

The resurrection of the dead



I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Our topic today is the doctrine stated in the last line of the Creed: the doctrine that there will be a resurrection of the dead.

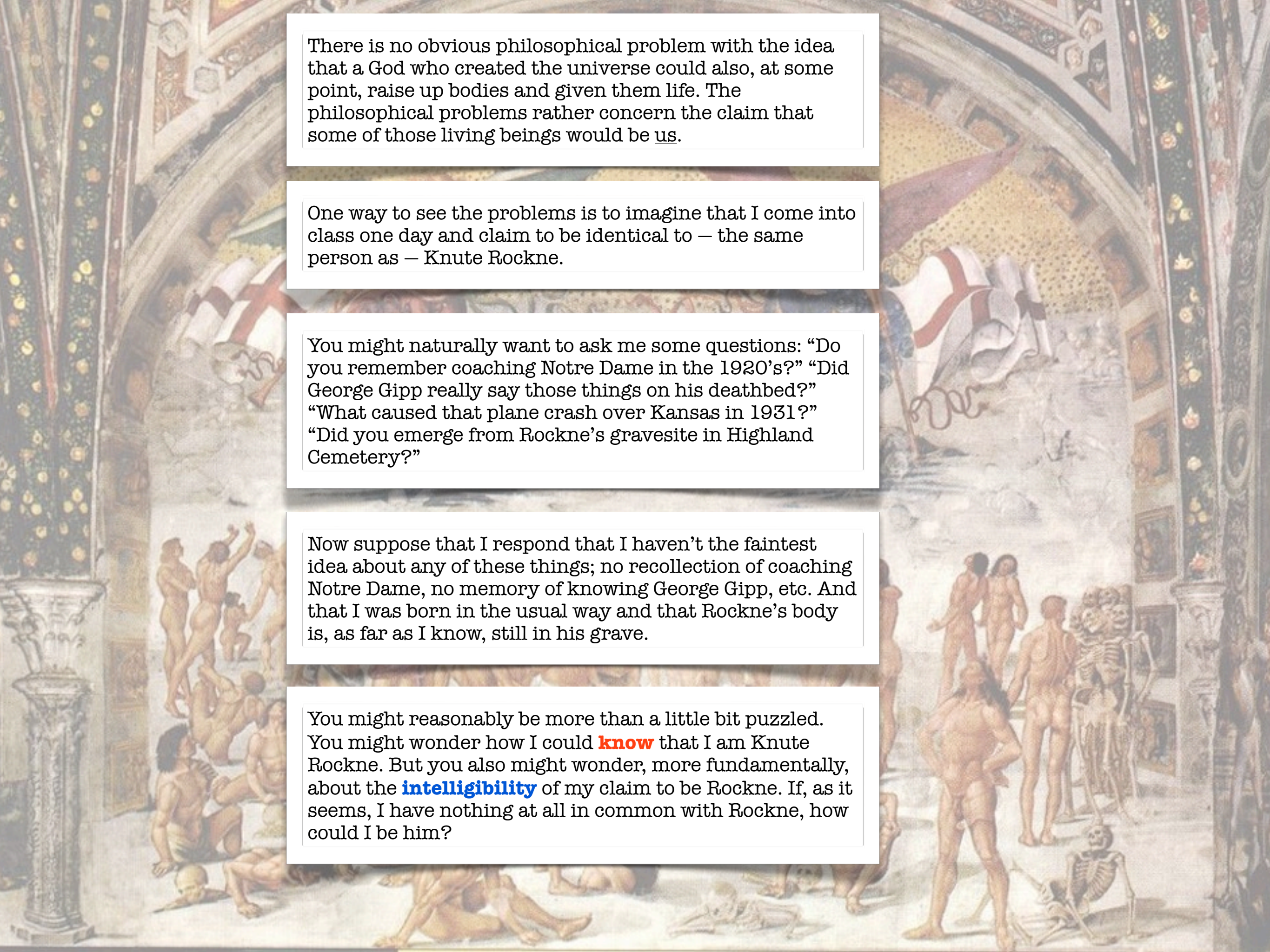
The Catechism describes the view succinctly:

*989 We firmly believe, and hence we hope that, just as Christ is truly risen from the dead and lives for ever, so after death the righteous will live for ever with the risen Christ and he will raise them up on the last day ....*

*990 The term "flesh" refers to man in his state of weakness and mortality. The "resurrection of the flesh" (the literal formulation of the Apostles' Creed) means not only that the immortal soul will live on after death, but that even our "mortal body" will come to life again.*

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One way to see the problems is to imagine that I come into class one day and claim to be identical to – the same person as – Knute Rockne.

You might naturally want to ask me some questions: “Do you remember coaching Notre Dame in the 1920’s?” “Did George Gipp really say those things on his deathbed?” “What caused that plane crash over Kansas in 1931?” “Did you emerge from Rockne’s gravesite in Highland Cemetery?”

Now suppose that I respond that I haven’t the faintest idea about any of these things; no recollection of coaching Notre Dame, no memory of knowing George Gipp, etc. And that I was born in the usual way and that Rockne’s body is, as far as I know, still in his grave.

You might reasonably be more than a little bit puzzled. You might wonder how I could **know** that I am Knute Rockne. But you also might wonder, more fundamentally, about the **intelligibility** of my claim to be Rockne. If, as it seems, I have nothing at all in common with Rockne, how could I be him?



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There are at least two initially plausible interpretations of this puzzlement.

One holds that the problem with my claim to be Rockne lies in the fact that I have no psychological connection with Rockne – and, in particular, no memories of his life.

The other view holds that the problem lies in the fact that I have no physical connection with Rockne – his body is in his grave, and stands in no special connection to my body.

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### The psychological theory

If  $x$  and  $y$  are persons, then  $x=y$  if and only if  $x$  has memories of  $y$  (or vice versa).

### Materialism

If  $x$  and  $y$  are persons, then  $x=y$  if and only if  $x$  is the same material thing as  $y$ .



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These views might seem like they come to pretty much the same thing. But there are apparently coherent descriptions of cases in which they seem to come apart.

One famous and historically influential example of this sort is due to John Locke.



For should the Soul of a Prince, carrying with it the consciousness of the Prince's past Life, enter and inform the Body of a Cobbler as soon as deserted by his own Soul, every one sees, he would be the same Person with the Prince, accountable only for the Prince's Actions

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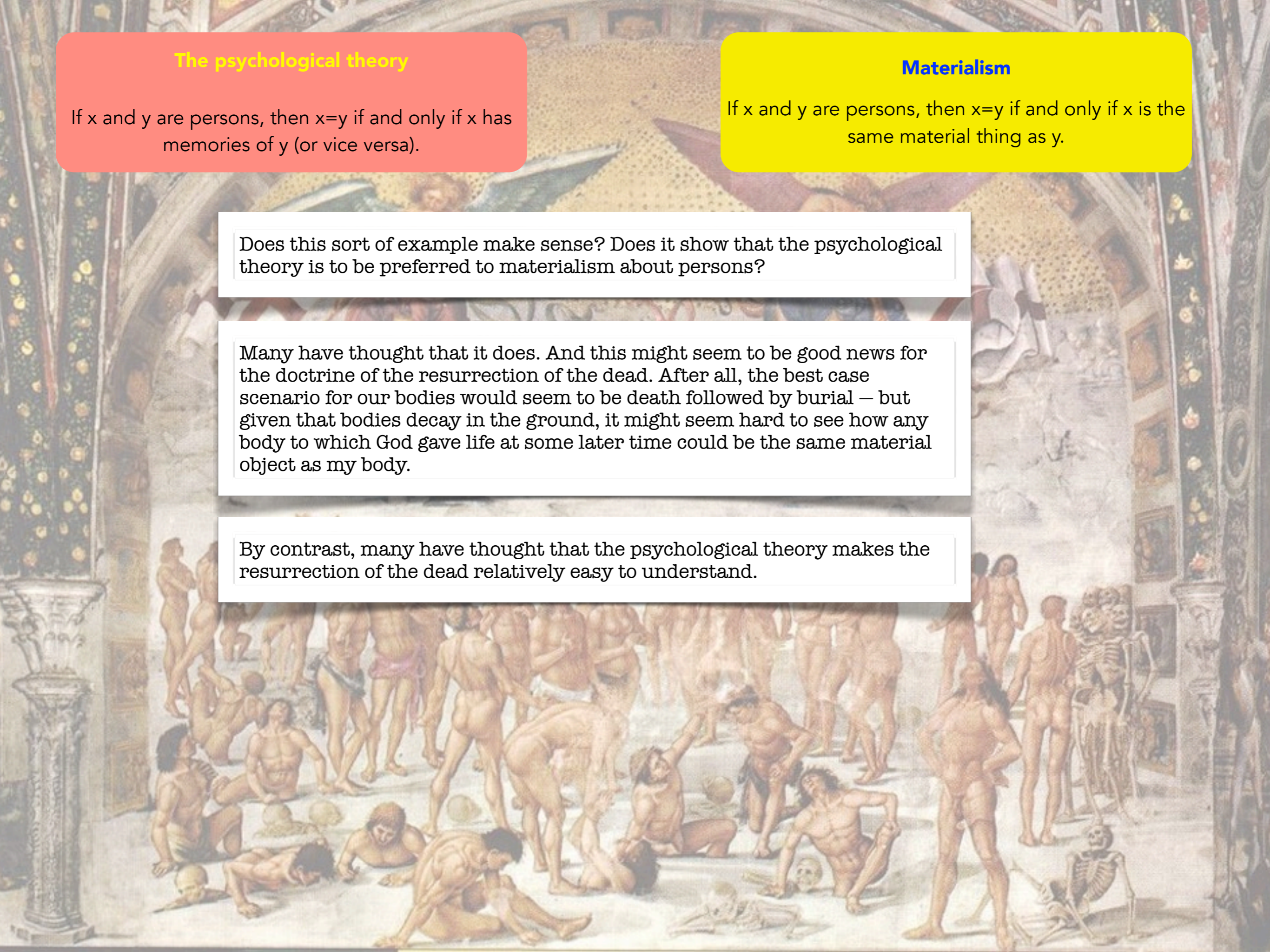
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Many have thought that it does. And this might seem to be good news for the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. After all, the best case scenario for our bodies would seem to be death followed by burial – but given that bodies decay in the ground, it might seem hard to see how any body to which God gave life at some later time could be the same material object as my body.

