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The Scotistic Achilles & The Virtual Distinction

**Abstract:** This paper investigates a neglected episode in scholastic debates over identity and distinction. The formal distinction--a mind-independent distinction between identical entities–may be the most important tool in Duns Scotus’s toolbox; much of his metaphysical program stands or falls with it. For this reason, Scotus developed many powerful arguments in its favor. What is perhaps his favorite argument came to be known as the Scotistic Achilles. Thomistic opponents, rejecting the formal distinction, resisted the Achilles in diverse and sometimes radical ways, appealing to an alternative piece of machinery–the *virtual distinction*. Thomistic responses fall into four kinds: denying a key premise about the incommunicability of paternity, appealing to reduplication, accepting true contradictions outright, and appealing to mystery. An examination of these responses highlights difficulties facing Thomistic opponents of the formal distinction and suggests considerable disunity among Thomistic theories of the virtual distinction. Moreover, this debate not only sheds light on Thomistic metaphysics and the history of scholastic debates concerning identity and distinction, but also reveals historical precedents for some recent, ambitious proposals in analytic philosophy of religion.

There are real distinctions between things–such as the distinction between Socrates and Superman–as well as merely conceptual distinctions–such as the distinction between Superman and Clark Kent. Many scholastics, for different reasons, felt the need to invoke what is sometimes called a *middle distinction*, a distinction somehow “between” the two: neither a (fully) real distinction nor a (merely) conceptual distinction. This sought-after middle distinction would accommodate the identity of the things distinguished (unlike the real distinction) but would also carve nature at its joints somehow (unlike a mere conceptual distinction).

One prominent candidate for a middle distinction among the scholastics is the *formal distinction*, originally theorized by Scotus. The formal distinction is a crucial element in Scotus’s thought, and he employs it in diverse and manifold areas throughout his system. Here are a few examples. First, in the essence of a thing, genus and difference are formally distinct: Socrates’s animality is formally distinct from his rationality.[[1]](#footnote-1) Second, in humans and angels, intellect and will are formally distinct, both from each other and from the soul which houses them.[[2]](#footnote-2) Third, a thing’s principle of individuation—its haecceity—is formally distinct from its common nature.[[3]](#footnote-3) Finally, the divine attributes are also formally distinct.[[4]](#footnote-4)

As we will see below, the Scotistic doctrine of the formal distinction has some radical consequences; given this and the indispensability of the formal distinction in Scotus’s system, it is unsurprising that later followers of Scotus and their opponents–especially Thomists–engaged in protracted debate over the formal distinction. Thomists, on the one hand, urged that Scotus’s formal distinction could not be made sense of. Scotists, on the other hand, argued forcefully that the formal distinction is indispensable. No argument for the formal distinction caused more consternation than a now little-discussed argument that came to be known as the *Scotistic Achilles*.[[5]](#footnote-5) The Jesuit scholastic Rodrigo Arriaga characterizes the Achilles as “exceedingly difficult”[[6]](#footnote-6) and the famed Thomist Tommaso Cajetan addresses this argument, prompted by the works of “Scotists and other annoying people.”[[7]](#footnote-7)

This “exceedingly difficult” argument, due originally to Scotus, amounts to a derivation of the formal distinction from theses about God that were widely held among the scholastics. Later Thomists and those who sought to resist the Scotistic doctrine of the formal distinction offered different responses to the Achilles: respondents grant that *some* middle distinction is required in order to make sense of their shared common ground, while also insisting that some middle distinction *other than* Scotus’s suffices. The main alternative to the formal distinction in this context is the so-called *virtual distinction*, which has its roots in Aquinas.

The virtual distinction, like the formal distinction, proves to be critical in many scholastic philosophical systems, including even those of some Scotists. Moreover, for many Thomists, the virtual distinction is supposed to do much of the philosophical work that would otherwise be done by Scotus’s formal distinction.[[8]](#footnote-8) At stake then, was not only the metaphysics of the middle distinction, but also its diverse applications; for example, few scholastic theories of universals, the categories, real definitions, divine simplicity, or many other things can even get off the ground without some middle distinction. Thus, the dispute over middle distinctions has huge ramifications, and the Achilles argument is at the center of the action; one cannot understand this celebrated dispute without first understanding the Achilles. Moreover, as we shall argue, one cannot even understand the various distinctions being argued for–i.e. the formal and virtual distinctions themselves–without understanding the Achilles. For in response to the Achilles, the virtual distinction is pushed to its limits, revealing that the Thomists themselves do not agree on what it is or how it functions. Thus only a study of the Achilles makes clear not only how the crucially philosophically important debate between the Thomists and Scotists on distinctions proceeds, but also what the various positions in the larger debate even are.

Scotus’s argument proved to be a very influential critique of Aquinas and others; moreover, the virtual distinction is an important tool in the Thomistic toolbox, both historically and today. Further, many scholastics give radical responses to the Achilles. For instance, in order to develop a consistent response to the Achilles, the Salmantincenses develop a position that bears a strong resemblance to a recent, somewhat radical view defended by Timothy Pawl. And for others, no price was too high to avoid the Scotistic conclusion: some respond to the argument by positing true contradictions in the Godhead, a proposal defended today by Jc Beall. Our discussion is thus also of interest to contemporary philosophers of religion and philosophical logicians.

To begin our study, in section I, we give an overview of the two middle distinctions mentioned above: the formal distinction and the virtual distinction. In section II, after presenting the theological context for Scotus’s Achilles, we present the argument itself. In sections III-V we detail the various strategies Thomists (and some Nominalists) adopted for putting the virtual distinction to work in responding to the Achilles; additionally, we show that each strategy is costly, and some are clearly inadequate.

1. The Formal Distinction & The Virtual Distinction

The doctrine of the formal distinction is one of the characteristic theses advanced by Scotus and his followers. The formal distinction is a middle distinction[[9]](#footnote-9) between identical items. In recent scholarship, what it is for some items to be *identical*, according to Scotus, is a matter of dispute; it is not our task to wade into those debates.[[10]](#footnote-10) Whatever the conditions for identity are, it is clear that for Scotus, only identical items can be formally distinct.

Like a merely conceptual distinction, a formal distinction distinguishes between identical entities; like a real distinction, the formal distinction is mind-independent. This leads to failures of the indiscernibility of identicals: on Scotus’s view of identity, x and y can be identical while also being distinguishable in certain respects.[[11]](#footnote-11) Scotus’s criteria for the formal distinction are as follows:[[12]](#footnote-12)

FORMAL DISTINCTION: x is formally distinct from y iff 1) x and y are identical and 2) the *ratio* of y is not included in the *ratio* of x.

The first condition has been discussed; the second, crucially, invokes the notion of a *ratio*. *Rationes* are, roughly, real definitions; they characterize the mind-independent quiddity or whatness of a thing.[[13]](#footnote-13) So, as Cross puts it, “roughly, [...] [x and y] are formally distinct if and only if they are both really identical and susceptible of definition independently of each other.”[[14]](#footnote-14) Because the definitions mentioned are real definitions, the formal distinction is not a merely conceptual distinction; if x and y are formally distinct, they are distinct prior to any act of the intellect. In other words, that x and y are formally distinct is not a matter of how anyone conceives of x, or y, or x and y together; they would still be formally distinct even if, *per impossibile*, there were no minds. It is this–for most purposes–that makes the formal distinction unique: wherever there is identity along with some distinction prior to any act of the intellect, there we have a formal distinction.

Scotus’s doctrine of the formal distinction, not to mention its many applications, were understandably controversial. Among the scholastics, almost every non-Scotist rejected the formal distinction; in order to explain the same phenomena (the distinction between genus and difference, intellect and will, etc.), non-Scotists appealed to other metaphysical tools at their disposal. Among Thomists, the most popular alternative to the formal distinction was the middle distinction known as the *virtual distinction*.[[15]](#footnote-15) [[16]](#footnote-16)

According to the Thomists, there are only two (broad) kinds of distinction: real distinctions and conceptual distinctions (importantly, not *merely* conceptual distinctions). Real distinctions, as the famed 17th-century Thomist John of St. Thomas defines them, are “a lack of identity which is there *a parte rei*, without apprehension or a fiction of the intellect.”[[17]](#footnote-17) A group of 18th-century Benedictine Thomists led by John the Evangelist Schiferl wrote a treatise dedicated exclusively to the defense of the virtual distinction, and there he defines a real distinction as “what obtains between two extremes, one of which *prior to any act of the intellect* is not the other.”[[18]](#footnote-18) Because, for the Thomists, any distinction which obtains *ex natura rei* is real, the formal distinction turns out to be incoherent: it posits a distinction *ex natura rei* alongside identity, which in Thomistic terminology amounts to posting a distinction that is and is not a real distinction.[[19]](#footnote-19)

