

# Incomplete Entities, Natural Non-separability, and Leibniz's Response to François Lamy's *De la Connoissance de soi-même*

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## Abstract

Robert M. Adams claims that Leibniz's rehabilitation of the doctrine of incomplete entities is the most sustained effort to integrate a theory of corporeal substances into the theory of simple substances. I discuss alternative interpretations of the theory of incomplete entities suggested by Marleen Rozemond and Pauline Phemister. Against Rozemond, I argue that the scholastic doctrine of incomplete entities is not dependent on a hylomorphic analysis of corporeal substances, and therefore can be adapted by Leibniz. Against Phemister, I claim that Leibniz did not reduce the passivity of corporeal substances to modifications of passive aspects of simple substances. Against Adams, I argue that Leibniz's theory of the incompleteness of the mind cannot be understood adequately without understanding the reasons for his assertion that matter is incomplete without minds. Composite substances are seen as requisites for the reality of the material world, and therefore cannot be eliminated from Leibniz's metaphysics.

For Leibniz, a simple substance such as a soul or a mind is a "complete being" in the sense that it is the origin of its own actions, and that it represents in a confused way all its previous states.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, what could be more complete than a simple substance with its causal independence and autonomy in the production of its own states? Nevertheless, in the *Addition à l'Explication du système nouveau* (1698), written as a response to an extended review of the first edition of François Lamy's *De la Connoissance de soi-même*,<sup>2</sup> Leibniz embraces the Scholastic view that soul and body, in some sense, are incomplete entities.<sup>3</sup> Although the passages in which Leibniz takes up this thought in subsequent years are not very numerous, Robert M. Adams has suggested that it most fully expresses Leibniz's attempt to integrate a Scholastic theory of corporeal substance into his philosophy.<sup>4</sup> Marleen Rozemond and Pauline Phemister have proposed interpretations that diverge markedly from Adams'. Rozemond objects that Leibniz cannot reproduce basic features of the Scholastic view within the framework of his own metaphysics. According to her interpretation, it is essential for the Scholastic theory that mind and body are related to each other as matter and form, which supplement each other as act and potency – a structure that the relations of mutual representation

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in the theory of pre-established harmony cannot account for.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, Rozemond argues that although Leibniz at some place is talking about the incompleteness of soul and body, the only notion of incompleteness that really has a place within Leibniz's metaphysics is that of the incompleteness of primitive active and passive forces internal to a simple substance.<sup>6</sup> Pauline Phemister agrees that talk about the incompleteness of soul and body is always found together with a theory about the internal structure of simple substances.<sup>7</sup> She ascribes to Leibniz the view that a simple substance *qua* possessor of primitive active and passive force "is also, when created" a corporeal substance, because the extension of its organic body is, to a large extent, a modification of its primitive passive force.<sup>8</sup> In this sense, corporeal substances and simple substances *qua* having active and passive aspects can be "distinguished theoretically, in practice they can be regarded almost as one and the same."<sup>9</sup>

In a recent article, R. S. Woolhouse defends Adams' interpretation by providing convincing textual evidence showing that the idea that bodies are constitutive for the way souls perceive the universe is present in the thought of Leibniz during the decade after the publication of the *Système Nouveau* (1695).<sup>10</sup> However, Woolhouse does not address Rozemond's objections directly, which leaves us with the problem of how closely this view of the relation between soul and body corresponds to the Scholastic views, and how well it is integrated within the framework of Leibniz's theory of simple substances. Using portions of the material presented by Woolhouse, as well as additional material from Leibniz's manuscripts, the present paper tries to address the arguments of Rozemond more directly, and to connect this with a discussion of aspects of Phemister's interpretation. In the first section, it will be argued, that contrary to Rozemond's view, the Scholastic notion of incompleteness is not dependent on an analysis of corporeal substance as a hylomorphic entity, and, moreover, that this more abstract notion of incompleteness is present in writings of Descartes and Lamy, and therefore also in Leibniz's response to Lamy. The second section criticizes the assumption shared by Rozemond and Phemister that in passages from the response to Lamy and associated texts Leibniz also has a second notion of incompleteness in mind, that of active and passive aspects internal to simple substances. The third section argues that, contrary to Phemister, in Leibniz's response to Lamy there is little evidence for the thesis that (created) simple substances are "coextensive" with composite substances.