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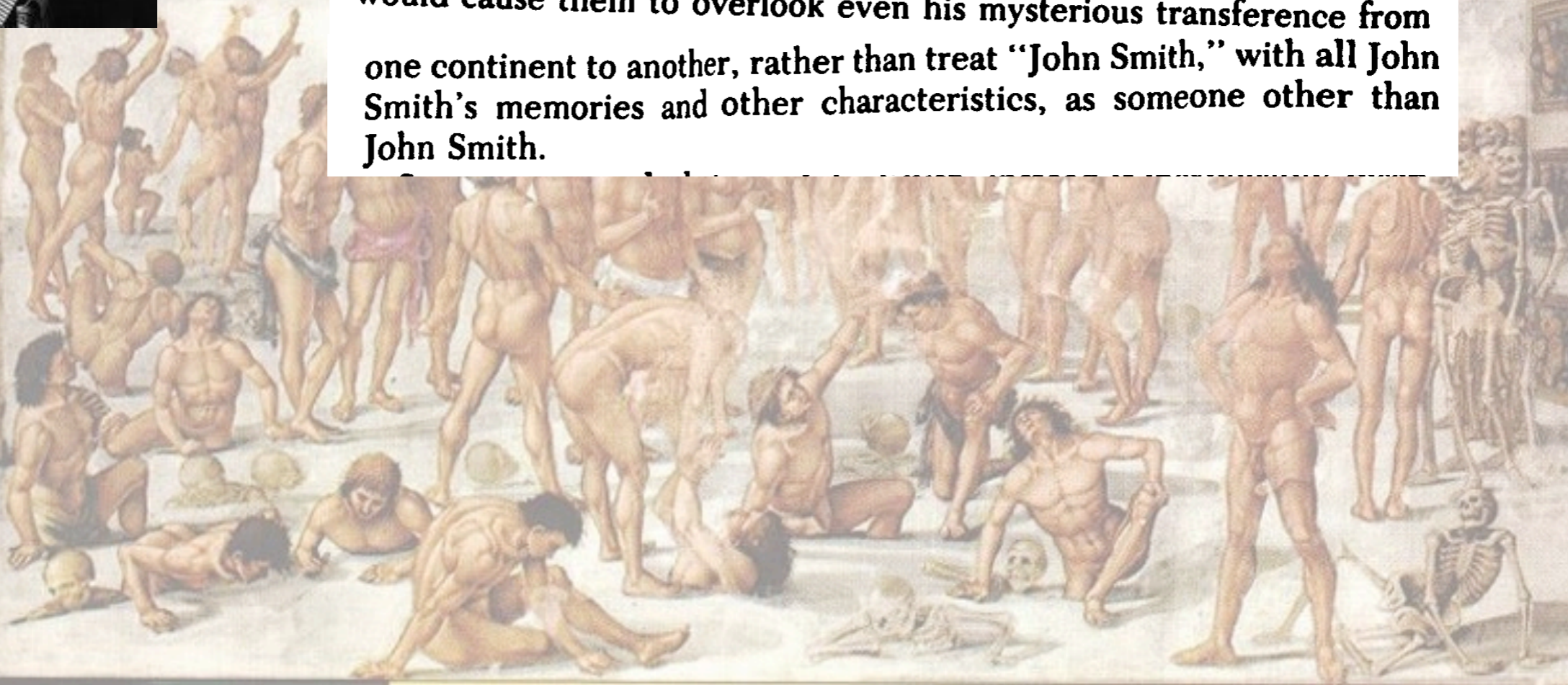
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Suppose, first, that someone — John Smith — living in the USA were suddenly and inexplicably to disappear from before the eyes of his friends, and that at the same moment an exact replica of him were inexplicably to appear in India. The person who appears in India is exactly similar in both physical and mental characteristics to the person who disappeared in America. There is continuity of memory, complete similarity of bodily features including fingerprints, hair and eye coloration, and stomach contents, and also of beliefs, habits, emotions, and mental dispositions. Further, the “John Smith” replica thinks of himself as being the John Smith who disappeared in the USA. After all possible tests have been made and have proved positive, the factors leading his friends to accept “John Smith” as John Smith would surely prevail and would cause them to overlook even his mysterious transference from one continent to another, rather than treat “John Smith,” with all John Smith’s memories and other characteristics, as someone other than John Smith.





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**Suppose, second, that our John Smith, instead of inexplicably disappearing, dies, but that at the moment of his death a “John Smith” replica, again complete with memories and all other characteristics, appears in India. Even with the corpse on our hands we would, I think, still have to accept this “John Smith” as the John Smith who died. We would have to say that he had been miraculously re-created in another place.**





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Now suppose, third, that on John Smith's death the "John Smith" replica appears, not in India, but as a resurrection replica in a different world altogether, a resurrection world inhabited only by resurrected persons. This world occupies its own space distinct from that with which we are now familiar. That is to say, an object in the resurrection world is not situated at any distance or in any direction from the objects in our present world, although each object in either world is spatially related to every other object in the same world.





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Hick is, I think, correct that if the psychological theory of personal identity is correct, then a strong case can be made on that basis that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is coherent.

Unfortunately, as Thomas Reid, a Scottish contemporary of Locke, argued, certain sorts of examples seem to show that the theory leads to paradox.

Suppose a brave officer to have been flogged when a boy at school, for robbing an orchard, to have taken a standard from the enemy in his first campaign, and to have been made a general in advanced life: Suppose also, which must be admitted to be possible, that, when he took the standard, he was conscious of his having been flogged at school, and that when made a general he was conscious of his taking the standard, but had absolutely lost the consciousness of his flogging.

These things being supposed, it follows, from Mr Locke's doctrine, that he who was flogged at school is the same person who took the standard, and that he who took the standard is the same person who was made a general. Whence it follows, if there be any truth in logic, that the general is the same person with him who was flogged at school. But the general's consciousness does not reach so far back as his flogging—therefore, according to Mr Locke's doctrine, he is not the person who was flogged. Therefore, the general is, and at the same time is not the same person with him who was flogged at school.





## The psychological theory

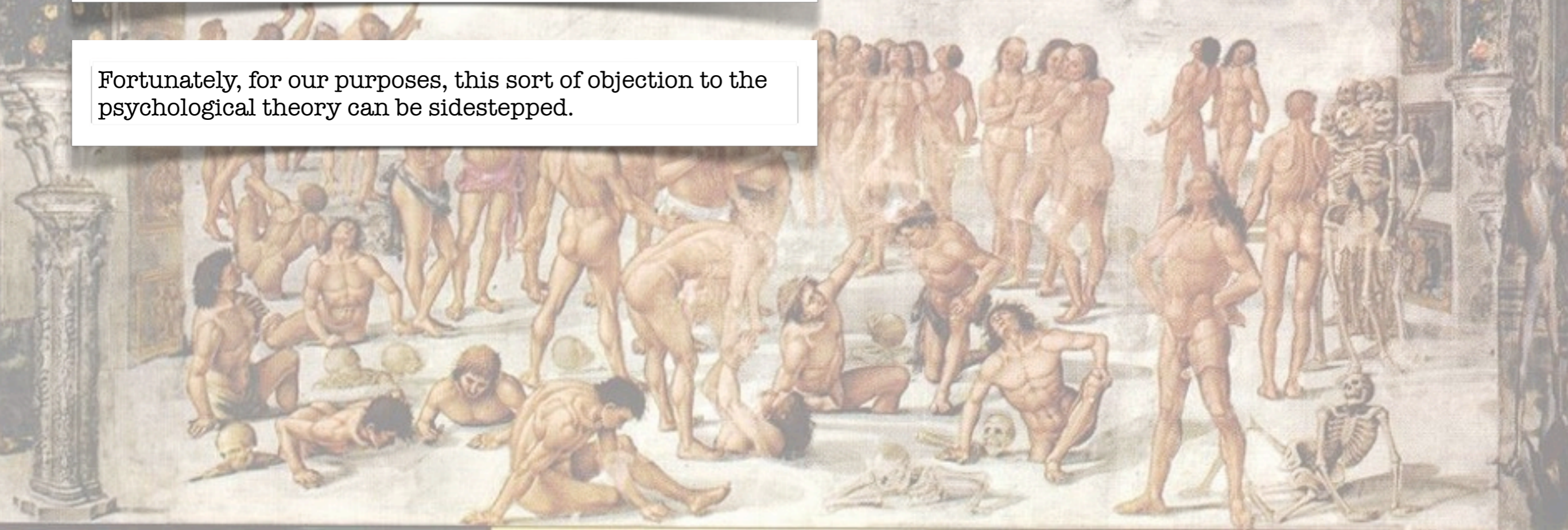
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Then what Reid seems to be saying is that the following sort of scenario is possible:

C has memories of the experiences of B, and B has memories of the experiences of A, but C does not have memories of the experiences of A.

But this, plus the transitivity of identity and the psychological theory, implies a contradiction. Hence, it seems, the psychological theory is false.

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We can think of the psychological theory as the combination of two claims:

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### The memory requirement

If neither  $A$  nor  $B$  has memories of the other, then  $A$  and  $B$  are not the same person.

### The memory guarantee

If either  $A$  or  $B$  has memories of the other, then  $A$  is the same person as  $B$ .

Which one of these does Reid's argument call into question? Which is required by Hick's explanation of the possibility of life after death?





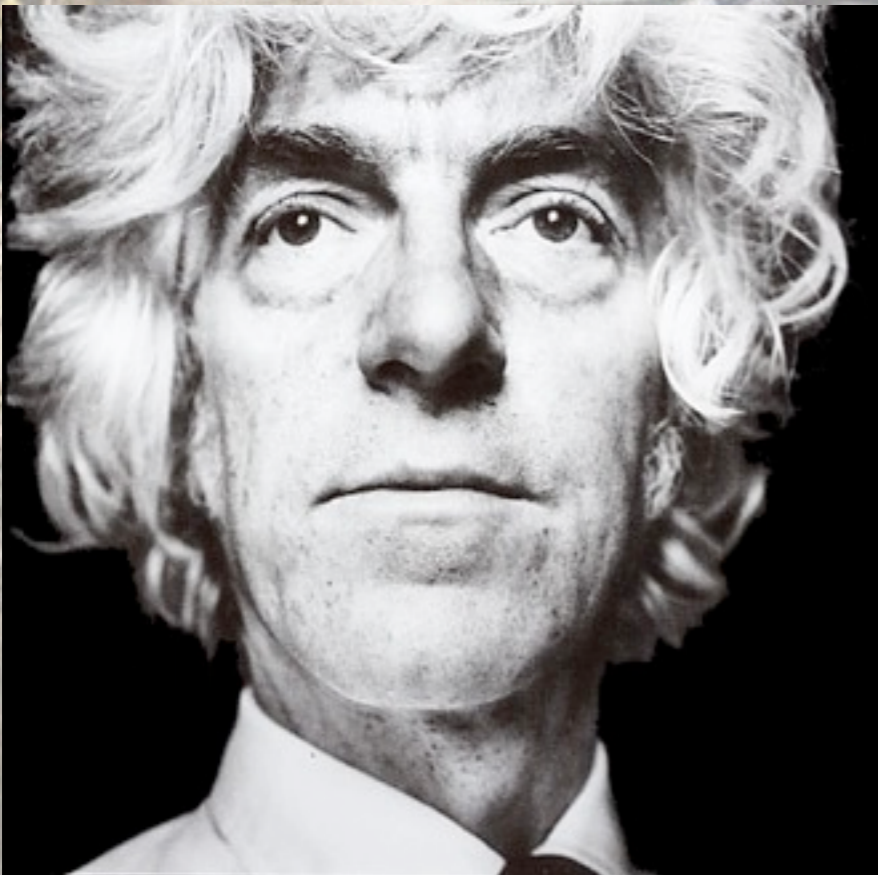
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So it seems that, for our purposes, we can stick with the memory guarantee, and set the more ambitious psychological theory of personal identity to the side.

The memory guarantee, however, faces some problems of its own. The most dramatic way of bringing them out is to focus on what the view implies about cases of teletransportation, which have been emphasized in this context by the British philosopher Derek Parfit.



I enter the Teletransporter. I have been to Mars before, but only by the old method, a space-ship journey taking several weeks. This machine will send me at the speed of light. I merely have to press the green button. Like others, I am nervous. Will it work? I remind myself what I have been told to expect. When I press the button, I shall lose consciousness, and then wake up at what seems a moment later. In fact I shall have been unconscious for about an hour. The Scanner here on Earth will destroy my brain and body, while recording the exact states of all of my cells. It will then transmit this information by radio. Travelling at the speed of light, the message will take three minutes to reach the Replicator on Mars. This will then create, out of new matter, a brain and body exactly like mine. It will be in this body that I shall wake up.

Though I believe that this is what will happen, I still hesitate. But then I remember seeing my wife grin when, at breakfast today, I revealed my nervousness. As she reminded me, she has been often teletransported, and there is nothing wrong with *her*. I press the button. As predicted, I lose and seem at once to regain consciousness, but in a different cubicle. Examining my new body, I find no change at all. Even the cut on my upper lip, from this morning's shave, is still there.



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then A is the same person as B.

