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IS BODILY RESURRECTION COMPATIBLE WITH MATERIALISM?

by

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Presentation of the Question

It is widely known that at least three of the major world religions—Christianity, Islam, and (more controversially) Judaism—embrace the theory of bodily resurrection, or an event in which a person or people are brought back to embodied life after death. But is this theory compatible with materialism, or the philosophical doctrine that nothing exists except matter and its movements and modifications? In other words, if my “self” is purely physical (e.g. identical with or constituted by my body), could my unique and particular “self” come to exist again on Earth after my death? The answer to this question is hotly debated; it is this debate, situated at the crossroads of philosophy and Christian theology, on which my thesis will focus.

An Introduction to Materialism and its Problems

Before we dive into theories of how bodily resurrection might be compatible with materialism, we must first understand what materialism and bodily resurrection entail. We will begin by examining materialism, which is the philosophical theory that nothing exists except matter and its movements and modifications, that selves contain only fundamentally physical parts. This theory exists in opposition to idealism, which claims that only ideas/perceptions and nonphysical minds exist (and that therefore I am identical with my fundamentally non-material mind), and dualism, one version of which claims that I am identical to my non-material mind, though I also “have” a physical body. So another way to phrase my thesis topic is: if my “self” is identical with or constituted by my body and not by anything fundamentally non-physical, could my unique and particular “self” come to exist and live again after my death?

Materialism is favored by the majority of modern philosophers, yet poses a perhaps insurmountable problem for the doctrine of bodily resurrection. For some of the most central issues that must be addressed in this or any survival theory are the questions of what constitutes

personal identity, and how this personal identity can persist through drastic change (in this case, through the temporal gap constituted by death and the change from pre-mortem to post-resurrection existence).

This problem is unique to materialists; for both idealists and dualists, bodily resurrection does not pose much of an issue, because in these theories, the self is either entirely or largely a fundamentally non-physical mind or soul and can therefore exist independently of the body—so when a person is resurrected, all that is needed is for the mind or soul to be re-united with the body; the self that persists through the death of the body has remained in existence, and has retained its personal identity; there is no problematic gap of temporal nonexistence during the body's death. But with materialism, the self *is* purely physical (i.e., is identical with or constituted by the body), and bodies *do* go out of existence when they decompose, are cremated, are eaten, etc. In order to show that bodily resurrection is compatible with materialism, the materialist/resurrection theorist must therefore address this key issue of how personal identity is to survive the temporal gap of death. This will be explored by several authors investigated in this thesis paper.

The Question, Complicated

Furthermore, it seems that the embodied self that is resurrected must be numerically identical with the embodied self that previously died. In other words, the pre-mortem and post-resurrection bodies cannot be merely qualitatively identical—that is, they cannot merely look identical, be composed identically, and yet be distinct. They must also be numerically identical—that is, the body that died must be the same exact body that was resurrected. For if the bodies were not numerically identical, then several problems would arise. For example, a self that could be equated with two qualitatively identical but numerically distinct bodies is logically impossible

since it would violate Leibniz's Law. Also known as the Identity of Indiscernibles, this law of logic states that no two distinct things exactly resemble each other—so if two bodies are qualitatively identical, they must be numerically identical. It becomes illogical, then, that bodily resurrection could entail a self living on via the creation of a new body that is qualitatively identical to, but numerically distinct from, the body that died. If the doctrine of bodily resurrection is to hold, it seems that we must discover a way in which the same body that dies is the one that is resurrected. This paradoxical puzzle of how to align identity with process is a major problem for materialist views of bodily resurrection, and is one of the main issues on which this thesis paper will focus.

Reconstitution Views and their Problems

One way in which philosophers have dealt with this problem is to take a reconstitution view of bodily resurrection. There are at least two different versions of this view. The older version, put forward by such theologians as Methodius of Olympus, is to deny any bodily change in terms of replacement of particles, even throughout life; while appearance changes, “every particle of the body subsists throughout life, never nourished or excreted or in any way invaded or altered” (Bynum, 69). In this view, a metaphor of a statue or vessel is often used; our particles are specific and unchanging, and resurrection entails God reconstructing us as such. This version of the reconstitution view has been rejected with modern science, as we now are certain that real bodily change and process, real death and new generation of bodily matter, is a key part of life.

Another version of the reconstitution view that holds more promise is also known as the Aristotelian view of resurrection and is one in which God gathers up the particles that formed the body at the moment of death and reassembles them so as to create a complete post-resurrection body composed of all the same particles in the same way as the original, pre-mortem body. But

this view is faced with such problems that must be overcome as the cannibalism problem and the problem of fission or annihilation.

The cannibalism problem asks how it is possible for our bodies to be reassembled, given that the atoms that make up our bodies eventually leave and are transformed into new kinds of matter as our bodies disintegrate or are burned, and become parts of other beings—as when a cannibal eats another human or when a man receives a new organ from an organ donor. At this point, whose atoms are whose? How can both myself and the person who took some of my atoms into her own body be resurrected into two whole people when we share the matter that has made up both of our bodies at the moment of both of our deaths? Philosophers have proposed various solutions to this problem; these approaches will be explored throughout later parts of this thesis paper.

But even if the problem of cannibalism can be solved, the problem of fission or annihilation proposed by Yuval Avnir (discussion, Oct. 10, 2016) remains. Avnir points out that matter can be destroyed, partially or totally—such as when it is converted into energy and smaller pieces of matter in fission, or completely annihilated and turned to pure energy when matter meets antimatter. The problem then is how even God could possibly locate this energy that used to be my body and reconvert that same energy into the same matter my pre-mortem body was made of at the time of my death. For this is what is needed for this version of the reconstitution view of bodily resurrection. This poses a major challenge for the view of bodily resurrection itself, given our assumption of materialism.

Temporal Gaps and Personal Identity

So, then, besides the issue of how bodies could be perfectly reconstituted in order to regain numerical identity, given challenges such as the cannibalism problem and the problem of

fission or annihilation, there is the question of how a body that has gone out of and back into existence and life could possibly have retained the personal identity of the self that it constitutes. After all, reconstituting my body how it was at the moment of death cannot be enough, or else my corpse would not be a corpse; I simply would have never died. So there must be some other element to retaining personal identity over the spatiotemporal gap of death. In other words, to find the doctrine of bodily resurrection compatible with materialism, we must discover a way in which God could reconstitute bodies in such a way that the living body that has since died is numerically identical with the body that has been resurrected, given the obstacle of death.

An answer to the question of the compatibility of bodily resurrection with materialism has the capability to make or break the entire doctrine. For if materialism is true (which I will assume in my thesis, as the question is about compatibility, not truth) and incompatible with resurrection, the entire doctrine would fall. But if materialism is true and compatible with the doctrine of bodily resurrection, the doctrine will have gained substantial support.

