

THE UPPER AND LOWER WILL

The Dyothelite Pattern: The Two Wills, Their Paths, and the Governance of the Soul

Christopher E. Etter

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Abstract

This treatise is the volitional companion to the account of the two natures. If the Tree encodes the dyophysite pattern — the upper and lower Son, the two natures — then it must also encode the dyothelite pattern, the two wills affirmed at the Third Council of Constantinople: a divine will and a human will, corresponding to the two natures, with the human will freely conforming to the divine. The treatise locates both wills as paths converging on the frontal executives, Chesed and Geburah, where the will is governed, and shows that the two wills are sourced from opposite directions and opposite registers. The human will rises from below: from Yesod, the affective and habitual foundation, along the hidden neurological paths — the frontal cortices to the brainstem by way of the thalamus and the medial forebrain bundle — the subcortical motivational machinery of the embodied soul. The divine will descends from above: from Chokmah and Binah onto the executives, contralaterally, as the influx of supra-cortical Wisdom and Understanding upon the conscious will, referencing not a subcortical tract but a divine source above the cortex. The two wills meet at the executives, and the human will's sources meet first at Yesod, on the central pillar, before rising. The dyothelite drama — the human will conforming to the divine, as in Christ, or competing with it, as in the fallen state — is shown to be the Christological archetype of the Corpus's account of the governance of the will: grace as the re-sourcing of the will from the subcortical-below to the supra-cortical-above, and sanctification as the conformity of the lower will to the upper.

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I. From Two Natures to Two Wills

The companion treatise established the dyophysite pattern on the Tree: the Son present as the upper Son, Chokmah, the divine nature, and the lower Son, Tiphareth, the human nature, the two natures meeting by perpendicular intersection as the Council of Chalcedon defined. But the Christological tradition did not stop at two natures. At the Third Council of Constantinople, in the year 681, the Church affirmed against monothelitism that Christ possesses two wills, a divine will and a human will, corresponding to his two natures, the human will freely and perfectly conforming to the divine — the doctrine of dyothelitism. The reasoning was that a nature without a will is incomplete; a true human nature must have a true human will, and a true divine nature its divine will, so that two natures entail two wills. If the Tree encodes the two natures, it must therefore also encode the two wills.

It does, but the will is not located where the natures are. The natures are positions — Sephiroth, the upper and lower Son. The will is a matter of governance and act, and in the Corpus the will is governed at the frontal executives, Chesed and Geburah, where the influences that move the will converge. The two wills are therefore not two further positions but two systems of paths, two directions of influence converging on the executives: one rising from below, one descending from above. The lower, human will rises; the upper, divine will descends; and they meet where the will is governed. This is the dyothelite pattern as the Tree encodes it: not two points but two converging sources, the volitional counterpart of the two natures, the nature in act.

Two natures entail two wills: this was the reasoning of Constantinople III against monothelitism. The natures are positions — the upper and lower Son. The wills are paths converging on the frontal executives, Chesed and Geburah, where the will is governed: one rising from below, the human will; one descending from above, the divine will. The will is the nature in act.

II. The Lower Will: The Hidden Paths from Below

The lower will is the human will, and it rises from below along what the Corpus calls, in their neurological aspect, the hidden paths. Its source is Yesod, the foundation — the affective and habitual substrate, the seat of the subconscious drive on the will established in the treatise on the governance of the will. Its anatomical route is subcortical: from the frontal executive cortices down to the brainstem by way of the thalamus and the medial forebrain bundle, the great motivational pathway of the deep brain, dopaminergic in its seeking-system aspect though it carries the noradrenergic and serotonergic strands alongside. These are the hidden paths in the strict neurological sense — hidden because they run beneath the cortical surface, the subcortical machinery under the visible Tree, the circuitry by which the body's motivational and affective drives ascend to move the will.

The two ascending branches of the lower will — toward Geburah and toward Chesed, the two executives — do not cross. They meet first at Yesod, on the central pillar, the single foundation from which both rise; Yesod gathers the subcortical drive at the centre and sends it up to both

executives. This is the human will in its embodied, motivational character: sourced from the foundation, rising through the hidden subcortical paths, driving the executives from below. It is a true will, proper to the human nature, as Constantinople III insisted; it is not in itself evil. But it is the will sourced from below, and when it governs alone — when the executives are moved only by the ascending drive of Yesod and the medial forebrain bundle — the will operates mechanistically, driven by the subcortical foundation rather than governed from above. This is the volitional condition the treatise on the governance of the will named as the mechanistic mode: the will moved by its lower source.

The lower will is the human will: from Yesod, the foundation, along the hidden neurological paths — frontal cortices to brainstem via the thalamus and the medial forebrain bundle, the subcortical motivational machinery. Its two branches do not cross; they meet at Yesod, on the central pillar, and rise to both executives. A true will, proper to the human nature — but when it governs alone, the will is mechanistic, moved from below.