The problems begin with the arrival of the New Scanner:

Several years pass, during which I am often Teletransported. I am now back in the cubicle, ready for another trip to Mars. But this time, when I press the green button, I do not lose consciousness. There is a whirring sound, then silence. I leave the cubicle, and say to the attendant: 'It's not working. What did I do wrong?'

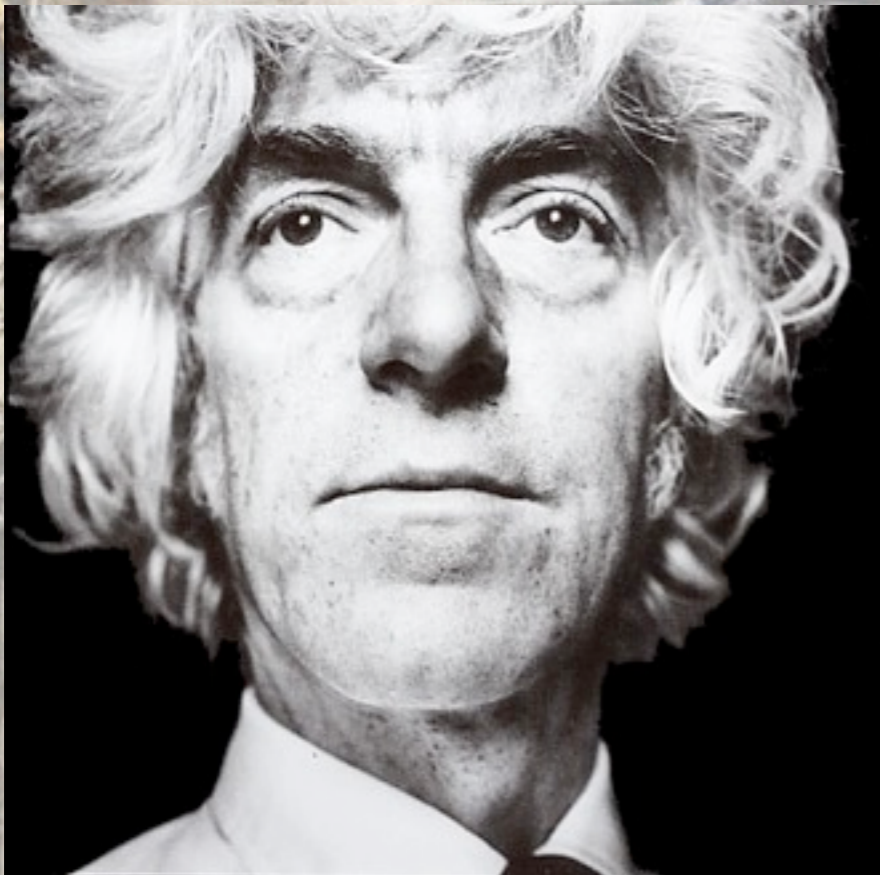
'It's working', he replies, handing me a printed card. This reads: 'The New Scanner records your blueprint without destroying your brain and body. We hope that you will welcome the opportunities which this technical advance offers.'

The attendant tells me that I am one of the first people to use the New Scanner. He adds that, if I stay for an hour, I can use the Intercom to see and talk to myself on Mars.

'Wait a minute', I reply, 'If I'm here I can't *also* be on Mars'.

Someone politely coughs. a white-coated man who asks to speak to me in private. We go to his office, where he tells me to sit down, and pauses. Then he says: 'I'm afraid that we're having problems with the New Scanner. It records your blueprint just as accurately, as you will see when you talk to yourself on Mars. But it seems to be damaging the cardiac systems which it scans. Judging from the results so far, though you will be quite healthy on Mars, here on Earth you must expect cardiac failure within the next few days.'

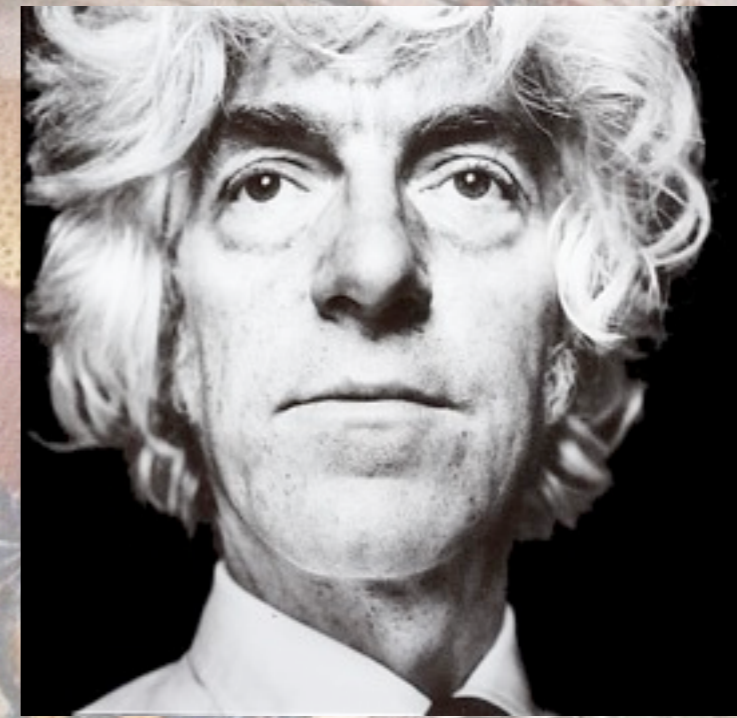
The attendant later calls me to the Intercom. On the screen I see myself just as I do in the mirror every morning. But there are two differences. On the screen I am not left-right reversed. And, while I stand here speechless, I can see and hear myself, in the studio on Mars, starting to speak.





## The memory guarantee

If either A or B has memories of the other, then A is the same person as B.



The problems posed by this case are closely related to the problems posed by Reid's example. It will be useful to introduce some terms so that we can talk about this case clearly.

Original-Parfit = Parfit before he stepped into the teletransporter.

Earth-Parfit = the person who gets out of the teletransporter on earth.

Mars-Parfit = the person who gets out of the teletransporter on Mars.

The character in the story seems to be correct when he says "If I'm here I can't also be on Mars." But that is just another way of saying this:

The problem is that both Earth-Parfit and Mars-Parfit stand in direct memory relations to Original-Parfit. Hence, if the memory guarantee is true, we know that each of the following must be true:

But for reasons which are by now familiar, these three claims cannot all be true.

Earth-Parfit  $\neq$  Mars-Parfit

Earth-Parfit = Original-Parfit

Mars-Parfit = Original-Parfit



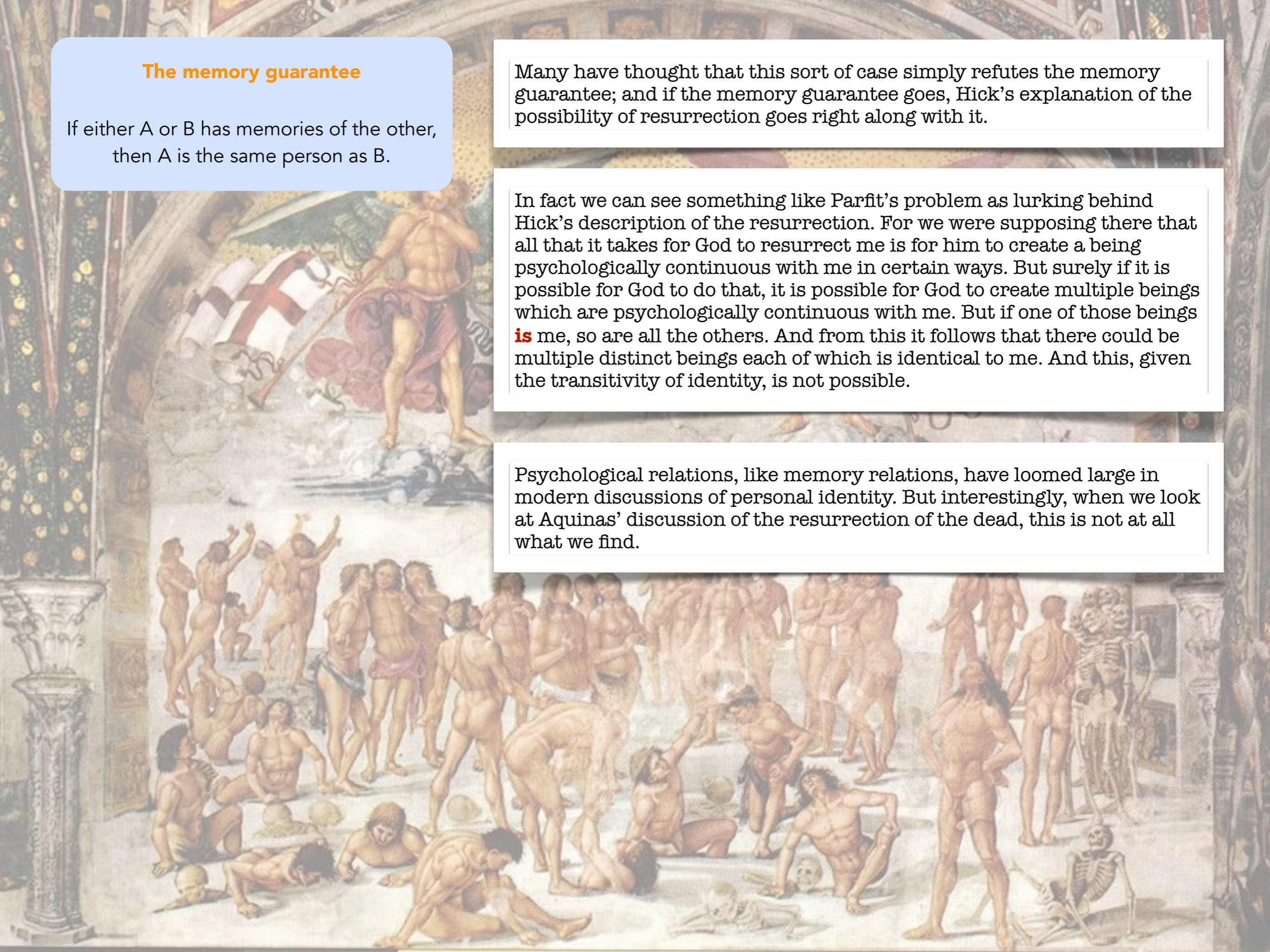
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Many have thought that this sort of case simply refutes the memory guarantee; and if the memory guarantee goes, Hick's explanation of the possibility of resurrection goes right along with it.

In fact we can see something like Parfit's problem as lurking behind Hick's description of the resurrection. For we were supposing there that all that it takes for God to resurrect me is for him to create a being psychologically continuous with me in certain ways. But surely if it is possible for God to do that, it is possible for God to create multiple beings which are psychologically continuous with me. But if one of those beings **is** me, so are all the others. And from this it follows that there could be multiple distinct beings each of which is identical to me. And this, given the transitivity of identity, is not possible.

Psychological relations, like memory relations, have loomed large in modern discussions of personal identity. But interestingly, when we look at Aquinas' discussion of the resurrection of the dead, this is not at all what we find.