The Christian Doctrine of Bodily Resurrection

We now ought to examine what the Christian doctrine of bodily resurrection entails. Most importantly, it entails resurrection with one's *selfsame* body they had prior to death (Davis, *Death and Afterlife*, 125). While there is debate regarding whether or not this selfsame body undergoes change between death and resurrection—for example, there is debate between physicalists and spiritualists regarding the nature of Jesus' resurrection body (Bynum, 5), which, in Christian doctrine, is the model for the future resurrection bodies of us all (1 Corinthians 15.12-19)—it is clear that throughout the Bible, there is emphasis on a *bodily* resurrection. For instance, in Luke 24.36-44, Jesus appears to the Prophets and asks, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and

see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.” Jesus then eats fish in their presence, presumably in order to prove that his resurrection body was, in fact, material.

Besides making it clear that Jesus had some kind of resurrection *body*, the New Testament focuses not on *whether* we will have resurrection bodies, but on *what* these bodies will be like. While some theologians have viewed our bodies as urns or statues which are resurrected by re-assembly (Bynum, 8), others adhere to Paul’s famed seed metaphor in 1 Corinthians 15 of a bodily resurrection that entails physical change with a spiritual (but nonetheless material) aspect:

But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?” How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body.

So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

[...] we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. [...] For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. (1 Corinthians 15.35-54)

In other words, the New Testament presents the spiritual resurrection body as physically and spatiotemporally contiguous with the pre-mortem body; it is the selfsame body, purified, glorified, and transformed by God (although in exactly what ways is debated) so as to be fit to leave earth for heaven. In the Pauline seed metaphor, the pre-mortem body is the seed, and what develops and grows from this seed is the spiritual body. So we see that there is material change, then—unlike in the strict reconstitution view of bodily resurrection explored earlier—but the resurrection body is nevertheless contiguous in all ways with the pre-mortem body.

Importantly, philosophers who argue for the compatibility of bodily resurrection with materialism emphasize this purely material nature of said “spiritual body.” Stephen T. Davis says:

The term ‘spiritual body’ might be misleading; it should not be taken as a denial of corporeality or as a last-minute capitulation to some version of the immortality of the soul as opposed to bodily resurrection. By this term Paul means not a body whose stuff or matter is spiritual (whatever that might mean) or an immaterial existence of some sort; rather he means a body that is fully obedient to and dominant by the Holy Spirit. [...] What enters the kingdom of heaven [...] is not this present weak and mortal body of flesh and blood but the new glorified body. This new body is a physical body (Paul’s use of the word *soma* implies as much), and is materially related to the old body (taking seriously Paul’s simile of the seed), but is a body transformed in such ways as make it fit to live in God’s presence. If by the term ‘physical object’ we mean an entity that has spatio-temporal location and is capable of being empirically measured, tested, or observed in some sense, then [...] the new body [...] is a physical object. (Davis, *Death and Afterlife*, 126)

Origen of Alexandria

As we have seen, the idea of bodily change when one identifies self with physical body (as is the case in materialism) is not without problems or paradox. For, again, if I am identical with my body that died, there arises the question of how I could be said to be a “new,” transformed body after resurrection, different from the original in significant ways—even if this body is contiguous with the original, pre-mortem one. Some criteria that can account for personal identity through physical change—in this case, a physical change as drastic as death and rebirth through transformation—is required. According to Bynum, the issue is “a fundamental contradiction between identity and change,” (Bynum, 62) that can be outlined as follows:

There must be something that rises; there is no *resurrection* without identity. We know we are body; therefore body must rise. But there must be process and transformation as well, because the risen body must be radically changed. Unless something can change and still be the same thing, there can be no rising to glory of the corpse that has gone down into the grave. (Bynum, 62)

The first theologian to provide a plausible solution to this paradox of how identity can survive through process was Origen of Alexandria in the third century AD (Bynum, 63). Origen was unique in that he “accounted for identity through dynamic process and built radical change into resurrection” (Bynum, 63). This dynamism in his influential account included process throughout life, transition from life to death, and a transformation from death to afterlife that maps nicely onto the Pauline seed metaphor of 1 Corinthians 15.

Origen recognized the natural process of material change in our bodies so acutely that he clearly stated that because of natural processes such as eating, excreting, etc.,

[...] the material substratum [of the body] is never the same. For this reason, river is not a bad name for the body since, strictly speaking, the initial substratum in our bodies is perhaps not the same for even two days. (Bynum, 64)

Further, Origen wondered,

Even if the bits of flesh present at the moment of death could survive, why would God arbitrarily decide to reanimate those bits as opposed to all the others that have flowed through the body between childhood and old age?” (Bynum, 65).

What must remain the same through change and therefore accounts for our personal identity, according to Origen, is not matter, but our material form or *eidōs*. According to Bynum,

This *eidōs* is a combination of Platonic form, or plan, with Stoic seminal reason (an internal principle of growth or development). A pattern that organizes the flux of matter and yet has its own inherent capacity for growth, it is (although I introduce the modern analogy with extreme hesitation) a bit like a genetic code. (Bynum, 66)

In other words, personal identity is in the form, and the form also has an inherent organizational code. So the particles don’t matter for identity; it’s the form and its inherent organization that are key to body and therefore self.

To extend Origen’s metaphor of person as river, then, the *eidōs* is the shape of the river along with the capacity for the river’s shape to change over time (although the river would still be recognizable as and formally contiguous with the same river, just as Jesus was changed yet

recognized after his resurrection, according to Luke 24). Further, this is really what we mean when we say “river,” as we are not referring to the particular water molecules flowing through the form of the river—although it is necessary that there are water particles. In the same way, matter in general is a necessary condition of body, but the particular particles of matter are inconsequential; it is the form and its own organizational code which makes my body my body—and therefore (on a strict materialist view of persons) me, me.

Because form is so important, Origen adds that accordingly, the “corporeal quality” of persons (such as scars, skin blemishes, etc.) also remains the same, even in our glorified resurrection bodies (Bynum, 64). So even though our bodies change daily in life due to process and adaptation, from life to death, and from death to afterlife, they remain recognizable; Origen will look in the afterlife largely as he did in life and in death, according to his view.

According to Origen’s account, while our form persists from life to death to afterlife, we will have a “spiritual and luminous” resurrection body of new, pure particles in heaven (Bynum, 64). This is because our earthly bodies of flux are not fit to live in the environment of heaven and so cannot rise; heaven requires bodies that are more crystalline, just as fish require gills to live underwater (Bynam quoting Origen, 65). Further, since the resurrection body will lack all of the matter it was composed of before, this solves the problem of the arbitrariness of God choosing which past particles to use to reconstitute us in the resurrection, as well as the problem of cannibalism; all particles for each resurrection body are new, and holy. Yet the body and thus person retain identity because,

The previous form does not disappear, even if its transition to the more glorious [state] occurs [...] [A]lthough the form is saved, we are going to put away nearly [every] earthly quality in the resurrection ... [for] “flesh and blood cannot inherit [the] kingdom...” (1 Corinthians 15.50). Similarly, for the saint there will indeed be [a body] preserved by him who once endued the flesh with form, but [there will] no longer [be] flesh; yet the very

thing which was once being characterized in the flesh will be characterized in the spiritual body. (Bynum quoting Origen, 65-66)

Again, the form is intact but the earthly matter is replaced with spiritual—but nevertheless physical—matter so that the body is capable of rising from earth to heaven. Thus is Origen’s solution to the problem of retaining personal identity while embracing a pre-mortem body of change and a transformation from pre-mortem to resurrection body.