By contrast, a conceptual distinction, in the words of John of St. Thomas, is present “by the beneficence of the intellect and is not there in reality”; in other words, as Schiferl says, it is present “between two really indistinct things, one of which, nevertheless, is not the other by the *beneficence of the intellect.*”[[20]](#footnote-20) There is a conceptual distinction, then, in cases where we form different concepts of one of the same thing; paradigmatically, this happens in Frege puzzles, as when Lois Lane believes one thing about Superman and believes otherwise about Clark Kent, even though Superman and Clark Kent are identical. One kind of conceptual distinction is especially important for our purposes: a distinction between identical things which derives “from the intellect with a foundation not of itself fictive, but preexisting in reality.”[[21]](#footnote-21) In other words, thisis a distinction which is conceptual, but not merely so, because there is a foundation in reality; the object diversely conceived has a disposition to incline human intellects to understand it under multiple concepts. This foundation in reality is *the virtual distinction*, which is “the intrinsic containing of many perfections.”[[22]](#footnote-22)

(Having distinguished in this way between a *distinction*, drawn by the mind, and its extramental *foundation* in reality, following others in the literature we will use ‘virtual distinction’ to refer to both components indiscriminately in what follows; strictly speaking, only the latter is a virtual distinction. The distinction between the distinction itself and its extramental foundation is not insignificant, though for many practical purposes it can be conveniently elided.[[23]](#footnote-23))

As John of St. Thomas explains, the virtual distinction is the eminence of a single existing thing whereby it “contains more *rationes* or perfections in some being.”[[24]](#footnote-24) As we might put it, the virtual distinction is the simple perfection of a thing, whereby it has a disposition in virtue of which it can naturally give rise to Frege puzzles. He helpfully elaborates, “the reason is because some thing, as much as it is superior and more eminent, unites more perfections than an inferior. Hence, in one entity in a more simple way *rationes* are found which in inferiors would constitute diverse entities.”[[25]](#footnote-25) An example may help. According to standard scholastic metaphysics, to be a human is to be a rational animal, and a human’s rationality and animality are identical both with one another and with her human nature. Both rationality and animality are “perfections”. One can think of human nature under the guise of rationality–after all, in a human, human nature *is* rationality; one can also think of human nature under the guise of animality–after all, in a human, human nature *is* animality. For this reason, one can also come to think that rationality (that is, human nature) and animality (that is, human nature) are really distinct, though in a human they are not. More than this, as was quoted above these perfections “in inferiors would constitute diverse entities”: if, *per impossibile*, rationality were violently given to an otherwise irrational creature like a mouse, rationality and animality would, in the mouse, be really distinct. This is what makes it so natural to conceive of these perfections as really distinct. Nonetheless, these perfections are one in humans–the one simple perfection that is human nature. Similarly, in a mouse, mouse nature is identical both with animality and the (unnamed) mouse difference; when we think of mouse nature, we can think of it under the guise of animality or under the guise of mouse difference. Both a mouse and a human really are animals, and so they both really cause us to think of them under the guise of animality; but in a human, animality is identical with rationality, and in a mouse it is identical with the (unnamed) mouse difference. In containing several perfections, a human nature is really identical with each one; nevertheless, these perfections are *distinctly conceivable*. Thus human nature, in *containing* these perfections, has a tendency to induce Frege puzzles in human intellects.

Although, then, the virtual distinction and the formal distinction are kinds of middle distinctions, the virtual distinction leans towards the merely conceptual side, whereas the formal distinction leans towards the real distinction side. The Thomists thought they could consistently go without the closer connection between the mind and the world posited by the formal distinction; they furthermore thought that they could use the virtual distinction as a satisfying alternative. In many places where the Scotists wanted to posit a formal distinction, the Thomists thought a virtual distinction could do the job. In order to defend their position, both Scotus and the Scotists advanced arguments for the conclusion that the formal distinction was necessary in many areas.[[26]](#footnote-26) But their high ground is the Achilles argument, to which we now turn.

2. From Gilbert to the Achilles

According to basic Christian theology, the Trinity is one God, though also three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person of the Trinity is identical with the divine essence, but also really distinct from the other persons in virtue of their distinct, personal properties (Paternity for the Father, Filiation for the Son, and Spiration for the Holy Spirit).[[27]](#footnote-27) An important part of the common ground for our discussion involves the axiom that the divine essence is identical with each of the personal properties. One motivation for this axiom comes from the traditional doctrine of divine simplicity. According to this doctrine, the divine essence is identical with all of God’s attributes, including, therefore, the attributes of Paternity, Filliation, and Spiration.[[28]](#footnote-28)

Another source of the scholastic consensus on this point owes to an ecclesiastical controversy. After the Council of Rheims in 1148, St. Bernard of Clairvaux brought charges of heresy against Bishop Gilbert de la Porrée, claiming that the latter taught the real distinction of the divine essence from the personal properties of the Trinity. According to Bernard, such a view should be condemned. Despite Aquinas and others later reporting that Gilbert recanted,[[29]](#footnote-29) Gilbert did not recant; moreover, the view that the divine essence is really distinct from the personal properties (or the Trinitarian persons themselves, for that matter) does not seem to have been condemned.[[30]](#footnote-30) In any event, the view attributed to Gilbert was afterwards widely taken to be heretical.

Our introduction to the Scotistic Achilles begins with a problem Aquinas notes in defending this axiom. Given Christian doctrine, the divine essence is shared by the three Persons of the Godhead (i.e., the divine essence is *communicable*), but the distinguishing feature of the Father–paternity–is not (i.e., paternity is *incommunicable*). But then we seem to be pushed to the conclusion that the divine essence and paternity are distinct:[[31]](#footnote-31)

1. If x is communicable and y is incommunicable, then x and y are distinct.
2. The divine essence is communicable and paternity is incommunicable.
3. Therefore, the divine essence and paternity are distinct.

The conclusion contradicts the axiom mentioned above, according to which paternity and the divine essence are *identical*.

Given Aquinas’s commitments, he must grant that, simplicity notwithstanding, the divine essence and paternity are distinguishable *in some sense*. But how can he square this with his commitment to simplicity, and in particular to the claim that paternity *is* the divine essence? Aquinas’s response exploits the idea that identical things can be distinguished, as it were, according to different *perspectives*–paradigmatically, this is what happens in Frege puzzles. In effect, Aquinas is invoking a conceptual distinction:

As the Philosopher says, nothing prevents contradictories being predicated of that which is the same thing, differing only by reason [*ratione*]; just as it is clear that the same point in reality, differing by reason [*ratione*], is the beginning and end [of a line]; and according to which it is the beginning, it is not the end, and conversely. Hence, since the essence and properties are the same thing in reality and differ by reason [*ratione*], nothing prohibits it being the case that one is communicable and the other incommunicable.[[32]](#footnote-32)

What is in reality identical can be distinguished *by reason*, witnessed by the intellect. So, on our reconstruction, Aquinas denies the first premise of the argument above: though the divine essence is communicable and paternity is not, paternity and the divine essence are *not* distinct.

St. Thomas and later Thomists will grant that identical things can be distinguished by reason; so far, so good. Here’s the trouble: they add that identical things can be distinguished *only by reason*. That is, what’s identical can be distinguished, but cannot be distinguished *in reality*. Scotus, however, sees an opportunity here to present a powerful argument for the formal distinction; he thinks there must be a distinction *ex natura rei* between personal properties and the divine essence, even though they are identical. Scotus modifies the above argument to motivate this.

For we can say more than that the divine essence is communicable, and paternity is not. We can say that the divine essence is communicable and paternity is incommunicable *prior to any act of the intellect*. We must say this, in fact, to avoid something like Sabellianism, and to preserve the robust mind-independence of Trinitarian distinctions.[[33]](#footnote-33) And if x and y are distinguishable prior to any act of the intellect, then x and y are *distinct* prior to any act of the intellect; thus, if, prior to any act of the intellect, x is communicable and y is not, then x and y are distinct prior to any act of the intellect. Together, we get a version of the argument known by both critics and champions as the *Scotistic Achilles.[[34]](#footnote-34)* The argument is the following:[[35]](#footnote-35)

1. If, *prior to any act of the intellect*, x is communicable and y is incommunicable, then x and y are distinct *prior to any act of the intellect*.
2. *Prior to any act of the intellect*, the divine essence is communicable and paternity is incommunicable.
3. Therefore, the divine essence and paternity are distinct *prior to any act of the intellect*.

Given the identity of paternity and the divine essence, what we have here is an argument for the formal distinction: some things are identical, though also distinct prior to any act of the intellect. Having established this, by Scotus’s lights (and those of his followers), he is now licensed to add the formal distinction to his toolbox and employ it as he sees fit. Those unwilling to join the Scotists in accepting the formal distinction have a lot of work on their hands.

As we said in the previous section, where Scotists see a need to employ the formal distinction, the Thomists frequently employ the virtual distinction. It should come as no surprise that they do the same in responding to the Achilles. However, it is far from evident exactly *how* this machinery can be used to respond to the Achilles. After all, the virtual distinction is a conceptual distinction; by design, the premises of the Achilles concern what’s true *prior to any act of the intellect* precisely in order to prevent anything psychological–such as a conceptual distinction–from making a difference.

