Contradictory Christ without Contradictory Christology

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Abstract: In this chapter, I grant Jc Beall's assertion that the best understanding of the doctrine of the incarnation posits that Christ is a contradictory being, in the sense that it has him satisfying complementary pairs of predicates. I also argue, however, that by attending to a distinction between predicate negation and sentence negation, this view can be upheld without positing any classical logical contradictions. I argue that the resulting Christological view has several advantages over Beall's: It is more conservative about avoiding contradiction, exhibits greater logical neutrality, and comports better with Christian tradition.

Introduction

According to the Christian doctrine of the incarnation, Christ has a human nature by virtue of which he is fully human, and a divine nature by virtue of which he is fully divine. A key issue for this doctrine is that it appears to entail contradictions. More exactly, there are seemingly complementary pairs of predicates, one of which (it seems) must be apt of Christ if he is truly human, and the other of which (it also seems) must be apt of him if he is truly divine.

Given classical theism, for instance, any being who is truly God is immutable, and so if Christ is fully divine, the predicate 'immutable' must be apt of him. But obviously if Christ is truly human (in anything resembling the manner we are), Christ must be capable of change, and so the predicate 'mutable' must also be apt of him. Thus the doctrine of the incarnation appears to entail both that Christ is mutable and that Christ is not mutable, and thereby appears to entail a contradiction.

Jc Beall (2021) proposes that instead of attempting to understand the doctrine of the incarnation in a way that alleviates such apparent contradictions, Christians should embrace them. Christ, argues Beall, is "a contradictory being." Beall does not recommend that Christians embrace this view at the cost of giving up on logic however. Rather, he has already made a career arguing that the correct logic is first-degree entailment logic (FDE), which is subclassical, and allows for the possibility of true contradictions.

In this chapter, I grant (for the sake of argument) that the best understanding of the doctrine of the incarnation posits that Christ is a contradictory being, in the sense that it has him satisfying complementary pairs of predicates. However, I also argue that embracing the doctrine so understood does not require giving up classical logic.

We should be careful to distinguish (I argue) between predicate negation (a negation operation that applies to predicates) and sentence negation (a negation operation that applies to whole sentences). Once we do (I contend) we also find that we need not embrace the validity of any inference rule that allows us to move from one to the other. The upshot is a logic of predicate negation that allows for objects to satisfy complementary pairs of predicates without doing so in a manner that generates classical contradictions.

I apply this logic to develop a Christological view according to which Christ satisfies complementary pairs of predicates without violating the classical law of non-contradiction. I also argue that the resulting Christological view has several advantages over Beall's: It is more conservative about avoiding contradiction (which is a good-making feature of a theory even by Beall's own lights). It exhibits greater logical neutrality than Beall's view. And it comports better with Christian tradition.

Before I continue, I want to make a couple of additional remarks about the dialectical setup. First, while I am granting for the sake of argument that the best option for Christians is to take the position that Christ is a contradictory being, I do not actually agree with that assumption. Nevertheless, for ease of exposition, I will write as though I do, and also as though I embrace the Christological position I am advocating as an alternative to Beall's view.

Second, I will sometimes write (again for ease of exposition) as though Beall is committed to "Conciliar Christology," by which I will mean the set of claims about Christ embraced by the first seven ecumenical councils (which are authoritative for Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and many Protestants). I will not, however, be using this term in quite the same way that Tim Pawl (2016) uses it (where on Pawl's more narrow usage, it refers not merely to the contents of the Christological claims, but also to methodological and metaphysical commitments going beyond them). Beall in actuality explicitly distances himself from Conciliar Christology in Pawl's more narrow sense, and regards his own view as more general than (though compatible with) Conciliar Christology in the sense I have given it.

1. Some Non-Christological Motivation: The Logic of Multilocation

In this section I propose that multilocation scenarios provide independent motivation for the logic of predicate negation central to my Christological proposal. I warn my readers in advance, however, that since this is not a chapter about issues pertaining to the possibility of multilocation, and because this section is intended primarily as a softening-up exercise, my discussion of those issues will be all too brief. It is worth pointing out for this reason that one could reject what I have to say about multilocation while still embracing my Christological proposal.

