

Sous la direction de
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LEIBNIZ
SELON LES
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SUR
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conception générale de l'essence réelle des choses. Puisque des définitions réelles sont concevables, la connaissance par définitions nominales peut se former de manière adéquate; ce point manquait à la doctrine lockienne et justifiait la critique leibnizienne adressée à cette philosophie de la connaissance. Une définition de la notion générale de substance permettrait d'asseoir une doctrine plus exacte de l'expérience sensible, de sorte qu'en analysant ces questions et en redonnant un rôle primordial à une définition réelle de la substance, Leibniz replaçait en même temps sa métaphysique au centre du débat comme complément à ses thèses épistémologiques.

Twin-Consciousnesses and the Identity of Indiscernibles in Leibniz's *Nouveaux Essais*

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According to Leibniz's Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles, there cannot be in nature two objects that are qualitatively indistinguishable from each other in every respect; objects that are numerically different from each other must display some qualitative difference (letter to De Volder, June 20, 1703, GP II, 249; VII, 372). Leibniz calls this at one place a "most manifest axiom" (GP II, 249), which could suggest that he regarded the principle as a self-evident proposition. At other places, he mentions empirical confirmations of the principle, such as the fact that it turns out to be unfeasible to find two leaves of exactly the same shape in a garden, or the fact that in seemingly identical drops of water, microscopic observation reveals a multitude of utterly diverse micro-organisms (fourth letter to Clarke, GP VII, 372; letter to Electress Sophie, October 31, 1705, GP VII, 563; NE 2.27.3, A VI vi, 231). Yet he also develops arguments for the principle, which have specifically philosophical starting points. In texts from the 1680s, he counts the principle among the consequences of the analytic theory of truth, according to which in each true affirmative proposition the predicate concept is contained in the subject concept (*Discours de métaphysique* § 9, A VI iv, 1541-1542; *Remarques sur la lettre de M. Arnauld*, GP II, 42; *Principia Logico-Metaphysica*, A VI iv, 1645).¹ In his late correspondence with the British theologian and philosopher Samuel Clarke, he proposes a theological argument for the principle. There, he argues that if God had created several qualitatively identical objects there would be no reason for their numerical diversity; in this case, God

1. See Couturat L., 1901, 228-229; Frankel L., 1981, 194-195; Troisfontaines C., 1988.

would have acted without a sufficient reason (fifth letter to Clarke, GP VII, 393-394).²

The present paper argues that Leibniz pursued a third line of argument for the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles, and that this argument plays a significant role for the view of the nature of the individuation of substances and the nature of consciousness in the *Nouveaux Essais*. The argument – call it the “Perspectivity Argument” – could be formulated as follows:

(PA) Since each individual substance represents the universe from a particular point of view, two individual things cannot be qualitatively identical with each other.

As we will presently see, Leibniz gave varying expressions to this argument. In some contexts, he used theological considerations to argue for the claim that in each individual substance the whole universe is expressed from a particular perspective, whereas in other contexts he made use of an analysis of the mutual existential dependence between the states of a simple substance and the states of the organic body (or the aggregate of simple substances constituting the organic body) dominated by it. In a theological perspective, Leibniz makes use of (PA) already at the beginning of his Hanover years. In a piece consisting of various metaphysical notes, he writes:

That all souls are not equal by themselves, seems to have been established by the faculty in Paris, for among the articles condemned by the Paris faculty the following is found: that the soul of Christ and Judas are equal.³ And in fact, if the soul is something resulting from God and a certain view on the universe, they are surely unequal due to the diverse views on the universe, the ones more distinct than the others. From this it is evident that there cannot at the same time be two human beings that are similar to each other in every respect (*Notæ plerumque metaphysicæ*, 1677 (?), A VI iv, 1349).⁴

In a piece from the time after the *Discours de métaphysique*, Leibniz takes a different line of thought. To be sure, at this place he does not yet invoke the constitutive function of bodily traces for the perspectival representation of the universe. However, he outlines an argument for the identity of indiscernibles that does not – or at least not explicitly – rely on theological assumptions. Rather, it uses natural characteristics of minds – their capacity of rational decision making based on “primitive”, i.e. non-

2. See Vinci T. C., 1974; Frankel L., 1981, 209-211; Grover S., 1996; Rodriguez-Pereyra G., 1999; Cover J. A. and O’Leary-Hawthorne J., 1999, ch. 5.

3. See Denifle H. and Chatelain A., 1889-1897, I, 543-558: *Opiniones [...] condemnatae*, 1277, Martii 7, Parisiis, art. 124.