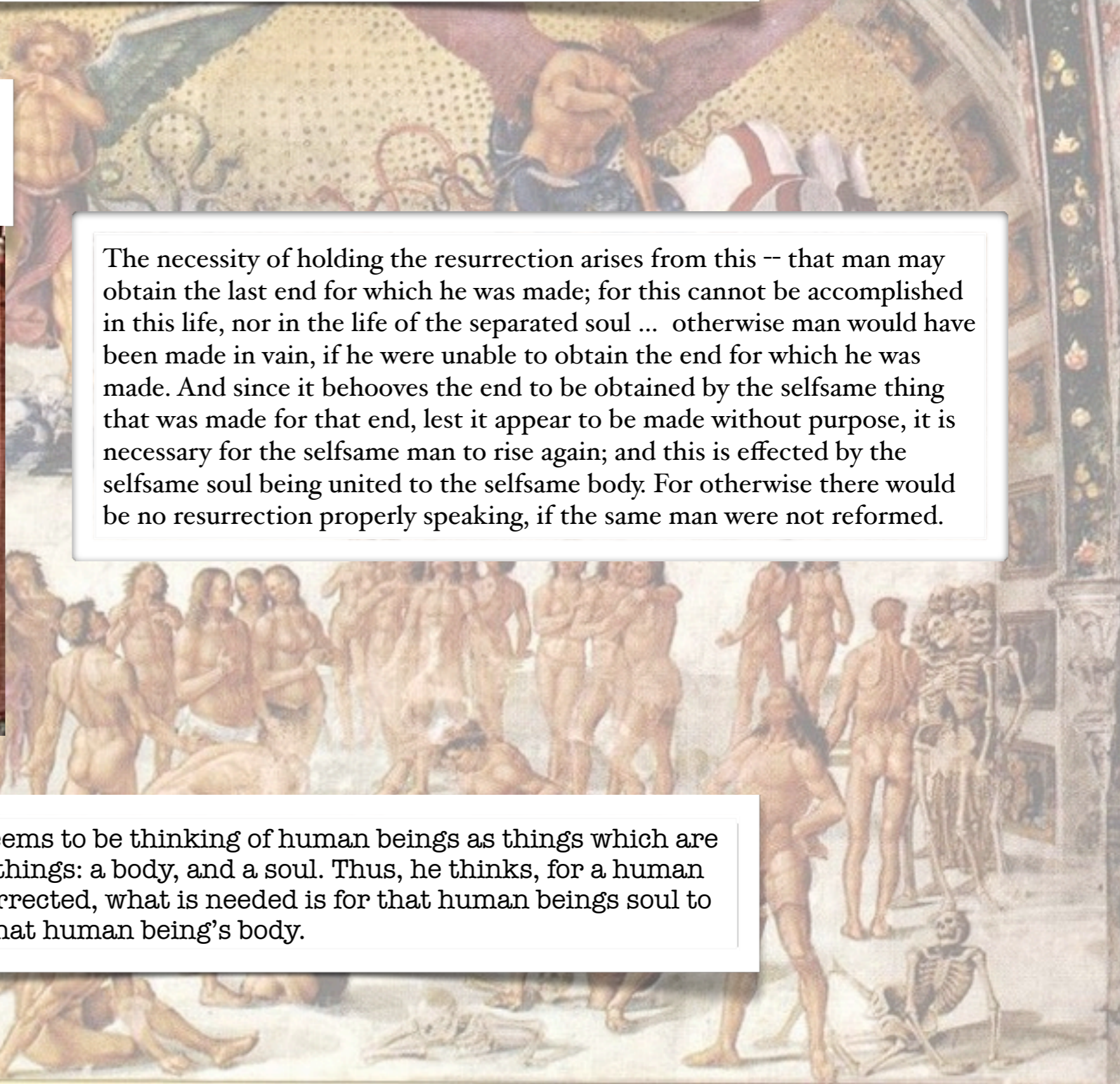
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In the Summa Theologica (II**II**q79a2) he writes:



The necessity of holding the resurrection arises from this -- that man may obtain the last end for which he was made; for this cannot be accomplished in this life, nor in the life of the separated soul ... otherwise man would have been made in vain, if he were unable to obtain the end for which he was made. And since it behooves the end to be obtained by the selfsame thing that was made for that end, lest it appear to be made without purpose, it is necessary for the selfsame man to rise again; and this is effected by the selfsame soul being united to the selfsame body. For otherwise there would be no resurrection properly speaking, if the same man were not reformed.

Here Aquinas seems to be thinking of human beings as things which are made up of two things: a body, and a soul. Thus, he thinks, for a human being to be resurrected, what is needed is for that human beings soul to be re-joined to that human being's body.







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Aquinas was consistent in this insistence that resurrection has to involve both your body and your soul. In a commentary on the first letter to the Corinthians, he wrote

A human being naturally desires his own salvation; but the soul, since it is part of the body of a human being, is not a whole human being, and my soul is not I; so even if a soul gains salvation in another life, that is not I or any human being.

One very surprising thing about this passage is that Aquinas refers to the soul as **part of the body of a human being**. What could this mean?

This is not an easy question to answer, and trying to answer it would take us too far afield. But one way to get a handle on Aquinas' thinking on this topic is to think about one analogy he provides to understand the relationship between my soul and the matter of which I am composed:

The soul, which is the primary principle of life, is not a body, but an actuality of a body, just as heat, which is the principle of heating, is not a body, but a certain actuality of a body.



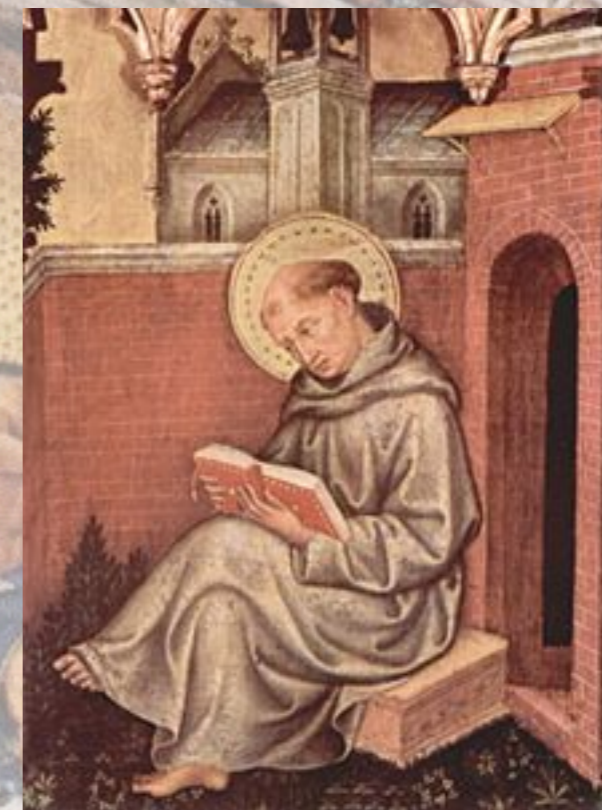
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This is (as Aquinas emphasizes in other places) not a perfect analogy. But it will help us to understand why Aquinas thought that the resurrection of the dead required that the body of the person resurrected be present. For if the soul is something like (even if not exactly like) a property of our bodies, then the survival of my soul is hardly sufficient for **me** to survive.

In a sense, then Aquinas' view of persons is not so terribly far from a straightforward materialist view, according to which we are material things. It's just that on Aquinas' view of what material things we are (and what material things in general are), part of the relevant material beings is a soul.

Let's formulate the constraint on personal identity over time which Aquinas' view requires like this:



### The same body requirement

If A does not have the same body as B, then A and B are not the same person.







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As Aquinas recognized, this view leads to immediate problems in making sense of the possibility of resurrection: for after I die, my body will decay, and hence won't be around at the time of the resurrection. Given the same body requirement, doesn't this just imply that **I** will not be raised from the dead?

Indeed, if we look at the sorts of worries Aquinas had about the possibility of resurrection, we can get some clues as to the sort of picture of the resurrection he had in mind.

One worry involved the effects of cannibalism:

It happens, occasionally, that some men feed on human flesh ... Therefore, the same flesh is found in many men. But it is not possible that it should rise in many. And the resurrection does not seem otherwise to be universal and entire if there is not restored to every man what he has had here.

This makes it sound as though Aquinas is thinking of the resurrection as involving a kind of **reassembly**. One way to think about it would be to think of the resurrection as involving God taking all of the particles which composed me at the time of my death, and then reassembling them into a body.



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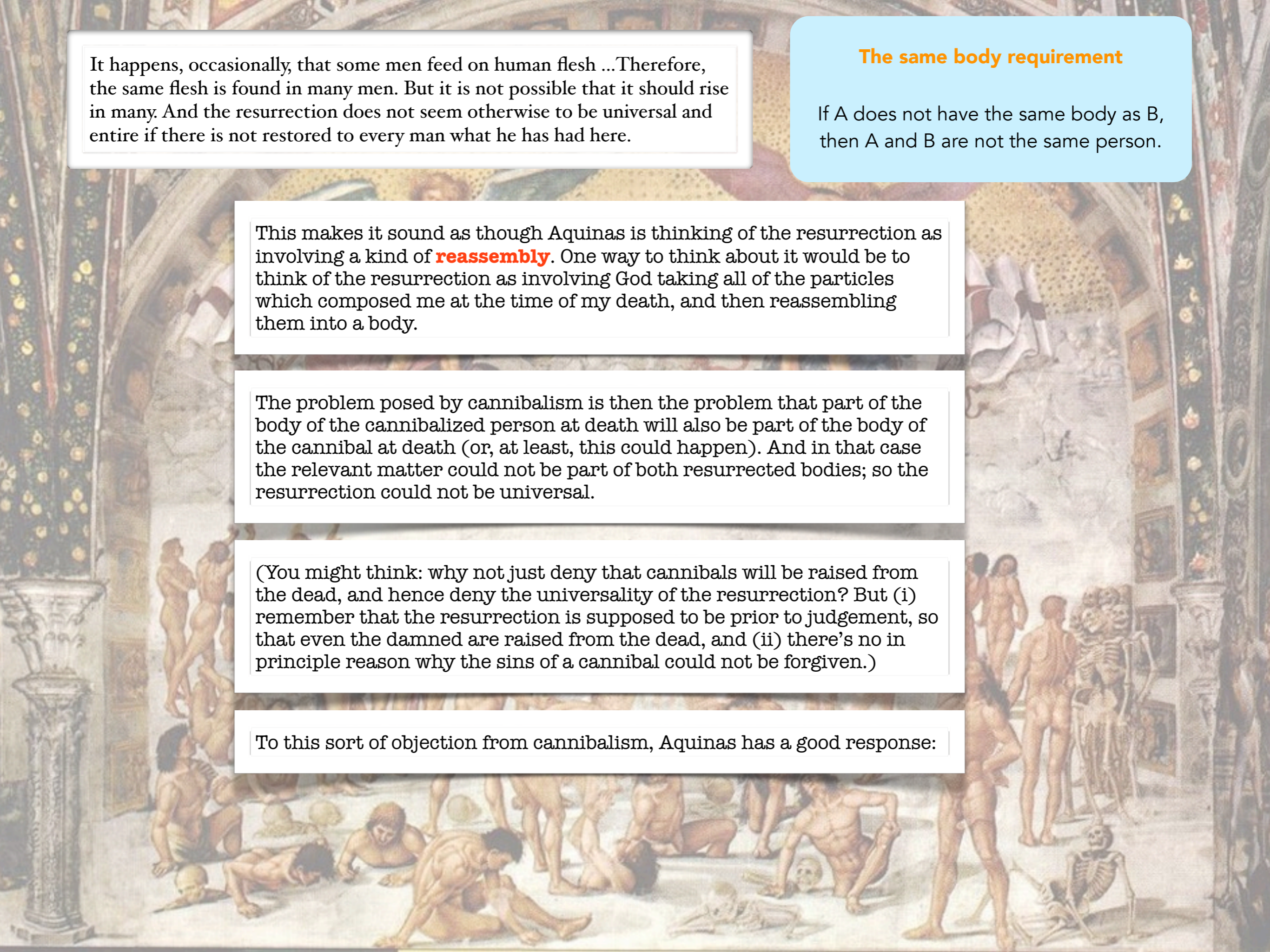
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The problem posed by cannibalism is then the problem that part of the body of the cannibalized person at death will also be part of the body of the cannibal at death (or, at least, this could happen). And in that case the relevant matter could not be part of both resurrected bodies; so the resurrection could not be universal.