Metaphysicians find themselves with at least some reason to countenance the possibility of multiply located objects. Some philosophers argue that we have good reason to believe in Aristotelian universals that are wholly spatially present in the objects which exemplify them. Others countenance the possibility of time-travel scenarios involving enduring objects in which an object goes back in time and occupies space alongside itself. In such scenarios one and the same object becomes wholly present simultaneously in distinct non-overlapping regions of space.

On first appearance, descriptions of multilocation scenarios seem coherent. Even if time travel turns out to be metaphysically impossible, for instance, there seems to be nothing *incoherent* about many carefully crafted science fiction narratives in which someone travels back in time and meets their past self. Nor does it seem, on first telling, that such stories require (on pain of incoherence) a view of the metaphysics of persistence according to which individuals fail to be identical across times. But as philosophers are well aware, a superficial appearance of coherence can sometimes be deceiving.

When I was five, I was not over five feet tall. But now I am. So, if I persist through time by way of being numerically identical to individuals who exist at past and previous times, and if I did manage to go back in time and stand next to myself at five years old (without shrinking in height), I would have brought it about that, at the same time, I am over five feet tall and I am not over five feet tall. In doing so, it seems, I would have brought it about both that I am over five feet tall and that it is not the case that I am five feet tall. But if I managed to do that, I would have brought about a contradiction.

Or (if time-travel cases are not to your liking) consider an Aristotelian view according to which universals are wholly spatially present in the regions in which they are exemplified. One

may or may not buy such a theory of universals, but on the surface, it does not appear to be incoherent. But now consider a case in which a fire hydrant exemplifies redness on the west side of the street and a stop sign exemplifies redness on the east side. Over on the east side, the redness universal is octagonal. Over on the west side, it is not octagonal. So in this scenario, redness is octagonal and redness is not octagonal. It seems to follow both that redness is octagonal and also that it is not the case that redness is octagonal. And this is just a straightforward contradiction.[1]

Some attempt to dissolve such paradoxes by relativizing predicate satisfaction to spatial locations. I.e. instead of saying that my child self in the time-travel scenario is not-over-five-feet-tall *simpliciter*, we might say instead that he is under-five-feet-tall at (or relative to) location L_0. Similarly, instead of saying that my adult self in that scenario is over-five-feet-tall *simpliciter,* we can say that he is over-five-feet-tall at (or relative to) location L_1. But such solutions are not without problems. For one thing, properties such as height appear to be intrinsic, whereas the present solution seems to make them implicitly relational.[2] Furthermore, as Douglas Erhing (2002: 21-23) argues, such relativizing solutions do not easily handle certain cases in which objects are collocated in more than one place.[3] So I propose (all too hastily) to set such relativizing solutions aside.

Where does this leave us? In both the above cases the derivation of a contradiction depended on the application of an inference rule that I will refer to as "Negation Extraction." The rule may be represented schematically as follows:

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[1] Erhing (2002) argues along similar lines that multiply located Aristotlean universes would instantiate contradictory spatial relations.

[2] See (Lewis 1986: 202-205) for a classical presentation of such complaints levied against solutions to the problem of temporary intrinsics that involve relativizing property having to times.

[3] Although see (Gilmore 2003) for a response and (Keskinen et al. 2015) for a counterresponse.

(Negation Extraction) t is not F. Therefore, it is not the case that t is F (where *t* is a

singular term and *F* is a predicate).

In order to move from negation extraction to the logical impossibility of the described scenarios,

we also need the classical law of non-contradiction, which we may put schematically as:

(Classical LNC) It is logically impossible that both p and not p (where *p* is a truth-

evaluable sentence).

The combination of these two principles allows us to move, for instance, from the claim that I

am not over five feet tall to the claim that it is not the case that I am over five feet tall. And

conjoining the latter claim with the proposition that I am over five feet tall results in a violation

of Classical LNC.

Here we face two options. We can either hold on to Negation Extraction and Classical

LNC and so reject the logical possibility of the scenarios described above, or we can regard such

scenarios as logically coherent and thereby counterexamples to the conjunction of Negation

Extraction and Classical LNC. Since it seems that these scenarios are genuinely conceivable, I

propose we take the latter route.[4] I am not here relying on any claim to the effect that genuine

conceivability entails *metaphysical* possibility. I deny that. But it is much more plausible that

genuine conceivability entails (or at least provides strong *prima facie* justification for believing

in) *logical* possibility.