As we will see, the Achilles pushes the application of the virtual distinction to its limits; as a result different Thomists developed distinct and often incompatible ways of employing it in response. Responses to the Achilles can be grouped into four categories–all employing the virtual distinction in various ways. The first strategy denies the second premise of the Achilles; the other three deny the first. The second purports to deny the first premise by appealing to *reduplication*. The third rejects the first premise by accepting true contradictions. And the fourth rejects the first premise, coupled with an appeal to mystery. We’ll discuss these options and their advocates one by one.

Before moving on, it is worth acknowledging that the Scotist’s grounds motivating the Achilles argument, and the opposition’s motivation to respond, are theological in nature; for all that, it is critical to remark that the historical debate over the Achilles is nonetheless a *philosophical* debate. For the scholastics, theological dogma frequently needed to be distinguished from philosophical knowledge, but it was taken to be *knowledge* nonetheless, so that a philosophical argument with authoritative theological premises was simply an argument wherein those premises were taken to be *known*. Arguing for a metaphysical conclusion (in this case, the actuality of the formal distinction) from widely held theological premises would have appeared no less “philosophical” in their day than arguing for metaphysical conclusions from widely held scientific premises does in our own. In fact, participants in the debate over the Achilles treated the topic in works devoted to philosophy proper and not only in theology.[[36]](#footnote-36) Moreover, relegating Trinitarian dogma exclusively to the domain of theology is in this context somewhat tendentious, since one can also find diverse *philosophical* arguments for Trinitarian dogma in the scholastics and in the earlier Christian philosophical tradition.[[37]](#footnote-37)

3. Denying Premise 2

Paul Mezger, a late-17th century Salzberg Thomist, denies the second premise. Mezger, in responding to the Achilles, says,[[38]](#footnote-38)

[i] I respond by denying the minor [i.e., Premise 2]. Since actually, *a parte rei*, prior to our intellect precisively and inadequately forming a distinction between the essence and the personalities by means of a concept, [ii] there is a certain real foundation of the contradiction, which foundation is the divine essence insofar as it contains the absolute perfection of a nature communicating itself and insofar as it contains the relative form of Paternity with respect to the Son, and producing Him. [iii] But there is not a negation consisting in non-production or non-communication: [iv] for these are superadded from a created intellect by prescinding and mutually opposing one *ratio* from another…. Hence insofar as the eminence is under inadequate concepts it is able to receive contradictions; [v] but not insofar as it is under intuitive cognition.

So, we see that (i) Mezger denies premise 2; prior to any act of the intellect, the essence is communicable, but so is paternity. This is why he denies that (iii) there is “non-communication” in God. Instead, (ii) there is merely a real foundation for the “contradiction.”[[39]](#footnote-39) That foundation is the divine essence as containing the perfections both of the nature and of the relational property of paternity. This real foundation (i) is just a feature of the way the world is, prior to our intellect forming distinct concepts of the essence and paternity.[[40]](#footnote-40) Because the divine essence contains the *rationes* both of the nature and of the relational property of paternity, there is a disposition in the essence so that (iv) the human intellect will consider those *rationes* separately (“prescinding… one *ratio* from another”) and will consider them as contradictory (“opposing one *ratio* from the other”), even though paternity is incommunicable only posterior to the act of the intellect.[[41]](#footnote-41)

So, what the virtual distinction does is explain why premise 2 *seems* to be true even though it isn’t. On Mezger’s view, our intellect *has* to conceive of paternity as incommunicable due to God’s absolute perfection and the limitations of our finite intelligence, even though prior to any act of the intellect, paternity (that is, the divine essence) is *communicable*.

The theological problem with this view is obvious. Paternity *can’t* be communicable prior to any act of the intellect. It’s not merely a matter of how we conceive of God that the Son lacks Paternity! If Paternity really were communicable prior to any act of the intellect, the Son would also have Paternity prior to any act of the intellect, and would thus *be the Father* prior to any act of the intellect.[[42]](#footnote-42) Rejecting premise 2 is a theological non-starter.

4. Reduplication Strategies

Let’s move on to the other strategies, all of which involve denying–or purporting to deny–premise 1 of the Achilles. Before considering these in detail, it will be helpful to note just how difficult it is to resist premise 1.

A powerful motivation for premise 1 comes in two stages. First, make the plausible assumption that it is *contradictory* to be both communicable and incommunicable.[[43]](#footnote-43) Call this the *Contradictoriness Assumption* (CA). Second, endorse[[44]](#footnote-44) every instance of the following, very plausible conditional:

* If (a) it is contradictory to be F and G, and (b) *prior to any act of the intellect*, x is F and y is G, then x and y are distinct *prior to any act of the intellect*.

Call the above schema the *No-Contradiction Principle* (NCP). The route to the first premise of the Achilles is then straightforward. For if one endorses every instance of the NCP, the CA commits one to the following:

* If, *prior to any act of the intellect*, x is communicable and y is incommunicable, then x and y are distinct *prior to any act of the intellect*.

This is simply premise 1 of the Achilles. So, premise 1 can only be resisted by failing to assume the CA or failing to endorse some instance of the NCP. Neither looks particularly attractive. As we will see, this unattractiveness characterizes all viable responses to the Achilles.

This leads us to the second response we will discuss in this paper, which recruits reduplication in responding to premise 1 (and its derivation from the NCP). The 17th century Thomists John of St. Thomas, Jean Baptise Gonet, and Vicente Ferre are some of the better-known defenders of this view.

The term ‘reduplication’ refers to various ways of modifying simple predications: here, paradigmatically, going from a sentence like ‘x is F’ to sentences like ‘x is F *qua*-G’. There are different ways of interpreting these ‘*qua*’-locutions in both scholastic and contemporary metaphysics.[[45]](#footnote-45) Fortunately, the technical differences between these interpretations do not matter for our purposes; as such, in what follows we use the term ‘reduplication’ to refer generically to these sorts of ‘*qua*’-modifications.

In his Logic, John of St. Thomas briefly addresses the Achilles, saying that “contradictories can be verified of the same thing under diverse *rationes* by a concept, but not under the same *ratio*, especially when the contradictories are made under some reduplication or at least virtual appellation.”[[46]](#footnote-46) In applying reduplication to the Achilles, he says that “the same most simple entity from His own eminence has the condition of many things, and thus it has the capacity that this contradiction can be verified of it.”[[47]](#footnote-47) This most simple entity has the condition of many things, he explains, in the form of distinct roles or offices: “the same divine substance contains an absolute and relative genus, and the same divine substance performs the role and office of each.”[[48]](#footnote-48) So, God can play the role of something communicable and the role of something incommunicable. As such, “this contradiction which is formed by saying that the essence is communicable but not the person only requires a diversity of role and office, not of beings, and that is sufficient.”[[49]](#footnote-49) These distinct roles or offices, then, can serve as the foundation for a reduplicative answer to the Achilles. The idea is that, due to its perfection, the one divine essence(/paternity) can do or be what in creatures would require real distinction: the roles or offices are perfections that, in creatures, cannot be borne by a single being. As such, the divine essence(/paternity) is communicable qua *this* role but not qua *that* role, and it is incommunciable qua *that* role but not *this* role. And John of St. Thomas thinks this is enough to dissolve the contradiction.

Gonet purports to deny premise 1, appealing to reduplication by way of the virtual distinction. In response to the derivation of premise 1 from the NCP, he grants that the propositions “it is verified of the divine essence that it is communicable” and “it is verified of the relation that it is incommunicable” are contradictory.[[50]](#footnote-50) He then explains:[[51]](#footnote-51)

it does not suffice for a contradiction that opposites are predicated of the same thing, but it is required that they are predicated of the same thing under the same formal account [*ratio*] and virtual account [*ratio*], since contradictions, by witness of the Philosopher, are of the same, concerning the same, and according to the same: but communicability and incommunicability, producibility and improducibility are verified of the substance and divine entity according to diverse *rationes*, formalities, or equivalences: for as it is equivalent absolutely, it is communicable, and as it is equivalent relatively, it is incommuncabile.

Thus different *rationes* (or, what is the same, formalities or equivalences)are present in one simple being: the divine nature as relative and as absolute. Reduplication comes out in the last line of the quotation: the divine entity is communicable qua absolute *ratio* and is incommunicable qua relative *ratio*. And this prior to any act of the intellect. Gonet claims that this is sufficient to dissolve the contradiction.

In either author, the virtual distinction allows the simple God, due to his perfection, to have multiple roles, offices, *rationes*, or aspects. These then facilitate reduplication: the simple divine entity is communicable qua one *ratio* or aspect and incommunicable qua another, and this isn’t contradictory. On this view, to say that the essence and paternity are virtually distinct is to say that, even though the essence and paternity are identical, there are multiple roles or *rationes* present which the one simple entity can occupy. Playing one role, or under one *ratio*, this one divine essencewill be communicable; playing another role, or under another *ratio*, itwill be incommunicable.[[52]](#footnote-52)

On this, more common version of the reduplication strategy, our Thomists are merely changing the subject. Sure, one thing can be incommunicable qua A and communicable qua B without contradiction, prior to any act of the intellect. But that is not what premise 1 is about. Premise 1 says that something cannot be both communicable *simpliciter* and incommunicable *simpliciter* prior to any act of the intellect, without some distinction prior to any act of the intellect. If they are challenging some premise in an argument for the formal distinction, it is not the first premise of the Achilles.

