

An Embodied Existence in Heaven and the Non-Cartesian Substance Dualism (Revisited)

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Abstract: In this paper, I propose to imagine, through Non-Cartesian substance dualism (NCSD), how we could resurrect. Even though many objections have been addressed to the classic conception of eschatology since the beginning of the *century of eschatology*, I propose we have some reasons to think that a more corporeal conception of the eschaton is not only desirable but also metaphysically possible and compatible with biblical data. I shall explore what I call the *Christ Body Argument*, which invites us to reject, on the one hand, a disembodied existence in heaven, and on the other side to adopt a corporeal existence of Christ in heaven. A kind of Dualism, and more precisely, one possessing NCSD's virtues, could play a role in exploring this new theological option. I expect to show that NCSD is a metaphysical option allowing us to understand better what we are. If we hope and believe in the resurrection of the dead, NCSD provides an interesting model to think about it.

Keywords: E. J. Lowe, Intermediate state, Embodied existence, Non-Cartesian substance dualism, analytic theology

To the memory of E. J. Lowe

In this paper, I propose to see the classic conception of eschatology as the best option to think of resurrection. According to this position:

- (α) There is resurrection,
- (β) there is an intermediate state after death,
- and (γ) the resurrection takes place at *the end* of the time.

The conclusion γ depends on the premise β . So, it is logically necessary that alpha and beta are true, gamma is also true (but gamma itself is not

metaphysically necessary).¹ Indeed, it is logically necessary, if and only if, one has a *temporal* conception of the eschaton, where one thinks that death comes at t_0 , we wait in an intermediate state at the moment t_1 , and we are resurrected at the moment t_2 .

Nevertheless, I am aware that some theologians and philosophers think that the intermediate state and the resurrection happen at the same time, t_1 , without rejecting the existence of an intermediate state;² what they do reject is the temporal conception of this state.³ In other words, if the classic conception of eschatology possesses three phases (i. death, ii. intermediate state, iii. general resurrection⁴), an alternative option lies in considering a classic conception of eschatology in two phases (i. death, ii. Intermediate state and general resurrection).⁵ But I am not sure about how that is possible or could be justified.

In this paper, I shall envisage *an embodied existence* after death, and hence, before the resurrection, something like “*an embodied intermediate state*”. In this sense, I shall go against a shared conception of the eschatology, according to which:

- (1) There is an intermediate state
- (2) The intermediate state involves a disembodied existence.

¹ A physicalist disputes (and non-physicalists theologians and philosophers) that gamma depends on beta. However, indifferently of their metaphysical commitments, they do not accept an intermediate state because they reject a dualist conception of human being. What is more, against whom reject the intermediate state, we must note that they must necessarily endorse an immediate resurrection, belief generally contested within the Christian tradition (even though it has become a dominant position).

² As I noted, the rejection of the doctrine of the resurrection at the end of the time does not imply, for some scholars, a necessary rejection of the intermediate state; they accept rather an intermediate state at the same time with the final resurrection.

However, I think that the best way to think about it (but I do not do it!), is to talk about an intermediate state *co-located* with the final resurrection. But some doubts remain. From one side, is not this a kind of a nominalist theory of the intermediate state, as opposed to a realist theory of this, according to which, there is *something* existing that could we call the intermediate state? From another side, if one accepts that something like the intermediate state exists and is co-located with the final resurrection, that must imply a kind of a theory of constitution.

³ But, as LaRock notes, if they happen at the same time, then necessarily a temporal conception is invoked. I agree with LaRock stating that. The main problem lies in believing that they can avoid a temporal conception of the eschaton. Undoubtedly, that is why the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (in 1979) and the International Theological Commission (in 1992) have rejected atemporalistic conceptions of the resurrection.

⁴ Hans Urs von Balthasar adopts another possible resurrection, according to which resurrection takes place not at the end of the time but *along* the history (cf. *Theo-Drama V*).

⁵ See for example: Ladislaus Boros (1962); Karl Rahner (1984, 186–187). For understanding challenges to this position, see Yates (2017, 114ss).