### **1. Incomplete Entities and Incomplete Essences**

There can be little doubt that the analysis of corporeal substances in hylomorphic terms played a central role for Scholastic theories of the relation between soul and body. However, does the theory of soul and body as incomplete entities rely on the theory of form and matter? Contrary to Rozemond, Suárez's discussion of incomplete substances in the first part of the thirty-third *Metaphysical Disputation* seems to subsume the relation of form and matter under the relation between incomplete substances rather than the other way round. Using "physical" in the unusual sense that what is "physical" exists in a thing itself independently from the operations of the mind,<sup>11</sup> he defines the notion of an incomplete substance in the following way:

In a physical sense, a substance is called incomplete, which is a physical part, or a substantial mode, or the goal of a substance, concurring in some way to its complement.<sup>12</sup>

Interestingly, form and matter subsequently are treated only as one of several examples of physically incomplete substances:

Thus in particular a substance in the state of becoming, or the substantial becoming itself, can be called an incomplete substance... Then, form and matter, which are physical parts of a substance, are physically incomplete substances. In the same way, the whole nature, be it composite of matter and form, or simple like the angelic nature, compared to the logical subject is an incomplete substance, because it is compared to this part or form, which is complemented and terminated through subsistence. From whence also subsistence itself is an incomplete substance, or something physically incomplete in the kind of a substance.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, the notion of incompleteness Suárez has in mind is more general than the notion of incompleteness of form and matter. This more abstract notion of incompleteness is especially relevant for the way Suárez distinguishes the relation between soul and body from the relation between different portions of water:

[A] drop of water is not so to speak positively a part, even according to its aptitude, but only negatively, because out of its own nature it does not demand the conjunction with another portion of water; since in itself it has the whole essence, and the proper logical subject of water, and its own intrinsic goal, it just does not resist being joined to another portion of water... However, things are different with the soul, since even when it is separated it is a part according to its positive aptitude and nature, and not only by means of non-

resistance. This is because it is not an integral part but an essential part, and has an incomplete essence that by its nature has the constitution to complete another essence, and thus it is always an incomplete substance.<sup>14</sup>

Here, a substance is seen as an incomplete entity in case its essence is incomplete without the essences of other entities, or it is not a proper subject of predication, or it has not reached its internal goal. In particular, the soul is characterized as an incomplete entity in the first sense. Because soul and body have incomplete essences that complement each other, they form a whole that is more than a sum of mereological parts. Of course, this notion of incompleteness can be combined with the idea of form and matter as incomplete entities. However, it is formulated on a more abstract level, and therefore, in principle, can be integrated into different ontological frameworks. Moreover, although Suárez uses the terminology of complete and incomplete “substances”, he points out that properly speaking only a complete entity can be called a “substance”; calling incomplete entities “substances” is justified only because entities that are entirely non-substantial cannot constitute a genuine substance.<sup>15</sup> Contrary to Rozemond,<sup>16</sup> Leibniz’s views should therefore not be seen as incompatible with the Scholastic doctrine simply on the grounds that he does not think that bodies are substances: reservations as to the substantiality of incomplete entities are inherent in the Scholastic approach itself.

There is no evidence that Leibniz was familiar with the details of Suárez’s theory of incomplete substances. However, there is a more indirect connection. Something very close to Suárez’s abstract, not specifically hylomorphic conception is a target of Descartes’ criticism of Scholastic theories of the relation of soul and body. For example, in a letter to Regius, Descartes writes:

It can only be objected, that it is not accidental for the human body that it is combined with the soul, but that it is rather its very nature; for, because the body has all dispositions required to receive the soul—without which it is not properly speaking a human body—it cannot happen without a miracle that the soul is not united to it; and that it also is not accidental to the soul that it is united to the body, but only accidental after death to be separated from the body. All this should not be totally denied, so that the theologians are not offended once more; but I would nevertheless respond that these things can be said to be accidental in the sense that if we consider the body alone we perceive in it flatly nothing because of which it would desire to be united to the soul; and nothing in the soul because of which it would have to be united to the body ...<sup>17</sup>

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At a more prominent place, this thought is expressed in Descartes' *Fourth Replies*.<sup>18</sup> From then on, it provides a model for other discussions of the theory of soul and body as incomplete entities within the Cartesian tradition. Particularly relevant for the present concern is that Lamy's broadly occasionalist theory of the union of mind and body adopts a very similar line of argument. The review in the *Journal des Scavans* puts it thus:

He regards it as chimerical to pretend as they [sc. the Scholastic philosophers] do that the mind & the body are incomplete beings that have a natural & essential relation to each other. ... That one suggests that they are incomplete is not more reasonable, if by this one pretends that the mind would not have all that is needed for being a true thinking substance independently of the body, or that the body would not have independently of the mind all that is needed to be a true human body.<sup>19</sup>