Let us lay out the issue more cautiously, because it’s important. (In what follows, we omit the qualifier ‘prior to any act of the intellect’, which is implicit throughout.) We distinguish two conditionals, the relevant instance of premise 1 of the Achilles, and the qua-relativized version thereof:

C: If the divine essence is communicable and Paternity is incommunicable, then the divine essence and Paternity are distinct.

C\*: If the divine essence is communicable quaabsolute *ratio* (or role) and Paternity is incommunicable quarelative *ratio* (or role), then the divine essence and Paternity are distinct.

Even if all parties were to agree that C\* is false, given the law of excluded middle (which good scholastics accept), the reduplication theorist still needs to contend with C. Is it, according to the reduplication theorist, true or false? If true, then the reduplication theorist has not *really* denied premise 1 of the Achilles; therefore, to avoid the conclusion they must deny premise 2. If false, recall that C is an instance of the original first premise of the Achilles, which follows from the no-contradiction principle. In other words, C comes out false only by violating the NCP, and thus countenancing true contradictions. Therefore, C is false only if there are true contradictions. Earlier we canvassed responses to the Achilles that denied premise 2, and in the following section we will consider responses to the Achilles that countenance true contradictions. The important point here is that the reduplication strategy is not a third way of responding to the Achilles: if workable, it must collapse into one of the other two.

There is, however, one viable attempt to salvage the reduplication strategy. Recall, in our derivation of the Achilles’s first premise from the NCP, we assumed that to be incommunicable just is to not be communicable; in other words, we assumed that communicability and incommunicability are *contradictories*. This assumption we called the contradictoriness assumption; the CA is violated in at least one scholastic treatment of the Achilles.

A collective of 17th-century commentators on Aquinas’s *Summa* known as the Salmanticenses offers the following, explicit rejection of the CA:

In God it will not be valid to infer that concerning the formality of the essence and relation it is verified that it is not the case that it is communicable from the fact that it is incommunicable.[[53]](#footnote-53)

Without the CA, there is now no obvious route from the NCP to the first premise; conversely, one may reject the first premise of the Achilles without any obvious threat of outright inconsistency. But this alone is not yet a satisfactory route to answering the Achilles; without further explanation, simply denying the contradictoriness of communicability and incommunicability is an *ad hoc* maneuver. This is where reduplication re-enters the story. The Salmanticenses explain (putative) failures of the CA by embracing what we call *radical reduplicationism*.

Taking truth-according-to-a-*ratio* as our paradigm of reduplication, the hallmark of radical reduplicationism is equating how things are *simpliciter* and how things are according to some *ratio* as a matter of real definition.[[54]](#footnote-54) In this context, the radical reduplicationist says that for x to be communicable *just is* for x to be communicable according to some *ratio*, and for x to be incommunicable *just is* for x not to be communicable according to some *ratio*. More carefully:

Def 1: x is communicable =df for some *ratio* y, x is communicable according to y;

Def 2: x is incommunicable =df for some *ratio* y, x is not communicable according to y.[[55]](#footnote-55)

Given this, the first premise becomes:

* If, *prior to any act of the intellect*, there is a *ratio* z such that x is communicable according to z and there is a *ratio* w such that y is not communicable according to w, then x and y are distinct *prior to any act of the intellect*.

Here there is no attempt here to *replace* the first premise of the Achilles argument with some reduplication-theoretic alternative. No; on the view under consideration, this is just what the first premise *is*, and reduplication simply results from the substitution of real *definientia* for their *definienda*.[[56]](#footnote-56) And, as promised, the first premise of the Achilles can now be denied without any obvious conflict with the NCP. The first premise of the Achilles, once again, is an instance of the NCP only if to be incommunicable just is to not be communicable. This is no longer plausible, given the definitions above. Given Def 2, for x to be incommunicable is for x to not be communicable according to some *ratio*, and given Def 1 for x to not be communicable is for x not to be communicable according to any *ratio* whatsoever. Clearly the one is not the other; any case where something is communicable according to some *ratio* but not communicable according to another will be a counterexample.

The Salmanticenses underwrite their rejection of the CA in just this way, embracing radical reduplicationism. They consider the following objection, which embodies a version of the contradictoriness assumption: whatever is communicable and incommunicable is and is not communicable–a contradiction–and so the divine essence(/paternity) cannot be communicable and incommunicable.They respond as follows (here, ‘this formality of the divine essence and relation’ simply refers to the divine essence(/paternity)):[[57]](#footnote-57)

[i] when it is said that ‘this formality of the divine essence and relation is incommunicable’ then this negation taken infinitely does not distribute to the essence with respect to everything which it asserts. [ii] Thus, the sense would [otherwise] be that according to everything which it signifies, it does not have communicable being; for thus it would be clearly false: [iii] but in the consequent when it is inferred ‘therefore it is not case that the predicated formality is communicable’ then [iv] the negation has the force of the distributed, and thus the negative proposition reduces to this sense, namely, that according to no *ratio* of it is it communicable. [v] But that is false, and from the antecedent that saying is not inferred….

According to the Salmanticenses, there is an important distinction in the function of negation. On one usage (ii and iv) the negation applies to the whole of the thing negated: ‘it is not the case that x is communicable’ means that for all y, if y is a *ratio* of x, x is not communicable according to y. Thus, removing this negation altogether, ‘x is communicable’ means that for some *ratio* y, x is communicable according to y (which accords with Def. 1). According to the contrasting usage, (i) the negation does not distribute to the whole of the thing negated, i.e., ‘x is incommunicable’ means that there is some *ratio* y of x such that x is not communicable according to y (which accords with Def 2). So, when (iii) the objector tries to infer ‘therefore it is not the case that the predicated formality is communicable’ from (i) ‘this formality of the divine essence and relation is incommunicable,’ (v) the inference is invalid (and the conclusion false). The essence(/paternity) is communicable because, with respect to one *ratio*, it is communicable; it is incommunicable because, with respect to another *ratio*, it is not communicable;but it is false that it both is and is not communicable.

Given our previous arguments, the ordinary reduplication strategy is not viable as a response to the Achilles; something like radical reduplicationism is needed. Some problems remain, however. First, the definitions of communicability and incommunicability given above have little, independently, to recommend them. Further, the theoretical work they can do for the Thomist–mainly, leveraging a response to the Achilles–is meager. It’s not obvious how the Thomist, on theoretical grounds, will be able to justify accepting these seemingly *ad hoc* definitions.

Moreover, there’s reason to think that piecemeal radical reduplicationism–limited to only a few cases, like communicability and incommunicability–is insufficiently general. If we replace every occurrence of ‘is communicable’ with ‘is shared’ and every occurrence of ‘is incommunicable’ with ‘is not shared’ in the Achilles argument, the resulting argument seems no less forceful than the original: the new first premise is plausible, and the new second premise can be denied only by countenancing heterodox theological consequences. Here, to extend the radical reduplicationist’s response, more and more of our vocabulary needs to be understood along radical reduplicationist lines: to be F is to be F-according-to-some-*ratio*, to be G is to be G-according-to-some-*ratio*, and so on. Thus the semantic and metaphysical costs incurred by adopting revised definitions of communicability and incommunicability multiply.

A more pressing worry about the radical reduplication strategy concerns the invocation of diverse *rationes*.[[58]](#footnote-58) In order for this strategy to succeed, there needs to be a multiplicity of distinct *rationes* present in the divine nature. However, here the Thomist faces a dilemma: either there is a multiplicity of distinct *rationes* present in the divine nature prior to any act of the intellect, or else only posterior to some act of the intellect. If it’s the latter,[[59]](#footnote-59) then they cannot do any explanatory work *prior* to any act of the intellect. In that case, they cannot be used to explain why either premise of the Achilles is false, since the premises are each about how things are *prior* to any act of the intellect. On the other hand, if there is a multiplicity of distinct *rationes* present in the divine nature prior to any act of the intellect, then these *rationes* are features of the divine nature, and are thus identical, by divine simplicity. But then we have a case where identical things are nonetheless distinct prior to any act of the intellect: that’s just the Scotist’s formal distinction! More carefully, that’s just what the anti-Scotist, in rejecting the conclusion of the Achilles, is trying to avoid. We see no way out for the radical reduplicationist here.[[60]](#footnote-60)

Summing up, the bulk of the Thomists appeal to reduplication in a way that, as a response to the Achilles, is a dead end: it leaves the first premise of the Achilles untouched. A minority of the Thomists appeal to radical reduplicationism; to the credit of the Salmanticenses, this appeal to reduplication does not simply change the subject. But, as we have seen, radical reduplicationism has its own problems, and it is of doubtful usefulness as a response to the Achilles.

5. Inconsistency and Mysterian Strategies

This leads us to the third strategy for responding to the Achilles. Premise 1 follows from the contradictoriness assumption and the no-contradiction principle. Whereas, as we have seen, some reduplicationists deny premise 1 by rejecting the CA, others deny 1 by rejecting the NCP, taking paternity and the divine essence to be counterexamples. In other words, this strategy accepts both of

* The divine nature(/paternity) is communicable

and

* The divine nature/(paternity) is not communicable

Since these are contradictories, the proposed solution is committed to an outright contradiction. Call this the *inconsistency strategy*.