- (3) Therefore, the human being exists in the intermediate state in virtue of its soul.

This reasoning supposes:

- (2a) The human being possesses a disembodied existence *in virtue* of its soul.

As I noted, I shall suppose that (1) is true. We have biblical as well as theological and philosophical reasons to do it. So, once again, let me only accept (1).⁶ However, I propose to reject the conclusion of the above reasoning. That is why I shall show that (2) is not true (and therefore, (2a) either).

Also, if I may show that *an alternative classic model* that is the model which I shall develop here is possible, one has good reasons to believe (1), because metaphysical considerations might guide philosophical and theological reflections about an afterlife. As Hasker and Taliaferro point out: “the reasonability of beliefs about an afterlife depends on the reasonability of metaphysical convictions” (2019).

My second purpose in this paper, linked to this first point, lies in revisiting the non–Cartesian substance dualism to think of resurrection. I believe that, as I intend to show it, this is a fascinating thesis which until now has been neglected. Now, when I refer to a kind of non–Cartesian substance dualism, I am not thinking about a possible reading of the Thomistic hylomorphism.⁷ Instead, I have in mind Edward Jonathan Lowe’s metaphysics of mind, or at least, one kind of dualism as accepting the main thesis developed by Lowe. As many of you know, Lowe was not interested in the metaphysical question of the resurrection. So, what I am doing here is *to imagine* the form of the resurrection by adopting the non–Cartesian substance dualism. In this sense, I think as James Arcadi defends it, that analytic theology lies in *imagining better* what we believe (2017).

1. An embodied intermediate state

According to one big part of mainstream theology, the intermediate state suggests a disembodied existence, and on the contrary, those who reject the metaphysical or logical possibility of the disembodied existence will deny the theology of the intermediate state. But have we given this matter enough thought? And if not, why haven’t we done it? Indeed, this assumption is neither grounded on good biblical nor on philosophical reasons. Arguments introduced

⁶ See the remarkable books of John W. Cooper (1989) and Stephen Yates (2017) about this topic, where they expose theological and philosophical reasons to accept that (1) is true.

⁷ See Stump (1995).

in order to defend this position appear to be insufficient, and they do not pay enough attention to other biblical and philosophical aspects that may lead us to think of the post-mortem existence in another way.

That is why in the following lines I propose to introduce a recent idea which I have called the *Christ's Body Argument*,⁸ according to which, if Christ's body exists in heaven, and there is an intermediate state, then there is an *embodied* intermediate state. I hope this idea will allow viewing in a different way our own life after death.

In the four Gospels, and more generally in the New Testament, the resurrection of believers is grounded in the work, death and resurrection of Jesus (we could even talk about it in a philosophical sense, that is to see the resurrection of Jesus in terms of metaphysical grounding). Thus, as it is said in the Gospel of Mark:

Now after he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first (*prôton*) to Mary Magdalene [...] After this (*meta de tauta*) he appeared in another form to two of them [...] Later (*hysteron*) he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were sitting at the table. [...] So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. (Mark 16.9;12;14;19).

This ending (probably added after Mark) talks about Christ's post-resurrection. One can highlight the movement thanks to the words used: *πρῶτον*, *Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα*, and *Ὑστερον*. Each one of these words insists on the realism of the body resurrected manifested at three apparitions: a body which might be seen and recognised as such.

The gospel of Luke also insists on this aspect: "Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have" (Luke 24.39). So, Christ is not a ghost (*pneuma*); it is really Him; He is a human being *like* others, but He is also different, because he is transfigured. He possesses a *resurrected body*. This body, finally, is a *human body* but *transfigured*.

Luke uses here a particular term "*ψηλαφήσατέ*" (touch and feel, or feel by touching, or knowing by feel). This form is used only once in the New Testament, and the verb *psèlephao* appears only once in the gospels, and it has only three other references in the New Testament.⁹ Even if I do not develop the importance of this term and how it is used in the New Testament, one can note that it bears sense in this passage: Christ's body is not only touched but *recognised* as such.

⁸ See Pérez (2019).