III. The Upper Will: The Supra-cortical Descent from Above

The upper will is the divine will, and it descends from above, from Chokmah and Binah onto the executives. Here the anatomy is of a different kind, and the difference is the whole point. The descending paths run Binah to Chesed and Chokmah to Geburah — contralaterally, crossing, as the governance of voluntary and conscious action crosses in the body. But these paths are not a subcortical tract like the ascending hidden paths. They have no bottom-up neurological cable, because the divine will is not sourced from below. Their correlate is supra-cortical: the influx of Wisdom (Chokmah) and Understanding (Binah) upon the conscious will from above the cortex — not a pathway rising from the brainstem but an influence descending onto the executives, and one that, by its very nature, references a divine source. Supra-cortical Wisdom and Understanding are not faculties the brain generates from beneath; they are the higher influences received from above, the divine influx upon the conscious will.

This asymmetry between the two wills is exact and is the structural heart of the matter. The human will has a bottom-up neurological source — the hidden subcortical paths, Yesod by way of the thalamus and the medial forebrain bundle — because it is the will of the embodied nature, arising from the body's own motivational machinery. The divine will has no such bottom-up tract; its correlate is the supra-cortical descent of Wisdom and Understanding, because it is not generated by the body at all but received from above, referencing a divine source. The two wills are sourced from opposite directions and opposite registers: the human from below, subcortically, embodied; the divine from above, supra-cortically, received. They are not two ends of one continuum — here again the perpendicular principle holds — but two substantially distinct sources of volitional influence, meeting at the executives where the will is governed.

The divine will descends contralaterally — Binah to Chesed, Chokmah to Geburah — but has no subcortical tract, for it is not sourced from below. Its correlate is supra-cortical Wisdom and Understanding, the influx upon the conscious will from above the cortex, referencing a divine source. The asymmetry is the point: the human will rises from beneath, embodied; the divine will

descends from above, received.

IV. The Meeting at the Executives: The Dyothelite Drama

The two wills meet at the frontal executives, Chesed and Geburah, where the Corpus locates the governance of the will. This meeting is the dyothelite drama, and it has two outcomes, which are the Christological and the fallen cases. In Christ, the human will conforms freely and perfectly to the divine: the will rising from the human nature is brought into willing accord with the will descending from the divine, so that the two wills, though distinct, are in harmony — not the human will overridden or annihilated, which would be monothelitism, but the human will freely conforming, as in Gethsemane: not my will, but thine, be done. This is the dyothelite ideal, the two wills in conformity, the lower freely consenting to the upper.

In the fallen human, the two wills are at variance. The lower will, rising from Yesod and the subcortical hidden paths, governs the executives alone or against the descending influence, so that the will is moved mechanistically from below and the supra-cortical influx of Wisdom and Understanding is not received, or is received and resisted. The will is then sourced from beneath rather than governed from above — the condition the treatise on the governance of the will described, and the volitional form of evil as that treatise defined it: not a positive force but the will clinging to its lower source, contracted onto the foundation, closed to the descent from above.

The two wills meet at the executives. In Christ the human will freely conforms to the divine — not overridden but consenting, as in Gethsemane. In the fallen human the lower will governs alone, moved mechanistically from below, the supra-cortical descent unreceived or resisted. The dyothelite ideal is the lower will's free conformity to the upper.

V. The Dyothelite Pattern as the Archetype of the Governance of the Will

This shows the dyothelite Christology to be the archetype of the Corpus's whole account of the governance of the will. That account held that the will is governed at the frontal executives, sourced bottom-up from Yesod and the somatic foundation and top-down from the divine, and that grace is the re-sourcing of the will from below to above — the change of its governing direction, not the overriding of its freedom — while sanctification is the holding of the will in that higher governance. The dyothelite pattern names the perfected case of exactly this. Christ's human will, freely conforming to his divine will, is the perfect instance of a human will re-sourced from above and held there — not by the annihilation of the human will but by its free and complete conformity. What grace works in the believer, the hypostatic union realises perfectly in Christ: the lower will, rising from the embodied foundation, brought into willing accord with the upper will descending as supra-cortical Wisdom and Understanding from the divine source.

So the two wills wind about the two natures as act winds about being. The natures are the upper and lower Son, the perpendicular pairs, the structure of what the Son is. The wills are the paths of influence by which that structure is moved into act — the human will rising from Yesod through

the hidden subcortical paths, the divine will descending from Chokmah and Binah as supra-cortical influx, meeting at the executives. Dyophysitism gives the two natures; dyothelitism gives the two wills; and the Tree encodes both, the natures as positions and the wills as the converging paths of their governance. Sanctification, in this light, is the human will's Gethsemane — the lower will, rising from below, freely consenting to the upper will descending from above — the dyothelite harmony worked in the soul, the will of the embodied nature conformed to the will received from the divine source. This treatise describes the two wills as they stand whole, in Christ — the human will in perfect free conformity to the divine. The same dyothelite structure as it stands in the fallen human, where neither will is in perfect union with the divine and the image is shattered into the qliphothic husks, and the work of its repair through catharturgy, are taken up in the companion treatise 'The Shattered Image.'

References and Related Papers

The Third Council of Constantinople (680–681), affirming dyothelitism: two natural wills in Christ, divine and human, the human will freely conforming to the divine, against monothelitism.

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