The proposal–accepting outright contradictions–might be surprising, but there is some, admittedly meager precedent in the history of Western philosophy for thinking that right theology, though true, is inconsistent. For instance, some interpret Plotinus as holding that “the principle of non-contradiction” does not apply to the One.[[61]](#footnote-61) Nicholas of Cusa has been similarly interpreted.[[62]](#footnote-62) Among the scholastics, perhaps most prominent is the Nominalist Jesuit Honoré Fabri, who, in his discussion of the virtual distinction, posited true contradictions in God. (The case is prominent only because Fabri’s unapologetic inconsistency was criticized severely by his now (slightly) more famous contemporary, Leibniz).[[63]](#footnote-63) Fabri rejects the possibility of a virtual distinction in creatures, since (contra the Thomists) he thinks it would entail that there are true contradictions in creation.[[64]](#footnote-64) Nevertheless, when it comes to God we must posit both the virtual distinction and true contradictions, “which human intelligences cannot comprehend naturally by power, but only from the faith divinely poured into us to believe, capturing our intellect in the obsequience of faith.”[[65]](#footnote-65)

Thus, it is not so surprising to find such views on display in response to the Achilles. A version of this radical view is suggested by the important Thomist Tommaso Cajetan’s rejection of the first premise of the Achilles: “For from this, that there is one *ratio* in itself, it does not follow, ‘therefore it is only communicable or it is only incommunicable:’ but it remains that it is both communicable and incommunicable.”[[66]](#footnote-66) Here we assume that Cajetan, unlike the radical reduplicationists, accepts that communicability and incommunicability are contradictories—he says nothing to suggest otherwise. In fact, according to Cajetan, if it is objected that one thing or *ratio* can’t be both communicable and incommunicable, Cajetan adds that “that is true about one limited formal *ratio*, but not about an unlimited formal *ratio*.”[[67]](#footnote-67)

Note the contrast between Cajetan and the reduplicationists–radical or otherwise. For Gonet, recall, the divine entity has multiple *rationes*—one absolute, one relative. Contradictories are never verified of one and the same *ratio*, and the fact that there are two of them is exploited *via* reduplication. Similarly, John of St. Thomas explicitly asserts that contradictories cannot be truly verified of one *ratio*, but only multiple *rationes* under reduplication, lest there be true contradictions.[[68]](#footnote-68) By contrast, Cajetan insists that there is only one *ratio* in the divine entity (at least, prior to any act of the intellect), and this one *ratio* is both communicable and incommunicable. The most straightforward way of interpreting this is that Cajetan simply holds that, in God, there can be (logical) inconsistencies: the one divine entity, with its single *ratio*,is both communicable and incommunicable. Thus Cajetan is advancing a version of the inconsistency strategy.

Another version of the inconsistency strategy is advanced by the Nominalist Jesuits Rodrigo Arriaga and Francisco Oviedo. In Arriaga’s explanation of how the virtual distinction allows one to reject the first premise, he says that the virtual distinction here “[...] consists precisely in this, that two predicates of themselves contradictory really and truly agree with the same indivisible entity and with one real formality.”[[69]](#footnote-69) According to Arriaga, *contradictory predicates* (that is, predicates contradictory “of themselves”) are truly said *of one and the same thing*–i.e., the divine nature(/paternity). Is this a version of the inconsistency strategy?

Note that Arriaga says only that contradictory predicates (that is, predicates contradictory “of themselves”) are true of the divine nature: the predicate ‘is communicable’ is true of the divine nature, and the predicate ‘is not communicable’ is true of the divine nature. It is natural to read this as committing Arriaga to an outright contradiction, just like Cajetan, but this is so only if Arriaga is also committed to something like the following principle:

* Disquotation: If ‘is F’ is true of x, then x is F.[[70]](#footnote-70)

For given Disquotation, ‘is communicable’ and ‘is incommunicable’ are both true of the divine nature only if the divine nature is communicable and not communicable.

Disquotation is an intuitively compelling principle. Furthermore, we know of no grounds for suspecting that Arriaga would deny it. Thus, we think a natural interpretation of Arriaga counts him, like Cajetan, as an inconsistency theorist.[[71]](#footnote-71)

Now, it should be noted that Arriaga and Oviedo both appear to deny that their view commits them to outright contradictions. For while they maintain that the predicates ‘is communicable’ and ‘is not communicable’ are both true of the divine essence, they deny that these predicates are, as it were, *really* contradictory; Arriaga maintains that these predicates “are not formally and actually contradictory.”[[72]](#footnote-72) Here’s Arriaga’s explanation:[[73]](#footnote-73)

For just as ‘to run’ and ‘not to run’ are predicates contradictory of themselves if they fall on really distinct things–for example ‘Peter runs’ and ‘Paul does not run’–they now cease to be contradictory, because the subject is two-fold; thus in our case, although the subject is not two-fold, because the subject has this virtual distinction [they now cease to be contradictory].

So even though ‘is communicable’ and ‘is not communicable’ are “contradictory of themselves”, they are not “contradictory” when predicated of one and the same thing, provided that there is a virtual distinction. Oviedo says the same even more starkly: “It does not suffice for a contradiction to be of the same indistinctly formally, but it also needs to be of the same indistinctly virtually or not distinctly virtually.”[[74]](#footnote-74) On their view, apparently contradictory predicates are only *really* contradictory in the absence of a virtual distinction.

Notwithstanding this insistence from Arriaga and Oviedo, it’s important at this point not to be diverted into a merely verbal dispute. For the views under discussion to be inconsistent (in our sense) it suffices that they are committed to the following:

* The divine essence is communicable and the divine essence is not communicable

And this they clearly *are* committed to. An argument suffices to establish this: they tell us that some one thing–the divine essence(/paternity)–is such that ‘is communicable’ and ‘is not communicable’ are both true of it; by the relevant instances of Disquotation, then, it follows that the divine essence is communicable and the divine essence is not communicable. Note that the conclusion of this argument is *not* that “contradictory predicates” are true of the divine essence; rather, the conclusion is simply a contradiction! (That is, a contradiction *in our sense*.) That Arriaga and Oviedo are committed to a contradiction is not in serious question, we think. There are live questions here about what ought to count as “a contradiction”, or about what it takes for predicates true of one and the same thing to be “contradictory”, but a dispute over these questions would be merely verbal. That Arriaga and Oviedo are committed to a contradiction (in our sense) is the important point for our purposes. On our reading, then, Arriaga and Oviedo advance an inconsistency strategy, like Cajetan, notwithstanding what appear to be explicit claims to the contrary.

At any rate, for inconsistency theorists, it is clear how the virtual distinction functions in denying the first premise of the Achilles: to say that paternity and the essence are virtually distinct on this view is to say that the divine entity, from its infinite perfection, is capable of bearing true contradictions, such as that the divine essence is both communicable and not communicable.

How are we to evaluate inconsistency responses to the Achilles? They are not apparently theologically unorthodox; nor do they change the subject, as versions of the reduplication strategy seemed to do. But accepting outright contradictions is, if anything, as bad as it can get for advocates of the virtual distinction: the Scotists can sleep well knowing that, even if their view can be resisted, it can’t be *consistently* resisted. It also leads to grave problems, given either classical or Aristotelian logic. Here’s Leibniz’s harsh judgment against Fabri:

We have here a defendant confessing that in divine matters there is no room for the principle of contradiction, since according to him it is grounded only in created things, even though this principle must hold wherever there is truth and falsity. What do the atheists and anti-Trinitarians listen to with more pleasure? Therefore, nothing absurd is non-assertible concerning divine matters, and there is no room in this sphere for refutation or reasoning …. it would be more prudent and sane to say that neither in divine nor in created matters contradictory propositions should be admitted.[[75]](#footnote-75)

Even if Leibniz’s denunciations are venomous, the costs accruing to the inconsistency theorists need to be registered.[[76]](#footnote-76)

Happily, there is yet another way of reading Arriaga which connects with the last strategy we will consider–*mysterian* responses to the Achilles. Mysterian responses, as we understand them, involve rejecting the first premise without anything like an *explanation* for why the first premise is false. Nonetheless, the idea is that the first premise *must* be false, because the Achilles argument is valid, the second premise is true, and the conclusion is unacceptable (at least if you’re not a Scotist.) This is pretty unsatisfying all on its own. The mysterian response looks slightly more credible if, as its defenders tend to say, the mysteriousness in question is to be expected. As Arriaga says, shortly after the quote above, “in this consists the whole difficulty of the most abstruse and most Holy Trinity, which difficulty alone forces us to posit this [virtual] distinction.”[[77]](#footnote-77)

As we’ve said, Arriaga’s bare admission that contradictory predicates are true of the divine essence doesn’t by itself yield an explanation for why the first premise of the Achilles is false. But if we read Arriaga as a mysterian, we can understand him not as offering an *explanation* for why the first premise is false, but only as identifying an especially noteworthy *symptom* of the mysteriousness of the Trinity—i.e., contradictory predicates true of one and the same entity. Like the Trinity itself, the falsity of the first premise remains a mystery.