⁹ See: Ac 17:27; He 12:18; 1 John 1:1. The verb "touch" (*psèlephao*) is ever linked to the divine and the knowledge that we can have of it.

Now, after being recognised and touched the body of Christ, it is said at the end: Ὁ μὲν οὖν Κύριος Ἰησοῦς (so then the Lord Jesus) [...] ἀνελήμφθη εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν (was taken up into heaven) (cf. 2King 2.11; Ac 1.9–11). Indeed, Christ is the first to have resurrected, with a resurrected body recognised as body, and He constitutes, in this sense, our model.

Bizarrely, during history, theologians and philosophers have only focused on the identity of the *same* body of Christ (a strict identity). This thesis formulated in the creeds of faith *Quicumque* and *Fides Damasi* allows seeing that: “there is a second level of meaning discernible in this teaching. This is that “same” is to be understood not only in terms of *type*, but also of *token*” (Yates 2017, 128). But it’s something strange to face.

Now, it seems impossible to have forgotten a central fact, and more precisely, a biblical datum: the location of Christ’s body in heaven. Why have scholars neglected this point? What is more, in a Christian doctrine where the body *plays* a central role, why have we not paid attention to Christ’s body in heaven? I think that here we have a biblical fact which we need to revisit.

This forgetfulness is grounded, I think, in a materialistic view widespread in the first centuries, according to which: we *strictly* need the same body to resurrect because it needs to be the body Christ had when he walked on Earth. However, I propose there is no way for us to have strictly the same body after death, nor during this life. Peter van Inwagen’s thought experiment on a materialist account of the resurrection shows us that we need something that I voluntarily call, a miraculous miracle (cf. Inwagen 1998).

Therefore, believers and scholars have mainly focused on the *identity* of the same body, because they could not envisage, or did not want to think about the possibility of an embodied intermediate state. Now, when they do not reject this state, they have adopted a dualism because of the impossibility to think of this strict identity, nay a kind of hylomorphism. What is more, when one is not trying to focus only on the identity of the same body (e.g. Church Fathers), one is trying to reject the intermediate state.¹⁰ However, faced with the dilemma to choose between an embodied resurrection or a disembodied paradise, as Turner Jr., for example, proposes in many of his works,¹¹ I aim to solve this problem by adopting an embodied paradise. In other words: it is not necessary either to reject the intermediate state or to embrace a disembodied existence. This seems to be the exit to a dilemma.

So, if I can formulate my argument, I might say:

¹⁰ See for this question: Pérez (2019).

¹¹ See for example, Turner Jr (2014).

Christ's Body Argument

If Christ's body exists in an extensionless place, an embodied existence after death is possible.¹²

Christ's body exists in an extensionless place.

Therefore, an embodied existence after death is possible.

I am not saying that a physical body can exist in an extensionless place. Instead, I think that we need to affirm "a physical (or material) body *transfigured*". If Christ had not possessed a human body, he could not survive. However, the human body becomes a transfigured (or resurrected) body. But I am only speculating here, about how it is metaphysically possible to resurrect. I shall introduce this question in the next section.

Let me only *imagine* for a moment, that during the three days of Christ's death, he never leaves his body. I shall develop this point now.

Pay attention to the following fact. Traditionally, one affirms that Christ, the second person of the Trinity, has descended into hell without his body (this belief is only enunciated on 359 in the *Creed of Sirmium*). Here again, the debate has been focused on whether Jesus has visited hell, and one insists on his disembodied existence. So, one agrees with leaving Christ's body but not his divine nature. *But*, if Christ has descended without his body, only one part of his whole nature descended.¹³ So, Christ is detached from his flesh, from his incarnation, and that is a difficult point. What is tricky is that this seems to be a kind of Docetism and or Monophysitism. Indeed, one could say that:

Docetism and Monophysitism Argument

Christ has only one nature, and He has descended into hell.

Christ has descended into hell only with his Divine nature because his body stays in the tomb.

Therefore, Christ has only one nature, that is the Divine nature.

