## Antonio-M. Nunziante (Padova)

## *"Monas Dominans"* like *"Monas actuatrix"*. A Case of Unitiy in Plurality<sup>\*</sup>.

In the following paper I would like to try to expound on a concept quite important in the philosophy of Leibniz – that of the "*Monas Dominans*".

In particular, I would like to approach this subject in the first place by means of considerations of a "historical-genetic" nature, while in the second part of my work I propose to put forward some possible interpretations of it. In both cases I will try to compare my ideas with those of recent studies on this theme.

The difficulties are numerous; first of all, the texts published to date in which Leibniz introduces and presents his doctrine of the "Monas Dominans" are relatively few, especially if compared to the space given to other elements of his philosophical system; secondly, if on the one hand the general intention put forward by Leibniz through the introduction of this doctrine is clear enough (the Monas Dominans renders "*One*" in the Machine the "corporeal substance", that is the "Animal", as found in the letter to De Volder of June 1703 to which scholars often make reference), on the other hand, when one tries to clarify its details and consider its implications one immediately runs into the same difficulties already pointed out in other studies (regarding, for example, the definition of "corporeal substance", that form the "Organic Machine", etc.).

A primary idea I will try to present in this work regards the highlighting in the work of Leibniz of a close correlation between the appearance of the expression "*organism*" and that of the expression "*Monas Dominans*".

## I. From a historical point of view

First of all, the expression "Monas dominans" is not univocal. Leibniz frequently uses other terms in his writings: he speaks of "substantia praeminens seu entelechia primaria" (in the abovementioned letter to De Volder)<sup>1</sup>, of "Monade centrale" (PNG § 3), and "anima dominans" (De Ipsa Natura, NE, letter to Sophie Charlotte of 4<sup>th</sup> May 1704, Monad.)<sup>2</sup>, of "Unité dominante et principale" (to Sophie12<sup>th</sup> June 1700)<sup>3</sup>, "Monas actuatrix" in the *Animadversiones contra Stahl*)<sup>4</sup> and finally, of "Unum Dominans" (although in this case, in the text on *De rerum originatione radicali*, the reference is to the One that "not only rules the world, but also creates it and makes it")<sup>5</sup>.

Then there are problems of dating. According to Look (2002), the "first appearance" of the expression "Monas dominans" can be found in the famous letter to De Volder of 1703 already quoted<sup>6</sup>. Some further considerations however could perhaps be added, in the sense that Look's

<sup>\*</sup> The following text has been published in: VIII Internationaler Leibniz-Kongress, *Einheit in der Vielheit*, Hannover, 24. bis 29. July 2006, hrsg. von H. Breger, J. Herbst und S. Erdner, Vorträge 2. Teil, 729-736.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> GP II, 252.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> De ipsa natura, GP IV, 512; NE, A VI, 6, 220; GP III, 347; Monad. § 70.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> This letter reads "dans un corps organique il n'y a qu'une seule Unité dominante et principale, qui est son ame". See GP VII, 553.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Dutens, II, 2, 157.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> GP VII, 302.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> B. Look: "On Monadic Domination in Leibniz's Metaphysics", in *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 10 (3) 2002, 380.

claim is probably right, but if we accept the idea that the abovementioned expressions have close "family ties", or at least that they have the same conceptual basis, then we have to go back a few years. The text of the letter to Sophie in which Leibniz refers to the "Unité dominante et principale" present in the "organic body" in fact seems to me to be quite explicit and is dated 12 June 1700. But also in *De ipsa natura* of 1698 he writes about "dominant souls" although in this case the expression seems to be exclusively confined to the consideration of "intelligent" souls, that is, those which are "human". Then there is the case of *De substantia simplex ac composita*, in which he speaks expressly of "dominant monads" and which has been dated around 1695<sup>7</sup>. Finally, if we confine our interest to a purely linguistic plane, the expression "Unum dominans" (as we are reminded by Look), which appears in *De rerum originatione radicali* of 1697, although referring to God, can be significant for the very conceptual implications that it contains.

