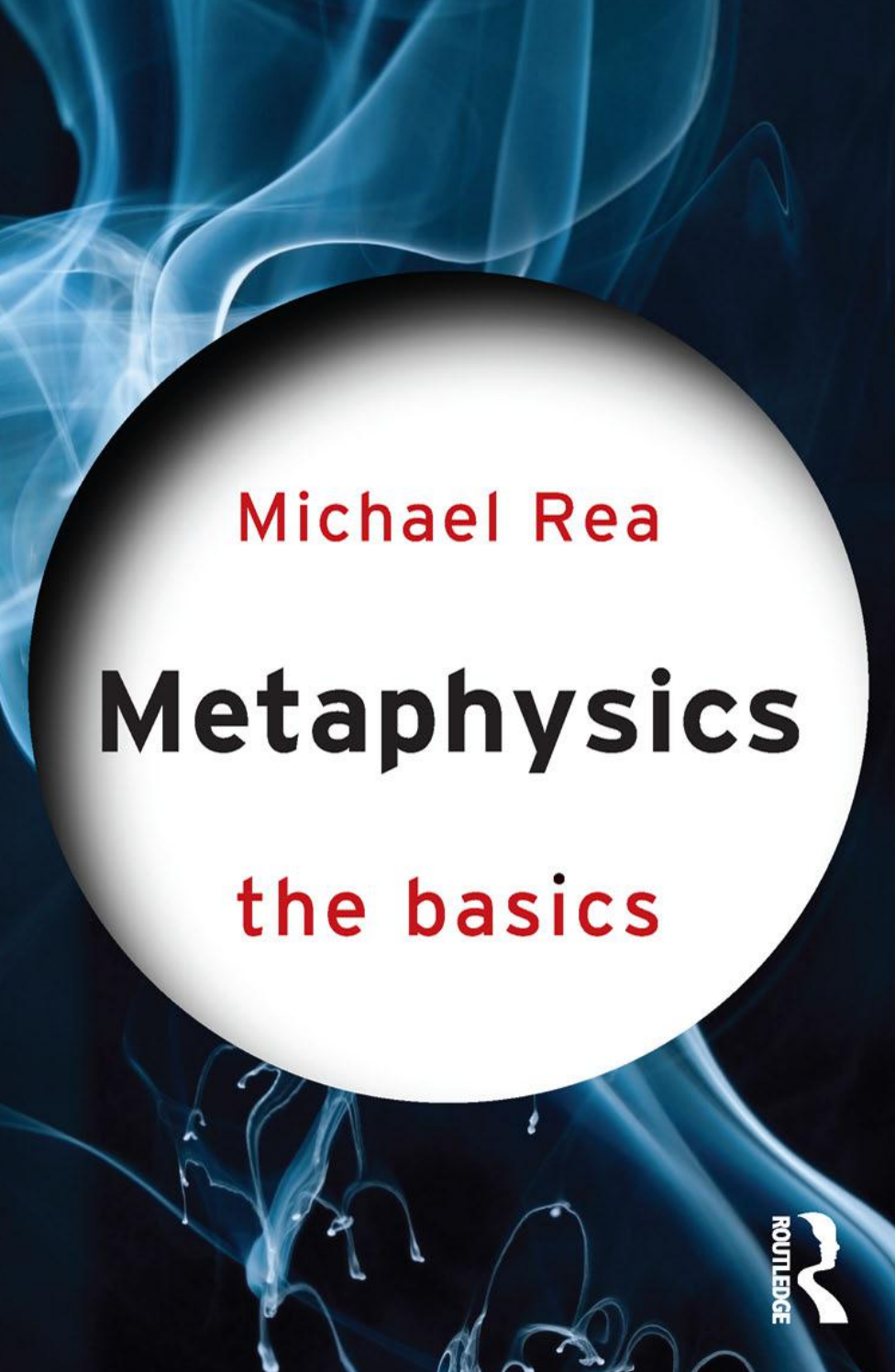
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example. You remember where you were, what you were doing, what the cake tasted like, and so on. Getting a bit more specific, suppose you think at *t1*, "I really enjoyed that cake," and then you think at *t2* "I'm glad that my sister was there." Obviously the transition from the one thought to another involves a change. Thus, DTP implies that you have different temporal parts at *t1* and *t2*, one of whom thinks "I really enjoyed that cake" and the other of whom thinks "I'm glad that my sister was there." Moreover, it is by virtue of having these two different temporal parts that you think those things at the relevant times. But now it looks as if we have *three different thinkers*—you, your *t1* part, and your *t2* part—where in fact we should have only one. This is bizarre. The doctrine of temporal parts implies that for every temporary thought you have, there is some *other thing*—a temporal part of you—that *also* has that thought. Worse, it implies that you have your thoughts derivatively: It is only *because* that temporal part of you has the thought he or she has that you have the thought that you have. Furthermore, the doctrine implies that some of the things thinking your thoughts have true beliefs and others don't. Your *t1* and *t2* parts never ate your sixteenth-birthday cake (they didn't exist at that time); and your sister is not their sister (they don't have sisters). Thus, they are mistaken when they think that they enjoyed your cake, and they are confused when they think of your sister as theirs. All of this, I submit, is very odd.