(You might think: why not just deny that cannibals will be raised from the dead, and hence deny the universality of the resurrection? But (i) remember that the resurrection is supposed to be prior to judgement, so that even the damned are raised from the dead, and (ii) there's no in principle reason why the sins of a cannibal could not be forgiven.)

To this sort of objection from cannibalism, Aquinas has a good response:





The background is a classical painting, likely a detail from Raphael's 'The School of Athens'. It shows a scene with several figures in a grand, arched architectural setting. In the foreground, a skeleton is visible, suggesting a theme of mortality or the passage of time. The figures are dressed in classical attire, and the overall style is characteristic of the High Renaissance.

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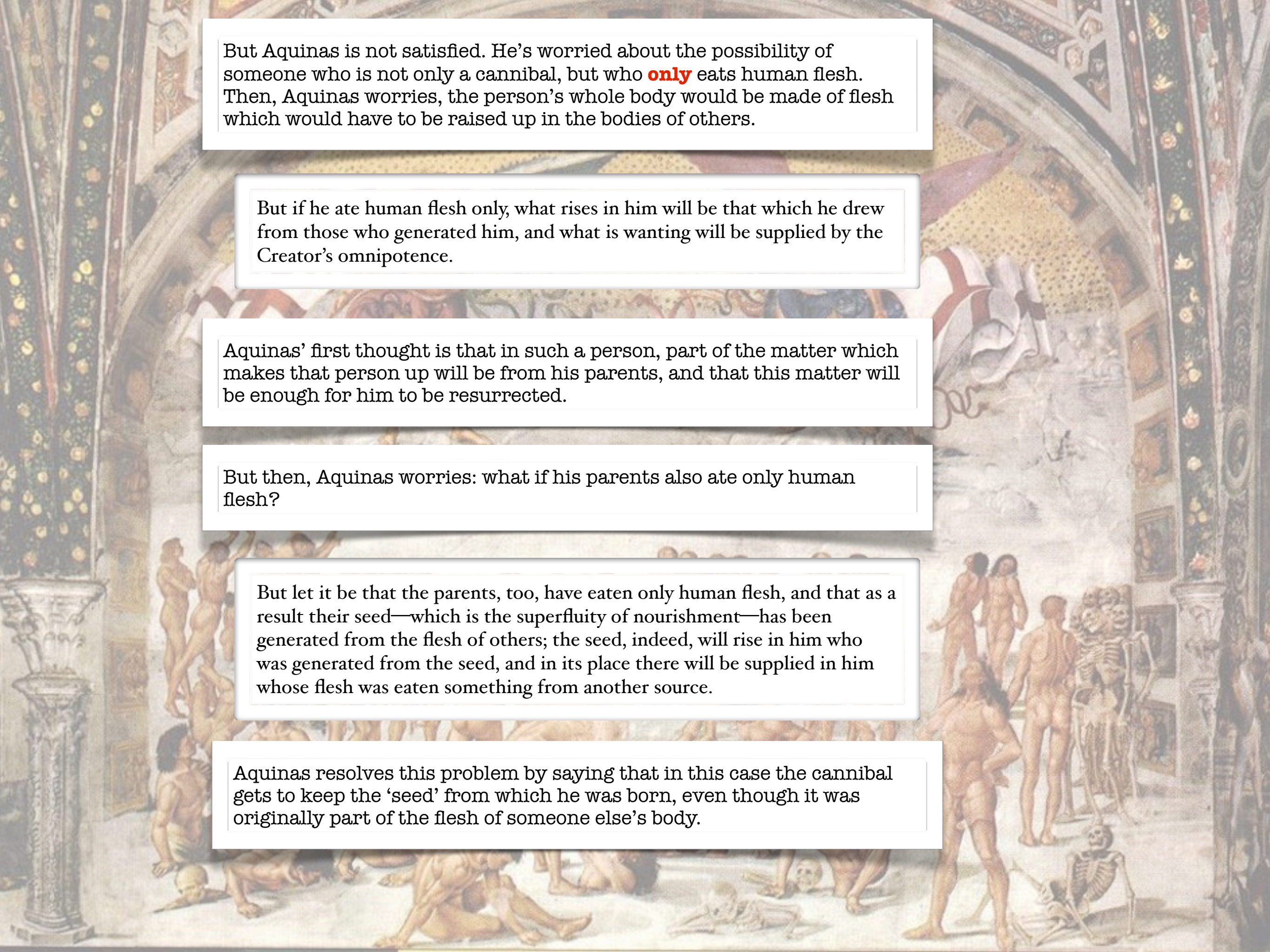
... what is no obstacle to a man's numerical unity while he continues to live manifestly cannot be an obstacle to the unity of one who rises. But in the body of man, so long as he is alive, it is not with respect to matter that he has the same parts .... In respect to matter, of course, the parts are in flux, but this is not an obstacle to his being numerically one from the beginning of his life to the end of it. An example of this can be taken from fire: While it continues to burn, it is called numerically one because its species persists, yet wood is consumed and new wood is applied. It is also like this in the human body, for the form and species of its single parts remain continuously through a whole life; the matter of the parts is not only resolved by the action of the natural heat, but is replenished anew by nourishment. Man is not, therefore, numerically different according to his different ages, although not everything which is in him materially in one state is also there in another. In this way, then, this is not a requirement of man's arising with numerical identity: that he should assume again whatever has been in him during the whole time of his life...

Aquinas recognizes that in this life, our bodies are constantly changing their parts; since this does not stop us from continuing to exist over time, resurrection cannot require that we have **all** of our parts restored to us after our death.

This, you might think, is enough to handle the problem posed by cannibalism.

But Aquinas is not satisfied. He's worried about the possibility of someone who is not only a cannibal, but who **only** eats human flesh. Then, Aquinas worries, the person's whole body would be made of flesh which would have to be raised up in the bodies of others.





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But if he ate human flesh only, what rises in him will be that which he drew from those who generated him, and what is wanting will be supplied by the Creator's omnipotence.

Aquinas' first thought is that in such a person, part of the matter which makes that person up will be from his parents, and that this matter will be enough for him to be resurrected.

But then, Aquinas worries: what if his parents also ate only human flesh?

But let it be that the parents, too, have eaten only human flesh, and that as a result their seed—which is the superfluity of nourishment—has been generated from the flesh of others; the seed, indeed, will rise in him who was generated from the seed, and in its place there will be supplied in him whose flesh was eaten something from another source.

Aquinas resolves this problem by saying that in this case the cannibal gets to keep the 'seed' from which he was born, even though it was originally part of the flesh of someone else's body.



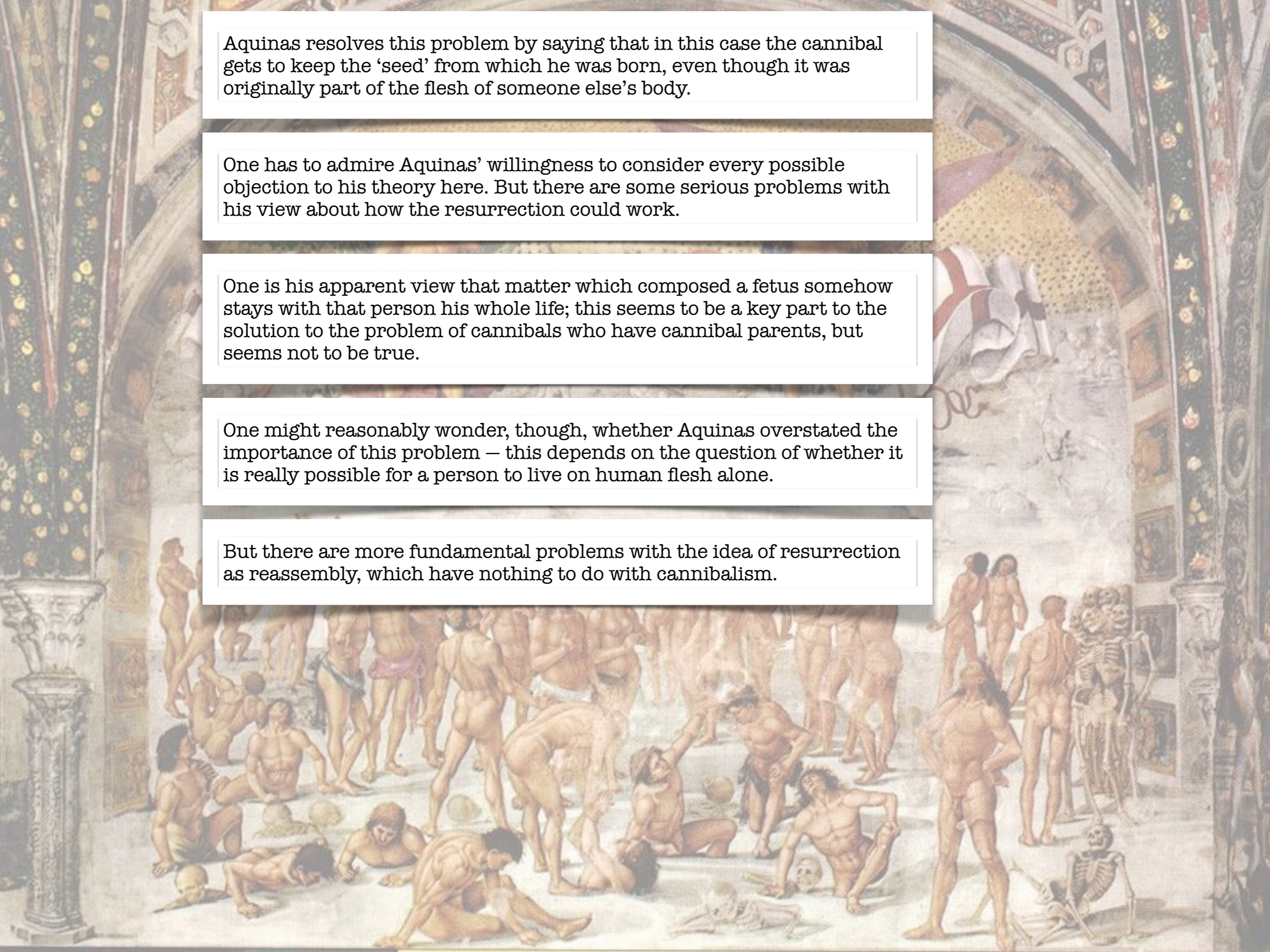
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One has to admire Aquinas' willingness to consider every possible objection to his theory here. But there are some serious problems with his view about how the resurrection could work.