4. “Animas omnes non esse per se æquales, definisse visa est Facultas Parisina, nam inter articulos a Parisina facultate damnatos, reperitur et ille: quod anima Christi et Judæ sint æquales. Et vero si anima est Aliquid resultans ex Deo, et aspectu universi certo, utique inæquales sunt ob diversos universi aspectus alios aliis distinctiores. Ex his patet non posse eodem tempore esse duos homines sibi similes per omnia”.

acquired dispositions – to argue for the qualitative difference of any two minds in the world:

Against our freedom the objection is made that the reason of willing comes from the outside, namely from the temperament of the body and the impression of the object.

I answer: also the internal dispositions of the mind itself concur.

You will insist: the present dispositions of the mind come from past impressions of the body and past external events.

I answer by conceding this with respect to some but denying it with respect to all; for there are some primitive dispositions in the mind that do not come from the outside. Therefore one must say that minds themselves and by themselves, due to their primitive nature, are dissimilar to each other [...] (*Mentes ipsæ per se dissimiles sunt inter se*, March 1689-March 1690 (?), A VI iv, 1639).⁵

Leibniz here also points out that an additional argument for this conclusion is provided by the fact that different minds have different capabilities to deal with external circumstances (A VI iv, 1639). Yet in later writings – and especially in the *Nouveaux Essais* – Leibniz uses the idea that organic bodies must differ from each other to argue for the claim that the simple substances by which they are dominated must differ from each other. In this sense, the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles is a consequence of Leibniz’s view of the constitutive function of bodily traces for the representation of the universe in a simple substance.

In what follows, I consider the argumentative function of Leibniz’s claim that there is no simple substance destitute of an organic body for (PA). Section 2 explores how Leibniz in the *Nouveaux Essais* as well as in some contemporary texts develops the topic of the constitutive role of bodily traces for mental representation and its connection with the identity of indiscernibles. Section 3 argues that the solution Leibniz in the *Nouveaux Essais* proposes to the problem of the possibility of twin-consciousnesses – the problem of whether according to the order of nature human beings on our globe and their counterparts on a Twin-Earth can have states of consciousness with the same content – is a consequence of his views about the constitutive function of bodily traces for mental activities.

5. “Contra Libertatem nostram objicitur rationem volendi esse ab externis, nempe a corporis temperamento, et objecti impressione.

Respondeo: concurrere et dispositiones internas ipsius mentis.

Instabis: dispositiones mentis præsentis, esse ab impressionibus præteritis corporis et externorum præteritis.

Respondeo, concedendo de quibusdam, negando de omnibus, sunt enim quædam in mente dispositiones primitivæ quæ non sunt ab externo. Itaque dicendum est Mentes ipsas per se, ex natura sua primitiva dissimiles esse inter se [...]”.

1. Organic Minds and the Identity of Indiscernibles

According to G. H. R. Parkinson, from the standpoint of the theory of pre-established harmony two souls could have exactly the same perceptions.⁶ This claim, however, underestimates the significance that indirect representations – representations of the universe by means of the representation of the states of an organic body – have for the constitution of simple substances. Although in Leibniz's metaphysics this constitutive role is not seen as one of causal influence, it nevertheless is seen as one of existential dependence as far as the order of nature is concerned. Thus, although there are no external relations between the states of the soul and the states of its organic body, there are internal relations: the states of the soul could not exist, and could not have the content they have, without the states of the body, and vice versa. In his response to Simon Foucher's critique of the *Système nouveau*, Leibniz is explicit about the constitutive function of bodily traces for representations in simple substances as well as for the unity of simple substances: "God produced straightaway not all thoughts (for thought need to succeed one another), but a nature which produces them in sequence. And that is exactly my point: all the body does, is to act in conformity with them. But bodies were necessary to produce not only our unities or souls, but also those of the other corporeal substances, animals and plants, which are in our bodies and in those which surround us" (*Remarques sur les Objections de M. Foucher*, 1695, GP IV, 493).⁷ Similarly, in his response to the first edition of Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire critique*, Leibniz argues that

the law of this animal's indivisible substance is to represent what happens in its body, just as we know from our own cases, and indeed to represent in some fashion, through its relation to the body, everything that happens in the world. Substantial unities are nothing other than different concentrations of the universe, which is represented in them in accordance with the different points of view, which distinguish them (letter from Leibniz, July 1698; GP IV, 518).⁸

Thus, the view that the representation of the universe by means of an organic body is constitutive for the nature of simple substances is part of the theory of pre-established harmony. This view has consequences for the question of whether two simple substances in the universe can be qualitatively identical. Aron Gurwitsch has

6. Parkinson G. H. R., 1965, 134.

7. "Dieu aussi a produit tout d'un coup non pas toutes les pensées (car il faut qu'elles se suivent), mais une nature qui les produit par ordre. Et c'est justement ce que je veux: Le corps ne fait qu'y répondre. Mais les corps étaient nécessaires pour produire non seulement nos unités et âmes, mais encore celles des autres substances corporelles, animaux et plantes, qui sont dans nos corps et dans ceux qui nous environnent". See Woolhouse R. S., 2000; Blank A., 2003.