Methodius of Olympus

Origen’s account was not without contenders, and Methodius of Olympus was one of Origen’s most outspoken critics. Their fundamental difference lay in the fact that while Origen wanted to find a way to incorporate flux into the body, Methodius feared and denied bodily change almost altogether. He denied that digestion really occurs, claiming instead that “nutriment replaces only body fluids not bones, sinews, or flesh,” much as water flows through a canal (Bynum, 71). Further, these fluids that undergo change via digestion are “superfluities, not substance” (Bynum, 71). So while Methodius allowed for change to inessential features of our embodiment in life, he denied transformation or replacement of particles, in life, in death, in the afterlife, and in the transitions in between.

Methodius recognized that Origen’s account sacrifices material continuity for identity through change, and was not willing to sacrifice this aspect of what Methodius believed to be a key part of the integrity of our material bodies (Bynum, 70). Methodius wanted an account not of identity through drastic change—since he denied real change—but an account of reassembly through reconstruction, not transformation. For Methodius, the ultimate question was not how to maintain identity, but was about “physicality: how will every particle of our bodies be saved?” (Bynum, 68). Thus, while Origen favored the organic symbolism of the Pauline seed metaphor, Methodius described the body as

[...] a stone temple within which the tree of sin is growing. In death, the temple falls; the tree is rooted out. Then in resurrection the exact stones are reconstructed in the exact shape that subsisted before. What grows and changes here is sinister, needing to be curtailed or destroyed; that which is salvageable is that—and only that—which persists unchanged. (Bynum, 70)

It is not clear what the tree symbolizes here, although it is plausible that the tree is the changing fluids within our bodies. Since Methodius feared change and viewed it as unclean, his account of the resurrection banished this aspect of our bodies from heaven; our selfsame particles are used to reconstitute our bodies, but the changeable fluids are left out altogether. This is an unproblematic development, since the fluids were said to be superfluous and completely inessential to our bodies.

Another key point within the metaphor of the rebuilt temple is that the stones (material particles) used to rebuild the temple (body) in the resurrection are the *exact* stones (material particles) in the original structure (body). This highlights Methodius's unwillingness to sacrifice the material continuity of body-composing particles to account for change; for Methodius, "both material continuity and complete bodily integrity are necessary for resurrection" (Bynum, 71). While Origen is satisfied with *bodily* continuity via the *eidōs* or form, Methodius demands *material* continuity for the maintenance and identity of body. This is the fundamental disagreement between the two materialist points of view championed by Origen and Methodius.

Methodius did respond directly to Origen as well, although he seems to have misinterpreted Origen's concept of *eidōs*, for his response misses the mark. Methodius viewed the *eidōs* "as external appearance or shape (that is, a waterskin into and out of which matter flows)" (Bynum, 69). Since Origen claimed the *eidōs* is static and Methodius interpreted it as external appearance, Methodius argued against Origen by pointing out that external appearance

does in fact change, and so the *eidōs* cannot be the constant; identity of body must therefore be found in the matter itself.

However, Origen did agree that external appearance changes (as when a baby grows into an adult), so Methodius's response fails. For Origen viewed the *eidōs* not as a waterskin that does not change, but as a river that has an inherent and coded capacity for formally contiguous and recognizable change. So Origen seems to have the upper hand in the debate, since his account withstands Methodius's main contention and acknowledges the scientific fact of significant material, bodily change that Methodius denied.

More Questions for Origen

This is not to say that Origen's account is without problems. As we have seen, to accept Origen's account, one must accept sacrificing "material continuity for the sake of identity" and "integrity of bodily structure for the sake of transformation" (Bynum, 68). Further, questions arise regarding Origen's claim that such "corporeal qualities" as scars and skin blemishes become part of the *eidōs* and so are maintained in our resurrection bodies (Bynum, 64). While some surface changes are allowed in the *eidōs* since the *eidōs* contains an "internal principle of growth and development" (Bynum, 66), it is unclear what is to become of unnatural alterations to the body that are externally imposed, such as amputations, reconstructive or plastic surgery, tattoos, and scars received from external forces (as when one accidentally cuts oneself when chopping carrots). For while the definition of *eidōs* allows for *internal development*, the previous examples are not internally developed, but are all due to external factors. Surely it was not programmed in my *eidōs* that I would be cut above the eye at a young age, resulting in a small scar... So then why is this scar supposedly central enough to my *eidōs* to come with me into the afterlife, as a necessary feature of my resurrection body? Origenists must either answer this

question or relinquish the claim that all corporeal qualities are central enough to be necessarily present in our glorified resurrection bodies.

A peripheral contention to be had with Origen lies in his suggestion “that we will lose all memory of the relationships of earth” (Bynum, 67). For if a person loses all memory of her life on earth, why should she care that *she* is resurrected? A key intuition is that we care about living on because we do not want to lose our memories and relationships. And it is hard to say who we would really be without our experiences, from a phenomenological perspective. With this in mind, it is difficult to think how one might be motivated to become an Origenist, despite the fact that it makes sense—in the abstract—of both materialism and scripture. For after all, Origen’s account of the resurrection takes our memory, and with it, a key reason for wanting to be resurrected in the first place. Of course, an Origenist could respond that the reward is being in the presence of God, and that this is enough. Points of view will differ on whether or not this is indeed enough, but this has little to do with the plausibility of Origen’s account of bodily resurrection. And it seems to me that Origen’s materialist account, in general, is quite plausible indeed.

Peter van Inwagen

In *The Possibility of Resurrection and Other Essays in Christian Apologetics*, Peter van Inwagen provides evidence for rejecting the Aristotelian or reassembly/reconstruction view of the resurrection, and in its stead presents his own “just-so story” of the resurrection, a story which has come to be known as the simulacrum model of resurrection. In the following pages, we will come to know van Inwagen’s stance regarding the criterion of personal identity, as well as how this criterion is violated in the reassembly view of the resurrection. We will then explore

three arguments against this theory, before being introduced to the simulacrum model of resurrection.

Van Inwagen's criterion of personal identity is that,

the atoms of which I am composed occupy at each instance the positions they do *because of the operations of certain processes within me (those processes that, taken collectively, constitute my being alive)* (van Inwagen, 47, emphasis mine).

In other words, Person X (at time A) is identical with Person Y (at time B) if and only if they are connected by a causal chain "of the operation of the natural processes that, taken collectively, were the life of that man" (van Inwagen, 47).