So DTP comes with some costs. I have not listed them all, but these three are among the most salient. However, DTP also comes in different varieties, which avoid some of the costs listed here while taking on other, different ones. For my part, the costs associated with DTP are too high. Endurantism seems a better way to go.

MATERIAL CONSTITUTION

You loan money to a friend, a substantial sum. Months later, weeks past the deadline for repayment, you contact your friend and ask for your money. Your friend offers instead a philosophical argument:

> Look at me: I'm just a collection of particles. You don't think there's something here *in addition* to the collection of particles, do you? I mean,

> it's not as if, in addition to the 135-pound collection of particles there is *also* a 135-pound woman, right? So there is a collection here, and I am that collection. But, now think about it for a moment. I am obviously a *different* collection of particles from the one who borrowed money from you. For example, *this* collection of particles includes some of the stuff that composed my breakfast this morning; *that other* collection didn't include that stuff. So I am a different collection of particles from the one who borrowed the money. A human person *just is* a collection of particles. So I am a different person from the one who borrowed that money. So I don't owe you any money.

Obviously something has gone wrong. But what? How is the debtor's argument flawed?

The debtor has raised a puzzle about material constitution. Material constitution occurs whenever an object *a* and an object *b* (in this case, the debtor and the collection of particles that constitutes her) share all of the same parts at the same time. The phenomenon is puzzling because it is not at all clear what the relationship is between the relevant *a* and *b*. In particular, it is not clear whether $a = b$. The debtor assumes that she is identical with the collection of particles that now constitutes her and concludes that she is therefore not the same person as the one who earlier borrowed some money (because that person was identical to a different set of particles). No doubt we want to deny this. But what will we say instead? If we say that she is *not* identical to the collection of particles that constitutes her, do we say that there is a 135-pound person and a distinct 135-pound collection of particles occupying *exactly the same place at the same time*? If not, then what else can we say? We seem to have no good alternatives.

There are many different kinds of puzzles about material constitution in the philosophical literature, but all of them present us with scenarios in which it appears that an object *a* and an object *b* share all of the same parts but have different **modal properties**. (Modal properties are properties like *being able to survive being squashed* or *being possibly made of wood*.) In what follows, I will sometimes also speak of **persistence conditions**. Since persistence conditions are facts about what changes an object *can* or *cannot* survive, they too are modal properties. The fundamental problem that they all raise is known as "the problem of material constitution."

We will talk about solutions shortly, but first we should get several of the different puzzles out onto the table. The Debtor's Paradox, presented above, is one of them. In what follows, I will discuss three others: the Ship of Theseus, Body-Minus, and Lumpl/Goliath. Familiarity with these three puzzles and their possible solutions is a gateway into a wide variety of core topics in contemporary metaphysics.