A more clear-cut mysterian is the Spanish Thomist Domingo Báñez. Báñez rejects premise 1 and continues: “For in this consists the mystery of the Trinity, that one thing most simple is three things really distinct and opposed between themselves, but having no distinction with the essence beyond a distinction of reason.”[[78]](#footnote-78) That’s his response. By our lights, Báñez is a mysterian.

It remains that this response to the Achilles, though it is a response, is not *much* of a response. It goes little further, dialectically, than the simple declaration that the first premise is false. Moreover, appeals to mystery are a double-edged sword. If the Trinity is so mysterious, on what grounds does the Thomist say that the mystery of the Trinity consists in the falsehood of the first premise, and not in the truth of the conclusion? (Maybe the mystery is that the Scotists are right after all!) Alternatively, if things are clear enough for the Thomists to discern that the mystery of the Trinity *really does* consist in the falsehood of the first premise, why are they unable to also furnish an explanation for this fact?[[79]](#footnote-79)

A final challenge for the mysterians has to do with traditional Thomistic doctrines concerning faith and reason. According to Aquinas,[[80]](#footnote-80)

whatever arguments are brought forward against the doctrines of faith are conclusions incorrectly derived from the first and self-evident principles imbedded in nature. Such conclusions do not have the force of demonstration; they are arguments that are either probable or sophistical. And so, there exists the possibility to answer them.

As we see, there is pressure for the Thomist to insist on just the sort of explanatory demands the mysterian solution shirks. For this reason, though the mysterian solution might have something going for it simply as a response to the Achilles, it’s questionable whether it is a response that is available to the Thomist.[[81]](#footnote-81)

Ultimately, we think the mysterian response is one of the Thomists’ more promising responses to the Achilles. But one thing should be clear: if it does furnish a credible response to the Achilles, it does not do this by explaining how *the virtual distinction* leverages a response to the argument. As a way of filling out a model of the virtual distinction, the mysterian solution simply gives up.

6. Conclusion

The disagreement over the nature of distinction was one of the most fiercely contested disputes in later scholasticism–a disagreement that raged for centuries. At stake was not only the metaphysics of identity and distinction, but also the manifold applications of the competing middle distinctions. Scotus and the Scotists thought the Achilles should settle the dispute in their favor, justifying the coherence and widespread use of the formal distinction. Thomists, however, denied this, maintaining that the virtual distinction could do just as well. However, for the task of responding to the Scotistic Achilles, the virtual distinction is not up to the job.

As we have seen, some respondents maintain that paternity is not incommunicable after all, at least not prior to any act of the intellect. On this view, the virtual distinction serves to explain why we *think* the essence is incommunicable, even though prior to any act of the intellect the essence *isn’t* incommunicable. This response, however, involves rejecting common assumptions shared by the scholastics; indeed, this response, though available in principle, plausibly involves embracing views clearly condemned by the Church, and for that reason could not have gotten very far with the scholastics (and in fact it didn’t). Others appeal to reduplication. Some versions of this response merely change the subject, whereas the view we called radical reduplicationism incurs considerable costs and plausibly only works if one assumes something like the formal distinction–the very thing our respondents are hoping to avoid. A third group goes so far as to accept outright contradictions. In this case, the virtual distinction is what allows the divine essence both to be and not be communicable. This response does answer the Achilles, but the costs are steep. The last group surveyed appeals to mystery, insisting that the argument is unsound, but declines to say *how* this could be the case. This response is unsatisfying, and it plausibly conflicts with principles of Thomistic meta-theology. It also does nothing to show how *the* *virtual distinction* plays an important role in responding to the Achilles.

This survey provides a detailed study of one of Scotus’s most important arguments for the formal distinction–a preeminent and indispensable tool in his metaphysics–and of that argument’s reception; both topics have been neglected in the literature. An investigation into the Achilles aids our understanding of Scotus and his reception; moreover, one cannot understand the broader scholastic debate on distinctions without it. The Achilles argument is very forceful. More than that, though, here we see that whereas Thomists agreed that the argument’s conclusion could not be accepted, their agreement goes little farther than that. Thomists and Nominalists gave a variety of responses to the Achilles, responses that are often mutually incompatible and only rarely mutually reinforcing. Though many scholastics agreed that the Scotists needed to be resisted, the resistance is by no means a unified front.

This is nowhere clearer than in the hugely varied appeals to the virtual distinction. Besides making a strong showing for the formal distinction, the history of the Achilles argument invites us to ask what the Thomistic rival to the formal distinction really is: *what is the virtual distinction*? For instance,, does the virtual distinction involve a proliferation of *rationes* in God? Perhaps, instead, it implicates a single *ratio* in outright contradiction. Thomistic respondents to the Achilles went their separate ways on this question. Without the Achilles argument, then, we would be unable to see that the Thomists in fact held diverse views about the nature and function of the virtual distinction; the Achilles thus clarifies the differences not only between Thomistis and Scotists, but also among the Thomists themselves concerning middle distinctions.

Our excursion into the history of the Achilles argument also reveals heretofore unnoticed connections between scholastic debates and recent developments in analytic philosophy of religion. Here we have in mind two ambitious programs. First, Timothy Pawl’s (2016) semantics for Christological predications invokes what is effectively a version of radical reduplicationism.[[82]](#footnote-82) Though parallels between Pawl’s proposal and some similar views in scholastic discussions of Christology have been noted, here we see new parallels in a different domain: anti-Scotistic responses to Scotus’s Achilles argument. Second, Jc Beall has recently defended the postulation of true contradictions in philosophy of religion–underwritten by 20th century developments in nonclassical logic–with particular applications to addressing long-standing difficulties in core, conciliar Christian thought.[[83]](#footnote-83) Though the resources of contemporary nonclassical logic are new, we now know that the heart of Beall’s proposal goes back at least to the early modern period. Beall is following Fabri, Cajetan, and others, in positing true contradictions in God. The dispute over the Achilles is an important part of this history.

Moreover, since the Achilles argument is so forceful, Thomists and Nominalists who wish to reject Scotus’s conclusion need a credible rebuttal. But the extant responses to the Achilles fall far short, as we have seen. For this reason, we tentatively conclude that the Scotists have won the day: plausibly, given their deeper commitments, Thomists and Nominalists should follow the Subtle Doctor in adopting the formal distinction.