In summary: rather than concentrating on individual instances I think it more appropriate to refer to a kind of "lexical constellation" that gravitates around the expression and the concept of "Monas dominans", and which showed signs of appearing around the turn of the century (1697-1700).

This, then, is my first set of considerations. If we then add to this lexical point of view other types of references, such as historical or conceptual, our path becomes ever more rocky.

Let us consider some texts of Leibniz. The first is taken from the Animadversiones contra Stahl:

"Assentior etiam, nullum esse corpus naturae organicum omni *entelechia primitiva* seu *Monade actuatrice* (quae ampliore sensu anima appellari possit) perfecte cassum, nec ullam esse animam naturaliter ab omni corpore organico separatum" (D II, 2, 157 my italics).

Let us concentrate on two elements: the first concerns the expression "entelechia primitiva", while the second regards the use of the term "actuatrix" in reference to the Monad, which, as far as we can understand, "actuates" the organic body referred to in the text. This last expression seems to me very important as it recurs also in the letter to De Volder to which we have already referred:

"Cum dico substantia, quamvis corpoream, continere infinitas machinas, simul addendum puto ipsam complecti unam machinam ex ipsis composita et praeterea esse una Entelechia *actuatam*, sine qua nullum esset in ea principium verae Unitatis" (GP II, 250, my italics).

Therefore: the corporeal substance, containing infinite machines, is "actuated" by the entelechia, in the sense that without this it would not be "*one*". The lexical and conceptual link that connects these two texts seems to me quite strong. We will pass over the particular meanings implied by this "actuation" (according to which the "Monad" is the "actuatrix" and the corporeal substance or machine is "actuated" by the entelechia) and pass instead to an examination of some other writings of Leibniz.

For example, in *De ipsa natura*, he says that:

"Quae utique activitates atque entelechiae, cum materia prima sive *molis*, rei essentialiter passivae modificationes esse non possint (...) hinc judicari potest, debere in corporea substantia reperiri *entelechiam primam*, tandem *pròton dektikòn* activitatis, vim scilicet motricem primitivam (...) Atque hoc ipsum substantiale principium est, quod in viventibus *anima*, in aliis *forma substantialis* appellatur, et quatenus cum materia substantiam vere unam, seu unum per se constituit, id facit quod ego Monadem appello" (GP IV, 511).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> See *De substantia simplex ac composita*, edited by E. Pasini: E. Pasini: *Corpo e funzioni cognitive in Leibniz*, Milano 1996, 208.

It seems to me that also in this case one can speak of significant "family ties" with the texts previously quoted (we are in 1698); we have an "entelechia prima" that seems to correspond quite closely to the "entelechia primitiva" from the text of the *Animadversiones*, we have a corporeal substance that is "animated" and "vivified" by this "substantial principle", and we have confirmation that this last, together with the "matter" forms a "substance that is truly one" or "*unum per se*" (in fact, Leibniz specifies that it is for this very reason that this substantial principle is called a "monad"). Moreover, as in the text from the *Animadversiones*, he underlines that "no soul can naturally be completely separate from an organic body"<sup>8</sup> and also in *De ipsa natura* he highlights that the character of "true unity" of living beings is rooted in the bond between substantial principle and what is called "secondary matter". The text of *De ipsa natura* in fact goes on to say:

"*materiam* intelligi vel secundam vel primam; secundam esse quidem substantiam completam, sed non mere passivam; primam esse mere passivam, sed non esse completam substantiam; accedereque adeo debere animam, vel formam animae analogam, sive *entelècheian tèn pròten*, id est nisum quendam seu vim agendi primitivam, quae ipsa est lex insita, decreto divino impressa" (*ivi*, 512).

Let us sum up, therefore, the theory of Leibniz: the substantial principle (monad), which in living beings is called the soul, and in the others, substantial form, constitutes, together with the "secondary matter" (that which in the letter to De Volder is defined as the "mass" or "organic Machine") a "complete substance" and this last is the "Animal" (or as we have already read in the letter addressed to De Volder "the corporeal substance, that the Dominant Monad renders One").