The Ship of Theseus. Consider a ship: the Ship of Theseus. At the beginning of its career, the ship is made entirely of wooden planks. The ship sails the same route for many decades and is "preserved" in the following way: Whenever one of the wooden planks wears out, it is discarded and replaced by an aluminum one. Eventually the time comes when all of the wooden planks have been replaced by aluminum ones. One day, however, an historian decides to gather all of the discarded planks and rebuild them in their original form. As a result of her work, each plank has the same position that it did in the original ship. She sells her ship to the local museum, and the curator then boasts that he has on display the Ship of Theseus. The crew of the aluminum ship, however, is outraged: "*We* are sailing the Ship of Theseus and have been for many years. The Ship of Theseus is here on the water, not there in your museum!" Who is right? Which ship is the Ship of Theseus?

Body-minus. Suppose that Tibbles is, at a certain time, a well-formed, properly functioning cat. At some later time, however, an unfortunate accident befalls her, resulting in the annihilation of her tail. Tibbles is understandably distressed. But we should be also. To see why, let us use "Body-minus" to name that part of Tibbles that includes all of her except for her tail—call it her torso. Before the accident, Tibbles is distinct from her torso. It is a **proper part** of Tibbles (i.e., the torso does not completely coincide with Tibbles). After the accident, Tibbles survives. Annihilating a tail doesn't normally destroy a cat. But Body-minus also survives. Annihilating a tail doesn't destroy a torso. But now we have a problem. On the one hand, we want to say that, after the accident, Tibbles is identical to Body-minus. Otherwise we would have two things in the same place at once. But Body-minus and Tibbles have different modal properties. Body-minus can exist as a mere torso; Tibbles cannot. Tibbles can be a cat with a tail; Body-minus cannot. So it seems that Tibbles cannot be identical to Body-minus after all.

Lumpl/Goliath. This puzzle was introduced by Allan Gibbard. A sculptor sets out to create a statue of Goliath, but he does so in the following way: He sculpts Goliath's upper body from one piece of clay, his lower body from another, and then finishes the statue by sticking the two pieces of clay together. In joining the two pieces of clay he simultaneously brings into existence a *new* piece of clay (call it "Lumpl") and a completed statue (call it "Goliath"). He allows the clay to harden, but then a day later, dissatisfied with his work, he smashes the statue, thereby obliterating both Lumpl and Goliath. The question is whether Goliath = Lumpl. There seems to be no good answer to this question. An affirmative answer is implausible, since Lumpl and Goliath seem to have different modal properties. For example (supposing the clay is still wet), Lumpl would survive if the piece of clay were reshaped in the form of a vase, whereas Goliath would not. And Goliath would survive if its left finger were annihilated, whereas Lumpl would not. But a negative answer is also implausible, at least initially, since such an answer appears to commit us to the conclusion that two distinct objects (a lump and a statue) can fully occupy the same region of spacetime.

All of these puzzles have roots in antiquity; and there are endless variations on each. But why think that they are all puzzles about material constitution? What are the relevant objects *a* and *b* in each puzzle that (allegedly) share all of the same parts and yet have different modal properties? The answer is straightforward in the first three puzzles. In the Debtor's Paradox, the relevant objects are the debtor and the collection of particles that constitutes her. Intuitively, the persistence conditions of persons and mere collections of particles are different: Removing particles from a collection leaves one with a *new* collection, whereas removing a few particles from a person doesn't seem to leave one with a new person (nor does it seem to destroy a person). Hence the difference in modal properties. In the Lumpl/Goliath puzzle, the objects are Lumpl and Goliath. Intuitively, lumps of clay and statues have different persistence conditions: The former, but not the latter, can survive being squashed. Hence they too have different modal properties. In the Body-minus puzzle, the objects are Tibbles and Body-minus; and I have already explained how it is that they have different modal properties.