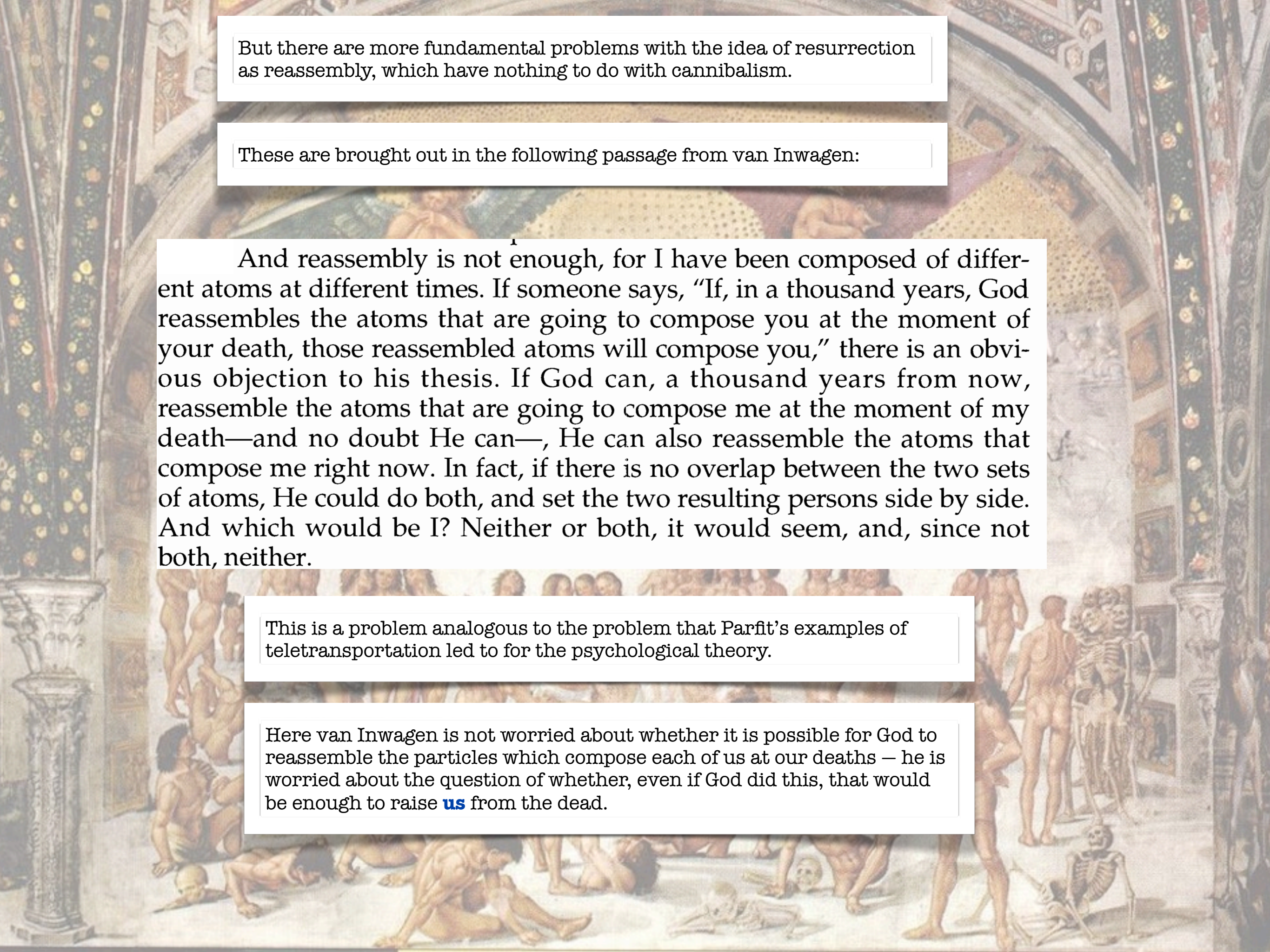
One is his apparent view that matter which composed a fetus somehow stays with that person his whole life; this seems to be a key part to the solution to the problem of cannibals who have cannibal parents, but seems not to be true.

One might reasonably wonder, though, whether Aquinas overstated the importance of this problem – this depends on the question of whether it is really possible for a person to live on human flesh alone.

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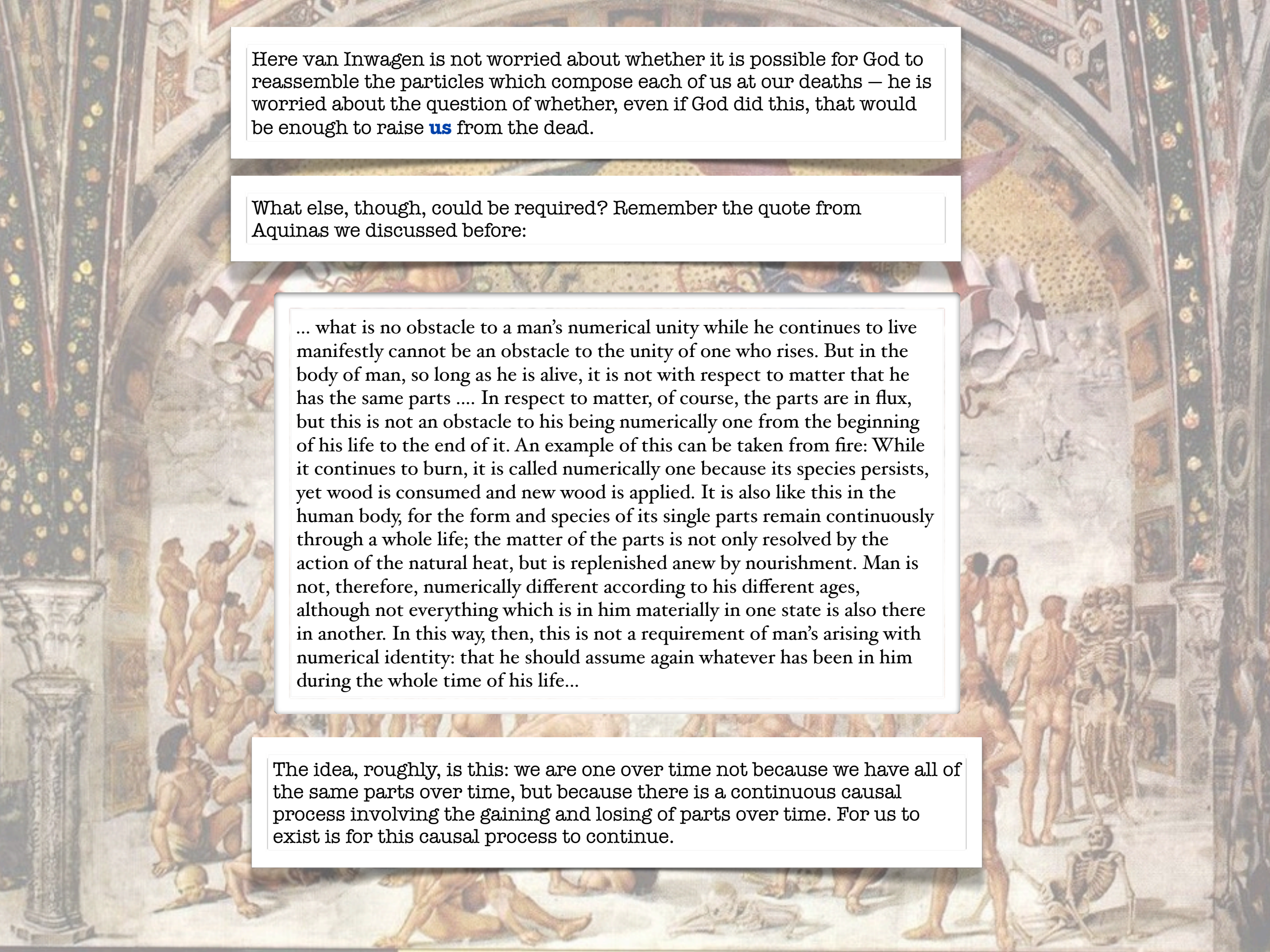
These are brought out in the following passage from van Inwagen:

And reassembly is not enough, for I have been composed of different atoms at different times. If someone says, “If, in a thousand years, God reassembles the atoms that are going to compose you at the moment of your death, those reassembled atoms will compose you,” there is an obvious objection to his thesis. If God can, a thousand years from now, reassemble the atoms that are going to compose me at the moment of my death—and no doubt He can—, He can also reassemble the atoms that compose me right now. In fact, if there is no overlap between the two sets of atoms, He could do both, and set the two resulting persons side by side. And which would be I? Neither or both, it would seem, and, since not both, neither.

This is a problem analogous to the problem that Parfit’s examples of teletransportation led to for the psychological theory.

Here van Inwagen is not worried about whether it is possible for God to reassemble the particles which compose each of us at our deaths – he is worried about the question of whether, even if God did this, that would be enough to raise **us** from the dead.





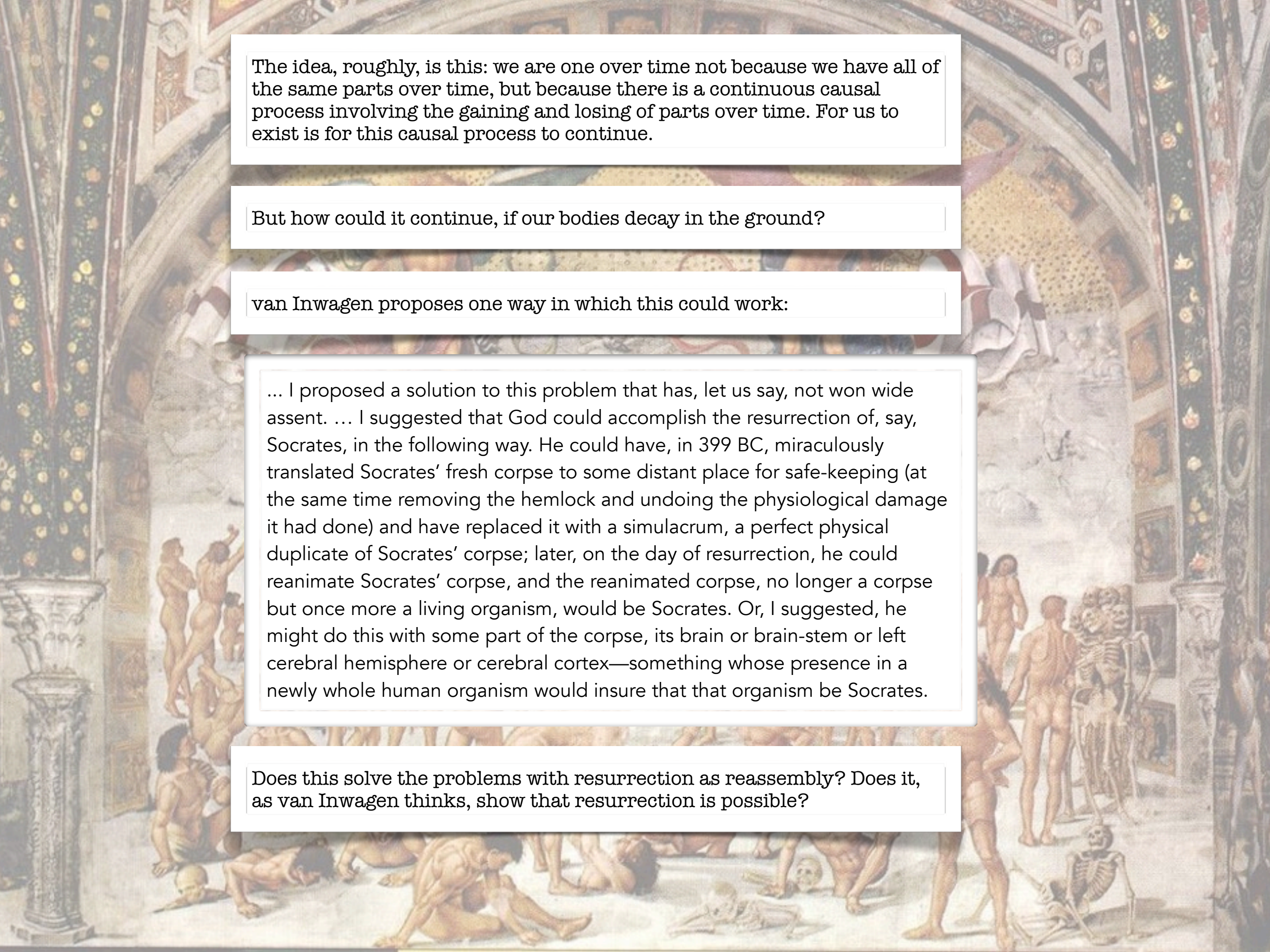
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What else, though, could be required? Remember the quote from Aquinas we discussed before:

... what is no obstacle to a man's numerical unity while he continues to live manifestly cannot be an obstacle to the unity of one who rises. But in the body of man, so long as he is alive, it is not with respect to matter that he has the same parts .... In respect to matter, of course, the parts are in flux, but this is not an obstacle to his being numerically one from the beginning of his life to the end of it. An example of this can be taken from fire: While it continues to burn, it is called numerically one because its species persists, yet wood is consumed and new wood is applied. It is also like this in the human body, for the form and species of its single parts remain continuously through a whole life; the matter of the parts is not only resolved by the action of the natural heat, but is replenished anew by nourishment. Man is not, therefore, numerically different according to his different ages, although not everything which is in him materially in one state is also there in another. In this way, then, this is not a requirement of man's arising with numerical identity: that he should assume again whatever has been in him during the whole time of his life...

