William Hasker, *Metaphysics and the Tri-Personal God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2013, viii + 269 pp. £65.00).

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William Hasker here offers a theology of the Trinity that advocates for social Trinitarianism by pairing the insights of Nicene orthodoxy with those of contemporary analytic philosophers of religion. Hasker's version of social Trinitarianism involves two primary claims: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are "distinct centers of knowledge, will, love, and action" or "distinct centers of consciousness" (22); and the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit "share a numerically identical concrete nature" (23).

Hasker begins with chapters that argue that Gregory of Nyssa and Augustine are "pro-Social" Trinitarians. Recent scholarship has emphasized that for Gregory, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have only one operation or power. Probing this argument, Hasker asks whether in this one operation, the three Persons have distinctive agencies. If not, then how could the Son alone become incarnate? Furthermore, as Hasker points out, Gregory holds that only the Son, and not the Father, is the eschatological Judge. The Son's action of judging is not performed by the Father or the Spirit. It follows for Hasker that the Son must be a distinct center of conscious agency, as also must be the Father and Spirit. Indeed, Gregory applies to the Son a number of distinctive personal activities, such as marking out the heavens, being born, healing, judging, and so on. Hasker also notes that Gregory developed an analogy from "three men" (Peter, James, and John sharing one human nature) that links the divine Persons with the properties possessed by distinctive human persons.

Before turning to Augustine, Hasker briefly argues that Athanasius and Apollinarius were also "pro-Social" Trinitarians. For both, "the psychological subject of the human experiences of Jesus is the Logos" (35). Even if Apollinarius's view that Jesus had no human soul was not explicitly held by Athanasius, it remains the case that the Logos here is a distinct center of consciousness, just as social Trinitarians maintain. Hasker also pauses briefly to dispute—and benefit from—Richard Cross's article "Latin Trinitarianism." Cross holds that Gregory's and Augustine's commitment to the doctrine of divine simplicity makes social-Trinitarianism impossible for them. In response, Hasker argues that the doctrine of divine simplicity renders impossible any real distinction between the Persons. If each Person is identical to the divine essence, and if the Persons are distinguished solely by their mutual relations, then personal distinction in God hinges solely upon what we make of these relations. In this regard, Hasker quotes Cross's remark that "relations are not real entities or things in the world, and to this extent we might

think of the distinction between the essence and a divine person as mind-imposed" (37). As Hasker points out, "if the only difference between *x* and *y* consists in the way they are considered in someone's mind, then between *x* and *y* in themselves there is no difference at all—which is to say, they are identical" (37). Cross's article thus serves as the definitive demonstration of the impossibility of uniting real personal distinction with the doctrine of divine simplicity.

Turning to Augustine, Hasker notes that he should not be presumed to be an "anti-Social" Trinitarian simply because he expressed reservations about the suitability of the term "person" and demurred from the Trinitarian analogy from the family. Above all, Hasker emphasizes Augustine's observation in Book XV of *De Trinitate* that all three Persons possess wisdom: the Father understands, the Son understands, and the Spirit understands. For Hasker, this is clear evidence that Augustine himself cannot avoid conceiving the Persons in terms of distinct centers of consciousness. As Hasker observes, Lewis Ayres holds that Augustine is guided by "Scripture's primary dramatic language concerning the interaction of Father, Son, and Spirit" (48); for Ayres, the Persons enjoy "a communion in which the mutual love of the three constitutes their unity of substance" (49). Although Ayres opposes social Trinitarianism, if the Persons interact with and love each other, then the Persons must be three centers of conscious agency. Hasker adds that all the pro-Nicene Fathers rejected Patripassianism, the view that not only the Son but also the Father suffered on the Cross. In Hasker's view, the fact that only the Son suffered means that the Son must be a distinct center of conscious agency vis-à-vis the Father and the Spirit.

The Nicene evidence, then, indicates for Hasker both that the main tenets of social Trinitarianism were accepted in Nicene orthodoxy, and that divine simplicity evacuates Trinitarianism. Hasker next devotes a chapter to showing that the Persons share a single, concrete essence, Godhood, which consists in a set of divine properties. He speaks of a "trope" of the divine essence, that is to say "the divine essence *as instantiated in* a divine being" (53). Does each divine Person have his own "trope," just as Peter's "trope" of humanity is not the same as James's? In response, Hasker gives the analogy of a statue that also serves as a pillar: the "trope" of marble is the same, but the statue and the pillar are nonetheless distinct. Hasker argues that this trope of divine nature or essence must be concrete and singular, rather than generic.