¹² According to Lowe, an embodied existence necessarily involves extension. This is, in fact, one important feature of his NCSD. However, as I have tried to show *supra*, Christian theologians and philosophers must accept Biblical data defending that Christ's body (that is transfigured but *still* a body) is in an extensionless place. It seems to be difficult to deny this fact. There is, nevertheless, a serious problem remaining. In this paper, I try to defend the idea according to which Biblical data and NCSD are in perfect harmony. Now, an extended body (transfigured) could be *in* an extensionless place? That seems like nonsense. But the issue is most complicated than that. When I talk about a body *transfigured*, I am not referring to a *soul* or a *machine* transfigured. So, first, it is really a body. But what about "transfigured"? I would like to note that any Christian accepting a corporeal resurrection must face the same problem. I leave this question open, pointing out the necessity to revisit this topic and confessing that we must understand what "transfigured" means.

¹³ I suppose here that something fundamental to the Incarnation and to be human is to have a body.

One falls on Docetism and or Monophysitism. I am not defending we have consciously adopted a kind of Docetism or Monophysitism, instead, I am pointing out that this seems like a Docetism or Mophysitism.

In passing, I note that in Orthodoxy, the divinity of the resurrected Christ is not always separated from his body. John Damascene says, for example:

Wherefore, although He died as man and His Holy Spirit was severed from his immaculate body, yet His divinity remained inseparable from both, I mean, from His soul and His body, and so even thus His one hypostasis was not divided in two hypostases. (*The Orthodox Faith*, III, 27)

Damascene is defending here that the Divine nature is what will assure that there is only one hypostasis. This is the tradition solution followed also by Thomas Aquinas (cf. ST IIIa, q. 50, a. 2) and contemporary philosophers and theologians. But we could imagine that only Christ's soul has descended into hell, therefore without his body and divinity nature. Paradoxically, tradition has not supported the idea that the soul is what assures the existence of the body and divine nature. This should help us understand the difficulties with a disembodied existence for Christ as well as for human beings. Now, following the same strategy (but not the same solution) of Damascene, I suggest that Christ has never left neither his Divine nature nor His body. This claim raises some difficult questions but none of them are impossible to overcome.

According to a reviewer, my argument implies a materialist conception of the human being. He points out also that this is not the traditional way to think of Christ's descent into hell. I disagree with the first point and I agree with the second one. I shall explain in the following lines why.

Timothy Pawl has recently studied this objection (the same problem which I have raised) against Conciliar Christology. He formulated this objection as follows:

1. The Word permanently assumed whatever he assumed in the incarnation.
2. The Word assumed CHN [concrete human nature] in the incarnation.
3. During the Interim State, CHN did not exist.
4. All real relations, to be instantiated, require the existence of their relata.
5. Assumption is a real relation.
6. Assumption requires the existence of its relata to be instantiated. (From 4, 5.)
7. During the Interim State, CHN was not assumed. (From 2, 3, 6.)
8. It is false that the Word permanently assumed CHN in the incarnation. (From 2, 7.)
9. The Word permanently assumed CHN in the incarnation. (From 1, 2.)
10. Contradiction! (From 8, 9.) (2019, 96)

One could note that without the premises (3) and (7), there is no contradiction. The contradiction lies in accepting a disembodied existence.¹⁴

So, I am not following a materialist point of view to think of the intermediate state. That is because I am trying to imagine a non–Cartesian substance dualism to think of the eschaton. But I am defending that (2) the Word assumed concrete human nature in the Incarnation and (1) that the Word permanently assumed His concrete human nature. That implies to assume His corporeal existence, a corporeal existence that can be sustained only by His body. So, I am not a materialist; just I do not accept the disembodied existence of Chris’s soul (and a disembodied existence *tout court*).

Therefore, I suggest that *The Christ’s Body Argument* argues in favour of an embodied existence after death. In other words, I defend an embodied existence in the intermediate state, because it is logically possible (and it is also metaphysically possible, as we shall see in a moment).

So, if our own resurrection is grounded in the death, resurrection, and *post* resurrection of Christ, I suggest that it follows that an embodied existence after death is generally a coherent idea. Let me give you some other theological motivations to imagine in this way.