The idea, roughly, is this: we are one over time not because we have all of the same parts over time, but because there is a continuous causal process involving the gaining and losing of parts over time. For us to exist is for this causal process to continue.





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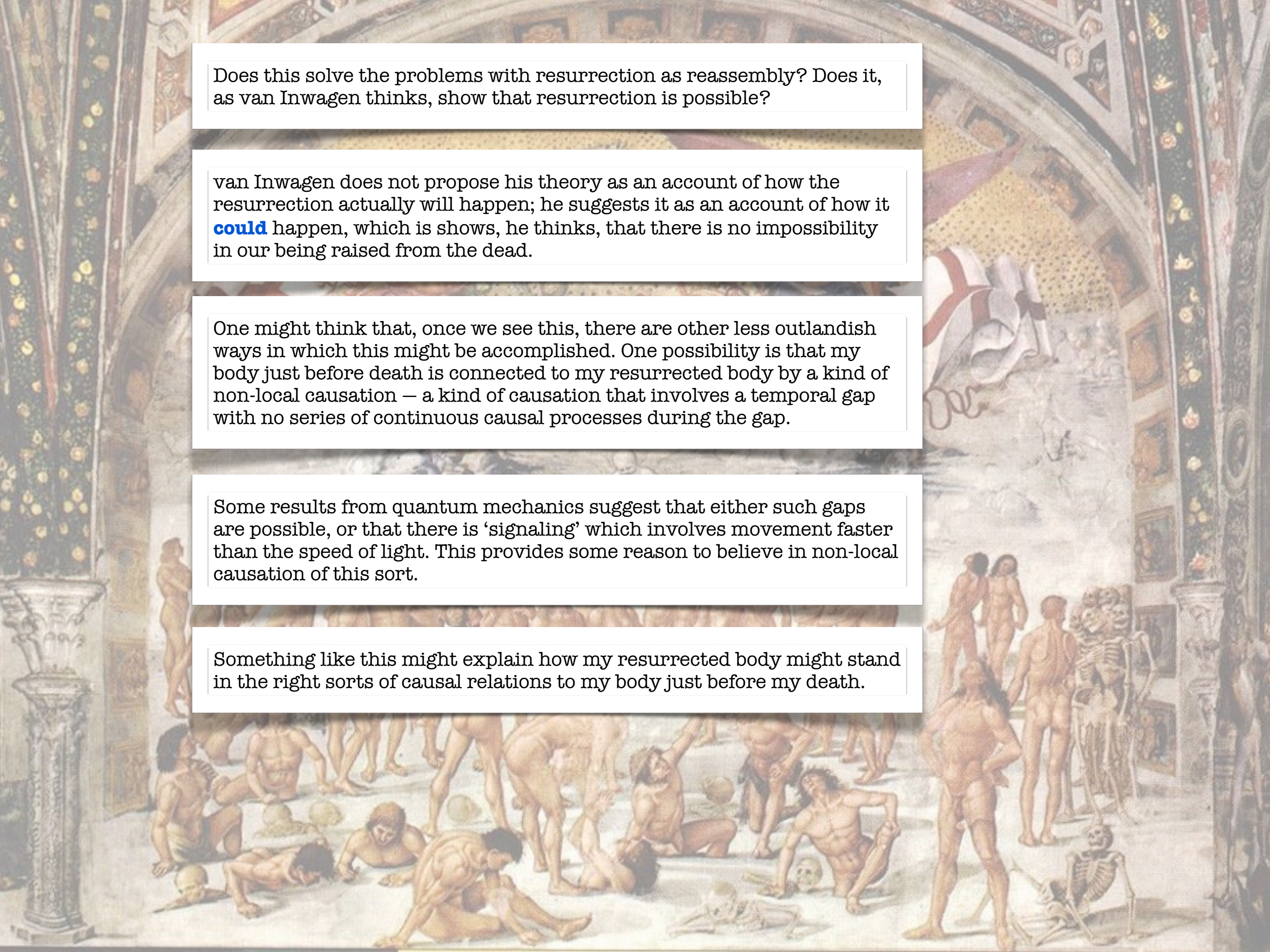
But how could it continue, if our bodies decay in the ground?

van Inwagen proposes one way in which this could work:

... I proposed a solution to this problem that has, let us say, not won wide assent. ... I suggested that God could accomplish the resurrection of, say, Socrates, in the following way. He could have, in 399 BC, miraculously translated Socrates' fresh corpse to some distant place for safe-keeping (at the same time removing the hemlock and undoing the physiological damage it had done) and have replaced it with a simulacrum, a perfect physical duplicate of Socrates' corpse; later, on the day of resurrection, he could reanimate Socrates' corpse, and the reanimated corpse, no longer a corpse but once more a living organism, would be Socrates. Or, I suggested, he might do this with some part of the corpse, its brain or brain-stem or left cerebral hemisphere or cerebral cortex—something whose presence in a newly whole human organism would insure that that organism be Socrates.

Does this solve the problems with resurrection as reassembly? Does it, as van Inwagen thinks, show that resurrection is possible?





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van Inwagen does not propose his theory as an account of how the resurrection actually will happen; he suggests it as an account of how it **could** happen, which shows, he thinks, that there is no impossibility in our being raised from the dead.

One might think that, once we see this, there are other less outlandish ways in which this might be accomplished. One possibility is that my body just before death is connected to my resurrected body by a kind of non-local causation — a kind of causation that involves a temporal gap with no series of continuous causal processes during the gap.

Some results from quantum mechanics suggest that either such gaps are possible, or that there is ‘signaling’ which involves movement faster than the speed of light. This provides some reason to believe in non-local causation of this sort.

Something like this might explain how my resurrected body might stand in the right sorts of causal relations to my body just before my death.



Our discussion has focused on the possibility of resurrection given the thesis that we are material beings, whose continued existence must involve whatever causal processes are required for the continued existence of material things.

But one might also think that this view of what we are is simply incorrect. Some reason to believe this can be given based on examples which are, again, parallel in a way to Parfit's examples of teletransportation.

These are cases of **fission**. Suppose that instead of Parfit stepping into a teletransporter, he decided to undergo an ambitious new form of surgery.

In this surgery, one's body is sawn in half. The left half is then joined with a perfect replica of the right half, and the right half is then joined with a perfect replica of the left half.

Let's call the resultant persons Left-Parfit and Right-Parfit. It is obvious that  $\text{Left-Parfit} \neq \text{Right-Parfit}$ . But it seems that if materialism is true,  $\text{Left-Parfit} = \text{Original-Parfit}$  and  $\text{Right-Parfit} = \text{Original-Parfit}$ . After all, each of Left- and Right-Parfit are physically and causally connected to Original-Parfit.





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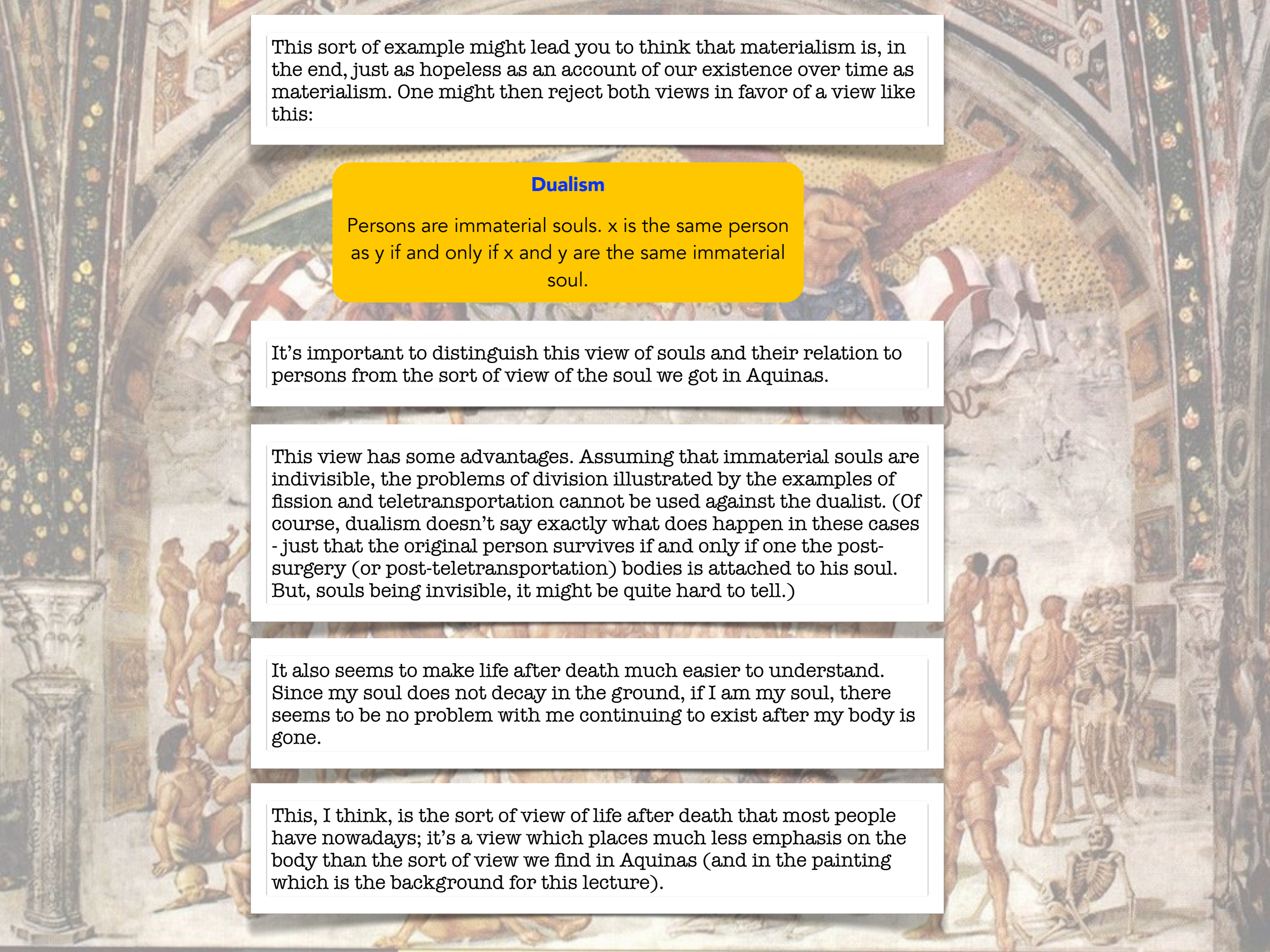
Might the materialist reply that neither of Left- and Right-Parfit have **enough** of a connection to Original-Parfit? Perhaps one must, from moment to moment, have **more than 50%** of the cells of someone in order to be identical to them.

But this sort of view is open to at least three objections.