8. "[L]a loi de la substance indivisible de cet animal est de représenter ce qui se fait dans son corps de la manière que nous l'expérimentons, et même de représenter en quelque façon, et par rapport à ce corps, tout ce qui se fait dans le monde: les unités de substance n'étant autre chose que des différentes concentrations de l'univers, représenté selon les différents points de vue qui les distinguent".

pointed out a passage from the correspondence with the Dutch Cartesian Burcher De Volder, where Leibniz characterizes the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles as a consequence of the perspectival representation of the universe in simple substances: "Entelechies must necessarily differ or not be completely similar to each other; in fact, they are principles of diversity, for they each express the universe from their own point of view" (letter to De Volder, June 20, 1703, GP II, 251-252).⁹ This is one of the most explicit statements of (PA). Moreover, in the context of the correspondence with De Volder, (PA) does not start with theological assumptions about simple substances being the result of a Divine view of the universe. Rather, Leibniz regards perspectival representation of the universe in a simple substance as a consequence of the perspectival representation of the universe in its organic body. In the same letter, he writes: "[T]hings which differ in position must express their position, that is, their surroundings, and are hence not to be distinguished merely by their location or by a solely extrinsic denomination [...]" (GP II, 250).¹⁰ He goes on:

[T]here never arises a natural organic mechanism that is new because it always possesses infinite organs, so that it may express the whole universe in its way; indeed, it always involves all past and present time. This is the most certain nature of every substance. And we know that what is expressed in the soul is also expressed in the body; hence the soul as well as the machine animated by it, and the animal itself, are as indestructible as the very universe. [...] Nor can any primitive entelechy ever come into being or be extinguished naturally or ever lack an organic body (GP II, 251).¹¹

Thus, (PA) as expressed in the correspondence with De Volder connects the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles with the idea that according to the order of nature a simple substance cannot exist without an organic body. Hence, having an organic body is constitutive for the perspectival representation of the universe in a simple substance. Because bodies express the universe from a particular position in space, simple substances must differ from each other.

In the *Nouveaux Essais*, Leibniz takes up this line of thought. As he claims there, by means of *petites perceptions* we perceive the whole universe: "the soul is a little

9. "Entelechias differre necesse est, seu non esse penitus similes inter se, imo principia esse diversitatis, nam aliæ aliter exprimunt universum ad suum quæque spectandi modum". See Gurwitsch A., 1974, 239.

10. "[Q]uæ loco differunt, oportet locum suum, id est ambientia exprimere, atque adeo non tantum loco seu sola extrinseca denominatione distingui [...]"

11. "[N]unquam oritur machina organica nova naturæ, quia semper infinitorum organorum est, ut totum Universum suo modo exprimat, imo semper omnia præterita et præsentia tempora involvit, quæ certissima est omnis substantiæ natura; raturumque est quod in anima, idem et in corpore exprimi; unde et anima et machina per eam animata, et ipsum animal tam indestructibilia sunt quam ipsum Universum. [...] Nec unquam oriri naturaliter aut extingui potest primitiva Entelechia quæcunque, et nunquam organico corpore caret".

world where distinct ideas represent God and confused ones represent the universe" (NE 2.1.1, A VI vi, 109).¹² Moreover, in the preface to the work Leibniz makes clear that the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles is a consequence of the theory of *petites perceptions*. He writes: "[I]n consequence of imperceptible variations no two individual things could be perfectly alike, and [...] they must always differ more than numerically" (NE preface, A VI vi, 57).¹³ Thus, the fact that simple substances have *petites perceptions* by means of which they represent the universe from their perspective excludes the possibility that in nature there are two individual objects that are qualitatively identical. Moreover, a little later in the preface Leibniz points out that, although the qualitative diversity of simple substances can be seen as a consequence of his theological views about the process of creation, it is also a consequence of his views about the nature of individuality:

This knowledge of insensible perceptions also explains why and how two souls of the same species, human or otherwise, never leave the hands of the Creator perfectly alike, each of them having its own inherent relationship to the point of view which it will have in the universe. But that follows from what I have already said about two individuals, namely that the difference between them is always more than numerical (NE preface, A VI vi, 58).¹⁴