As exponents of contemporary "anti-Social" Trinitarianism, Hasker treats Karl Barth and Karl Rahner. Barth argues that Scripture compels us to conceive of God in a threefold way but not in a way that divides the existence, acts, or attributes of God. In order to avoid implying that the Three are distinct personal centers of consciousness, Barth describes the Three not as Persons but as "modes of being" (89). In response, Hasker observes that Barth does not justify why we must suppose that revelation's threefold pattern requires real distinction in God. Hasker also notes that later in the *Church Dogmatics*, Barth makes statements that seem logically to require the Father and Son to be distinct centers of consciousness. Rahner finds in the economy of salvation a twofold self-communication of God, as truth and as love. For Rahner, such self-communication requires that there be real distinction of Persons in the immanent Trinity. Hasker, however, points out that

"[a] human person can give herself to others in different ways both in knowledge and in love… without this requiring any special internal division within the person herself" (91). Like Barth, furthermore, Rahner is inconsistent in his language, at times stating that the Father and Son love each other, and at other times denying this.

As theological exponents of contemporary social Trinitarianism, Hasker chooses Jürgen Moltmann and John Zizioulas. Moltmann considers that for there to be real distinction in God, there must be an "I-Thou" relationship, just as we find in the biblical portrait of the Father and Son. But at least in some passages of his works, Moltmann suggests that the unity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit will only be complete when humans are brought into the Trinity's unity in the eschaton. Hasker also queries Moltmann's rejection of the concept of divine substance. Zizioulas argues that the Father freely decides to give being to the Son and Spirit, a viewpoint that troubles Hasker due to its implication that the Father could freely will the non-existence of the Son and Spirit, which if so would tell against the co-equality of the Son and Spirit with the Father.

Since none of these four theologians provides a satisfactory solution, Hasker next inquires into the approaches of analytic philosophers of religion such as Brian Leftow, Peter van Inwagen, Jeffrey Brower and Michael Rea, William Lane Craig, Richard Swinburne, and Keith Yandell. Leftow compares the concrete unity of the "trope" of divine nature to a chorus line that is composed of a dancer who time-travels so as to appear to us at distinct points of time, thereby existing as a single dancer but also as a line of dancers. Likewise, says Leftow, there is one God living multiple life-strands. Van Inwagen defends the unity of the three Persons by recourse to the notion of "relative identity," namely that things are identical in relation to a "kind" or "sortal." Brower and Rea rely upon the image of a marble statue that also serves as a pillar, and upon the distinction between Socrates and "seated-Socrates." Craig suggests that the Trinity might be like a soul with three sets of cognitive properties. Swinburne argues that all three Persons could have the divine properties and work together harmoniously, so that the unity of the Persons consists in the fact that none of them exists or acts autonomously. Yandell holds that "the notion of a bearer-of-properties" is "a primitive category in an ontology" (157), so that the Trinity has three bearers-of-properties (and the whole Trinity, too, is a bearer-of-properties). Yandell thinks that the three Persons can be said to be one because each of the Persons exists in relation to the others and none of the Persons wills something contradictory from what the others will.

Hasker devotes a chapter to each of these views, and while he finds none of them "to be fully satisfactory" (162), he also considers that they provide valuable insights. In developing his own constructive account, he first affirms the full divinity of each of the three Persons. Asking whether each Person is "identical" with the divine essence, he argues that we need to avoid the language of identity, due to its logical tendency to reduce God to a monad. Instead he proposes that when we say that the Son is fully God, we simply mean to predicate the property of divinity to the Son. Against criticisms advanced by Daniel Howard-Snyder and Jeffrey Brower, he argues that the Persons are distinct centers of conscious agency. Returning to the

Fathers, he cites Khaled Anatolios in favor of the view that, according to Athanasius, the distinct Persons exercise distinct conscious intentionality vis-à-vis each other.