The Ship of Theseus Puzzle is more complicated. Initially, it seems that the puzzle presents us not with two objects but at least

three: the original ship, the aluminum ship, and the historian's ship (that is, the ship that has been rebuilt from the original planks). Moreover, at the end of the story it is not at all clear which (if any) of these objects constitute one another. Obviously the historian's ship and the aluminum one do not constitute one another. But does either constitute the original ship? That question seems equivalent to the one already under dispute. For if either of the two ships constitutes the original, it will do so only because it is *identical* with the original. Thus, it is hard to see how this puzzle presents us with an object *a* and an object *b* that share all of the same parts but appear for some reason to be *distinct* from one another.

But suppose we focus our attention not on the end of the story but on the beginning. At the beginning of the story, what kind of thing do the original planks compose? A ship, obviously. But what kind of ship? We start with the intuition that they compose a ship that can survive complete part-replacement, and this is what tempts us to identify the aluminum ship with the original. But during the story, another of our intuitions is uncovered. It turns out that we are also inclined to think that, at the beginning of the story, the planks compose a ship that *cannot* survive complete part-replacement. This intuition is what tempts us to identify the historian's ship with the Ship of Theseus. So, in other words, the puzzle arises because we have some reason to think that two ships coincide at the beginning: one which can survive complete part-replacement and one which cannot. By the end of the story, those two ships have split apart; one is made of aluminum, and the other sits in a museum. As with any puzzle about material constitution, we can just accept the conclusion that there were two ships at the beginning where we thought there was only one. Or we can insist that, at the beginning of the story, either the aluminum ship or the historian's ship did not exist, thus identifying the remaining one with the Ship of Theseus. Or we can look for some other solution to the puzzle.

What, then, are our options? How do we solve these puzzles? Speaking quite generally, each puzzle presents us with a choice among four solutions.

Option 1: Deny the assumption that if x and y share all of the same parts, then x = y. This option, of course, has been on the table from the very beginning of our discussion. None of the puzzles would be

very puzzling if we did not have the strong intuition that two distinct material objects can never occupy exactly the same region of spacetime at the same time or share all of the same material parts. But one might think that precisely what the puzzles show us is that this deeply held intuition is false.

Option 2: Deny the existence of objects belonging to the kinds that are central to the puzzle. Each of the puzzles assumes the existence of at least two objects, each belonging to a different kind. The way these puzzles normally go, we start with a familiar kind of composite object (e.g., ship, statue, cat). We are then invited to believe in the existence of another kind of object (e.g., mere torso, mere collection of particles, etc.). Associated with each kind are different modal properties (e.g., statues can't survive squashing, but lumps can; cats can have tails, but torsos can't, etc.). This is what generates the puzzle. Thus, each of the puzzles can be solved by denying its existence assumptions. If there are no statues, or no mere lumps, then the Lumpl/Goliath puzzle is solved. If there are no torsos, the Body-minus puzzle is solved. If there are no composite objects at all, then all of the puzzles are solved.

Denying the existence of ships is not the same as denying that the world contains matter arranged in a general ship-like way. Nobody seriously denies the latter claim. Instead, they deny that arranging matter ship-wise suffices to bring a ship into existence. Likewise for those who deny the existence of torsos, cats, statues, and so on. If you find this puzzling, consider the fact that you yourself probably do not believe that arranging matter in any way whatsoever suffices to bring a new object into existence. For example, you probably don't believe that arranging matter in the form of a football team (i.e., putting uniforms on men and sending them out to a football field) brings a composite object of the kind *football team* into existence. Football teams, many of us think, are **mere pluralities**. That is, the term "football team" is not a name for an object but a device for referring collectively to several objects that do not together compose anything. But if we can say this about football teams, why *not* say something similar about ships, statues, cats, or—more radically—all (apparent) composite objects?