Leibniz's response to Lamy may be seen as a reaction to this formulation of the doctrine of incomplete entities. Hence, rehabilitating the Scholastic doctrine, as Leibniz attempts to do, amounts to defending the view that mind (or soul) and body (or matter)<sup>20</sup> have a "natural and essential" relation to each other, not the more specific claim that they are related to each other as form and matter, or as potency and actuality. That Leibniz pursues this more abstract strategy is most obvious in the way he treats the issue of the dependence of the representative nature of the soul on its organic body. For example, he emphasizes that God "has a need for the body to act following the natural order that he has established, having given to the soul from the beginning and once and for all this force or tendency which makes it express its body."<sup>21</sup> More specifically, he argues that the body "senses our abstract thoughts, and that experience makes visible that the meditations are capable of harming it: because the most abstract thoughts always employ some *signs* that touch the imagination, in addition to the attention which ties the fibers of the brain."<sup>22</sup> He agrees with Lamy's view that the soul is united to the body more through confused than distinct thought, because "the confused thoughts mark our imperfection, passions and dependency on the collection of external things or on matter."<sup>23</sup> However, he does not allow that there is no resemblance between sensations and corporeal traces:

It rather seems that our sensations represent and express them perfectly. Someone may perhaps say that the sensation of heat does not resemble movement: Yes, without doubt, it does not resemble a sensible movement, such as that of a driving coach, but it resembles the collection of small movements of fire and the organs which are the cause of the sensation, or

rather the sensation is nothing but their representation. This is like the way in which whiteness does not resemble a spherical convex mirror, though it is nothing but the collection of many small convex mirrors such as one sees in foam when one regards it from close up.<sup>24</sup>

Thus, just as whiteness has the same internal structure as the light reflected from a collection of many small mirrors, sensations have the same internal structure as the movements they represent. In this way, by stressing the importance of structural similarities, Leibniz tries to revive the idea that there is a similarity between movements in the external world, in the traces of the sensory organs, and in the sensations. This in turn gives content to the idea that perceptions in the soul could not naturally be as they are independently of the processes in the sensory organs. Rather, their representative nature depends on the existence of structural resemblances between perceptions, processes in the sensory organs, and processes in the external world represented indirectly by means of processes in the sensory organs. And it is the dependence of the qualitative side of the soul on the qualitative side of the organic body that makes the essence of the soul an incomplete essence and the soul an incomplete entity.

## 2. The Incompleteness of Matter

Yet, this is not the whole story. In particular, at the beginning of Leibniz's response to Lamy matter is said to be purely passive and therefore something incomplete:

The opinion of the Scholastics that soul and matter have something incomplete is not as absurd as one thinks. Because matter without souls and forms or entelechies is nothing but passive, and souls without matter would be nothing but active: the complete corporeal Substance, truly one, which the Scholastics call *Unum per se* (in contrast to entities by means of aggregation), as it must result from the principle of unity which is active, and from the mass that makes up the multitude and which would be solely passive, if it would contain nothing but prime matter. Instead, the secondary matter or mass that makes up our body has everywhere parts, which are complete substances themselves, because they are other animals or organic substances, animated or actuated separately. But the collection of these organized corporeal substances that constitutes our body is not united with our soul but through a relation that follows from the order of natural phenomena for each substance separately. And all this makes visible how on the one hand, one can say that the soul and the body are independent

from each other, and on the other hand, that each of them is incomplete without the other, because naturally the one is never without the other.<sup>25</sup> Does Leibniz introduce here, in addition to the notion of soul and body as incomplete entities, a second notion of incompleteness, one that concerns the incompleteness of primitive active and passive forces internal to simple substances? A passage from the correspondence with De Volder explicitly uses the terms “soul” and “prime matter” for the primitive active and passive forces internal to a simple substance.<sup>26</sup> However, this use of the terms should not be read into the text of the *Addition à l'Explication du système nouveau*. Leibniz has reworked several times the sentence explaining why the Scholastic view that soul and body are incomplete is not as absurd as one thinks. In the (corrected) draft this sentence reads:

Because matter without the souls and forms is nothing but passive and the souls without matter would be nothing but active.<sup>27</sup>

In the corrections to the first copy, Leibniz expands this sentence as follows:

Because matter without the souls and forms or entelechies is nothing but passive and the souls without matter would be nothing but active: the unities or monads, that the Scholastics call *Unum per se* having to result from the principle of unity which is active and the passive mass which makes up the multitude and contains what constitutes still other monads.<sup>28</sup>