It is totally bizarre that the tradition that refers to a disembodied descent into hell is the same that frequently viewed the body as the important part of the human being. In this view, if something needed to be purified it was certainly the body, not the soul. This allows us to understand the incoherence accepted through the idea of a disembodied existence. I surely do not see the body as the source of evil, I rather think that if human beings need to wait either to be purified or to be resurrected, they also need their bodies, without which they are not human beings.¹⁵

2. The non–Cartesian substance dualism

Before introducing the Non–Cartesian substance dualism (NCSD), let me say some words about Lowe’s ontology. Many of us are familiar with Lowe’s four–category ontology and the ontological square, so I shall just offer a very short summary.

According to Lowe, ontological categories are fundamental (or basic). So, beyond the fundamental categories, there is a complete metaphysical picture of the world containing further categories interrelated between them. These categories are four: kinds, attributes, objects and modes. One can note that

¹⁴ I cannot develop here the solution adopted by Pawl, but readers could see: (2019, 96–115.)

¹⁵ As a reviewer points out: “so, the body is necessary to be human.” I shall add, if the body is necessary to be human, I defend we are human beings during the intermediate state, and therefore, we have bodies.

attributes characterize kinds and modes characterize objects. Within this last ontological category which one calls “objects”, there are two ontological sub-categories, and these are: physical substances and psychological substances.

I think that Lowe’s NCSD is justified or grounded in its ontological and metaphysical coherence. That is why I tend to defend this position by appealing to the inference to the best explanation, as Lowe himself did it. Thus, NCSD may be true or close to the truth, because this seems to reply better to the different metaphysical and philosophical problems.

That said, I shall introduce the main argument in favour of NCSD, advocated by Lowe. Lowe calls it: “the unity argument”. The argument is the following:

- (I) I am the subject of all and only my own mental states, [...]
- (II) Neither my body as a whole nor any part of it could be the subject of all and only my own mental states.
- (III) I am not identical with my body nor with any part of it. (Lowe 2008, 96)

According to Lowe (I) is a self-evident truth and (III) follows from the first two premises. So, the question is: can one defend (II)?

The response lies in the next point. Following Lowe, “no entity can qualify as the *subject* of certain mental states if those mental states could exist in the absence of that entity” (2008, 96). Indeed, one can imagine that I experience pain in my arm that I lost some years ago. Like many people, I can suffer from pain in this arm, even if I do not have it. This idea, according to Lowe, argues in favour of a non-physical subject of mental states.¹⁶ What is more, if my pain is not attributed to any part of me (or any part of my brain either), we cannot attribute it to my body as a whole. That is why Lowe defends that: “my body does *as a whole* not need to exist in order for me to have *every one* of the mental states that I do in fact have” (2008, 96). Hence, if the premise (II) is true, one must conclude that I am not identical with my body nor with any part of it. Hence, I *am* a psychological substance, the one who feels the pain.

Even if this has been the argument defended by Lowe, I am not sure about why one could not attribute mental states to the body as a whole. We do not see how we go from “any part of the body” to “the body as a whole”. Maybe the reasoning is the following: If any part of my body cannot be the subject of my mental states, therefore, my body as a whole cannot be the subject of my mental states either.

¹⁶ Post-amputation syndrome is not fully known, and the etiology remains unknown. This physical and mental chronic pain perhaps comes from the difficulty in the primary somatosensory cortex to reorganise the body map. In this sense, a phantom limb pain (a mental state) is not *in* a physical subject (like a part of the brain).

For this reason, we propose to reformulate this argument as follows, as a similar argument in favour of NCSD. Let us call it *the Belonging Argument*:

- (i) For each mental state, there is a subject.

Certain philosophers would be opposed to (i), because talking about a subject *having* mental states could appear like an internalist and bizarre way of speaking. Thus, philosophers like Kenny, following the Wittgenstein tradition, brought our attention to this point. This was what Anthony Kenny called “the homunculus fallacy” (Kenny 1987).

