently* through him being characterised by d-modes, which are instances of the d-attributes, resulting in GS—at that time—being characterised as a particular deity. Importantly, however, prior to the Incarnation, GSI is not instantiating the kind Humanity, and neither is he being characterised by h-modes that are instances of the h-attributes, and thus he is not (dispositionally or occurrently) human prior to the Incarnation—in short, GSI, at this specific time, is not a particular human, but is simply a particular deity.[33] Thus, as noted previously, a 'what-question' asked of GSI in his pre-incarnate state—such as 'what is GS?'—would have as the correct answer that GSI is a particular divine person. We can capture this state of affairs within the Ontological Square, where, in the pre-Incarnation case, we see that GS exemplifies the d-attributes in the dispositional and occurrent way, and thus is a particular divine person, and not a particular human person:
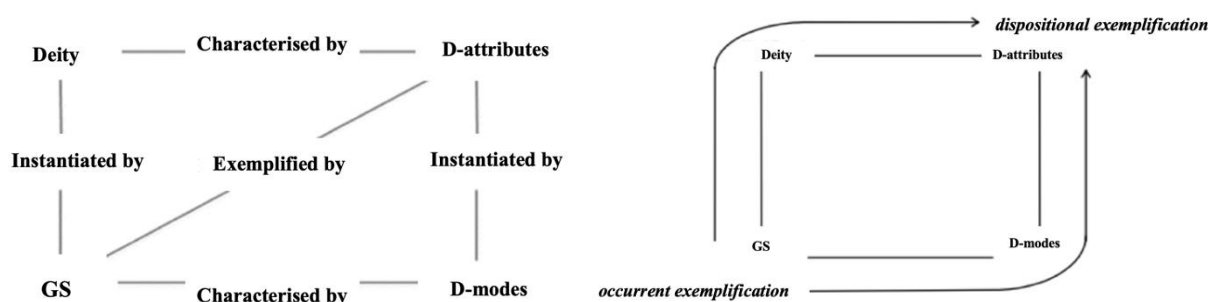

Fig 7. Ontological Square (Pre-Incarnation Exemplification)

Now, at the moment of the Incarnation, we see a change take place (i.e. a transformation) in two ways: first, there is now a new dispositional state of affairs that obtains—where GSI, in addition to his dispositional exemplification of the d-attributes, now dispositionally exemplifies the h-attributes—and thus now becomes a divine-instance *and* human-instance. Stated succinctly, post-Incarnation, the following is true (where *g* stands for GSI, *D* for d-attributes and *H* for h-attributes):

Dispositional*   **Dis**[*g*, *D*]: *g* exemplifies *D* dispositionally
                                Dis[*g*, *H*]: *g* exemplifies *H* dispositionally

Second, there is also now a new occurrent state of affairs that obtains—where GS is now *characterised* by some h-modes that are instances of the h-attributes, and

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[33] This point is important in distancing the present model from a model such as William Lane Craig's (20017) Neo-Apollinarian model that takes GSI to be an (archetypal) human prior to the Incarnation.

thus is occurrently *human*—in other words, he is characterised as a *particular human* as the qualities of being human—in the 'propertied' form of the h-attributes—are now taken to be features of GSI. Importantly, however, there is now also an occurrent state of affairs that *fails to obtain*—namely, one in which GSI is characterised by some d-modes. That is, GSI is now, post-Incarnation, not occurrently *divine*—in the sense that he is now not characterised as a particular *divine* person—as the qualities of being divine, in the 'propertied' form of the d-attributes, are now not features of the GSI. Stated succinctly, the following is true post-Incarnation (where *g* continues to stand for GS and *D* for d-attributes and *H* for h-attributes):

Occurrent*	~**Occ**[*g*, *D*]: ~*e* exemplifies *D* occurrently
	Occ[*e*, *H*]: *e* exemplifies *H* occurrently

As the h-modes are *particular ways* in which GS is, they are his characteristics, features and aspects. And as GSI is now not characterised by any d-modes—and thus is not (occurrently) divine—he lacks the characteristics, features and aspects of a particular divine person, even though he remains dispositionally divine (i.e. as a deity-instance)