That this view about the nature of individuality has to do with the order of nature becomes clear when at the beginning of the second book of the *Nouveaux Essais* Leibniz argues that the qualitative diversity of individual substances involves the qualitative diversity of organic bodies due to the relations between an organic body and the rest of the universe:

Things which are uniform, containing no variety, are always mere abstractions: for instance, time, space, and the other entities of pure mathematics. There is no body whose parts are at rest, and no substance which does not have something which distinguishes it from every other. Human souls differ not only from other souls but also from one another, though the latter differences are not of the sort that we call specific. And I think I can demonstrate that every substantial thing, be it soul or body, has a unique relationship to each other thing; and that each must always differ from every other in respect of *intrinsic denominations*" (NE 2.1.2, A VI vi, 110).¹⁵

12. "[...] l'âme est un petit monde, où les idées distinctes sont une représentation de Dieu et où les confuses sont une représentation de l'univers".

13. "en vertu des variations insensibles, deux choses individuelles ne sauraient être parfaitement semblables, et [...] elles doivent toujours différer plus que *numero*".

14. "Cette connaissance des perceptions insensibles sert aussi à expliquer pourquoi et comment deux âmes humaines ou autrement d'une même espèce ne sortent jamais parfaitement semblables des mains du Créateur et ont toujours chacune son rapport originaire aux points de vue qu'elles auront dans l'univers. Mais c'est ce qui suit déjà de ce que j'avais remarqué de deux individus, savoir, que leur *différence* est toujours *plus que numérique*".

15. "Les choses uniformes, et qui ne renferment aucune variété, ne sont jamais que des abstractions, comme le temps, l'espace et les autres êtres des mathématiques pures. Il n'y a point de corps dont les

That Leibniz's ideas about the constitutive function of bodily traces for insensible perceptions in the soul stand behind this version of (PA) becomes apparent in the way he argues for the existence of *petites perceptions*. According to Nicholas Jolley, the theory of *petites perceptions* is nothing but a consequence of an a priori theory of the nature of simple substances.¹⁶ However, Leibniz develops several arguments for the existence of insensible perceptions that show that he regards the theory of insensible perceptions as an outcome of the constitutive role of bodily traces for representations in the soul. As his spokesperson Théophile points out, one settles the question of whether there are insensible perceptions

in the same way that one proves that there are imperceptible bodies and invisible movements [...]. In the same way there are countless inconspicuous perceptions, which do not stand out enough for one to be aware of or to remember them but which manifest themselves through their inevitable consequences (NE 2.1.10, A VI vi, 112).¹⁷

Much of what Leibniz in the *Nouveaux Essais* says about *petites perceptions* is an expression of such an argumentative strategy. For example, he argues that

[w]hile sleeping, even without dreams, one always has some faint sensing going on. Waking up is itself a sign of this: the easier someone is to awaken, the more sense he has of what is going on around him, though often this sense is not strong enough to cause him to wake (NE 2.1.13, A VI vi, 115).¹⁸

Something analogous holds for impressions in our bodily organs in the state of waking: "[T]here are always objects which strike our eyes and ears, and therefore touch our souls as well, without our paying heed to them" (NE 2.1.14, A VI vi, 115).¹⁹ Moreover, insensible perceptions, according to Leibniz, are part of the structure of human action:

All our undeliberated actions result from a conjunction of minute perceptions; and even our customs and passions, which have so much influence when we do deliberate, come from the same source; for these tendencies come into being gradually,

parties soient en repos, et il n'y a point de substance qui n'ait de quoi se distinguer de toute autre. Les âmes humaines diffèrent non seulement des autres âmes, mais encore entre elles quoique la différence ne soit point de la nature de celles qu'on appelle spécifiques. Et selon les démonstrations que je crois avoir, toute chose substantielle, soit âme ou corps, a son rapport à chacune des autres, qui lui est propre; et l'une doit toujours différer de l'autre par des *dénominations intrinsèques*".

16. Jolley N., 1984, 110-111; 140-141.

17. "On la décide comme l'on prouve qu'il y a des corps imperceptibles et des mouvements invisibles [...]. Il y a de même des perceptions peu relevées sans nombre, qui ne se distinguent pas assez pour qu'on s'en aperçoive ou s'en souviene, mais elles se font connaître par des conséquences certaines".

18. "On n'est pas sans quelque sentiment faible pendant qu'on dort, lors même qu'on est sans songe. Le réveil même le marque, et plus on est aisé à être éveillé, plus on a de sentiment de ce qui se passe au dehors, quoique ce sentiment ne soit pas toujours assez fort pour causer le réveil".