Good question. Answering it requires one to say something about the conditions under which composition occurs. This is a topic that has received a great deal of attention in contemporary

metaphysics, and we shall discuss it briefly in Chapter 5. For now, I will simply note that few philosophers want to go so far as to deny the existence of composite objects generally but many do still want to deny the existence of quite a lot of composite objects that populate the ontology of common sense. Ships and statues are among the first to go. Cats and other living organisms, however, are more often allowed to remain.

Option 3: Deny the problematic modal properties. In discussing Option 2, I noted that, in every constitution puzzle, different modal properties are associated with each of the kinds mentioned in the puzzle. So, for concreteness, consider again the Lumpl/Goliath puzzle. In raising the puzzle, we assume that lumps have one set of modal properties, and statues another. But we can contest this assumption. So, for example, we might insist that at least some lumps—namely those that are also statues—cannot survive being squashed. We might insist that at least some collections of particles—namely, those that are human beings—have the modal properties of persons rather than the modal properties of mere collections. And so on.

We can put this solution more generally as follows. Suppose you are confronted with an object *a* and an object *b* that share all of the same parts but belong to two different kinds (K1 and K2); and suppose that the modal properties associated with K1 (e.g., *being able to survive squashing*) are incompatible with those associated with K2 (e.g., *being unable to survive squashing*). What you should say is the following: $a = b$, and that object belongs to both kinds. But not every object can have all of the modal properties associated with all of the kinds to which it belongs. Rather, every object has a *dominant kind*. An object's dominant kind is the one you'd refer to if you were in a position to give, for the object, the correct answer to the question, "What is the nature of that object?" So, in the case at hand, perhaps K1 is the dominant kind; perhaps K2 is the dominant kind; or perhaps neither is. Regardless, however, it won't be true that the object in question has the (incompatible) modal properties associated with *both* kinds.

This is an attractive solution, but it carries at least one unattractive cost. Suppose you shape a piece of clay into a statue. The piece you start with is a mere lump. The statue is also a lump, but (we might suppose) its dominant kind is statue. Since the initial lump was *by nature* a mere lump and the statue is not, it follows that

the statue is not identical to the lump you started with. Shaping the lump destroyed it and replaced it with a statue. Similar results arise in the other constitution puzzles. This, then, is our cost: The present solution implies that what appear not to be destructive changes *are* destructive changes. Some philosophers find this to be highly counterintuitive.

Option 4: Deny that identity is necessary. Each of the puzzles tacitly assumes that identity is necessary. That is, each puzzle assumes that, for any objects x and y, if x *is* identical to y, then x *has to be* identical to y. (It follows from this assumption that if x is distinct from y, then x has to be distinct from y.) Denying this assumption—saying that identity is **contingent**—therefore suffices to solve all of the puzzles at once. The Debtor's Paradox would go away if only we could say that, although she is *now* identical to the collection of particles arguing about her debt, she *was* identical to the collection that contracted the debt. The Body-minus puzzle would go away if only we could say that Body-minus *is now* (after the tail removal) identical to Tibbles but *was not* identical to Tibbles when it was a mere torso. The Lumpl/Goliath puzzle would go away if only we could say that Lumpl *is* identical to Goliath but might not have been. The Ship of Theseus puzzle would go away if only we could say that Ship A *was* identical to Ship B but is no longer. Similarly for any other puzzle about material constitution.

The cost of this solution is just the fact that it is extremely counterintuitive. How could a thing possibly be distinct from itself? That said, this solution is not universally rejected. But its defenders tend to be few. Those who do defend it typically do so by adopting a somewhat unusual view about what it would mean to affirm the sentence, "Lumpl could have been distinct from Goliath," given that, in fact, Lumpl = Goliath. The most well-known version of this unusual view is called counterpart theory. We shall discuss counterpart theory in Chapter 6.