- 1 It is hard to believe that there could be a single "cut off point." Suppose that the surgeon accidentally includes a bit more of Original-Parfit in the left half. Could that really determine whether Original-Parfit survives the surgery?
- 2 Moreover, it seems a bit like cheating, since we would not find the ">50%" requirement plausible if the other half did not survive. Suppose that more than half of someone's body was destroyed in a terrible accident. Wouldn't we think that it was great if medical science were able to save the person's life by replicating the destroyed portion of the body and re-joining it to the surviving portion?
- 3 One might reply to these worries by saying that it is not the whole body which determines personal identity, but rather just some part of the body - like the brain. But even here one might worry about the seeming possibility of partial brain transplants. Suppose that we acquired the ability to cure brain cancer by replicating the cancerous portion of the brain, removing the cancerous part, and replacing it with the replica. Would that really kill the patient? Would it matter exactly what % of the brain had to be removed? What would be the cut-off point?



The background is a classical painting of an interior space, possibly a library or a study. It features several figures in classical attire. In the foreground, a man is seated on the floor, looking towards the right. In the background, other figures are engaged in various activities. The architecture includes arches and columns. The overall style is reminiscent of Renaissance or Baroque art.

This sort of example might lead you to think that materialism is, in the end, just as hopeless as an account of our existence over time as materialism. One might then reject both views in favor of a view like this:

### Dualism

Persons are immaterial souls.  $x$  is the same person as  $y$  if and only if  $x$  and  $y$  are the same immaterial soul.

It's important to distinguish this view of souls and their relation to persons from the sort of view of the soul we got in Aquinas.

This view has some advantages. Assuming that immaterial souls are indivisible, the problems of division illustrated by the examples of fission and teletransportation cannot be used against the dualist. (Of course, dualism doesn't say exactly what does happen in these cases - just that the original person survives if and only if one the post-surgery (or post-teletransportation) bodies is attached to his soul. But, souls being invisible, it might be quite hard to tell.)

It also seems to make life after death much easier to understand. Since my soul does not decay in the ground, if I am my soul, there seems to be no problem with me continuing to exist after my body is gone.

This, I think, is the sort of view of life after death that most people have nowadays; it's a view which places much less emphasis on the body than the sort of view we find in Aquinas (and in the painting which is the background for this lecture).



## Dualism

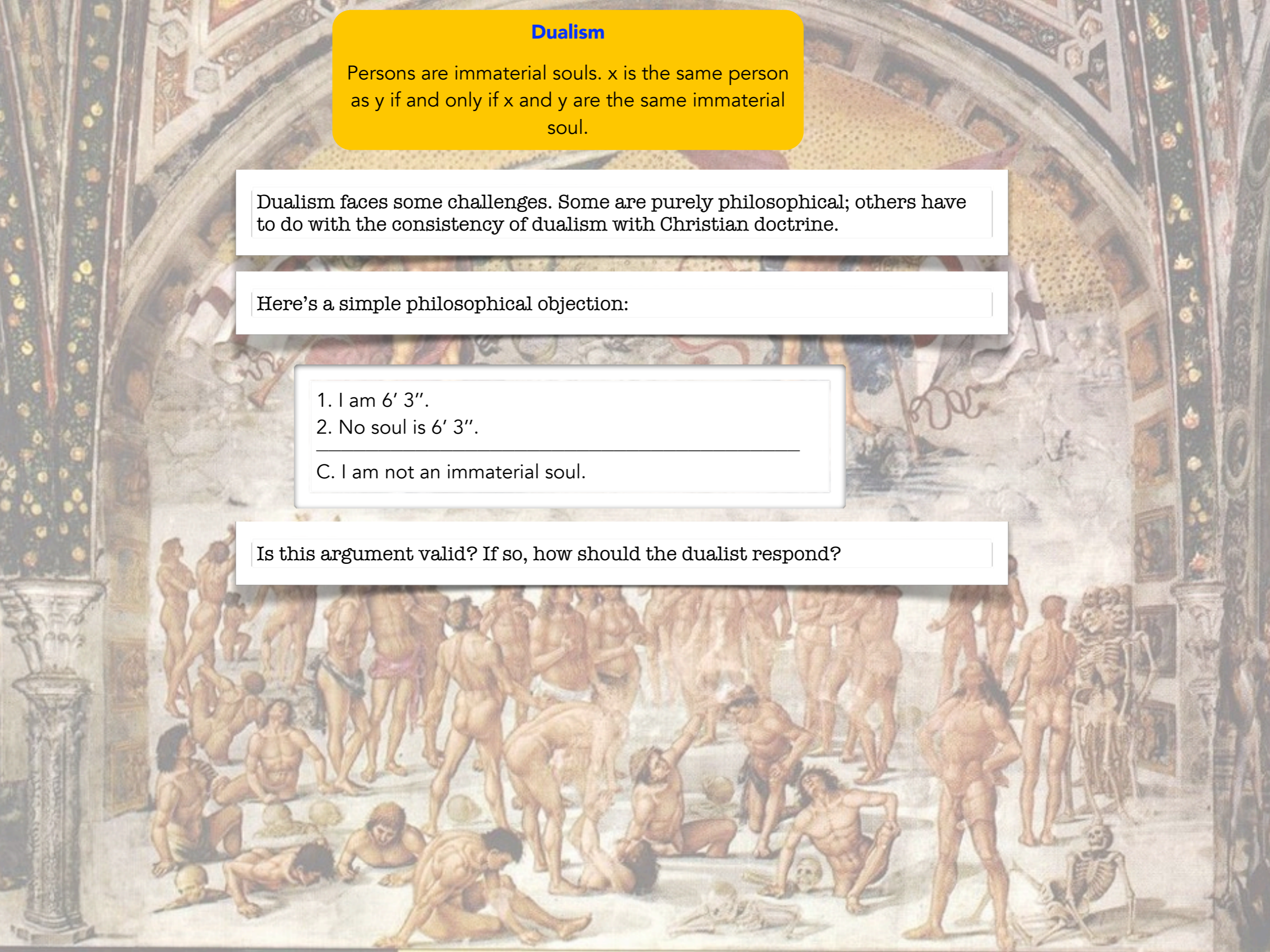
Persons are immaterial souls. x is the same person as y if and only if x and y are the same immaterial soul.

Dualism faces some challenges. Some are purely philosophical; others have to do with the consistency of dualism with Christian doctrine.

Here's a simple philosophical objection:

1. I am 6' 3".
  2. No soul is 6' 3".
- 
- C. I am not an immaterial soul.

Is this argument valid? If so, how should the dualist respond?





## Dualism

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A second important philosophical objection has to do with the interaction between immaterial souls and the material world.

It is very plausible that what happens to your body can affect your mental life, and that mental events also have physical effects. The dualist who agrees with these points is an **interactionist dualist**, since she believes in genuine causal interactions between souls and the material world.

But this can seem mysterious; how could an immaterial thing, which lacks physical attributes like mass and momentum, bring about effects in the physical world?

One worry about this is that it seems that the interactionist dualist has to think that certain conservation laws involving physical quantities have exceptions. Consider, for example, the conservation of energy and the conservation of momentum. It would seem that to bring about effects in the physical world, a soul would have to bring about a change in the energy or momentum of some physical system. But wouldn't such a change violate conservation laws?

The question of whether the dualist can make sense of mind-body interactions is a difficult and important one, which deserves more discussion than we can give it here.



## Dualism

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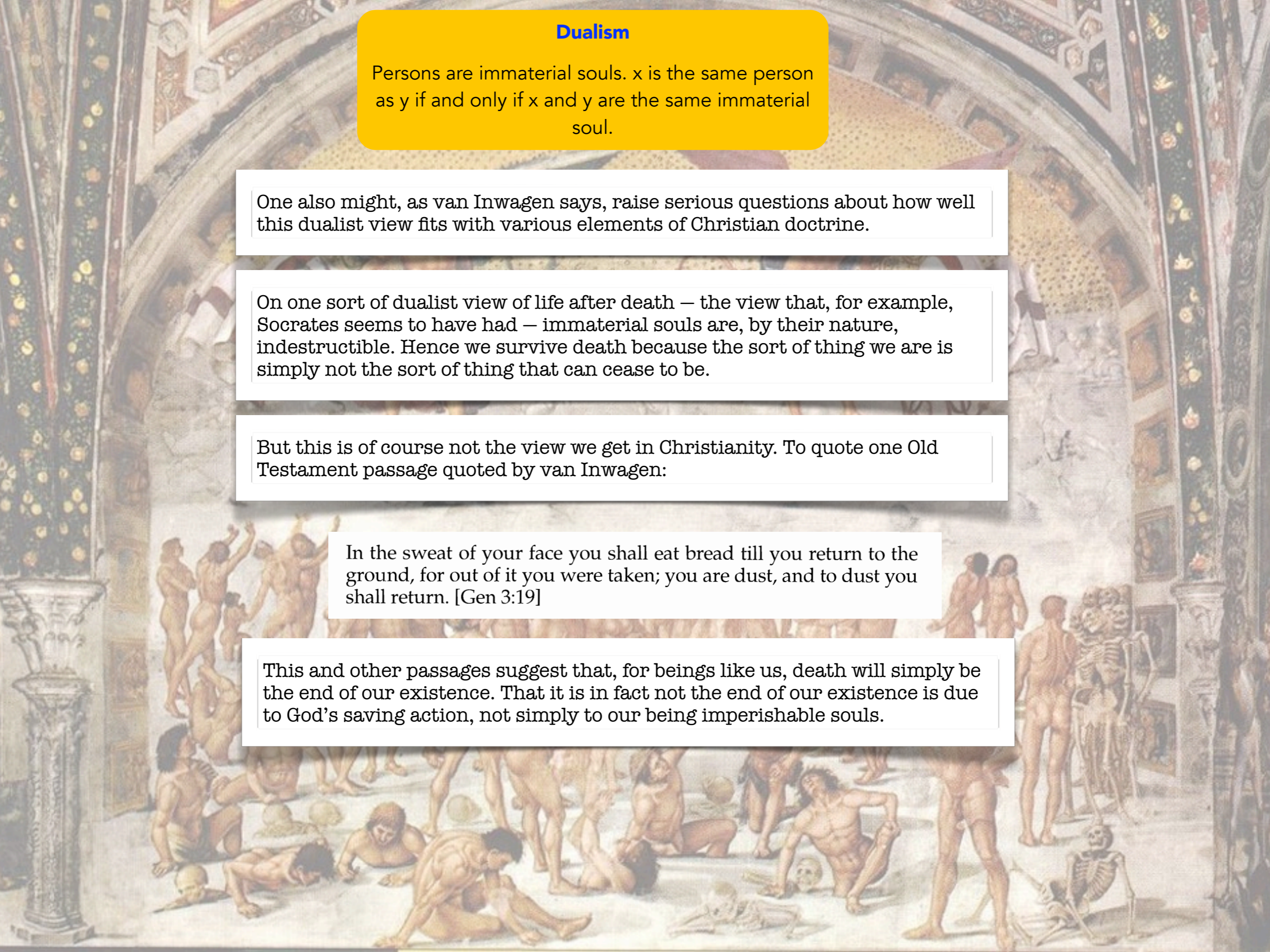
One also might, as van Inwagen says, raise serious questions about how well this dualist view fits with various elements of Christian doctrine.

On one sort of dualist view of life after death — the view that, for example, Socrates seems to have had — immaterial souls are, by their nature, indestructible. Hence we survive death because the sort of thing we are is simply not the sort of thing that can cease to be.

But this is of course not the view we get in Christianity. To quote one Old Testament passage quoted by van Inwagen:

In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return. [Gen 3:19]

This and other passages suggest that, for beings like us, death will simply be the end of our existence. That it is in fact not the end of our existence is due to God's saving action, not simply to our being imperishable souls.





## Dualism

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One might also wonder – if dualism is true – why there is so much emphasis in the Christian tradition placed on **resurrection**, rather than simply life after death. Why should our bodies have to be raised up, if we are immaterial souls?

There are things that the dualist can say here. But it is fair to say, I think, that it is less obvious than commonly supposed that dualism – rather than some form of materialism – is the view of the human person which fits best with Christian views of persons and the afterlife.