19. "nous avons toujours des objets qui frappent nos yeux ou nos oreilles, et par conséquent l'âme en est touchée aussi, sans que nous y prenions garde".

and so without the minute perceptions we would not have acquired these noticeable dispositions (NE 2.1.15, A VI vi, 115-116).²⁰

Arguments such as these are not only independent from the theory of simple substances. They also have a close connection with the view that souls, according to the order of nature, never can exist independently of organic bodies. Philalèthe, Locke's spokesperson, objects to the account of *petites perceptions* given so far: "Perhaps it will be said that in a man who is awake, his body plays a part in his thinking, and that the memory is preserved by traces in the brain; whereas when he sleeps, the soul has its thoughts separately, in itself". Théophile replies:

I would say nothing of the sort, since I think there is always a perfect correspondence between the body and the soul, and since I use bodily impression of which one is not aware, whether in sleep or waking states, to prove that there are similar impressions in the soul (NE 2.1.15, A VI vi, 116).²¹

Leibniz reaffirms this line of argument: "[S]ince I have reason to hold that the soul is never completely separated from all body, I think it can be said without qualification that a human being does and will always think" (NE 2.1.19, A VI vi, 117-118).²² In this sense, the theory of insensible perception is founded on an insight into the constitutive role of bodily traces for the states of a simple substance. Moreover, if the qualitative diversity of individual substances is due to insensible perceptions, the version of (PA) defended in the *Nouveaux Essais* is not only a consequence of a theological view about the creation of simple substances but also an outcome of the view that souls naturally are inseparable from bodies.

2. Organic Minds and the Problem of Twin-Consciousnesses

The intrinsic connection between bodily traces and perceptions in the soul also explains what Leibniz in the *Nouveaux Essais* says about the problem of whether it is possible, according to the order of nature, that human beings on this earth and their counterparts on another globe in this universe have identical states of cons-

20. "Toutes nos actions indélébiles sont des résultats d'un concours de petites perceptions, et même nos coutumes et passions, qui ont tant d'influence dans nos délibérations, en viennent: car ces habitudes naissent peu à peu, et par conséquent sans les petites perceptions on ne viendrait point à ces dispositions notables". For analogous arguments for the existence of *petites perceptions*, see *Quelques Remarques sur le livre de Mons. Lock intitulé Essay of Understanding*, A VI vi, 6-7; NE preface, A VI vi, 53-55; NE 1.3.20, A VI vi, 106-107.

21. "PHILALÈTHE: On dira peut-être que dans un homme éveillé qui pense, son corps est pour quelque chose et que le souvenir se conserve par les traces du cerveau, mais que lorsqu'il dort, l'âme a ses pensées à part en elle-même.

THÉOPHILE: Je suis bien éloigné de dire cela, puisque je crois qu'il y a toujours une exacte correspondance entre le corps et l'âme, et puisque je me sers des impressions du corps dont on ne s'aperçoit pas, soit en veillant ou en dormant, pour prouver que l'âme en a de semblables".

22. "Pour moi qui ai des raisons pour tenir que l'âme n'est jamais séparée de tout corps, je crois qu'on peut dire absolument que l'homme pense et pensera toujours".

sciousness. Leibniz's argument cannot be understood if, as Margaret Wilson has suggested, consciousness is interpreted as involving a kind of self-evident insight into the nature of substances – "consciousness of the identity, simplicity and substantiality of this entity" (Wilson M. D., 1976, 341). Wilson claims that according to Leibniz "we can self-evidently experience ourselves as simple or immaterial entities" (Wilson M. D., 1974, 508). However, already in Leibniz's early metaphysical writings, the substantial identity of the self is treated not as something self-evident but rather as something that can be argued for based on a description of the structure of mental activity. As Leibniz argues, one of the descriptively accessible structural features of mental activity is the temporal structure of consciousness. For example, he writes:

It is enough that there are some things that stay the same while they change, such as the Ego. But if someone contended that not even I endure beyond a moment, he cannot know whether he himself exists. For this he knows only by experiencing and perceiving himself. But every perception needs time, and so either he persists during the whole time of his perception, which suffices for us, or he himself does not perceive, otherwise he would perceive only for a moment, namely, for that moment alone at which he exists (*Divisio terminorum ac enumeratio attributorum*, Summer 1683-Early 1685 (?), A VI iv, 562).²³

As Leibniz goes on:

And since consciousness of my perception involves memory, and thus the past, for I do not both think and perceive my thought at the same moment, we are in error when we say that we experience ourselves, if neither he who perceives nor he who is perceived is he who is thinking or remembering now (A VI iv, 563).²⁴