The problem for van Inwagen, then, regarding the Resurrection, is not that there is no criterion for personal identity, but that given the criterion of personal identity he believes does exist (that of the causal chain of life processes within the body), this criterion "would, of necessity, yield the result that many men who have died in our own lifetime and earlier will not be found among those who live *after* the Last Day" (van Inwagen, 45, emphasis in original). This is because given this criterion of personal identity, to be bodily resurrected would require that one's body be not entirely or significantly destroyed. This is because

[...] if a man does not simply die but is totally destroyed (as in the case of cremation) then *he* can never be reconstituted, for the causal chain has been irrevocably broken. If God collects the atoms that used to constitute that man and 'reassembles' them, they will occupy the positions relative to one another they occupy because of God's miracle and not because of the operation of the natural processes that, taken collectively, were the life of that man. (van Inwagen, 47, emphasis in original).

However, the fact is that many bodies throughout history have been significantly destroyed to the point where atoms which previously occupied positions because of the processes they underwent in life are either destroyed or no longer occupy these positions, due to bodily decay, cannibalism, cremation, or any other number of posthumous physical reasons. And this is problematic because Christians interpret the Bible to promise life after death to *all* good

Christians—presumably including ones that were fed to the lions or significantly bodily altered or destroyed in other ways in Ancient Rome or other times. But with van Inwagen’s criterion of personal identity—which he believes is correct—these people could not be resurrected. So we find ourselves at odds with Christian doctrine.

But why doesn’t the Aristotelian story solve the problem of Christian bodily resurrection?

In van Inwagen’s words, the Aristotelian story is as follows:

God collects the atoms that once composed a certain man and restores them to the positions they occupied relative to one another when that man was alive; thereby [...] God restores the man himself. (van Inwagen, 47)

This story is insufficient given van Inwagen’s criterion of personal identity, since in the Aristotelian story, the atoms of the post-mortem body are put into place by God, not by the natural processes of life.

Van Inwagen clarifies this point by analogy to a manuscript. In his analogy, Saint Augustine’s manuscript is burned and then recreated by God. The monks, analogously taking after the Aristotelian story of resurrection, may say that this document recreated by God is the same manuscript as the one that Saint Augustine originally created. But van Inwagen objects that it’s *not* the same, since the copy was not a part of the fabric of the world when Augustine lived. And, more importantly, the ink in the recreated document was *put there by God*, and not by Augustine. In this story, the manuscript is analogous to a human body, and the ink is analogous to the atoms in the body. So, we see more clearly that because this Aristotelian theory of resurrection violates van Inwagen’s criterion of personal identity, the former is defective within the framework of van Inwagen’s metaphysics.

Van Inwagen then provides three further arguments against the Aristotelian account of the resurrection that don’t depend on the above analogy. The first two of these are *ad hominem*

arguments directed against Christians who take the Aristotelian view of the Resurrection, and the third shows that the Aristotelian theory has an impossible consequence.

The first of these arguments begins by pointing to the Christian doctrine that says that wicked men cannot hope to escape God's wrath, even in death. Van Inwagen then points to the scientific fact that atoms can, in fact, be destroyed. So, it seems to van Inwagen, wicked men *could* evade the wrath of God by ensuring that all his "building blocks" were destroyed in such a way. So, concludes this first argument, either "the nature of the ultimate constituents of matter is different from what it appears to be," or "the 'Aristotelian' theory is inimical to a central point of Christian theology" (van Inwagen, 48).

Van Inwagen's second argument also has implications for this Christian theological point that wicked men cannot escape the wrath of God. For the cannibalism problem poses a serious threat to this doctrine. The cannibalism problem is, in short, that "we may be composed of atoms that have been parts of other people at some time in the past" (van Inwagen, 48). If the Aristotelian theory of resurrection is true, the argument continues, this could lead to some confusion regarding *who* exactly is resurrected when the trumpet sounds. For example, if a member of the Donner Party—lets call him Sam—ate another member of the Donner Party to survive—let's call him Alex—thereby incorporating Alex's body into his own, and then died of the elements himself, when the trumpet sounds, will both Alex and Sam be resurrected? Or will only Alex be resurrected, Sam having more or less "become" Alex in an important way by eating him? Van Inwagen seems to take the latter view, declaring that "a wicked man who had read his Aquinas might hope to escape punishment in the age to come by becoming a life-long cannibal" (van Inwagen, 48). "But again," continues van Inwagen, "the possibility of such a hope cannot be admitted by any Christian" (van Inwagen, 48). So, either we must solve the

cannibalism problem differently than van Inwagen has, or we must admit that the Aristotelian theory of the Resurrection is at odds with a central tenet of Christian theology.

Finally, the third argument relies on the principle that two things existing in space at one time, whether identical or not, are *not* one and the same thing. Van Inwagen points out that it is possible that no atoms he had when he was ten years old are in his body now. But on Aristotelian theory, God could recreate him from his ten-year-old self's atoms, while van Inwagen still lives. In this example, van Inwagen states, both could truly say that they are van Inwagen. But because this is conceptually impossible, we see that the Aristotelian theory of Resurrection must be flawed.

Since for van Inwagen, only an Aristotelian theory of resurrection seems plausible, but is conceptually impossible, “[...] it is absolutely impossible, even as an accomplishment of God, that a man who has been burned to ashes or been eaten by worms should ever live again” (van Inwagen, 48). This means that for the doctrines of bodily resurrection and of all good Christians being sent to Heaven and of no wicked man being able to escape the wrath of God to be true, it must be the case that no bodies have actually been destroyed, against all appearances to the contrary.

Thus is the basis for van Inwagen's simulacrum theory of resurrection. The theory can be summarized as follows:

Perhaps at the moment of each man's death, God removes his corpse and replaces it with a simulacrum, which is what is burned or rots. Or perhaps God is not quite so wholesale as this: Perhaps he removes for “safe-keeping” only the “core person”—the brain and central nervous system—or even some special part of it. These are details. (van Inwagen, 49)

Van Inwagen is careful to state that this simulacrum theory of resurrection is a “just-so story”—that is, one that serves to establish a possibility, but probably is not true. But, adds van Inwagen,

[...] even if the story is not true, even if it gets the ‘mechanism’ of Resurrection wrong, it nevertheless *is* true—in a way. That is, I am inclined to think that even if the story is wrong about the specifics of the Resurrection, the Resurrection-in-the-story [...] nevertheless shares some important but very abstract feature of the real thing. My inclination is to believe that God will somehow—in the way I have imagined or in some way I lack the conceptual resources to imagine, “in this way or some other”—; preserve a remnant of each person [...], which will be sown in corruption and raised in incorruption. (van Inwagen, 51, emphasis in original)

Questions for van Inwagen

First, it is unclear exactly *why* van Inwagen holds the theory of the criterion of personal identity that he does; he never addresses this point, even indirectly. And this is an important omission, since van Inwagen’s entire objection to the Aristotelian theory of reconstitution revolves around it not meeting this criterion of personal identity [as a reminder, his criterion is that “the atoms of which I am composed occupy at each instance the positions they do *because of the operations of certain processes within me [...]*” (van Inwagen, 47)]. Van Inwagen indicates no reason why other criterion of personal identity could not be appropriate and work with the Aristotelian theory; it seems that he deliberately chose a criterion that is, at first glance, at odds with the reconstitution model—a strategic but ultimately fallacious move. To be convincing on this key point, van Inwagen must explain why other theories of criterion of personal identity are inappropriate or ineffectual.