Now, at a *prima facie* level, this might appear to negate GSI of his divinity post-Incarnation—through his lack of an occurrent exemplification of the d-attributes. However, what needs to be understood is that the dispositional exemplification of the d-attributes is what renders GSI as the kind of entity that he is: a divine and human entity—through him being an instance of each of the kinds Deity and Humanity. Thus, even though the existence of the h-modes provides GSI with his occurrent character as a particular human, he is not *merely* a particular human, as he also falls into the kind Deity (and the kind Humanity), which provides him with his existence and identity conditions. Thus, again, as noted previously, a 'what-question' asked of GSI in his post-incarnate state—such as 'what is GS now?'—would have as the correct answer that he is a particular human person, who is divine (i.e. is an instance of the kind Deity).[34]

Hence, despite GSI appearing to merely be a particular human, *what he is*—that is, what his (kind) essence (or identity) is—is more than that: he is a particular human person who is also divine. Thus, in the post-Incarnation case, as expressed by the following Ontological Square, we have a split exemplification, where GS instantiates the kind Deity, and thus dispositionally exemplifies the d-attributes, which establishes a dispositional route for GS to exemplify these attributes post-Incarnation:

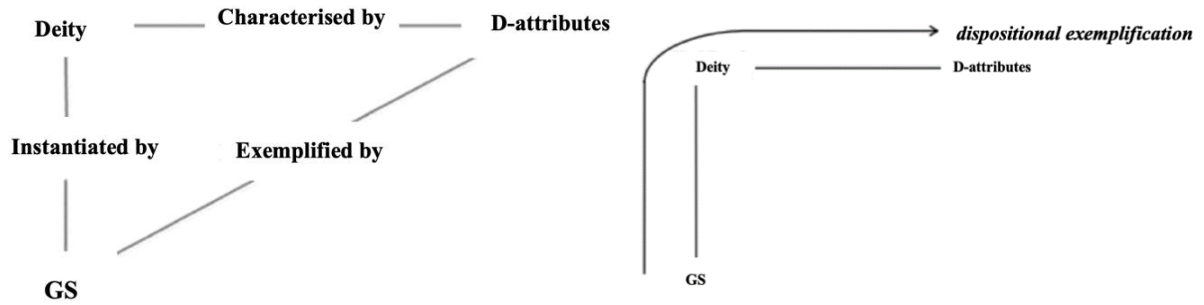[34] With him also being an instance of the kind Humanity as well.

Fig 8. Ontological Square (Post-Incarnation Exemplification (A))

Whilst at the same time, GS also instantiates the kind Humanity—and thus dispositionally exemplifies the h-attributes—*and* is solely characterised by some h-modes, which are instances of the h-attributes. Unlike that of GSI's exemplification of the d-attributes post-Incarnation, there is now an establishment of a dispositional *and* occurrent route for GS to exemplify the h-attributes post-Incarnation:
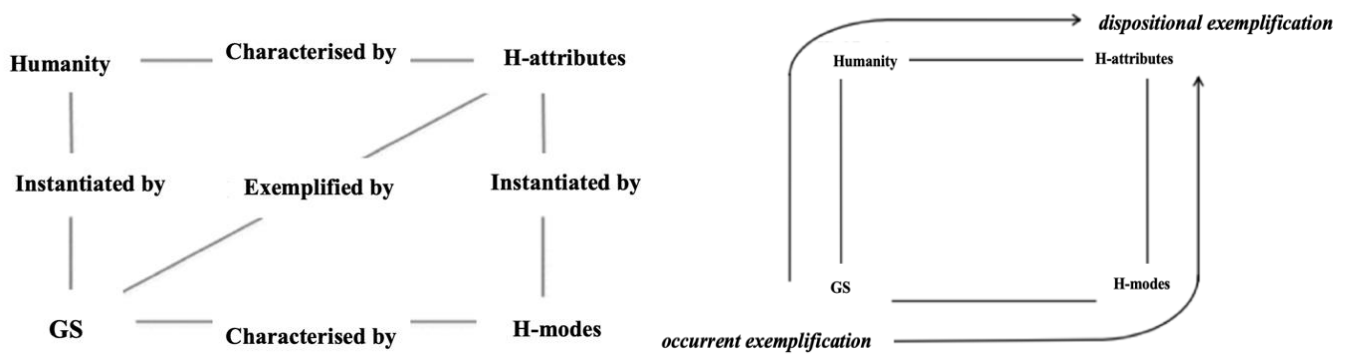

Fig 9. Ontological Square (Post-Incarnation Exemplification (B))

Consequently, GSI, 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 GSI *being* a deity-instance, that is instantiating the kind Deity, and by him being characterised by h-modes (which are particular ways of *being* human). GSI 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.