According to Kenny, we must avoid “predicates belonging to human beings being attached to non-human beings” (Kenny 1987, 163). Indeed, that could lead to possible fallacies. However, Kenny is focusing on the possible fallacies where we can attribute human being’s predicates to parts of human beings (like the brain). In this sense, dualism, and more precisely NCSD, avoids this objection. There is no homunculus *because* there is a substance playing the homunculus’s role (i.e. the psychological substance). Indeed, as Wittgenstein notes: “only of a living human being and what resembles (behaves like) a living human being can one say: it has sensations; it sees; is blind; hears; is deaf; is conscious or unconscious” (Wittgenstein 2009, I, § 281).

From an ontological point of view, NCSD has some benefits. NCSD avoids this fallacy because it considers that there is a “substance” which is bearer of mental properties. Thus, there is no internal spectator. But NCSD dualism also avoids this fallacy, when it defends that properties *are* modes of being. When I believe, I think and so on, we are talking about different modes of being of my psychological substance. A mental state or mental act is just a mode of being of me (the psychological substance). Thus, the premise (i) is one which many of us are ready to accept.

A second premise lies in defending that:

- (ii) A mental state cannot belong to different subjects.

Indeed, many people can share the *same kind* of mental state, for example, “Roma is a beautiful city”, but the *same* mental state cannot belong to many subjects. (ii) follows from (i).

We are ready to accept (iii), because it follows from (i) and (ii) that:

- (iii) No entity can qualify as the *subject* of a mental state if this mental state could exist in the absence of that entity.

And, we add:

- (iv) My body does not ever remain the same.

A great tradition of philosophers accepts (iv) as true, and we think that common sense would also constrain us to take this premise as true.

It follows:

- (v) Then, something else, not my body, is the subject of the mental states.

And one must conclude that:

- (vi) I am not identical with my body nor any part of it.

However, even though I am not *identical* with my physical substance, that is, my body, I coincide with it. And I coincide and I am extended in virtue of my constitution relation. According to this relation:

“*x* constitutes *y* at time *t* just in case *x* and *y* coincide spatially at *t* and every component part of *x* at *t* is also a component part of *y* at *t*, but not every component part of *y* at *t* is also a component part of *x* at *t*” (2009, 89).¹⁷

So, this NCS D adopts the following position:

Body ontological dependency: There is an ontological dependency between the physical substance (the body) and the psychological substance (the agent), but this dependency does not lie in the necessity of the *same* body which constitutes it.

So, disembodied existence is impossible,¹⁸ but a body is the body of a psychological substance in virtue of having *a* body, and not the *same* body. In other words, we need *any* body.

¹⁷ As a reviewer notes, it could not be clear if the constitution relation is defended by Lowe to think of embodiment relation. Indeed, Lowe affirms that it would not be “correct to say that a person is ‘constituted’ by his or her body in anything like the sense in which a tree is ‘constituted’ by an assemblage of physical particles.” (Lowe 1996, 35) However, he points out that: “one way to think of the self–body relation—the relation of *embodiment*—according to the NCS D is by analogy with the relation between a bronze statue and the lump of bronze composing it at any given time.” (2006, 9) The example of the lump of bronze is a classic example used by Lowe to talk of constitution relation.

¹⁸ On comparing Descartes’s version of dualism with NCS D, Lowe notes: “What can be said in favour of NCS D, and why should it be preferred to Descartes’s version of substance dualism?”

Consequently, this metaphysical theory of mind possesses two metaphysical commitments which allow differentiating from other kinds of dualism: *the extension of the self*, and the *impossibility of a disembodied existence*.

Let us imagine how it works. When someone dies, he does not cease to exist by virtue of a Divine miracle. In this sense, I do not consider the psychological substance as immortal; in fact, I do not see any argument in favour of this statement. Furthermore, an immortal conception of the soul is an idea going against the role of Christ's resurrection. Otherwise, why do we need a God incarnated and resurrected if we possess an afterlife guaranteed? What exactly does Christ's resurrection do to the human's afterlife?