But rejecting the conjunction of Negation Extraction and Classical LNC leaves us with

two additional (non-exclusive) options: we can reject Negation Extraction or we can reject

Classical LNC. There are two reasons why I propose we do the former. First, the former

suggestion provides the most conservative option for those of us drawn toward classical logic.

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[4] Here I remind the reader that I am writing *in persona*.

Second (as Beall himself would agree) even if we do deny Classical LNC and accept the logical possibility of true contradictions, we should be conservative about positing them. So exhibiting how we can understand multilocation scenarios like those described above in ways that do not violate Classical LNC remains a win even if we do not in fact endorse the principle.

2. Some Details Concerning a Logic of Predicate Negation

But how does the logic of predicate negation behind this treatment work exactly? Standard first-order predicate logic is not up even to the task of representing the negation extraction rule. That is because standard predicate logic contains only one type of negation, namely, sentence negation. The standard way of translating *t is not F* into predicate logic is as *~Ft*. And of course it is trivial that if ~Ft then ~Ft. In order even to represent the rule of negation extraction, then, we need to introduce a different kind of negation, one that applies to predicates rather than to whole sentences.

I propose that we represent this sort of negation by drawing a line above the predicate being so negated. That is, I propose that we represent *t is not F* as $\overline{F}t$. This allows us to represent Negation Extraction as follows: $\overline{F}t \vdash \sim Ft$. Since the sort of negation occurring on the left side of the turnstile is predicate negation, and the sort occurring on the right is sentence negation, the inference rule (so represented) is at least not obviously trivial.

The view at present does require positing a genuine logical distinction between predicate negation and sentence negation. Fortunately, there are independent reasons for doing so. Many natural languages contain negation devices (e.g. prefixes such as 'un') that operate directly on

predicates, often converting them into their complements.[5] Such phenomena have inspired

logical treatments of predicate negation as distinct from sentence negation.[6]

Considerations pertaining to the logic of predication surrounding (so-called) "empty"

terms and phrases also help motivate the distinction.[7] Suppose for instance that individuals cease

to exist at death. Then plausibly the sentence 'It is not the case that Socrates is wise' is true,

whereas 'Socrates is not wise' is false. The former sentence merely denies that 'wise' is aptly

predicated of Socrates (a safe assumption if in fact there is no longer any such individual)

whereas the latter appears to predicate the complement of 'wise' of Socrates (a dubious

proposition if in fact there is no longer any such person). Suppose instead the truth of a

Meinongian view according to which so-called "empty" phrases do in fact manage to refer, albeit

to non-existent objects. Then as both Alexius Meinong himself and contemporary Meinongians

have noted, distinguishing between predicate negation and sentence negation (and denying

Negation Extraction!) allows us to have a non-contradictory theory of impossible objects. E.g. it

allows us to say that the round square cupula on Berkeley college is indeed both round and not

round, while denying that it both is and is not the case that the round square cupula on Berkeley

college is round.[8]

But just how is predicate negation (in contrast to sentence negation) to be understood? I

propose that predicate negation be understood as a predicate forming operator. In order to

understand how the operator works, we need the notion of the extension of a predicate, as well as

the notion of the anti-extension of the predicate. To characterize these notions, we can use two

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[5] Although it should be acknowledged that these devices often fail to behave in ways that are semantically uniform. E.g. 'unperturbed' appears simply to mean 'not perturbed' whereas 'unhappy' appears to mean more than 'not happy', but also being in an oppositional state.

[6] See for instance (Wieckowski 2021).

[7] Indeed, as (Horn and Wansing 2020) notes, positing a distinction between sentence negation and predicate negation on such grounds goes all the way back to Aristotle.

[8] See (Jorgensen 2004) for a discussion.

other more fundamental ones, the notion of a predicate being *true of* a given thing, and the notion

of a predicate being *false of* a given thing. The extension of a predicate just is the set of things

the predicate is true of. The anti-extension of a predicate just is the set of things it is false of.