Hasker then asks how these three Persons constitute one God. Addressing once more the positions of numerous analytic scholars, as well as the critical perspective of the patristic scholar Michel Barnes, he takes up a variety of issues, including whether the Persons can will different things from each other (he thinks that they can and do, but without conflicting with each other) and whether we should retain the doctrine of processions (we should, on biblical grounds and because the Father's communication of the divine nature is incomprehensible but not unintelligible). How then is the divine nature one, and not merely generically one? Here he draws heavily on Craig's notion of one soul with three sets of rational faculties, and he spends a number of pages exploring scientific data for "*simultaneously conscious* multiple personalities in the same individual" (234). If a single concrete human nature can support two (or more) centers of consciousness, then why could not the same be true for a single concrete divine nature or "trope" of deity?

To this proposal, he adds an argument based upon "constitution." A statue can be melted down into a lump of bronze, and in a certain sense the statue "is" the lump of bronze. But the statue is so only as *constituted* by the lump of bronze, and this constitution presupposes a relation to a sculptor. In the example of one soul with three sets of rational faculties, the soul serves as the "constituting kind" and the personalities (or rational faculties) as the "constituted kind," in a certain sense the same as the soul. Although I am simplifying matters here somewhat, it should be clear enough how Hasker applies this to the Trinity, in which the Persons are constituted by the single concrete divine nature and are in a certain sense the same as this divine nature, namely by having the properties of the divine nature. As Hasker puts it, "Constitution is…very definitely a kind of sameness, even though it does not amount to identity. If the divine nature constitutes the Father, we can very well say that it is *the same as* the Father, and so also for the Son and the Spirit" (245). This constitution relation, however, does not imply that the Father is therefore the same as the Son or Spirit, and so the personal distinction is retained.

What remains is to specify grammatically his use of the word "God." The word "God" can mean YHWH, identified as "Father" by Jesus. The word "God" can also apply to any of the three Persons, insofar as they possess the set of attributes that qualifies them as divine, "including omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, moral perfection, eternity, and whatever else needs to be included in the full package of divine attributes" (247). Lastly, the word "God" can signify the whole Trinity, though Hasker emphasizes that this is not its primary meaning, since the Trinity is not a single Person. Hasker also discusses the Athanasian Creed's insistence that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are each almighty, but that their almightiness is *one*. This contrasts with social Trinitarianism's insistence upon the distinct conscious agency of each Person, which requires that the almightiness of the Trinity be threefold. Drawing upon Augustine's aforementioned discussion in Book XV of *De Trinitate* regarding the wisdom of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Hasker interprets the Athanasian Creed as intending simply to say that there are not three Gods, a point that social Trinitarians certainly accept.

What should we make of Hasker's project? Much hinges, clearly, upon his comparison of the divine nature to a soul supporting multiple conscious personalities and upon his idea that the Persons are constituted by the divine nature as by a substrate possessed of certain properties. One question is whether this sufficiently accounts for the unity proper to uncreated and immaterial spirit; in other words, is a unity based upon a shared substrate sufficient for real unity among three purely spiritual Persons? No matter what the shared substrate, would not the distinct spiritual capacities divide the three in a determinative way, so that the three spirit-entities could not be called one any more than three humans can be called one? But the more pressing questions go far deeper than this. To appreciate what these deeper questions are, Hasker would have to devote serious attention to the Hellenistic philosophy that he dismisses as outdated. Divine simplicity arises not least out of distinctions between essence and existence, and between act and potency, that Hasker does not consider in this book. It is unclear to me that Hasker has apprehended the transcendental unity that the doctrine of divine simplicity upholds and that would seem to be required of the infinite and unlimited source of all finite being. Hasker's deficiency in this regard can be seen in the way that he arrives at his crucial conclusion that the doctrine of divine simplicity leads to a pure identity, to a monad. Rather than engaging the classical thinkers on this topic, he recurs repeatedly to a remark of Richard Cross's as the sole basis for his supposedly conclusive dismissal of the coherence of Trinitarian theologies that uphold divine simplicity. He would have benefited, for example, by seeking to understand the way in which Thomas Aquinas arrives at personal properties via relative opposition in the order of origin—personal properties that do not undermine divine simplicity but nonetheless establish real Trinitarian individuation. Doing so would have helped him to identify more clearly the real pressure points of the issues that he takes up. Unfortunately, Hasker's surveys of contemporary analytic theology show that he is by no means alone in this; the creative but often implausible and frankly odd solutions offered by analytic defenders of Trinitarian theology need a fuller engagement with the classical metaphysical tradition. The good news is that analytic philosophy has shown itself capable of engaging these resources in a significant way, as in the work of John Haldane, Christopher Martin, Eleonore Stump, and numerous others.