In the second copy, Leibniz makes a similar change to the text, but replaces “the unities or monads” with “the complete unities or monads” (“les unites completes ou Monades”) and “principle of unity” with “principle of singularity” (“principe de l'unicité”).<sup>29</sup> The corrected third copy has almost the same text as the second, only with “the unities or complete monads” (“les unites ou Monades completes”). However, there the whole sentence is crossed out.<sup>30</sup> Finally, in a further correction to the first copy<sup>31</sup> Leibniz reaches the text of the *Philosophische Schriften*. These variants are interesting for two reasons: (1) They show that the function of introducing souls is not only to provide a theory of the unity of composite substances, but also to give a theory of what makes something into a singular thing. Thus, they give a hint to the effect that Leibniz introduces here active principles as something required for the individuation of material objects. (2) Leibniz starts with the notion of passive matter, subsequently moves on to an analysis in terms of passive mass and principle of multitude, and only in the final version comes up with the idea of prime matter. This invites a reading of the notion of prime matter simply in terms of the passive properties of matter, not in terms of primary passive forces internal to simple substances.

This reading is confirmed by the letters exchanged with Johann Bernoulli in the autumn of 1698, which are closely connected with the draft versions of the *Addition à l'Explication du système nouveau* through the use of the term “monad” for composite substances – a usage that seems to be restricted to this group of texts. In August or September 1698, Leibniz writes to Bernoulli:

By Monad, I understand a substance that is truly one, i.e., which is not an aggregate of substances. Matter itself *per se*, or weight (*moles*), which you could call prime matter, is not a substance; but also not an aggregate of substances, but something incomplete. Secondary matter, or mass (*massa*) is not a substance, but substances; thus, not a herd, but an animal; not a pond, but a fish is one substance. Although the animal body, or my organic body, is also composed in turn of innumerable substances, they are nevertheless not parts of the animal or of me. But if there were no souls, or their analogues, then there would be no I, no monads, no real unities, and thus no substantial multitudes; then everything in bodies would be nothing but phantasms.<sup>32</sup>

In his reply, Bernoulli takes the monads mentioned here to be soul-like: He asks Leibniz how far he has to go in the division of matter to be able to individuate “such souls, such substances, such monads”.<sup>33</sup> Leibniz’s subsequent elucidation can be seen, in part, as a corrective:

You ask, first, what I understand by matter *per se*, or prime matter or weight (*moles*), distinct from secondary matter. I respond: that which is merely passive, and separated from souls or forms.

You ask, second, what is for me something incomplete? I respond: the passive without the active, and the active without the passive.

Third: you demand that I divide a portion of mass (*massa*) for you into the substances out of which it is composed. I respond, as many individual substances are in it as there are animals or living beings or their analogues...

Fourth: I call a complete Monad or singular substance not so much a soul as the animal or its analogue itself, endowed with a soul or form and an organic body.<sup>34</sup>

At first sight, the text of the first point might indicate that what Leibniz here has in mind are the active and passive aspects of a simple substance.<sup>35</sup> Thus, the letter to Bernoulli would call what possesses form and matter a “monad” because this is the internal structure of simple substances. However, the contrast between *moles* and *massa* present in both letters to Bernoulli gives a hint that Leibniz here intends to understand the notion of prime matter in a physicalistic sense. This



reading is confirmed in a further letter to Bernoulli, where Leibniz takes up the issue that “in creatures the passive is never actually separated from the active”: there Leibniz talks about the “the merely passive, and the vacuum”.<sup>36</sup> Again, this supports the conclusion that the “merely passive” Leibniz has in mind here is on the same level as theoretical entities of physics such as the vacuum. The first point in the previously cited letter to Bernoulli would thus amount to saying that prime matter is something like the sum of passive properties (such as extension and impenetrability) of a material object, which is incomplete without active properties (such as force) resulting from simple substances. This also would provide a plausible reading of the *Addition à l'Explication du système nouveau* according to which Leibniz has a notion of prime matter in mind that is related to but not identical with the notion of prime passive forces of simple substances. Thus, the group of texts discussed so far seems not to be concerned at all with the internal structure of simple substances. What at first sight might look like a loss of interpretative sophistication has the great advantage that the theory of soul and body as incomplete entities cannot be discarded as something peripheral to Leibniz’s metaphysics by arguing that what Leibniz really has in mind is a theory of active and passive aspects of simple substances. Moreover, the interpretation suggested here shows why the issue of the incompleteness of souls in the thought of Leibniz is not independent from the issue of the incompleteness of bodies.<sup>37</sup> In the earlier of the two cited letters to Bernoulli—as in the draft versions of the *Addition à l'Explication du système nouveau*—Leibniz introduces souls and their analogues explicitly as conditions for the reality of material objects. Thus, a soul is a necessary condition for the existence of an individual object that both has a body and is more than a mere phenomenon. Thus, the idea that composite substances are the only complete entities in the universe is presupposed by the idea that there are objects that have a reality over and above that of phenomena in perceiving souls.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, the way in which the issue of the incompleteness of matter is connected with the issue of the incompleteness of souls shows why it is impossible to eliminate the theory of composite substances from Leibniz’s metaphysics.