A similar argumentative strategy is at work in the discussion of the identity of the self in the *Nouveaux Essais*. To be sure, Wilson's claim that Leibniz regarded the substantial unity of the self as something self-evident corresponds well to the first version of a passage in the *Nouveaux Essais*: "I also hold this opinion that consciousness or the sense of *I* constitutes moral or personal identity" (NE 2.27.9, A VI vi, 236, notes).²⁵ However, Leibniz seems to have been dissatisfied with this way of putting things. In a second version of the passage, he writes: "I also hold this opinion that consciousness or the sense of *I* proves moral or personal identity"

23. "Sufficit, aliqua esse quæ maneant eadem cum mutantur ut Ego. Quodsi quis ne me quidem durare contendant ultra momentum, is scire nequit an ipse existat. Hoc enim non aliter novit, quam quod semet experitur atque percipit. Omnis autem perceptio tempore indiget, itaque aut toto durante tempore hujus perceptionis permanet quod nobis sufficit, aut semet ipse non percipit, alioqui tantum momento perciperet, eo scilicet quo solo existit".

24. "Et cum conscientia meæ perceptionis, memoriam involvat, adeoque præteritum, neque enim eodem momento et cogito et meam cogitationem percipio, falso dicemus nosmet experiri, si neque is qui percipit, neque is qui perceptus est, ille est qui nunc cogitat seu meminit".

25. "Je suis aussi de cette opinion que la conscosité ou le sentiment du *moi* fait l'identité morale ou personnelle".

(NE 2.27.9, A VI vi, 236).²⁶ Thus, Leibniz regards self-consciousness as something that does not coincide with substantial identity and unity, but rather *proves* something about identity. Moreover, what is proved, in a first step, is not *substantial* but *personal* identity. Nevertheless, something analogous holds also about the relation between self-consciousness and substantial – real – identity:

[A]ccording to the order of things, an identity which is apparent to the person concerned (one who senses himself to be the same) presupposes a real identity obtaining through each immediate transition accompanied by reflection, or by the sense of *I*; because an intimate and immediate perception cannot mislead us in the natural course of things (NE 2.27.9, A VI vi, 236).²⁷

Leibniz also puts it thus: “The existence of real and personal identity is proved with as much certainty as any matter of fact can be, by present and immediate reflection [...]” (NE 2.27.9, A VI vi, 236).²⁸ Hence, reflection has both an intuitive and a discursive side. Reflection is intuitive in the sense that some structural features of mental activity are immediately accessible to the attentive mind. Yet it is also discursive because the immediate insight into structures of mental activity – such as the temporal structure of perception and consciousness – is used as an argument for a certain view as to the nature of substantial unities.²⁹

That reflection has both an intuitive and a discursive side in particular holds for the role *petites perceptions* play in Leibniz’s account of the identity of the individual. As Leibniz claims in the preface to the *Nouveaux Essais*,

[t]hese insensible perceptions also indicate and constitute the same individual, which is characterized by the traces which these perceptions preserve from the individual’s former states, thereby connecting these with his present state (NE preface, A VI vi, 55).³⁰

Again, this claim is not only based on self-evidence alone. To Philalèthe’s objection that the fact that the mind always thinks is not self-evident, Théophile responds by pointing out that according to his view this is not supposed to be some self-evident fact but rather a fact that requires some “attention and reasoning” (NE 2.1.10, A VI vi, 112). Thus, what Leibniz says about insensible perceptions involves both an intuitive aspect – the side of attention – and a discursive aspect – the side of reason-

26. “Je suis aussi de cette opinion, que la consociété ou le sentiment du *moi* prouve une identité morale ou personnelle”.

27. “[S]uivant l’ordre des choses, l’identité apparente à la personne même, qui se sent la même, suppose l’identité réelle à chaque passage prochain, accompagné de réflexion ou de sentiment du moi: une perception intime et immédiate ne pouvant tromper naturellement”.

28. “L’identité réelle et personnelle se prouve le plus certainement qu’il se peut en matière de fait, par la réflexion présente et immédiate [...]”.

29. See Blank A., 2001, 45-59.

30. “Ces perceptions insensibles marquent encore et constituent le même individu qui est caractérisé par les traces qu’elles conservent des états précédents de cet individu, en faisant la connexion avec son état présent”.

ning. The discursive aspect is at stake when Leibniz argues that consciousness makes the connection between *petites perceptions* apparent: “It is this continuity and connection of perceptions which make someone really the same individual; but our awarenesses – i.e. when we are aware of past states of mind – prove a moral identity as well, and make the real identity appear” (NE 2.27.14, A VI vi, 239).³¹ This suggests that apperceptions of past perceptions provide a proof for moral identity and make real identity apparent since they presuppose a real connection between past perceptions and present apperceptions. Or to put it differently: apperceptions of past perceptions depend for their existence and content on past perceptions, including insensible ones.