From this basis, we can now briefly switch our attention on to the wills that are possessed by GSI. GSI, as a particular object, is a persisting concrete entity

that is a bearer of properties that includes a set of powers. These properties are the h-attributes, which GS began to exemplify from the moment of the Incarnation, and the d-attributes, which GS had always exemplified. In the collection of h-attributes and d-attributes are both a human will and divine will—with the human will being a power present within the collection of h-attributes and the divine will being a power present within the collection of d-attributes. These powers are token powers and thus are each individuated by their *manifestation types*, their *bearer* and their *time of existence*. That is, firstly, GSI's token power of the human will is individuated by its manifestation type, willing a certain range of human actions, as GSI, which is its bearer, and the time at which GSI possesses this token power. Secondly, GSI's token power of the *divine* will is individuated by its manifestation type, willing a certain range of divine actions,[35] as GSI, which is its bearer, and the time at which GSI's possesses this token power. Thus, the identity of the token powers of GSI's human and divine wills are fixed or entirely determined by the powers that they are: human and divine wills—when possessed by GSI at a specific time. GSI's human and divine wills are each *spontaneous powers* (i.e. *active, non-causal* powers) as their exercise are never caused by some other entity acting upon GSI, and they do not consist in the causing of anything to happen.

Furthermore, GSI's human and divine wills are two-way powers to choose to act or refrain from acting over a range of human and divine actions, with each action of both of these wills being made in the 'light of reason' and thus them having a rational explanation for their exercise. Thus, the divine will, as it is a power that is part of the collection of d-attributes, it is *dispositionally exemplified* by GSI—that is, as an attribute, it characterises the kind Divinity which then, in turn, is instantiated by GSI.[36] In contrast to this, the human will, as it is a power that is part of the collection of h-attributes, it is *occurrently exemplified* by GSI—that is, as an attribute, it not only characterises the kind Humanity, which, in turn, is instantiated by GSI, but it also, unlike in the case of the divine will in GSI, has modes as instances (i.e. h-modes) that then directly characterise GSI. Thus, GSI can clearly be taken to possess two wills: a divine will and human will, and these

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[35] Though this does not mean that GSI had to be actively or consciously willing divine actions whilst on earth, as, given that a will is conceived of here as a power, powers can still exist (and be possessed by an object) even when they are not being manifested (such as a vase having the power to break—by being fragile—though it never manifests this. So, during his ministry on earth, GSI could still possess a divine will but not be actively exercising it (i.e. manifesting it)—with him only actively manifesting his human will and the other Trinitarian persons actively exercising the divine will during this time.

[36] Interestingly, as the divine will is construed here as an attribute (power) that characterises the kind Divinity, then as the other Trinitarian persons are of the same kind, they would possess the same will. Hence, one can also secure the fact of their being one divine will shared by each of the Trinitarian persons in this account as well.

wills are 'concrete'; rather than one concrete (and two 'aspectival' wills), as each of these wills is rightly conceived of as a distinct, mind-independent power (i.e. attribute) possessed—or, more specifically, exemplified—by GSI.[37]

Taking all of these things into account, it seems like the four-category ontology (i.e. Lowe's formal, neo-Aristotelian ontological framework) allows a clear categorisation of GSI post-Incarnation (i.e. post-transformation into a human 'person') and an elucidation of the natures that he possessed once incarnated (i.e. transformed). However, most importantly, what we now have with the TM₃ is a way to complete the Clarification Task, which can be seen as follows: first, building on the grounds established by the thesis of NCSD, we can also see that the TM₃ is not subject to the Assumption Problem, as by GS becoming a human 'person', as detailed in the previous sections, his (dispositional and occurrent) exemplification of the h-attributes, and the possession of a concrete human will (i.e. an active, non-causal power)—in addition to his concrete divine will—GSI was clearly human, and thus indeed possessed a complete human nature. Second, we can now also ward off the Transformation Problem, as despite there being a sequence of gaining and losing certain properties in the Incarnation— namely, GSI's d-modes—GSI is still able to remain divine. More precisely, after the Incarnation, GSI has a divine and human 'nature' in the sense of him exemplifying the d-attributes and the h-attributes. As noted previously, there are two *different* ways in which objects may be related to an attribute: the first is by *instantiating kinds* that are characterised by the attributes, which is a dispositional state of affairs (expressed by dispositional predication). And the second, is by being *characterised by modes* which instantiate the attribute themselves, which is an occurrent state of affairs (expressed by occurrent predication). What is important for us to maintain the divinity of GSI after his transformation into a particular human person is that of him *exemplifying* divinity in at least one of the above ways: dispositionally (indirectly) or occurrently (directly). In other words, GSI is required to be in some type of relationship of exemplification to the d-attributes, which he is able to stand in *dispositionally*, and thus *indirectly*, by him instantiating the kind Deity, which is, itself, characterised by the d-attributes. Thus, what is negated by the TM₃ is that of the obtaining of an occurrent state of affairs in regards to GSI's exemplification of the d-attributes—that is, GSI is not characterised by any d-modes, post-Incarnation—and what we are affirming is that of the obtaining of an occurrent state of affairs in regards to GSI's