Such other criterions of personal identity might include strict materialism (I am identical with my body in its entirety; no more, no less), less strict materialism (I am the “core person”—the physical brain and central nervous system), or even memory (presumably memories would have to be stored in specific physical ways for this to work, so it is still a materialist view. A version of this view states that a person who has memories of Person X’s life from Person X’s point of view is identical with Person X). Each of these seem to be viable options—at least as

viable as van Inwagen's own criterion. So why not any of these? Van Inwagen must address this serious omission.

Next, van Inwagen alleges that because of the seriousness of the cannibalism problem, the Aristotelian view of resurrection must be faulty. But there are ways to solve the cannibalism problem! That is, there are ways in which Sam could eat Alex and yet both of them could be resurrected, ensuring that the evildoer does not escape God's wrath and that the good Christian will live again, as promised.

For instance, Dean Zimmerman derives from his closest continuer clause—a clause which works within van Inwagen's metaphysics—the no closest predecessor clause:

[...] if, at present, there exists a certain person who has existed in the past, there must have been a closest predecessor of that person; the presence of two equally good prior candidates for being the same later person can make a difference as to whether a new person has come into existence, rather than a formerly existing person having merely continued to exist. (Zimmerman, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Death*, 138)

This means, I think, that the time of death of both organisms matters; if both organisms died and fused at the same time, then the new body would be a new organism (and so this body reconstituted would be a new organism as well)—this seems highly unlikely, if not impossible; if one died and the fusion took place before the other died, then the new (fused) body is identical with the last body to die. So in the case of the cannibalism problem, the cannibal (Sam) kills and eats the victim (Alex), and then dies. This new, “fused” body—that is, the body that contains both Sam and Alex—is really Sam's (since he died last). So even in death, Sam and Alex are distinct, and so will be resurrected separately.

One might add, too, that the case is not just one of Sam being resurrected with Alex becoming a part of him. Instead, Alex himself is also resurrected because God can temporally

sort out the bodies/Lives, and does so. In fact, Stephen Davis agrees, claiming that God's omnipotence can sort out who is who (Davis, *Death and Afterlife*, 133).

Not only can the cannibalism problem be solved, but apparently so too can the duplication problem that van Inwagen claims eliminates the possibility of the validity of the Aristotelian model of resurrection. So, how can we distinguish between the real van Inwagen and the duplicate/mere copy? Is the ten-year-old body van Inwagen, or is he the older man?

For Stephen Davis, his further criteria of personal identity—the will of God—allows us to distinguish between the real van Inwagen and the copy (Davis, *Risen Indeed: Making Sense of the Resurrection*, 120). They don't both have an equal claim to being van Inwagen because there's the added criterion of God's will to determine identity, and God will only will that one of them is truly van Inwagen. Davis believes, as, intuitively, do I and no doubt many others, that the true van Inwagen is the adult. For Davis, this is because the adult has God's will to be van Inwagen; the child is just reconstructed matter, a mere copy. This is also due to the fact that the adult van Inwagen has the right kind of material continuity and causal relationship with van Inwagen (Davis, *Risen Indeed*, 117). In other words,

The adult philosopher has a regular and predictable causal relationship with all previous temporal parts of van Inwagen while the child is [...] the result of a trick performed by God. Surely resurrection has always meant the continuation of the life of the person at the psychological stage that that person had reached at death. (Davis, *After We Die: Theology, Philosophy, and the Question of Life after Death*, 55-56)

We see also with Davis that, despite van Inwagen's claim to the contrary, going through the mind of God does *not* take away imminent causation! This is because there is no self-maintenance of objects or people; all things pass through the mind of God anyway. Taken in this way, the mind of God can be thought of as the glue of the world. True, Davis agrees with Zimmerman that the persistence of an object is *partially* determined by “the way it was during

the interval leading up to that moment” (Davis, *After We Die*, 70)—but the other necessary part of this is God’s will. So this means that God’s reconstructing the bodies of dead persons—the Aristotelian model of resurrection—*is* a possibility. This renders van Inwagen’s model superfluous.

We see, too, that the simulacrum model itself has issues. The main issue, as we’ll see with Zimmerman shortly, is that it makes God seem devious and untrustworthy—an idea seriously against Christian doctrine. Further, it is unclear why we should prefer this to the Aristotelian model, since we’re able to avoid the problems with it that van Inwagen brings up. In fact, it is unclear why we should prefer this to Origen’s theory, or to other theories out there; van Inwagen’s criteria for personal identity is undefended and dubious, and his theory seems superfluous given the seeming lack of need for a new theory of resurrection.

Dean Zimmerman

In his paper, “The Compatibility of Materialism and Survival: The ‘Falling Elevator’ Model,” Dean Zimmerman critiques van Inwagen’s simulacrum model of resurrection and proposes his own “just-so” story instead—one that is compatible with Van Inwagen’s metaphysics. As we will see, Zimmerman believes that his falling elevator model avoids the problems and contradictions that Van Inwagen’s model falls into. In the end, Zimmerman claims, he provides a story that meets the following two requirements: 1) my dead body is really my dead body (not a simulacrum), and 2) the resurrected body is really identical with the one I had in life (i.e., causally continuous with it).

Zimmerman begins his paper by summarizing van Inwagen’s paper in which he proposes the simulacrum model of resurrection. As this is a paper which we have already explored in depth, I will only point out a few key points here. Both van Inwagen and Zimmerman agree that

a criterion of identity for persisting material objects must require direct, immanent causation (Zimmerman, 195). Zimmerman also agrees that for a materialist account of resurrection compatible with van Inwagen's metaphysics, we need some way to save the body from the destruction of death.

So what's wrong with van Inwagen's simulacrum model of resurrection? For

Zimmerman, to start, this account is simply not satisfying:

[...] it is in some sense possible that God takes our brains when we die and replaces them with stuff that looks for all the world like dead brains, just as it is possible that God created the world 6000 years ago and put dinosaur bones in the ground to test our faith in a slavishly literal reading of Genesis. But neither is particularly satisfying as a picture of how God actually does business. (Zimmerman, 196)

In other words, it seems uncharacteristically malignant of God to deceive us, so while it is a possibility that this is the case, it seems unlikely that God would act in such a way. Further, as we will explore in detail a little later on, Zimmerman asserts that a materialist account like van Inwagen's cannot escape a closest continuer account and must reject the only x and y principle. According to Zimmerman, "This is important, since the falling elevator model requires that human persistence conditions include a 'temporally closest continuer' clause" (Zimmerman, 196).