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1. Scotus *Ord.* I d. 2 q. 1 n. 418 (Vat. II, 365) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Scotus Rep. II d. 16 q. 1 n. 18-19 (Vives 23, p. 75) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Scotus Ord. II, d. 3, p. 1, q. 6, n. 188 (Vat. VII, 483-484). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Scotus Ord. I, d. 8, p. 1, q. 4 n. 192 (Vat. VI, 192) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Mezger, *Theologia Salsburgensis* t. 1 d. 4 a. 1 s. 4 n. 29 p. 39. ‘Achilles argument’ was a general term to describe the most powerful argument for some position; it did not connote a weakness like ‘Achilles’ heel’. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Arriaga, *Cursus Theologicus* d. 42, sectio I, n. 9, p. 441 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Cajetan *Commentary on the Summa* I. q. 39 a. 1 VIII p. 398. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. For instance, Thomists commonly hold that genera and their differences (e.g., John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Philosophicus*, Secunda Pars Artis Logicae q. 3 a. 6 p. 129), as well as the divine attributes (e.g.,Mezger t. I d. 4 a. 3 p. 41-46) are virtually distinct. And Suarez holds that the individuating difference is virtually distinct from the common nature (*On Individuation* s. II n. 8-16, p. 45-52).. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Cross (1999, 149). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. By far the majority view is that A and B are identical iff neither A nor B can exist without the other; A and B are really distinct iff either A or B can exist without the other. Such a reading is defended in Cross (1998, 8), Steele and Williams (2019, 7), King (2003, 21-22), and Tweedale (1999*,* 579). Blander (2020, 245-246) argues that this is incorrect—existential separability is neither necessary nor sufficient for real distinction. Grajewski (1944, 59-61) comes the closest to our view when he claims that A and B are really distinct iff they are either (i) existentially separable, (ii) related by causal dependence, or (iii) they exist in really distinct subjects. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. See King (2003, 9). As an example, for Scotus the Father’s paternity is formally distinct from the divine essence, so they are identical. But they are not indiscernible: paternity is incommunicable and the essence is communicable (Ordinatio I d. 2, part 2. q. 1 n. 389-403 (Vat. II, 349-357). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Scotus, *Rep.* I-A d. 33 q. 3 n. 63 (Wolter and Bychkov, 330). In terms of the secondary literature, this account of formal identity and formal distinction is relatively uncontroversial, essentially agreeing with Cross (1999*:* 149), Adams (1976: 35), Steele and Williams (2019: 8), and King (2003: 22-23) that the two defining features of formal distinction are identity and the non-inclusion of one *ratio* in the other. Many of the Scotists (e.g., Sannig *Cursus Philosophici* d. 1, q. 4 n. 9 p. 127) give a similar account. Blander (2020: 236) adds a third criterion, but this addition might not introduce a substantive difference. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. *Ord.* I d. 8 p. 1 q. 4 n. 193 (Vat. IV, 261-262). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Cross (1999, 149). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. The exceptions being cases where the Thomists would posit a real distinction instead, such as between the soul and its powers, which the Scotists hold to be formally distinct and the Thomists hold to be really distinct. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. The virtual distinction shows up as a middle distinction not just–as we will see below–in the writings of Renaissance and Early Modern Thomists, but also in the writings of contemporary Thomists. See Feser (2014, 80-85) and Tomaszewski (2023) for two recent examples. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. John of St. Thomas *Cursus Philosophicus* Logica q. 2 a. 3 p. 109. “Without apprehension or a fiction of the intellect” excludes cases where things are merely apprehended to be the same, though prior to any act of the intellect they are not. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Monasterium Obernaltaichenses *Virtus in Medio!* Q. 1 p. 3. Emphasis original. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Of course, Scotus has a more restrictive account of what it is to be really distinct and so would be unbothered by this. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. John of St. Thomas *Cursus Philosophicus* Logica q. 2 a. 3 p. 109 and Monasterium Obernaltaichenses *Virtus in Medio!* Q. 1 p. 3. Emphasis original. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Monasterium Obernaltaichenses *Virtus in Medio!* Q. 1 p. 4 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Monasterium Obernaltaichenses *Virtus in Medio!* Q. 1 p. 5 [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. A distinction whose foundation in reality is some virtual distinction is traditionally called a distinction *rationis ratiocinatae*. The scholastics themselves frequently elide the distinction between the distinction *rationis ratiocinatae* and the accompanying virtual distinction; for this point and more on the virtual distinction, see Novák 2023, p. 300-301. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. John of St. Thomas *Cursus Philosophicus* Logica q. 2 a. 3 p. 111. Here we take *rationes* and perfections to be the same. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. John of St. Thomas *Cursus Philosophicus* Logica q. 2 a. 3 p. 111 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. For a careful discussion of another of Scotus’s arguments for the formal distinction, see Novák (2022). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. See, e.g., Aquinas *Summa Theologicae* I Q. 28 a. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Of course, the personal properties will not for this reason be identical to *one another*, any more than the Trinitarian persons are. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Aquinas *Summa Theologicae* I Q. 28 a. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Nielsen (1982)p.32-38. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Aquinas, *De Potentia*. Q. VII a. 1 p. 220. “On the contrary, affirmation and negation are not verified of the same. Now the divine essence is communicable to the three Persons, whereas the properties are incommunicable. Therefore the property and essence are not the same.” [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Aquinas, *De Potentia*. Q. VII a. 1 p. 221. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. According to the heresy of Sabellianism, the three persons of the Trinity are not really distinct, but are mere modes or appearances of the same one person. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. See e.g., Mezger *Theologia Salsburgensis* tract. I, d. IV, a. I s. 4 n. 29, p. 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. “And I say, without assertion and without prejudice of a better opinion, that the idea by which the supposit is formally incommunicable (let it be a) and the idea of essence as essence (let it be b) have a distinction that precedes every act of created and uncreated intellect. I prove this as follows: the first supposit formally or really has a communicable being, otherwise it could not communicate it; also it really has an incommunicable being, otherwise it could not be a positive supposit in real being. And I understand ‘really’ thus, that which is in no way by an act of an intellect considering it, nay that which would be a being of this sort there if no intellect were considering it; and to be in this way there if no intellect were considering it I call ‘existing before every act of intellect’. – But it is not the case that some entity before every act of intellect, such that it is not by an act of intellect, is communicable and that another entity is of itself incommunicable, unless there is before every act of intellect, that is, not precisely through an act of understanding, some distinction between this entity and that; therefore etc.” Scotus Ordinatio I d. II, p. II. q. 1 n. 389-390 (Translation by Simpson). Some version of this argument is repeated by every Scotist we have consulted; see, e.g., Mastri *Disputationes Theologicae* d. 2 q. 2 a. 2 p. 15 n. 20-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. It was frequently discussed in philosophical textbooks (Cursus Philosophici)–which were the main genre of early modern scholastic philosophy–in the section on distinctions. A handful are cited in what follows. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Scotus himself, for example, offers many purely philosophical arguments for the Trinity, even though none rise to the level of a strict demonstration (Ordinatio I d. 2 p. 2 q. 1-4). [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Mezger *Theologia Salsburgensis* tract. I, d. IV, a. II n. 1, p. 45. “Resp. neg. Min. nam actu a parte rei priusquam noster intellectus praecisivo et inadaequato conceptu idstinctionem format inter essentiam et personalitates, datur quidem fundamentu reale ispius contradictionis, quod est divina essentia, quatenus continens absolutam perfectionem naturae se communicans, et quatenus continens formam relativam paternitatis filium respeciens, eumque producens: nondum tamen datur negatio non productionis, non communicationis: haec quippe primum superadditur ab intellectu creato unuam rationem ab altera praescindente, et mutuo opponenete.” For ease of reference we have numbered the sentences. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. That is, of the essence being communicable and paternity being incommunicable, posterior to some act of the intellect. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. “Precisively,” because neither concept is contained in the other, and “inadequately” because in reality there is just one thing there, not two. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. The incommunicability is thus “superadded.” This is confirmed, since (v) under intuitive cognition, there are no contradictory properties (intuitive cognition is a kind of cognition of a thing as it is in itself–there are no conceptual distinctions drawn when cognizing with intuitive cognition). [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. A related response maintains that prior to any act of the intellect there are only distinct Trinitarian persons and there aren’t any personal properties at all (a view rejected by Aquinas in *Summa Theologica* I q. 28 a. 1). It is difficult to know how to develop this response, since there are diverse ways of reasoning about non-being; for example if there is no such thing as Paternity, is it for that very reason incommunicable, since only what exists can be communicated? In any case, this response to the Achilles is also a non-starter. Besides the questionable orthodoxy of denying that there are personal properties and the metaphysical uncomfortability of maintaining that the persons are distinct but not distinguished *by* anything, a slightly modified version of the Achilles is available that makes no reference to the personal properties.

    1. If, *prior to any act of the intellect*, x is communicable and y is incommunicable, then x and y are distinct *prior to any act of the intellect*.
    2. *Prior to any act of the intellect*, the divine essence is communicable and the Father is incommunicable.
    3. Therefore, the divine essence and the Father are distinct *prior to any act of the intellect*.

    [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. What we mean by this can be spelled out stipulatively as follows:

    It is contradictory to be F and G =df (a) to be F just is to not be G; (b) to be G just is to not be F.