### **3. Primitive Active and Passive Forces**

This, of course, does not mean that the incompleteness of active and passive aspects of simple substances would not be an important issue for Leibniz. It is

important both as a theory of the internal structure of simple substances and as a device of explaining characteristics of physical active and passive forces. However, it is far from clear that the importance of this doctrine implies that the structure of composite substances can be reduced to the structure of (created) simple substances. In a paper dated May 1702, Leibniz comes close to referring to the combination of primitive active and passive forces as a corporeal substance. The text, however, is somewhat ambiguous:

[A]ctive force is twofold, primitive and derivative, that is either substantial or accidental. Primitive active force which the Aristotelians call *first entelechy*, commonly substantial form, is the other natural principle that with matter or passive force completes a corporeal substance, viz. [a substance] which is an *unum per se*, not a bare aggregate of several substances; for there is a great difference, e.g., between an animal and a herd. And thus this is the entelechy or soul, or something analogous to the soul, and in the order of nature it always actuates some organic body...<sup>39</sup>

The distinction between primitive and derivative forces Leibniz makes in the first sentence may suggest that in the second sentence he intends to speak of matter as a primitive passive force that complements primitive active force, and thus is something internal to a simple substance. However, Leibniz at this place draws the distinction between primitive and derivative forces explicitly only with respect to active forces. This leaves the possibility open that matter and passive force here are mentioned in an unanalyzed, physicalistic sense. Passive force, in this case, would not be mentioned here as an aspect of the simple substance that has an organic body. Although this passage does not exclude the reductive reading suggested by Phemister,<sup>40</sup> it seems to be far too ambiguous to give decisive support to a reductive account of the nature of corporeal substances.

One of the most stimulating claims in Phemister's article is that a simple substance *qua* possessor of primitive active and passive force is "coextensive" with a particular corporeal substance.<sup>41</sup> How close does this come to Leibniz's view of the relation between a simple substance and extension? This, of course, is a difficult question, and here it should only be asked with a view to Leibniz's response to Lamy. In a way quite similar to Leibniz, Lamy defends the view that the mind is united with the body through confused and sensible thoughts.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, Lamy puts forward the thesis that the mind has a location only in the sense that there are parts of the body in which it immediately performs its

functions. The review in the *Journal des Scavans* renders it thus:

He begins by remarking that the soul, because it has no extension, there can no way to find a local residence for it; that it is neither out of nor in the body; that exactly speaking, the minds are nowhere; & that it is only a question to know in which part of the body the soul performs its functions. He pretends that this is particularly in the part of the brain, which is the source of the nerves. It is there where like in its seat it gives its orders to all the parts of the body, & where through intermission of nerves reaching out from there to the most remote parts of the body, it receives in an instant news of all that there happens.<sup>43</sup>

In two additional notes on smaller sheets inserted between the pages of the text of the *Addition à l'Explication du système nouveau*, Leibniz takes up the idea—which he already accepted in the main text<sup>44</sup>—that, in some sense, the soul is located through its operations. In an interesting way, he relates this idea to the Thomistic idea that the soul as a whole is in the whole body and as a whole in each part.<sup>45</sup> In the first note, he writes:

The nature of the form or soul can well be explained by the active potency or force, or it can be captured from the fact that also the force is as whole in the whole and as whole in each part, as it is usual to say of the soul. For if a balloon is inflated no part can be compressed without the resistance of the whole, and what is in the whole is felt in the compression of each part.<sup>46</sup>

In the second note, from the premises that matter is infinitely divisible, that there are connections between portions of matter over immense distances, that organic bodies have effluvia reaching out throughout the universe, and that the whole universe is expressed in each soul, Leibniz derives the following conclusions:

1. in fact, in some way one can say that the whole universe is the organic body, speaking in the widest sense, of each soul. For all things are organic[,] all are organic with respect to all others, all have an order with respect to each point in the universe, and an organic body is nothing but an ordered one[.]