Importantly, Zimmerman asserts that his own model, which we shall get to near the end of this section, is compatible with van Inwagen's metaphysics. But what is his metaphysics? One key point is that all that exists are living things and the simples from which they are made.

Another is that:

A set of objects are caught up in a Life when they are organized in such a way that they work toward insuring the continued existence of successor sets of simples organized in roughly the way they are—they possess [...] a knack for self-maintenance. (Zimmerman, 197)

And another key point is that self-maintenance requires immanent causation:

If matter is organized in one of the ways characteristic of living things, it tends to *directly* bring it about that there be matter organized in roughly the same way. A process that only *indirectly* insures that a certain sort of structure be maintained will not count as a single Life. (Zimmerman, 197, emphasis in original)

Zimmerman points out that this aspect of van Inwagen's metaphysics is what makes the possibility of survival so problematic for him; once a body dies and therefore no longer perpetuates itself, its demise follows, especially once the living structure has been completely lost (e.g. by cremation).

We now turn to Zimmerman's point that van Inwagen's account leads to important contradictions—that is, it leads van Inwagen to claim adherence to the only x and y principle but when applied to new examples, Zimmerman shows that this cannot be so (and Zimmerman thinks we ought to reject this principle and instead hold a closest continuer theory of personal identity instead, which is necessary for his own falling elevator model).

The only x and y principle is, in short,

the thesis that facts about events outside the spatiotemporal path swept out by an object could not have made any difference to the question of whether or not a single object passed along that path (Zimmerman, 198).

In other words, personal identity cannot depend on anything external to me; the only thing that can determine if a thing is me is myself (x) and the future thing (y). This is in contrast to the closest continuer theory, which states that at time $t+1$, I at time t am identical to whatever thing most closely resembles me at time t . So the closest continuer theory entails "[...] that whether a given process is a single Life will sometimes depend upon events that are not part of that process" (Zimmerman, 199). One who accepts the only x and y principle must necessarily reject the closest continuer theory; the two are strictly incompatible theories. So by claiming adherence

to the only x and y principle, van Inwagen is essentially saying that no external factors can dictate whether any person y is identical with any person x .

However, Zimmerman will show that in problems of fission, van Inwagen must give up the only x and y principle, and in some cases will be forced to adopt a closest continuer theory of personal identity.

Zimmerman invites us to explore the following case of fission: my brain is split into two, and each hemisphere is transplanted into a new body. Both seem to have an equal claim to be me, “but they cannot both be me; one thing cannot become two, on pain of contradiction” (Zimmerman, 198). So then, which is me? In a similar thought experiment, a creature, Neocerberus, has two brains and two sets of organs of maintenance (although because they do the same job, Neocerberus requires only one set for *functioning*). The halves are separated; which one is Neocerberus? Zimmerman asserts that van Inwagen would be forced to say “that, at least in cases of perfectly symmetrical fission, the original organism ceases to be and is replaced by two new ones [Alpha and Beta]” (Zimmerman, 198)—and van Inwagen does say this.

This leads naturally to the closest continuer theory since x and y tell us nothing about which is Neocerberus; we need further, outside information. But, as Zimmerman points out, the closest continuer theory does not *necessarily* follow from the above thought experiment. For, as van Inwagen can and does say, Neocerberus’s life ends when half 1 (or half 2) is destroyed. Van Inwagen “could then claim that it is not the mere presence of a competitor that keeps Neocerberus’s Life from following the spatiotemporal path traced out by Alpha (or Beta),” (Zimmerman, 200).

The competition mentioned here is, I believe, the competition between half 1 and half 2 over who is Neocerberus in actuality. But since one of the halves dies in this variation of the

thought experiment, there's no competition; there is only one organism left to claim the title of Neocerberus. However, despite the lack of competition, this organism is *not* Neocerberus, since Neocerberus required two halves with two sets (total) of *organs of maintenance*, not one; instead of being Neocerberus, the surviving organism is Alpha (or Beta).

Breaking this down further, we see that this is because while the organism that was Neocerberus required only one set of organs for *functioning*, Neocerberus's *Life* & therefore *personal identity* was *caused by* two organs of maintenance, not one. And, for van Inwagen, it is the cause of a Life that determines what constitutes that Life's personal identity. So when you destroy the Beta organs, there is still life because there are the Alpha organs and you only need one set for a life, but this is a different Life than Neocerberus's because it is caused only by Alpha organs, and so is Alpha, not Neocerberus.

Van Inwagen *is* forced to accept a closest continuer theory, though, when considering the thought experiment of Leftycerberus, a creature very much like Neocerberus except that the left organs of maintenance are a bit faster than the right organs of maintenance in sending signals that direct that life. And, in the case of Leftycerberus, sometimes the signals do not send, so in these cases Leftycerberus relies on the right organs of maintenance for life. Yet,

To be consistent with what he says about Neocerberus, it would seem that he must say something like this: whenever one organ of maintenance is, for a time, the sole cause of the changes it tries to direct, then it cannot give up any of its control to the other organ of maintenance without one Life coming to an end and a new one beginning. (Zimmerman, 200)

But this would be a ridiculous claim, implies Zimmerman. After all, imagine Henry, a man who at some point in his life requires a pacemaker. We would certainly be reasonable in claiming that pre- and post-pacemaker Henry is the same Henry! Why should Leftycerberus be any different?

Zimmerman claims that van Inwagen *must* admit that Leftycerberus could survive the removal/destruction of one of its organs of maintenance (this is *not* true fission, since the rest of Leftycerberus remains intact). For example, let's say that the left side transfers its duties to the right side, and is then removed. Leftycerberus's pre-op and post-op Life is the same (Life 1), since it has the same cause (which is VI's criteria/stipulation): the right side's organs of maintenance.

But in a case of true fission, Leftycerberus does not survive. This is because a competitor (the other half that becomes a new organism) is present. So, according to van Inwagen's metaphysics, it follows that Life 1 ends and two new Lives begin. So we see that van Inwagen therefore must give up the only x and y principle, since Leftycerberus's survival depends on the presence or absence of a competitor. A closest continuer theory of personal identity must be adopted.

As we will see, Zimmerman's falling elevator model implies that the only x and y principle be false, so "if van Inwagen's materialism should force him to reject the principle anyway, the falling elevator model does not have this implication as an *added* cost" (Zimmerman, 198). Zimmerman himself advocates for a "temporally-closest continuer' theory of persistence conditions" (Zimmerman, 201):

If you are looking for the next event in a given Life, and the present event is causally connected in the appropriate, immanent way to two nonsimultaneous later events, but one is earlier than the other, go to the earlier of the two—it is the earlier one that represents the continuation of this Life, and the subsequent appearance of the later one does not turn this into a case of fission. (Zimmerman, 201)

Thus ends Zimmerman's critique of the simulacrum theory of resurrection, and marks the beginning of the presentation of his own "just-so" story.