The predicate negation operator takes a predicate with a certain extension and transforms it into a

predicate with the original's anti-extension.

These characterizations allow us to spell out the following truth conditions for both

atomic sentences and sentences that result from applying the predicate negation operator to them

(where F is a predicate and t is a singular term):

(T1) Ft is true iff F is true of t.

(T2) $\bar{F}t$ is true iff F is false of t.

Finally, we may characterize sentence negation for atomic sentences as follows:

(T3) ~Ft is true iff it is not the case that Ft is true

These three truth conditions (together with suitable counterparts for relational predicates) supply

base cases from which recursive definitions of truth and falsity for more complex sentences may

be given in the standard manner.

These truth conditions permit what we might call "predicate gaps" (cases in which F is

neither true of t nor false of t) as well as "predicate gluts" (cases where F is true of t and F is also

false of t). However, they do not permit sentence gaps or sentence gluts. In any situation in

which F is not true of t (whether because F is only false of t or because F is neither true nor false

of t), ~Ft will be true. And in any situation in which F is true of t, ~Ft will be false, without also

being true, even if F is also false of t. So ~Ft does not follow from $\bar{F}t$. That is Negation

Extraction turns out to be invalid.

Compare and contrast the above with the truth conditions for first-degree entailment logic offered by Beall (2021: 18-21). As above, Beall appeals to two different fundamental relations, *true of* and *false of*, and Beall uses these two relations to characterize both the extension and anti-extension of a predicate in the same manner as above. However, Beall also has it that an atomic *sentence* is true just when the object referred to by the singular term is in the extension of the predicate and false just when that object is in the anti-extension. That is, according to Beall, *Ft* is true iff *F* is true of t, and *~Ft* is true just when *F* is false of *t*. From the current vantage point, Beall's truth conditions simply conflate predicate negation with sentence negation.

Even so, one might protest, Beall's treatment of negation is at least uniform, whereas the present view treats predicate negation and sentence negation in objectionably non-uniform ways. Why does the present account have predicate negation characterized in terms of the presence of falsity but sentence negation merely in terms of the absence of truth? Why does predicate negation admit of gaps and gluts but not sentence negation? There are three responses that may be given to such concerns.

First, I note that nothing in the Christological view I will develop in the remainder of the chapter depends on treating T3 as a part of *logic*. Beall himself maintains that various theories come with their own theory-specific consequence relation. The theory-specific consequence relation potentially restricts the possibilities countenanced by the theory to some proper subset of the logical ones. It may be that even though logic does not vindicate T3, the only possibilities countenanced by the true Christological theory's consequence relation are those that vindicate T3.

Second, while I originally characterized predicate negation in terms of a primitive falsehood relation, I could have done things the other way around. That is, I could have included

as fundamental a *true of* relation combined with a fundamental operation of predicate negation and then defined 'false of' in terms of those. I could have done so by taking the predicate negation operator to define a new predicate whose meaning corresponds to the set of objects in the complement of the extension of the original predicate. E.g. if *F* is a predicate whose extension is the set of all and only octagonal things, $\overline{F}$ could have been defined as the predicate whose extension is the set of all and only those things that are not octagonal. (Be careful though! Keep in mind that on the present view it is logically possible for something to be a member of the set of things that are octagonal and also be a member of the set of things that are not octagonal.)

Third, there is at least some motivation for treating truth for sentences differently from the *true of* relation for predicates. The *true of* relation has to do with how objects are positively characterized. The class of sentential truths by contrast merely lists the various ways in which objects are so characterized (or fail to be so characterized). So the *true of* relation is plausibly more fundamental and explanatory than sentential truth. Indeed, part of what motivates a distinction between predicate negation and sentence negation to begin with is the intuitive thought that there is a fundamental difference between an object's being positively characterized by the complement of a predicate (the circumstance which makes for true predicate negation) and the mere failure of a predicate to characterize an object (the circumstance that makes for true sentence negation).