Thus 2. as the soul is as a whole in each part, it is this only through its operation. So that in the whole it can easily happen that it changes its seat, i.e. that its prime center is there, where it can in the best way continue its former operations.<sup>47</sup>

These remarks can be read as affirming the idea that the soul, in some sense, is

coextensive with its organic body. However, it is coextensive with its body in a metaphorical sense, reducing coextension to the idea that the soul operates in the whole body. In turn, the idea that the soul operates in the whole body here is combined with the idea that there is a place where it operates more directly than at other places. Moreover, this place of direct operation can change over time. Thus, the kind of extension Leibniz ascribes to a soul seems to reduce to the location of its operations, and this seems to be something that allows for different degrees of immediacy of action.

Phemister bases her interpretation in part on a letter to Des Bosses, where Leibniz says that in his French articles he was concerned with the soul only as a “spiritual substance”, conforming to the expectations of his Cartesian readers.<sup>48</sup> This statement clearly implies that there is something more to the theory of simple substances than stated explicitly in the French articles, but it can be read in two ways: First, Leibniz may have characterized simple substances as something “spiritual”, although this is *contrary* to his real view. Second, Leibniz may not have made all aspects of his metaphysics explicit, yet remaining *consistent* with his real views. Which of these readings come closest to what Leibniz has had in mind? Phemister embraces the first reading by arguing that Leibniz in his earlier Fardella Notes (1690) “effectively eliminates” soul-like substances from the list of candidates for genuine substances:<sup>49</sup>

[T]he soul properly and accurately speaking is not a substance, but a substantial form or a primitive form existing in a substance, a first act, a first active faculty.<sup>50</sup>

However, in the correspondence with Bernoulli Leibniz makes a very similar claim, viz. that monads or singular substances are not so much souls as animals or their analogues—a claim made there in the context of the theory of soul and body as incomplete entities. This suggests a similar reading of the passage from the Fardella Notes. Indeed, the argument Leibniz provides for his claim that properly speaking the soul is not a substance supports such an interpretation:

The force of the argument consists in this, that the body is not a substance but substances, or an aggregate of substances. Therefore, either there is no substance, and thus no substances, or there is something other than the body. Furthermore, even if the aggregate of these substances constitutes the body, yet they do not constitute it in the mode of a part, because a part is always homogeneous with the whole... Meanwhile, the organic bodies of substances included in some mass of matter are parts of this mass. Thus in a fishpond there are many fish; and the fluid of each fish again is like some pond in

which so to speak other fish or other animals of their own kind subsist; and so to infinity.<sup>51</sup>

Thus, as in the correspondence with Bernoulli only animals and their analogues are seen as genuine substances. At the same time, souls are introduced as a necessary condition for the reality of bodies. In this sense, bodies without souls implicitly are characterized as something incomplete. But the same holds for souls, which enter into the picture only as principles of the individuation of animals and their analogues. Therefore, the Fardella Notes already contain a view very close to the theory of soul and body as incomplete entities. In this case, saying that souls properly speaking are not substances would amount to saying that, in contrast to substances as they occur in nature, they cannot occur in isolation. And asserting this is neutral as to the immaterial or material character of the entities that are said to be incomplete. Thus, the Fardella Notes do not support a very strong reading of the statement in the letter to Des Bosses.

#### 4. Conclusion

In his response to Lamy and the associated texts, Leibniz's views of the relation between soul and body come surprisingly close to the Scholastic view that soul and body are incomplete substances. At this time, Leibniz seems to have been confident that this theory provides him with sufficient resources to formulate a theory of a genuine unity of soul and body. In particular, unlike in his later correspondence with Des Bosses, he did not attempt to explain the unity of composite substances by introducing additional substantial entities. Interestingly, Lamy discussed and rejected such a strategy. The review in the *Journal des Scavans* puts it thus:

He also accommodates himself little to *entities* which one calls *unifying*. He finds them unintelligible in their nature, & not only insufficient for this effect; but also much more apt to disunite the mind & the body than to unite them.<sup>52</sup>

In his response, Leibniz did not go with this option, but with another option of Scholastic ontology, that of the theory of soul and body as incomplete entities. As in the Scholastic view, incomplete entities, for Leibniz, and naturally non-separable from each other and, therefore, constitute a composite whole that is more than a mereological sum of its constituents. In particular, simple substances are incomplete entities because their modifications would not naturally be as they are without indirect representation of the universe by means of an organic body. However, what Leibniz says about the incompleteness of the soul cannot be fully

understood without understanding his motives for holding that the body is incomplete without a soul. In a letter to Damaris Masham, Leibniz explicitly connects both issues:

The soul is not at all without a body; for the same reason that there is no vacuum or atoms. An atom would be an incomplete substantial thing, and the soul without the body, or the body without souls too; as well an extension without solidity.<sup>53</sup>