    For example, it is contradictory to be married and unmarried, since to be married just is not to be unmarried and to be unmarried just is not to be married. In the present context, we can afford to make the strong assumption that to be F just is to be G only if being F and being G are (higher-order) indiscernible, in line with the influential proposal outlined in Dorr (2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. For most of our purposes, this talk of endorsing instances of a conditional can be understood intuitively. But for reasons that will be more readily appreciable in what follows, some readers may want us to clarify what, for us, endorsing every instance of NC amounts to. One endorses every instance of a conditional ⌜if A then B⌝ just in case one *accepts* all instances of that conditional and *rejects* all *Boolean counterexamples* to it. Here a Boolean counterexample to ⌜if A then B⌝ is any instance of the corresponding conjunction ⌜A and not-B⌝.(⌜ not-B⌝ expresses the (logical) negation of B.) In the obvious way, an instance of NC will be any uniform substitution of singular terms for ‘x’ and ‘y’ and predicates for ‘F’ and ‘G’ in NC, and similarly, *mutatis mutandis*, for instances of the corresponding conjunction. Acceptance and rejection may be understood intuitively, provided we mark the distinction between rejectinga sentence and acceptingits negation, an important distinction in contexts where nonclassical logics are being considered–see Priest (2006) and Field (2008) for further discussion. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. For more on reduplication, see John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Philosophicus* Logica bk. II c. 24 p. 24-25 and Alan Bäck (1996). Two brief, helpful discussions of reduplication (both in the context of Christology) are p. 193-205 of Cross (2002)and Chapter 6 of Pawl (2016)*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. John of St. Thomas *Cursus Philosophicus* Logica q. 2 a. 3 p. 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theologici* tomus 1.2, d. XIII a. 1 n. 17 p. 89. “sed eadem simplicissima entitas ob sui eminentiam habet vicem plurium rerum; & sic habet capacitatem verificandi illam contradictionem.” [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theologici* tomus 1.2, d. XIII a. 1 n. 17 p. 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theologici* tomus 1.2, d. XIII a. 1 n. 17 p. 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Gonet, *Manuale Thomistarum* part 1 tractus VI caput IV s. 1 n. 13 p. 89. Gonet chooses an unfortunate way of expressing the purportedly contradictory propositions, needlessly confusing the example by having different grammatical subjects in the sentences. However, as the next quote shows, this is not relevant to his solution, which he thinks can be applied to the subject “the divine entity” as well. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Gonet, *Manuale Thomistarum* part 1 tractus VI caput IV s. 1 n. 14 p. 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. As mentioned, Vicente Ferre also falls into the Reduplicationist camp, *Tractatus Theologici In Primam Partem D. Thomae* Tomus Tertius Tract. 14 q. 4 s. 9 p.73 n. 111: “ut enim talia praedicata haberent actualem oppositionem, oporteret, quod convenirent Divinitati ratione eiusdem virtualitatis. Cumque aliud conveniat divinitati, ex quo absoluta est, et aliud conveniat Divinitati, ex quo actu relativa est, actu nullam habent inter se oppositionem.” [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Salmanticenses *Cursus Theologicus* t. 6 dis. 5 dub. 2 s. 7 n. 56 p. 149. “Ita neque in Deo valebit de illa formalitate essentiae, et relationis verificari, quod non est communicabilis, ex eo quod sit non communicabilis.” The Salmanticenses treat “est incommunicabilis” as equivalent to “est non communicabilis,” which differs from “non est communicabilis” as will be seen below. For the sake of clarity, we have chosen to translate “est non communicabilis” and its variants as variants of “is incommunicable.” [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Alternatively, as a matter of identity or absolute indiscernibility. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. If we wish to take these as real definitions of communicability and incommunicability, respectively, circularity can be avoided by insisting that communicability according to a *ratio* is not defined in terms of communicability *simpliciter*, and likewise *mutatis mutandis* for incommunicability; the relative notion is prior to the non-relative notion, even though our *expressions* for the non-relative notion are *lexically* prior to our expressions for the relative notion. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. This strategy is an analog of a strategy used by many scholastics and recently by Pawl (2016) to defend against putative contradictions in the context of Christology. However effective the Christological strategy is, we will argue that radical reduplicationist responses to the Achilles face more challenging problems. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Salmanticenses *Cursus Theologicus* t. 6 dis. 5 dub. 2 s. 7 n. 56 p. 149. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. The argument here is our own, but it bears some resemblance to an argument from Mastri (*Disputationes Theologicae* d. 2 q. 2 a. 2 p. 17 n. 29) [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. This seems to be the horn taken by Aquinas himself (*Sentences* I d. 2 q. 1 a. 3). [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Note: none of this is a problem for the radical reduplicationist *per se*. Rather, this is a problem for radical reduplicationist responses to *the Achilles argument*. There are several ways of spelling out what these diverse *rationes* are; none of them, though, can do the explanatory work required of them without ceding ground to the Scotist. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. See Stanburgy (2019) for discussion. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. See Ursic (1998) for discussion. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. See Leibniz *The Art of Controversies* chapter 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Fabri *Metaphysica Demonstrativa* Prop. 31 p.22: “Contradictory predicates cannot belong to the same thing, through the axiom [mentioned above]. Therefore, neither can the virtual distinction.” [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Fabri *Metaphysica Demonstrativa* Prop. 31 p.22 [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Cajetan *Commentary on the Summa* q. 39 a. 1 VIII p. 397. “Unde ad primum Scoti, negatur consequentia. Et ad probationem eius, negatur assumpta conditionalis. Ex hoc enim quod est unius rationis in se, non sequitur, *ergo tantum connunicabilits vel tantum incommunicabilis*: sed stat quod sit et communicabilis et incommunicabilis.” [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Cajetan *Commentary on the Summa* q. 39 a. 1 VIII p. 397 “Nec est mirabilius unicam rationem formalem habere utrumque, quam unicam rem: imo illud, secundum rectam philosophiam, sequitur ex hoc posito per fidem.--Poteris quoque novitiis distinguere illam conditionalem, dicendo quod est vera de una ratione formali limitata; non autem de illimitata, ut in proposito contingit.” [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. John of St. Thomas *Cursus Philosophicus* Logica q. 2 a. 3 p. 111 [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Arriaga, *Cursus Theologicus* d. 42, sectio I, n. 6-8, p. 440-441. “Ergo duabus formalitatibus a parte rei praeexistantibus relictis, dicendum est, distinctionem hanc virtualem consistere precise in eo, quod eidem indivisibili entitati, et formalitati uni reali, vere tamen & realtor convenient duo praedicta ex se contradictoria, qualia sunt produci et non produci, communicari & non communicari, &c….Nec mirum, si non claram ei possimus adhibere solutionem: consistit enim in eo tota abstrusissimi sancitissimae Trinitatis mysterii difficultas, quae sola ad hanc distinctionem ponendam nos cogit necessario, ut paulo post dicemus.” [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Really, commitment to Disquotation in general is not needed; commitment to just the relevant instances of Disquotation would do just as well. Granted the point, we ignore it in what follows. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Oviedo takes a similar line to Arriaga. See *Cursus Philosophicus*, Metaphysica c. 4 p. 4 s. 2 n. 3-12 p. 261-263. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Arriaga *Cursus Theologicus* d. 42, sectio I, n. 7, p. 440. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Arriaga *Cursus Theologicus* d. 42, sectio I, n. 7, p. 440. “Non sunt formaliter et actu contradictoria, hoc est repugnantia…sicut enim currere, et non currere, ex se sunt praedicata contradictoria; si autem cadant supra res distinctas realiter, verbi gratia, Petrus currit; Paulus non currit, iam desinunt esse contradictoria, quia subiectum est duplex; ita in nostro casu, quia subiectum licet non sit duplex, habet tamen distinctionem hanc virtualem. Ideo ea praedicata ex se opposita desinunt respectu illius esse opposita.” [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Oviedo *Cursus Philosophicus*, Metaphysica c. 4 p. 4 s. 2 n. 11 p. 263. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Leibniz *The Art of Controversies* chapter 25. “Theology and the Principle of Contradiction” p. 239, translated by Dascal. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. These worries only apply to those who, like Cajetan, go in for *outright* contradictions. An alternative reading of Arriaga and Oviedo avoids the conclusion that the divine essence both is and is not communicable, even though the predicates ‘is communicable’ and ‘is not communicable’ are both true of the divine essence. This requires violations of Disquotation: either ‘is communicable’ is true of the divine essence, even though the divine essence isn’t communicable, or else ‘is not communicable’ is true of the divine essence even though the divine essence is communicable. Setting aside other worries one might have about this position—and, once again, we know of no reason to think that this *really is* the position of either Arriaga or Oviedo—this by itself is not a response to the Achilles. Like the flat-footed reduplication strategy discussed in the previous section, it changes the subject. The question remains: which premise of the Achilles argument is denied? It is tempting to say that the first premise is denied, but the first premise is about what’s communicable and incommunicable, and it’s *not* directly about what the predicates ‘is communicable’ and ‘is incommunicable’ can be truly predicated of. There is an obvious connection between the two subject matters, a connection codified by Disquotation. But this position avoids outright contradiction only if the relevant instances of Disquotation are denied. Another way of making the same point appeals to the following instance of the law of the excluded middle:

    * The divine nature/paternity is either communicable prior to any act of the intellect or not communicable prior to any act of the intellect.

    We ask: which one is it? Both? Then we have an outright contradiction, and we are back to Cajetan’s position. Only one? Then not the other, and we are no longer denying the first premise; we are back to denying the *second* premise which, as we said before, is heterodox. Neither? (Perhaps we decline to say?) Then whither the law of excluded middle? This position, though an alternative to the inconsistency view, is either a red herring, or it collapses back into Cajetan’s position. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Arriaga, *Cursus Theologicus* d. 42, sectio I, n. 9, p. 441. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Báñez *Scholastica Commentaria* I. q. 28 a. 2 p. 350. “ad quintum argumentum concesso antecedenti nego consequen. In hoc enim cosistit mysterium trinitatis, quod una res simplicissima est tres res realiter distinctae et oppositae inter se, nullam autem habentes distinctionem cum essentia praeter distinctionem rationis.” [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. A *tu quoque* objection could be made here, suggesting that accepting the conclusion and utilizing the formal distinction is no less mysterious than denying the first premise and utilizing the virtual distinction. A proper response to this objection would involve diving into the details of the formal distinction and the metaphysics behind it, showing that it is not mysterious but rather that Scotus and the Scotists have a consistent and worked-out theory of the formal distinction to employ. We are optimistic that the Scotists have such a theory (see, e.g., Mastri *Cursus Philosophicus* Tomus I *Logica* d. I q. 5 a. 2 n. 59-95 p.94-102), but to explicate it is beyond the scope of this paper. So, it is true that the Scotists do owe us a theory in order to vindicate their position. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles* Bk. 1 c. 7 (translation by Anton Pegis). [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Thanks to XXX for suggesting this point to us. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. In particular, Pawl recommends a view on which the truth conditions for Christological predications follow the following paradigm: ‘is mutable’ is true of x just in case x has a concrete nature that can change; ‘is immutable’ is true of x just in case x has a concrete nature that cannot change. Given this, the orthodox affirmation ‘Christ is mutable and Christ is immutable’ is not *per se* inconsistent, provided, as Christian orthodoxy maintains, Christ has more than one nature. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. See Beall (2021), (2023). [↑](#footnote-ref-83)