But before Zimmerman can present the rest of his theory, he must first outline the possibility of lives with spatiotemporal gaps. For Zimmerman, it is not spatiotemporal contiguity that matters for a thing's persistence, but rather immanent causality (this too is in line with van Inwagen's metaphysics). Importantly,

[...] for an object that persists throughout a given period of time, the way the object is at any moment in that interval must be partially determined by the way it was during the interval leading up to that moment. (Zimmerman, 203)

It doesn't matter then, if *b* follows *a* immediately or if there is a spatiotemporal gap between them; what matters is that *a* and *b* are connected through immanent causation; something about *a* causes *b*; *when b* appears is not significant. In Zimmerman's own words,

[...] immanent-causal relations among stages are much more central to the persistence conditions of physical objects than relations of spatiotemporal contiguity among stages. Furthermore, the notion that spatiotemporal continuity of stages is not even necessary for persistence is a natural enough view. Why suppose that things cannot jump discontinuously from one place to another, or flicker out of existence for a while only to re-emerge elsewhere and elsewhen? (Zimmerman, 203)

In fact, for Zimmerman, spatiotemporal continuity seems to be a *result* or *sign of* immanent causation, rather than the other way around. So we begin to see the possibility of "gappy" objects—that is, objects that can persist across spatiotemporal gaps.

Importantly,

[immanent causality] does not rule out the possibility of discontinuous spatiotemporal jumps for objects, or even of 'temporally gappy' objects; it merely describes a condition that applies to periods of time *throughout which* an object exists. If immanent-causal connections are indeed necessary for persistence, then if it is possible for an object to persist through temporal gaps during which it has no stages, there must be suitable immanent-causal relations which cross the temporal gap between earlier and later stages. (Zimmerman, 203, emphasis in original)

In these cases of gappy existence, it is a necessary condition of *x*'s persistence over a gap that *x*'s temporal stage right before the moment the gap begins is a partial cause of *x*'s temporal stage right after the moment the gap ends. Further, "[...] at no time during the gap is there a set of

conditions sufficient by itself for the occurrence of x's temporal stage [right after the moment the gap ends]" (Zimmerman, 203). For if there was, then it would follow that immanent-causal connections could pass through the mind of God—a feat that van Inwagen classifies as not immanent enough to count.

As has already been touched upon, there is no reason to think that a Life could not contain spatial jumps or temporal gaps. For "as long as the causal processes from earlier stages to later stages are of the right sort, preserving the self-sustaining structure peculiar to the living thing in question, one has the same Life" (Zimmerman, 204). So in this case too, it is the immanent causation of one stage to the next that matters, *not* the spatiotemporal continuity of stages.

In fact, Zimmerman asserts, there is some reason to think that persistence across spatiotemporal gaps happens; "the most promising theories still in the water can accommodate it" (Zimmerman, 204). For instance,

[...] Bell's inequality [...] suggests that either there is faster-than-light signaling at the quantum level, or else there are nonlocal causal influences at work. [...] nonlocal causal processes are a serious contender for explaining certain very mysterious physical phenomena; and many of those who have thought hardest about these matters take the possibility seriously. (Zimmerman, 204)

In regards to the most promising theories still in the water, the impossibility of causation over gaps doesn't *follow* from them. They don't "in any straightforward way *imply* the spatiotemporal continuity of causal processes, or the contiguity of cause and effect" (Zimmerman, 205, emphasis in original). So, it seems to Zimmerman, it is not too much of a stretch to seriously consider the possibility that Lives can persist over spatiotemporal gaps.

With this groundwork laid out, Zimmerman then presents his falling elevator model of resurrection. In this model, my body undergoes discontinuous fission by the hand of God,

producing two copies at disparate spatiotemporal locations. One copy is exact, with all particles arranged exactly as the original was, and *because* the original was (there is immanent causation); there is replication over a temporal gap. This first copy appears in Heaven, now or in the future. The other copy is flawed, and is basically just dead, unstructured matter that looks like the original, but which doesn't have all the particles in all the right places and so is not an exact copy. This imperfection allows the one Life (of the first, exact copy) to continue in the future; since the fission is imperfect, there's no true duplication problem. In other words, there is no issue of competition, so the Life does *not* necessarily end. This second, imperfect copy appears right where the original was, and is what we refer to as the "corpse." However, it is important to note that this corpse is not a candidate for being me—although it is a causally connected copy—since it does not participate in a Life (Zimmerman, 206).

The falling elevator model still works even if the simples of which we're composed can last through time (meaning, I think, that instead of the original simples disappearing/ending and being replaced by two different copies, one of which continues the Life and one of which is the "dead" copy, the corpse actually *is* the mass of the very same simples that used to be alive—these particles remain x particles, though they are dead. Instead of having two separate copies with the original ceasing to exist, in the case of simples that can last through time, the original stays, and the particles in the hereafter are *different*, though causally immanent with the x particles). In this case,

[...] each particle x is immanent-causally connected to two streams of later particle-stages; one of them—the one in the here and now—includes stages of x itself; the other, the one in the hereafter, consists of stages of a different particle. (Zimmerman, 206)

In other words, the fission products don't coexist; there's only one resultant particle now, so we do not face the issue of competition (there's only one temporally-closest continuer).

But what makes the first, exact copy the same body as the original, that is, what makes it *my* body? Simply that it partakes in the same Life. Against Aristotle's theory of reconstitution, for Zimmerman personal identity is not about particular particles of matter. After all, the particles that make up our bodies are always being replaced anyway. So what makes the exact copy of my body *mine* is the same principle that makes my adult body the same as my baby body: it partakes in one and the same Life.

And "whether or not the ultimate simples in my body persist, the atoms and molecules in my body as I die will all still be here, heaped up on the floor as parts of my corpse" (Zimmerman, 206). In other words, the second imperfect copy of the original is still *my* corpse although it was not and never will be *me*. There is no competitor, because what would be the competitor (the perfect first copy of the original) is in the future, whereas my corpse is in the present; competition is not an issue and immanent causality is present, so it's still *my* corpse. After all, "the causal relations normally sufficient to preserve atoms and molecules will obtain between the pre- and post-death atoms and molecules" (Zimmerman, 206). This means, I think, that it's the same body, my body, because its atoms and molecules at time t are causally connected to those at time t^* . If the simples in my body persist, then it is my body because it partakes in the same Life as the original. And if the simples in my body don't persist but are replaced, then this is still my body because the copies are causally connected—even the imperfect dead copy. It is still a copy because it was caused by the original, even if it is deficient! Thus concludes Zimmerman's paper.

Questions for Zimmerman

I find Zimmerman's theory highly convincing as a "just-so" story. He puts forth a theory of personal identity that not only explains how one might survive death, but also explains how I

am the same person I was yesterday, or last week, or ten years ago. I find this to be a major strength of his paper. However, I do find problems with how he reached the need for his just-so story; the steps taken to introduce it seem faulty.