Seen from the perspective of this argumentative strategy, it seems natural to read the *Addition à l'Explication du système nouveau* and the correspondence with Bernoulli as expressing the same bottom-up approach to the problem of composite substances. What Leibniz there has in mind with “what is purely passive” is not the passive aspect of a simple substance but the purely passive aspects of matter in a physicalistic sense. The ontological problem the purely passive aspects of matter pose is that of the individuation of material objects. Because material properties due to their passivity do not suffice for the solution of this problem, matter is something incomplete without simple substances that provide the activity necessary for the individuation of material objects. Thus, composite substances with a simple substance and an organic body are seen as requisites for the reality of the material world, and therefore cannot be eliminated from the Leibnizian ontology.<sup>54</sup>

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*Notes*

<sup>1</sup> *Extrait du Dictionnaire de M. Bayle article Rorarius p. 2599 sqq. de l'Édition de l'an 1702 avec mes remarques*, GP 4, 543-4.

<sup>2</sup> François Lamy, *De la Connaissance de soi-même*, 5 vols., Paris: André Pralard, 1694-1698. For the history of the editions of Lamy's work and Leibniz's responses,

see R. S. Woolhouse and Richard Francks, “Leibniz, Lamy, and ‘the way of pre-established harmony’”, *Studia Leibnitiana* 26 (1994), pp. 76-90; R. S. Woolhouse, “Leibniz and François Lamy’s *De la Connoissance de soi-même*”, *Leibniz Review* 11 (2001), pp. 65-70. The parts of the review to which Leibniz responded were published in the French *Journal des Scavans* 26 (1698), pp. 660-8 and pp. 669-79.

<sup>3</sup> *Addition à l’Explication du système nouveau touchant l’union de l’ame et du corps, envoyée à Paris à l’occasion d’un livre intitulé Connoissance de soy même*, GP 4, 572.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Merrihew Adams, *Leibniz. Determinist, Theist, Idealist*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994, pp. 272-85.

<sup>5</sup> Marleen Rozemond, “Leibniz on the Union of Body and Soul”, *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 79 (1997), pp. 150-178, especially pp. 165-71.

<sup>6</sup> Rozemond, “Leibniz on the Union of Body and Soul”, pp. 174-5.

<sup>7</sup> Pauline Phemister, “Leibniz and the Elements of Compound Bodies”, *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 7 (1999), pp. 57-78, especially p. 72.

<sup>8</sup> Phemister, “Leibniz and the Elements of Compound Bodies”, p. 74.

<sup>9</sup> Phemister, “Leibniz and the Elements of Compound Bodies”, p. 72.

<sup>10</sup> R. S. Woolhouse, “Pre-established Harmony Between Soul and Body: Union or Unity?” in A. Lamarra and R. Palaia (eds.), *Unità e molteplicità nel pensiero filosofico e scientifico di Leibniz*, Florence: Olschki, 2000, pp. 159-70, especially pp. 164-70.

<sup>11</sup> Suárez, *Disputationes Metaphysicae* 33, 1, 6. By contrast, he calls “metaphysical” or “logical”, what depends on the operation of the mind. Thus, a substance that can be called “metaphysically complete” is one that has a complete description in terms of genera and lowest species. Cf. *Disputationes Metaphysicae* 33, 1, 15-23. All translations are my own.

<sup>12</sup> *Disputationes Metaphysicae* 33, 1, 6.

<sup>13</sup> *Disputationes Metaphysicae* 33, 1, 6.

<sup>14</sup> *Disputationes Metaphysicae* 33, 1, 11.

<sup>15</sup> *Disputationes Metaphysicae* 33, 1, 5.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Rozemond, “Leibniz on the Union of Body and Soul”, p. 173.

<sup>17</sup> Descartes to Regius, mid-december 1641, AT III, 460-1.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Descartes, *Quartae Responsiones*, AT VII, 222-3.

<sup>19</sup> *Journal des Scavans* 26 (1698), p. 664.

<sup>20</sup> In the draft of the text, Leibniz starts using Lamy’s terminology of “mind” and “body” but after a few sentences switches to the terminology of “soul” and

“matter”, correcting the previous occurrences of “mind” and “body”; cf. LH II, 2, 3a, Bl. 1.

<sup>21</sup> GP 4, 574.

<sup>22</sup> GP 4, 574.

<sup>23</sup> GP 4, 574.

<sup>24</sup> GP 4, 576.