It goes without saying that the subatomic predicate logic offered in this section is extremely fragmentary. Once we distinguish predicate negation from sentence negation, it is natural to do the same with other logical vocabulary. It becomes natural, for instance, to distinguish sentence conjunction (as in 'Redness is octagonal and Redness is not octagonal')

from predicate conjunction (as in 'Redness is both octagonal and not octagonal'). We might represent the former as $Ft\&\bar{F}t$ and the latter as $[F\&\bar{F}]t$. Then we may ask such questions as whether Ft&F̄t ⊢ [F&F̄]t. Parallel questions also arise for disjunction. I will not address these questions, except to say that, however the logic of predicate negation is to be developed, any subclassical behavior is to remain confined to the predicate level, so as to ensure that the propositional logic in play remains classical.

3. A Christological Proposal

The application of the above to the apparent contradictory claims of Conciliar Christology is straightforward. The current proposal follows Beall's in simply accepting that Christ does indeed satisfy complementary pairs of predicates, such as 'mutable' and 'not mutable'. Unlike Beall's however, it denies that this acceptance commits us to any classical contradiction. For from the claim that Christ is mutable and Christ is not mutable, one may not derive the claim that Christ is mutable and it is also not the case that Christ is mutable.

Thus we have a Christological theory that attributes each of a pair of complementary predicates to Christ while failing itself to include any contradictory pairs of sentences. If we like, we may say that according to this proposal, Christ is indeed a contradictory *being* (he does satisfy complementary predicates), but even so, there are no true contradictions. I will continue to follow Beall in referring to his own view as "Contradictory Christology." The current view also needs a name. Since it focuses on Christ's satisfaction of complementary predicates, I will refer to it as "Complementary Christology."

4. Advantages of Complementary Christology

Complementary Christology, I maintain, not only incorporates all the advantages of Contradictory Christology, but also has many of its own. I detail a few of these below.

4.1 Conservativeness About Contradiction

In order to avoid the objection that we may posit contradictions willy-nilly whenever convenient

to avoid refutations of our theories, Beall (2021) maintains that we should take a conservative

attitude toward positing contradictions. According to him we should posit contradictions only

when dealing with "strange cases of extraordinary phenomena" (7). But according to Beall,

Christ does afford such a case (9). As noted in the introduction, I am willing to grant that Christ

does indeed satisfy complementary pairs of predicates. However, it is a mistake according to

Complementary Christology to take this to license inference to a contradiction. Complementary

Christology thereby accommodates, in the same straightforward manner as Contradictory

Christology, the data to which Beall points, but without positing any genuinely true

contradictions.

4.2 Logical Neutrality

Beall maintains it is an advantage of his own view that it is metaphysically neutral in ways many

of its rivals are not (39-40). However, Beall's view it is not *logically* neutral. It requires the

adoption of non-classical logic. Beall responds to this objection by claiming that no theory is

logically neutral, as the logical consequence relation is the one common to all true theories (103-

104). Nevertheless, a theory can be more or less logically neutral to the extent that adopting it

does not require one to take certain controversial stances regarding the correct logic. I submit

that Complementary Christology is more neutral than Contradictory Christology in just this

sense. One may adopt Complementary Christology, for instance, without taking any stand about

whether propositional logic is classical.

One might think that the logic of Complementary Christology is incompatible with

Beall's presentation of first-degree entailment logic, given that on Beall's account, a predicate *F*

being false of a given object t suffices for the truth of ~*Ft*, whereas the logic behind

Complementary Christology denies this. But I submit that once we distinguish between

predicate negation and sentence negation, we see that Beall's truth conditions involve the

substantive logical commitment that predicate negation in basic sentences suffices for sentence

negation. First-degree entailment logic itself need not endorse such a hefty commitment. Beall

motivates his own preference for FDE, furthermore, partially on the grounds that it involves

fewer substantive commitments than does classical logic (35). So once predicate negation and

sentence negation have been clearly distinguished, Beall has motivation from within his own

perspective to select more neutral truth conditions.

4.3 Avoiding Heresy

Beall is committed to claims such as the following:

> (CH) It is not the case that the Second Person of the Trinity is eternally omnipotent.

But CH is heretical by the lights of Conciliar Christology. Thus Beall's view appears to be

committed to (Conciliar) heresy.