I said in the previous section that some constitution puzzles can be solved by embracing the doctrine of temporal parts; however, I have not listed the doctrine of temporal parts explicitly as one of the options one might take for solving the problem. Why not? Earlier, I said that material constitution occurs whenever an object a and an object b share all of the same parts at the same time. If objects have temporal parts in addition to their spatial parts,

however, the idea of sharing all of the same parts (spatial or temporal) at a *single* time doesn't make much sense. Under the assumption that DTP is true, then, we should say that material constitution occurs whenever an object *a* and an object *b* share all of the same spatiotemporal parts, period. Once that is clear, however, it turns out that DTP "solves" the constitution puzzles that it solves simply by implying that what we *thought* was a case of material constitution is not *in fact* a case of material constitution. Furthermore, if we restrict our attention to puzzles in which an object *a* and an object *b* share all of the same spatiotemporal parts—puzzles, in other words, that even the temporal-parts theorist will agree are cases of material constitution—DTP as such has no solution to offer. Thus, I think it is misleading to consider it any kind of genuine solution to puzzles about material constitution.

To illustrate, consider Tibbles and Body-minus. According to DTP, Tibbles and Body-minus are both four-dimensional objects, spread out in time just as they are spread out in space. Tibbles is the object that fills the region of spacetime occupied by her body over the course of her entire life; Body-minus is the object that fills the region occupied by Tibbles' torso throughout its entire life. During the time that Tibbles is torso-shaped—that is, after the accident—Tibbles and Body-minus share all of their temporal parts in common. But before the accident the temporal parts of Body-minus are distinct from (though overlapping) the temporal parts of Tibbles. Thus, Tibbles and Body-minus do not share all of their temporal parts in common. Thus, they do not share all of their spatiotemporal parts. This solves the puzzle, because it removes any pressure we initially faced to say that there are two distinct objects sharing all of their parts in common. But it does so precisely by implying that Tibbles and Body-minus do not present us with a case of material constitution.

DTP would count as a solution to puzzles about material constitution if it implied that material constitution *never* occurs. But, as we have noted above, it does not imply this. Consider, for example, the Lumpl/Goliath puzzle. This one was crafted specifically to pose a problem for temporal-parts theorists. Lumpl and Goliath coincide for their entire careers. Thus, they share all of their spatial parts at every time at which either exists, and so they share all of the same temporal parts in common. DTP cannot solve this puzzle;

thus, in the face of this puzzle, DTP theorists are forced to accept one of the other four options listed earlier.

PERSONAL IDENTITY

We turn, finally, to the topic of personal identity. This is a topic on which almost everyone already has at least a few opinions, some grounded in common sense and experience and others perhaps grounded in religious convictions. As I've already suggested, virtually all of us will think that we are able to survive radical, nonfatal changes in our bodies and minds. We survive growth and development from infancy to adulthood; people survive the loss of limbs and all manner of surgical alterations; our beliefs, emotions, and personalities change over time; and so on. The topic of personal identity comprises a variety of philosophical questions about how such changes are possible and about the conditions under which a person can be said to *survive* from one time to the next.

Some of the questions one might ask on this topic look like nothing more than special instances of the more general questions about change and identity that we have already been discussing. How can one and the same person have different properties at different times? What is the relationship between a person and the mass of particles that constitutes her at any given time? Are persons composed of temporal parts or not? The puzzles discussed in the earlier sections of this chapter provide a natural starting place for reflection on these sorts of questions. But they provide only a starting place. For persons are not *ordinary* material objects (if they are material objects at all), and questions about the *survival of persons* from one moment to the next are in some ways more complicated than questions about the *identity of material objects* across time.

The questions become most vivid, and most relevant to our ordinary lives, when we consider the way in which human persons are affected by severe brain damage. Those suffering from Alzheimer's disease, for example, commonly experience massive memory loss which is sometimes also accompanied by radical changes in personality. Familiar faces and entire relationships are forgotten; core desires, values, and ambitions may change or be lost altogether; religious beliefs vanish. We find many of these same phenomena present in greater or lesser degrees when people suffer from mental illness, or