The constitutive function of insensible perceptions for the substantial identity of individuals implies that also the bodily traces constitutive for insensible perceptions are constitutive for real identity. This explains why Leibniz, in the above-cited response to Foucher, claims that bodies are “necessary to produce [...] our unities or souls” (GP IV, 493). It also implies that the existence and content of states of consciousness depend on bodily traces. This is immediately relevant for the question of whether twin-consciousnesses are possible according to the order of nature. Leibniz discusses this problem in the *Nouveaux Essais* in the context of a group of thought-experiments suggested by Locke. Philalèthe puts the thought-experiments thus:

If we could suppose either that two distinct incommunicable consciousnesses might act alternately in the same body, the one constantly by day, the other by night; or that the same consciousness might act by intervals in two bodies; I ask in the first case, whether the *day* and the *night-man* [...] would not be two as distinct persons, as Socrates and Plato; and whether in the second case there would not be one person in two distinct bodies? [...] Furthermore, that immaterial thinking thing may sometimes lose sight of its past consciousness, and recall it again [...]. Make these intervals of memory and forgetfulness to take their turns regularly by day and night, and you have two persons with the same immaterial spirit (NE 2.27.23, A VI vi, 244).³²

Théophile acknowledges

that if all the appearances of one mind were transferred to another or if God brought about an exchange between two minds by giving to one the visible body of the other

31. “Cette continuation et liaison de perceptions fait le même individu réellement, mais les apperceptions (c’est-à-dire lorsqu’on s’aperçoit des sentiments passés) prouvent encore une identité morale, et font paraître l’identité réelle”.

32. “Si nous pouvions supposer, où que deux consciences distinctes et incommunicables agissent tour à tour dans le même corps, l’une constamment pendant le jour et l’autre durant la nuit, ou que la même conscience agit par intervalles dans deux corps différents, je demande si dans le premier cas l’homme de jour et l’homme de nuit [...] ne seraient pas deux personnes aussi distinctes que Socrate et Platon, et si dans le second cas ce ne serait pas une seule personne dans deux corps distincts? [...] De plus, une chose immatérielle qui pense, doit quelques fois perdre de vue sa conscience passée et la rappeler de nouveau. Or supposez que ces intervalles de mémoire et d’oubli reviennent partout le jour et la nuit, dès là vous avez deux personnes avec le même esprit immatériel”.

and its appearances and states of consciousness, then personal identity would not be tied to the identity of substance but rather would go with the constant appearances [...] (NE 2.27.23, A VI vi, 244).³³

However, he raises two objections. The first is this:

But these appearances would not consist merely in states of consciousness: God would have to exchange not only the states of awareness or consciousness of the individuals concerned, but also the appearances which were presented to others; otherwise what the others had to say would conflict with the consciousnesses of the individuals themselves [...] (NE 2.27.23, A VI vi, 244-245).³⁴

As he points out, this would disturb the moral order. Yet, there is a second objection, one that goes beyond the requirements of the moral order and concerns the order of nature:

Still, it must be granted to me that the divorce between the insensible and the sensible realms, i.e. between the insensible perceptions which remained in the same substances and the states of awareness which were exchanged, would be a miracle – like supposing God to create a vacuum. For I have already explained why this is not in conformity with the natural order (NE 2.27.23, A VI vi, 245).³⁵

Thus, it is the connection between conscious states and imperceptible perceptions, for which Leibniz argued in earlier parts of the *Nouveaux Essais*, that shows what is contrary to the order of nature in Locke's thought experiments. I take Leibniz's argument to be the following: God cannot transfer one consciousness to a different body, or two consciousnesses to the same body, because this would involve separating consciousnesses from imperceptible perceptions associated with bodily traces. This is contrary to the natural order because imperceptible perceptions are constitutive for states of consciousness, and bodily traces are constitutive for imperceptible perceptions. Thus, what excludes Locke's thought experiments from what is naturally possible is the fact that states of consciousness depend for their existence and content on the states of the body with which they are associated.

Leibniz illustrates this line argument by way of discussing an alternative thought experiment. This is how the problem of twin-consciousnesses comes into play:

33. "J'avoue que si toutes les apparences étaient changées et transférées d'un esprit sur un autre, ou si Dieu faisait un échange entre deux esprits, donnant le corps visible et les apparences et consciences de l'un à l'autre, l'identité personnelle, au lieu d'être attachée à celle de la substance, suivrait les apparences constantes [...]"

34. "[M]ais ces apparences ne consisteront pas dans les seules consciences, et il faudra que Dieu fasse l'échange non seulement des aperceptions ou consciences des individus en question, mais aussi des apparences qui se présentent aux autres à l'égard de ces personnes, autrement il y aurait contradiction entre les consciences des uns et le témoignage des autres [...]"