Beall himself considers an objection along these lines and responds to it by distinguishing

two senses in which a theory may be heretical:

> (H1) Presence of negation: The theory contains the negation of a commitment of
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> orthodoxy.

> (H2) Absence of affirmation: The theory fails to contain the affirmation of an orthodox
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> claim.[9]

Beall claims that a Christological theory is heretical in a theologically important sense only if it

is heretical in an H2 sense. This characterization of what theologically significant heresy

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[9] I have slightly modified Beall's wording of these senses for ease of presentation.

amounts to strikes me as less than adequate. Suppose, for instance, that the Christological theory in question fails to contain the affirmation of an orthodox claim only because it is incomplete (and not because its proponents aim to deny that claim).

In any event, Complementary Christology can easily avoid heresy in both the H1 and H2 senses. It is true according to Complementary Christology that the Second Person (being human) is not eternally omnipotent. This claim may *sound* heretical, but it is of a piece with assertions made within the Conciliar documents themselves. Consider for instance the following quote from the Second Council of Nicaea

> One and the same Christ as both invisible and visible lord, incomprehensible and comprehensible, unlimited and limited, incapable and capable of suffering, inexpressible and expressible in writing.[10]

But what Beall's view requires is not merely the affirmation that Christ is not eternally omnipotent, but also the denial that Christ is eternally omnipotent. Complementary Christology, by contrast, requires no such thing.

4.4 Further Comportment with Christian Tradition

Complementary Christology also comports better with the type of reasoning employed within the history of the Christian thought. As Pawl (2019:445-446) points out,

> The traditional Christology once handed down, which so many theologians were and are at pains to defend, was itself arrived at through careful reasoning and argumentation. That reasoning and argumentation involved inference rules such as Modus Tollens and Disjunctive Syllogism, as is clear in a reading of Athanasius's works against the Arians, Leo's *Tome*, and many other seminal works. If all that reasoning was theologically

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[10] This quote is highlighted in Pawl (2016:153). It is taken from (Tanner 1990, 162).

invalid, and we now see that, that will take much of the impetus away from those who intend to defend it, whether through accepting contradictions or not.

It is important to note that Pawl's claim here is not about what the correct account of *logical consequence* is. Pawl is here willing to concede for the sake of argument that FDE is correct. Rather, the claim at hand is about the theory-specific theological consequence relation pertinent to Christology. That relation, argues Pawl, does not permit true theological contradictions.

Beall (2021: 109) himself finds it doubtful that Christians committed to the authority of the ecumenical councils are thereby committed to endorsing every form of reasoning they contain. And this strikes me as correct. It is certainly respectable to believe that the Holy Spirit guided those who shaped the doctrines of the church to the correct conclusions in spite of bad reasoning. God can and does work through flawed vessels. But it is a bit odd to think that the councils have authority concerning *what* we should think about the nature of Christ, but not *how* we should think about it. And such a view will be less persuasive to those Protestants and others who maintain that the councils have their authority only to the extent that they represent an accurate drawing out of the teachings of Scripture and the consequences thereof.

Fortunately, Complementary Christology, in upholding the inference rules licensed by classical logic, does not require casting any such aspersion on the forms of reasoning utilized by the authors of the councils. And in not requiring this, it obtains yet another advantage over Beall's Contradictory Christology.

5. An Objection from Comparison with Tim Pawl's View

Pawl's (2016) defense of Conciliar Christology affords (from the perspective of those who take standard logic as their benchmark) a more logically conservative view than Complementary Christology. Whereas Complementary Christology has it that Christ is a genuinely contradictory

being in the sense that he satisfies genuinely complementary pairs of predicates, Pawl's view denies this.

Pawl's view is, rather, an instance of what Beall refers to as "an explicit meaning-changing account." According to his view, for instance, the predicates 'mutable' and 'immutable', as used in the conciliar documents are not genuinely contradictory, but rather have the following satisfaction conditions:

s is mutable iff s has a concrete nature that is able to change.

s is immutable iff s has a concrete nature such that it is not the case that that nature is able to change.

It is clear that these predicates are not logical complements. If something were to have two concrete natures (as Christ does according to Pawl's reading of the Conciliar documents), it could satisfy both predicates without in any way violating standard logic.