The first major faults I find in Zimmerman's paper have to do with his basing important aspects of his theory on things he believes to be intuitively obvious and therefore true. For instance, he claims, based on his intuition, that pre- and post-pacemaker Henry must be the same person. This does not seem obvious to me—and if we can disagree about the truth of an intuition, then it seems that intuitions by nature are too weak to support a theory or statement alone. After all, in this example, why couldn't we stick to van Inwagen's principle and declare pre- and post-pacemaker Henry different people? Van Inwagen's account makes just as much sense to me as does the alternative. And even if it *were* intuitive that they are the same person, one must take into account the fact that many intuitions have been proven wrong throughout history. For example, it is intuitively obvious that the Earth is flat and that the heavier an object, the faster it will fall—but we know now, after deeper examination, that both of these intuitive beliefs are blatantly, objectively false.

And yes, we originally had reason to believe that these false intuitions were true—reasons that have since been replaced with explanations for why the intuition is false yet seemed true. And yes, there have also been intuitions that have later been proven to be correct. But just because the same has yet to be said for the intuition that pre- and post-pacemaker Henry must be the same person does not mean that it will not ever be said. Further, Zimmerman has not proven that his intuitions are correct—and proof requires more than intuition alone. I put forward here the idea that all intuitions, while perhaps helpful in our day-to-day life, are not necessarily to be

accepted as truth at face value. Yet Zimmerman does not here supply more than an intuition in this key step of his paper. I find this to be problematic.

So if we consider that Zimmerman's intuitions *may* be wrong (they certainly lack proof), it seems that in fact van Inwagen can be consistent about what he says about Leftycerberus, and therefore can avoid being forced into a closer continuer theory. In other words, it may be true that whenever one organ of maintenance takes over from the other organ of maintenance previously directing change in that organism's body, a new Life begins. This would certainly be complicated and troubling, but that is *not* to say that it is impossible. So, then, we see that accepting a closest continuer theory *does* become an extra burden to carry for those who accept Zimmerman's theory of resurrection. However, we must acknowledge here that while possible, the idea that a new Life begins whenever one organ of maintenance takes over from the other is extremely implausible. So my objection is weakened, and Zimmerman's point here is salvaged on the count of implausibility.

Another problem with Zimmerman's paper is that he does not provide a convincing argument for the possibility of the existence of objects with spatiotemporally gappy existence. True, the concept of gappy objects makes sense with the scientific theory he indicates (Bell's inequality), but that theory is just a theory, which will likely (as history has shown) be disproven by other, future theories. Further, as this is a counter-intuitive claim, it requires substantiation, which is glaringly absent. Finally, just because the impossibility of gappy existence doesn't follow from the "most promising theories still in the water" (Zimmerman, 205) does *not* mean that the possibility of gappy existence follows, either. It is just a possibility either way, but there is no reason to think that it's the way Zimmerman wants to say it is. In fact, it probably is not, since he is going by standards of his own questionable intuition.

Conclusion

After examining various answers to the question of the compatibility with materialism and bodily resurrection within Christian doctrine, I am led to conclude that the two are compatible in at least some scenarios. Although each of the solutions examined here has its own problems, I am drawn to Origen's solution as the most viable of the lot.

I began this paper by indicating that in order to be deemed compatible with materialism, an account of the bodily resurrection must meet certain requirements. It must contain an account of criterion of personal identity that allows the retention of personal identity through the destructive transformation of death. Further, the selfsame body that we have in this life must be the one that undergoes a spiritual yet physical transformation and is resurrected, transformed. Finally, a convincing account must either avoid or confront the problems of cannibalism and duplication discussed earlier in this paper.

The Aristotelian view of resurrection was introduced via the introduction of the problems of cannibalism and fission/annihilation. But as we saw in the van Inwagen section of this thesis, there are convincing ways to avoid at least the cannibalism and duplication problems. So I conclude that though the Aristotelian theory of reconstruction is not fully developed in certain key areas (such as the criterion of personal identity, which Aristotle fallaciously equated with matter), this theory—given some supplementary development—seems like a quite feasible way to solve the problem of the compatibility of materialism and the bodily resurrection.

With Origen, we saw that the criterion of personal identity is one's *eidos* (material form with inherent organization and potential for growth, a bit like a genetic code). What Methodius saw as a deficit in Origen's account—his sacrifice of material continuity and bodily structure for identity over change and transformation—I see as strengths in line with our understanding of the

world today. Some minor problems with Origen's account include that it is unclear what our bodies will look like in the afterlife. At what age will we be represented in the resurrection? Will externally-imposed physical changes will be represented? Origen declares that we'll lose our memories, yet this seems important to our sense of personal identity. These details must be cleaned up through a modern lens, but it should not be difficult to do so.

We must also acknowledge that Origen did not directly address the problems of cannibalism, fission/annihilation, and duplication. Still, Davis's solution to the first and last of these problems is compatible with Origen's account. As in the other accounts, the issue of fission/annihilation remains problematic.

Next, we explored van Inwagen's simulacrum model of resurrection, which he offers in place of the Aristotelian theory of reconstitution. Van Inwagen's criterion of personal identity is that atoms hold their positions because of the operations of processes within a person that, together, constitutes that person's being alive. However, van Inwagen does not defend why his criterion of personal identity is best or most appropriate. And his criterion is against the reconstruction view because in that view, the particles are where they are because of God. We see also that van Inwagen leveled accusations against the Aristotelian model; that is, he claimed that the cannibalism and duplication problems could not be solved within the framework of Aristotle's metaphysics of afterlife. However, we also saw that not only *can* we solve the cannibalism and duplication problems under this framework, but it also seems that one can go through the mind of God and still have immanent causation. So it seems that the Aristotelian model is a possibility on these counts and therefore that van Inwagen's account is superfluous. Finally, the simulacrum model has the final flaw of making God seem devious and untrustworthy—qualities of God that go strictly against Christian doctrine.

Finally, we turned to Zimmerman's falling elevator model of resurrection. As Zimmerman uses van Inwagen's metaphysics, they share the same criterion of personal identity. Zimmerman also shows that van Inwagen's model leads to a contradiction: while van Inwagen claims adherence to the only x and y principle, in reality he is forced into a closest continuer theory. Importantly, what determines a Life is the cause of that Life—there is a temporally-closest continuer clause here, as well. Zimmerman also claims that immanent causality is more important than is spatiotemporal continuity, and that, accordingly, the idea of spatiotemporally gappy existence is possible. He then introduces the falling elevator model in which the duplication problem is avoided by imperfect fission. I find his account convincing as a "just-so" story, but am skeptical as to how he reached this story. He bases too much on intuition, and in fact we find that accepting a closest continuer theory *is* an extra cost of his account. So, while convincing, Zimmerman's theory does have its drawbacks.

It seems, then, that while most of the accounts explored here either avoided or successfully confronted the problems of cannibalism and duplication, all still must face the problem of fission/annihilation outlined early on in this thesis. As the science necessary for exploring and better understanding this problem is not yet fully developed, I leave this problem to future philosophers. Assuming this problem of fission/annihilation can be solved or exploded, then, I am convinced that the concepts of materialism and of bodily resurrection within a Christian context are, in fact, compatible.

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