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[37] One might ask the question of how the wills possessed by GSI are concrete, given that they are conceived of as attributes (i.e. powers)—which are normally taken to be abstract entities? Well, one can indeed answer this question by affirming the fact that each of these wills is concrete, given that the four-category ontology is an imminent realist ontology, and thus the attributes exemplified by an entity are inhabitants of spatiotemporal reality—rather than them being abstract (platonic) entities.

exemplification of the h-attributes—that is, GSI is characterised by some h-modes that render him as a particular human person. Thus, post-Incarnation, GSI is thus a particular human person who is still divine through (indirectly) exemplifying the d-attributes—there is thus no Transformation Problem for the TM₃.

Finally, we can now also see that the Incompatibility Problem is not applicable to the model as well, as Christ is taken to be a single subject that is identical to GSI; however, Christ is *not*, within this framework, characterised by both sets of incompatible properties, as Christ is only characterised by one set of properties: the h-modes, which would provide him with the character of being a particular human, which would entail the fact of him being limited in power, knowledge and having a beginning in time. And by him not being characterised by any d-modes, GSI would not exhibit the character of being a particular divine person, which would have entailed the fact of him being unlimited in power, knowledge and being eternal. Hence, there would not be any contradiction here as there is a single subject with a single set of properties (i.e. modes). GSI can thus have two natures, despite being a single subject, which allows one to ward off Eutychianism—as there are two natures present: the d-attributes and h-attributes—and one can ward off Nestorianism—as there is a single subject present who is divine and human: he is a single particular object that is a deity and humanity-instance—and we can do this without falling into incoherence—as there is solely one set of modes (properties) that are possessed by Christ: Christ solely occurrently exemplifies the h-attributes, and thus is rendered as a particular human person. The Clarification Task has been successfully accomplished, and thus one can indeed have a good understanding of the inner workings of the doctrine of the Incarnation on the basis of the particular model that has been developed here.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the first section of this article focused on detailing the nature of the doctrine of the Incarnation, as expressed by the Chalcedonian Definition. In doing this, a specific task—termed the Clarification Task—needed to be accomplished if one is to have a good understanding of the nature of the Incarnation. That is, the Clarification Task required one to provide an explication of the doctrine of the Incarnation, which did not overstep the boundaries that were set by the constraints featured in the Chalcedonian Definition. A specific model of the Incarnation was put forward for assessment: the Transformational Model. This model was shown to be successful in warding off some incorrect interpretations of the Incarnation (i.e. Nestorianism and Eutychianism); however, it was shown to be plagued with its own issues—which we termed the Transformation Problem, Assumption Problem and Incompatibility Problem.

Thus, in the second and third sections of this article, the focus was on utilising a specific metaphysical thesis: Non-Cartesian Substance Dualism, which was introduced by Jonathan Lowe, and which provided a means to develop a new transformational model. However, it was noted in this section that though the model was now able to ward off the Assumption Problem, more was needed to be said if one were to fully deal with the issues raised by the Transformation and Incompatibility Problems. Thus, subsequent to this, in the fourth and fifth sections of this article, the focus was now on utilising a specific ontological framework: the four-category ontology, which was also introduced by Lowe, and which also provided a means to further develop the transformational model in such a way as to render it as a model that, firstly, is not subject to the problems that plagued its previous iterations—namely, the Transformation and Incompatibility Problems—and, secondly, as a model that can indeed complete the Clarification Task by providing a clear and consistent explication of the doctrine of the Incarnation.

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