Beall objects to Pawl's account on several grounds (including that it is not sufficiently motivated and is lacking in metaphysical neutrality). And since I have already granted for the sake of argument that Beall is correct that the best Christological theory has Christ satisfying complementary predicates, I will not rehearse these complaints. Rather, I want to consider a different objection that Pawl has made (in correspondence) concerning my own view.

He objects that it does not really differ substantially from his, because like his, it fails to take the relevant pairs of predicates as genuinely complementary. According to my view, for instance, Christ is both in the extension of 'mutable' and in the extension of 'not mutable'. But if so, argues Pawl, the extensions of these predicates overlap, and predicates with overlapping extensions are (by definition!) not complementary. I have two things to say in response to this objection.

First, if the objection lands, it is as forceful an objection to Beall's view as it is to mine. It is in fact an independent objection to the very notion of a contradictory being. If Beall is right, then Christ is also both in the extension of 'mutable' and in the extension of 'not mutable', in which case if Pawl is right the extensions of these predicates overlap, making them non-complementary. But, once again, the dialectical assumption currently in play is that Christ is to be understood as a contradictory being. And so we may conclude (given that assumption) that Pawl's objection is (somehow!) misguided.

Second, setting such dialectical games aside, a proponent of Complementary Christology may consistently embrace the view that two predicates are complementary if and only if whatever is in the extension of one is not in the extension of the other, and that the relevant pairs of predicates are indeed genuinely complementary in just that sense. I (in the role of such a proponent) can consistently embrace, for example, the claim that an object is in the extension of 'not mutable' if and only if it is not in the extension of 'mutable'. Suppose I were to do so. Then, since I also embrace the view that Christ is in the extension of 'not mutable', this would commit me to the claim that Christ is not in the extension of 'mutable'. However, this would not further commit me to the claim that it is not the case that Christ is in the extension of 'mutable'. In order to move from the former claim to the latter, one must apply negation extraction, which (according to the present view) is invalid. This allows me (if I wish) the possibility of consistently (though paradoxically) embracing the claim that Christ is in the extension of 'mutable' and that Christ is also not in the extension of 'mutable'. Obviously, to treat matters in this way is to go in for some sort of non-standard logic (and no one is saying otherwise), but it preserves the standard notion of what it is for two predicates to be complementary.

6. An Objection Concerning Motivation

First-degree entailment logic is motivated in part by its ability to deal with issues such as the liar paradox. It allows us to say, for instance, that 'This sentence is not true' is indeed true as well as not true. Or, alternatively, it allows us to say that 'This sentence is not true' is neither true nor untrue. Since the propositional component of the logic adopted by Complementary Christology remains classical (and thereby forbids both sentence gluts and sentence gaps), it does not permit either solution. Because of this, one might worry that the logic behind Complementary Christology lacks the kind of independent motivation had by the logic behind Contradictory Christology.

Here it bears repeating, however, that while Complementary Christology does not require violations of classical logic, it is also not committed to classical logic. Furthermore, the logic of predicate negation deployed remains compatible with FDE while allowing finer distinctions than the standard sort of predicate logic incorporated into Beall's treatment thereof. Accordingly, it can accommodate an FDE treatment of the liar paradox.

It also allows, however, for novel solutions to other paradoxes to which FDE has been applied. Consider, for just example, the following solution to Russell's paradox:
The set of all non-self membered sets does indeed have itself as a member. It also does not have itself as a member. However, it is not both the case and not the case that it has itself as a member. Here we have the tantalizing possibility of a classically consistent set theory that includes the naïve comprehension axiom. At the very least, the logic of predicate negation endorsed by the proponent of Complementary Christology allows for the exploration of proposals such as this, whereas a more standard logic of negation (classical or otherwise) does not.

Conclusion

Up to this point I have been engaging in the dialectical pretense that I agree with Beall that the best Christological model has Christ satisfying complementary pairs of predicates. In actuality, I am not convinced. Even so, I have suggested that there is a way of embracing this claim that does not involve endorsing any classical contradictions. One may believe in a contradictory Christ without embracing a contradictory Christology.[11]

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