So, let us call, this someone, Chloe. When Chloe dies, her psychological substance continues to exist because, at time t_1 , when she dies, God gives her a new body before the final resurrection. Chloe does not cease to exist *because* her psychological substance has not ceased to exist, *in virtue* of her new body. Otherwise, it does not cease to exist because it has been given a new body.

One could object that a *specific* body after death is just incoherent. Nonetheless, I think that it is impossible to reject this possibility. *Christ's body argument* is, in this sense, central for my purpose. That is why I insist on paying attention to *the question of corporeal bodies in heaven*. These appear as new facts from the Biblical/theological terrain allowing reconsideration of afterlife before the final resurrection.

3. Objections

Why could it not work? Because it is not necessarily a traditional way to think of resurrection. But is it?

Accepting an embodied existence after death and before resurrection explains better *what we are*, that is a psychological substance entertaining a constitution relation with a body. These identity conditions are necessary to talk about the human being, and they allow explaining in a more harmonious way how a post-mortem existence, or at least a dynamic rather than static post-mortem existence, could be. But, undoubtedly, the most crucial point is that it gives a central place to the body. When one believes in the resurrection of the body, it really makes sense.

A second objection lies in rejecting this unbiblical thesis. If I am aware that this position is not necessarily grounded in a biblical text, I assume also that it is not totally in contradiction with Holy Scriptures. Indeed, I agree with John Cooper

As for the second question, it may be urged that NCSA is a less extreme and intuitively more plausible doctrine—less extreme because it is not committed to the possibility of disembodied existence.” (2006, 9) Even if Lowe does not affirm the impossibility of disembodied existence, texts like this seem to favour this reading.

in saying that biblical anthropology is dualistic holism and more holistic than dualistic, and in no way, monistic or completely dualistic. Undoubtedly, theology is inspired by the Bible more than grounded. In this sense, as I said, I think that theology lies in imagining better our faith, so, I am not really in contradiction with what I think theology *is* or *must* be.¹⁹

Conclusion

My main aim in this paper has lied in imagining, through NCSD, how we could resurrect, and to propose an alternative model of the classic conception of eschatology. If many objections have been addressed since the beginning of the *century of eschatology* (cf. Schwöbel 2000), and more precisely objections against Dualism and an intermediate state, I have proposed here that we possess some reasons to think that a more corporeal conception of the eschaton is desirable. But it is not only desirable, but it is also metaphysically possible and compatible with biblical data.

What I have called the *Christ Body Argument* invites us to reject, on the one hand, a disembodied existence in heaven, and on the other side to adopt a corporeal existence of Christ in heaven (and this during His descent into hell but also – but that is not contested – after His resurrection). Christian theologians and philosophers must recognize that Christ could not have been separated from his body, in the same sense that He could not have been separated from His divine nature, for fear of falling on the Docetism and or Monophysitism. If this argument is right, scholars must pay attention to the possibility of an embodied existence in heaven (*post-mortem* and *ante-resurrectionem*).

A kind of Dualism, and more precisely, one possessing NCSD's virtues could play a role considerable in order to explore this new theological option. I expect to have shown that NCSD is not only a metaphysical option allowing us to better understand what we are, but if we hope and believe in the resurrection of the dead, NCSD provides one model to think how that is possible.

¹⁹ Earlier versions of this chapter were presented and discussed at Helsinki Analytic Theology Workshop 2020, and at Human Nature, Soul and Body, Perspective Convergence organized by the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross and Jacques Maritain Center at the University of Notre Dame. I am grateful to the attendees on those occasions, especially James Crocker, Oliver D. Crisp, Joanna Leidenhag, and David Worsley. I owe a special debt of thanks to Eric Larock, Mihretu Guta and two reviewers of *TheoLogica* for extensive comments about this paper. I would also like to thank Eric Olson, for helpful comments and feedback on this paper, and Regis Burnet, Roger Pouivet, Petre Maican, Pedro Valinho Gomes and Costas Catelas for helpful discussions of the topic. I also thank the last three and Jorge Pérez for their linguistic help.

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