35. "Cependant il faut qu'on m'avoue aussi que le divorce entre le monde insensible et sensible, c'est-à-dire entre les perceptions insensibles qui demeureraient dans les mêmes substances et les aperceptions qui seraient échangées, serait un miracle, comme lorsqu'on suppose que Dieu fait du vide; car j'ai dit ci-dessus pourquoi cela n'est point conforme à l'ordre naturel".

Here is something we could much more fittingly suppose: in another region of the universe or at some other time there may be a globe in no way sensibly different from this globe of earth on which we live, and inhabited by men each of whom differs sensibly in no way from his counterpart among us. [...] God could transfer the minds, by themselves or with their bodies, from one globe to the other without their being aware of it (NE 2.27.23, A VI vi, 245).³⁶

Leibniz uses this thought experiment to raise the question of whether a human being on this earth and its counterpart on Twin-Earth are one or two persons. Note that the problem Leibniz here discusses does not concern identity across possible worlds. Thus, the problem standing behind Leibniz's thought experiment is not that of the validity of an inter-world version of the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles.³⁷ Rather, it concerns a special case of intra-world identity, which could be called the problem of the validity of an inter-globe version of the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles. Leibniz's solution to this problem is analogous to his response to Locke's thought experiments. As he argues, a human being on this earth and its counterpart on Twin-Earth "could be told apart by God, and by minds which were capable of grasping the intervals [between the globes] and their outer relations of space and time, and even the inner constitutions, of which the men on the two globes would be insensible" (NE 2.27.23, A VI vi, 245).³⁸ Moreover, he adds that

if we are speaking of what can naturally occur, the two similar globes and the two similar souls on them could remain similar only for a time. Since they would be numerically different, there would have to be a difference at least in their insensible constitutions, and the latter must unfold in due course (NE 2.27.23, A VI vi, 245-246).³⁹

Thus, the connection between *petites perceptions* is not only what constitutes the identity of the individual; it is also what guarantees that in the long run the differences between the insensible perceptions must result in differences in conscious states.

36. "Voici une autre supposition bien plus convenable: il se peut que dans un autre lieu de l'univers ou dans un autre temps, il se trouve un globe qui ne diffère point sensiblement de ce globe de la terre où nous habitons, et que chacun des hommes qui l'habitent ne diffère point sensiblement de chacun de nous qui lui répond. [...] Dieu pourrait transférer les esprits seuls ou avec leur corps d'un globe dans l'autre sans qu'ils s'en aperçussent [...]"

37. For a discussion of the inter-world version of the principle, see Cover J. A. and O'Leary-Hawthorne J., 1999, 155-158.

38. "[...] Dieu et les esprits capables d'envisager les intervalles et rapports externes des temps et des lieux et même les constitutions internes, insensibles aux hommes des deux globes, pourraient les discerner [...]"

39. "Au reste, parlant de ce qui se peut naturellement, les deux globes semblables et les deux âmes semblables des deux globes ne le demeureraient que pour un temps. Car puisqu'il y a une diversité individuelle, il faut que cette différence consiste au moins dans les constitutions insensibles, qui se doivent développer dans la suite des temps".

* * *

I set out to argue that, in addition to the logical argument for the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles in writings from the 1680s and to the theological argument in the correspondence with Clarke, Leibniz develops a third argument leading from the perspectival representation of the universe in individual substances to the qualitative diversity of individual things. As we have seen, one of the contexts of this argument is itself theological: because each individual substance is the result of a Divine perspective on the whole universe, each individual substance expresses the universe in a way different from each other. Nevertheless, Leibniz in the *Nouveaux Essais* also argues that the perspectival representation in the perceptions of a soul-like simple substance is related to the perspectival representation in the sensory impressions of its organic body. The constitutive role of bodily traces for the insensible perceptions in the soul accounts for the fact that by means of *petites perceptions* each individual substance in the world is qualitatively different from each other. Moreover, it shows why Locke's thought-experiments are contrary to the natural order: states of consciousness cannot be separated from insensible perceptions because souls cannot be separated from organic bodies. This, in turn, provides Leibniz with a solution for his own thought-experiment involving human beings with twin-consciousnesses. What, according to him, excludes the possibility that human beings on our earth and their counterparts on twin-earth over a long time have identical states of consciousness is that fact that due to the perspectival representation in their insensible perceptions their conscious states in due time must differ. In this sense, the constitutive role of bodily traces for the representation of the universe in soul-like substances shows why the existence of twin-consciousnesses over a long period of time is contrary to the order of nature.