<sup>25</sup> *Addition à l'Explication du système nouveau touchant l'union de l'ame et du corps, envoyée à Paris à l'occasion d'un livre intitulé Connoissance de soy même*, GP 4, 572-3.

<sup>26</sup> Leibniz to De Volder, 20 June 1703, GP 2, 252.

<sup>27</sup> LH II, 2, 3a, Bl. 1: “Car la matiere sans les ames et formes n'est que passive et les ames sans matiere ne seroient qu'actives.”

<sup>28</sup> LH II, 2, 3a, Bl. 7: “Car la matiere sans les ames et formes ou entelechies n'est que passive et les ames sans matiere ne seroient qu'actives: les unites ou Monades, que l'ecole appelle *unum per se* devant resulter du principe de l'unité qui est actif et de la masse passive qui fait la multitude et contient ce qui constitue encor des autres Monades.”

<sup>29</sup> LH II, 2, 3a, Bl. 9.

<sup>30</sup> LH II, 2, 3a, Bl. 11.

<sup>31</sup> LH II, 2, 3a, Bl. 7.

<sup>32</sup> Leibniz to Johann Bernoulli (August or September 1698), GM 3, 537.

<sup>33</sup> Johann Bernoulli to Leibniz (August or September 1698), GM 3, 540.

<sup>34</sup> Leibniz to Johann Bernoulli, 20/30 September 1698, GM 3, 541-2.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Adams, *Leibniz. Determinist, Theist, Idealist*, p. 279.

<sup>36</sup> Leibniz to Johann Bernoulli, 17 December 1698, GM 3, 560.

<sup>37</sup> Woolhouse explicitly tries to separate both issues, and Rozemond and Phemister implicitly pursue the same strategy. Cf. Woolhouse, “Pre-established Harmony Between Soul and Body: Union or Unity?”, p. 165.

<sup>38</sup> For a detailed analysis of the logical structure of this argument, cf. Andreas Blank, *Der logische Aufbau von Leibniz' Metaphysik*, Berlin-New York: De Gruyter, 2001, especially ch. 3.

<sup>39</sup> GP 4, 395-6.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Phemister, “Leibniz and the Elements of Compound Bodies”, p. 71, note 26.

<sup>41</sup> Phemister, “Leibniz and the Elements of Compound Bodies”, p. 78.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. *Journal des Scavans* 26 (1698), p. 668.

<sup>43</sup> *Journal des Scavans* 26 (1698), p. 667.



<sup>44</sup> GP 4, 574.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Contra Gentiles* II, 52.

<sup>46</sup> LH II, 2, 3a, Bl. 4: “Formae vel Animae naturam aptè per potentiam seu vim actricem explicari, vel inde potest intelligi, quod vis quoque tota sit in toto et tota in qualibet parte, ut de anima dici solet. Nam si vesica sit inflata nulla pars comprimi potest, quin totum resistat, et quae in toto est in cuiuslibet partis compressione sentitur”.

<sup>47</sup> LH II, 2, 3a, Bl. 5: “1. verè dici certa ratione posse totum universum esse cuiusque animae corpus organicum latissime sumtum. Omnia enim organica sunt[,] omnia respectus uniuscuiusque organica sunt, omnia respectu uniuscuiusque puncti in universo ordinem habent nec aliud est corpus organicum quam ordinatum[.]

Hinc 2. cum anima est toto in qualibet parte, est eum non nisi per operationem. Ut in toto facile fieri potest, ut sedem mutet id est ut primarium eius centrum ibi sit, ubi aptissimè priores operationes continuari potest.”

<sup>48</sup> Leibniz to Des Bosses, 11 March 1706, GP 2, 307.

<sup>49</sup> Phemister, “Leibniz and the Elements of Compound Bodies”, p. 73.

<sup>50</sup> *Communicata ex disputationibus cum Fardella*, A VI, 4, 1670.

<sup>51</sup> *Communicata ex disputationibus cum Fardella*, A VI 4, 1670-1671.

<sup>52</sup> *Journal des Scavans* 26 (1698), p. 662.

<sup>53</sup> Leibniz to Masham, September 1704, GP 3, 363.

<sup>54</sup> This paper was written during my time as a Visiting Fellow at the Center for Philosophy of Science at the University of Pittsburgh in the academic year 2002-2003. An earlier version was read at the Department of Philosophy of the University of Ottawa in December 2002. The Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek Hannover provided me with microfilm copies of the *Addition à l'Explication du système nouveau* and the associated notes. I am grateful to Herbert Breger for his advice concerning the manuscripts and to Cathérine Collobert, Graeme Hunter, and the anonymous referee for the *Leibniz Review* for their helpful comments.