As is well known, there is a lot of discussion among scholars about the connections that subsist between entelechia, primary matter, monad and secondary matter. It has also been widely discussed about what is really meant by "substance", in other words whether the monad in itself, (as appears in the text of the letter to De Volder) can be meant as a sufficiently complete substance, or if it must be united with an organic body to achieve an effective completeness. It is not within the scope of this paper to enter into the details of such a discussion. In any case, I find convincing the interpretations put forward by Fichant (2003) and Phemister (1999 and 2005), who have highlighted that secondary matter is an aggregate not simply of "monads" but of "corporeal substances"<sup>9</sup>. Not only this, but an important merit in the interpretation of Fichant consists in his having brought to light the notion of "machina naturalis", which as he says "in some way provides the *real definition* of the concept generally associated with the organic body" <sup>10</sup>. I do not wish, however, to anticipate the sense of my interpretation, nor to bite off more than I can chew.

Let us then proceed in an orderly manner and continue to try to clarify those "family ties" that the texts of Leibniz seem to have. The elements that have emerged to date are at least three (in reality there are many more, but let us confine ourselves to these for convenience):

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> This thought – as it is well known – is often expressed by Leibniz.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> See, M. Fichant: "Leibniz et les machines de la nature", *Studia Leibnitiana* XXXV/1 (2003), 22. Fichant writes: "le concours des monades à la constitution de la matèrie seconde n'est pas direct, sauf à tomber dans les apories classiques de la composition d'un étendu à partir d'élements inétendus. Ce concours, par le quel les substances simplex soutiennent bien en effet ce qu'il y a d'ultimement réel dans les agrégats, est médiatisé par l'emboîtment à l'infini des substances corporelles les unes dans les autres: or c'est précisement cela qui fait de cette matiére seconde un "machine de la nature" dans ce qui la distingue d'un assemblage quelconque où aucune vie ne peut s'actualiser" (ivi, 24). On the same interpretative line had moved alrealdy P. Phemister: "Leibniz and the Elements of Compound Bodies", *The British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 7 (1) 1999, p. 64. See also P. Phemister: *Leibniz and the Natural World: Activity, Passivity and Corporeal Substances in Leibniz's Philosophy*, Springer (Kluwer), New Synthese Historical Library, 2005.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Fichant 2003, 13.

- 1. the Monad "actuatrix", or entelechy (or "soul in the widest sense") actuates the organic body (*Animadversiones*, letter to De Volder).
- 2. the organic body, thus substantialized, has the characteristics of a "unum per se" (*De ipsa natura* and, as we will soon see, NE)
- 3. the "true unity" expressed by that *unum per se* is the total result of an infinite "assembly" of "machines" and this whole notion is condensed in the use and in the expression that Leibniz makes of the concept of "machina naturalis" (letter to De Volder, and PNG).

That there is an effective homogeneity between these elements (of a lexical as well as a conceptual kind) is not difficult to demonstrate. It is sufficient to take into consideration at least a couple of other texts in order to have an even clearer picture.

Thus, in PNG, we read that:

"Et ce corps est organique, quand il forme une manière d'Automate ou de Machine de la Nature, qui est machine non seulement dans le tout, mais encore dans les plus petites parties, qui se peuvent faire remarquer" (PNG § 3).

And in NE, after having previously introduced his discourse on the "vivant organique" Leibniz writes:

"Il est vray qu'il y a apparement des especes qui ne sont pas veritablement *unum per se* (c'est à dire des corps doués d'une veritable unité, ou d'un estre indivisibile qui en fasse *le principe activ total*) non plus qu'un moulin ou une montre le pourroient estre. Les sels, les mineraux et les metaux pourroient estre de cette nature, c'est à dire de simple contextures ou masses où il y a quelque regularité. Mais les corps des uns et des autres, c'est à dire les corps animés aussi bien que les contextures sans vie, seront specifiés par la structure interieure, puisque dans ceux-là même qui sont animés, l'ame et la machine, chacune à part, suffisent à la determination" (A VI, 6, 318)<sup>11</sup>.

I said that the picture becomes clearer because in these texts, along with the previously encountered expressions "organic body", "nature machine", "unum per se", etc., others occur that are equally significant, that is "automa", "animated bodies", "*principium activum totalis*", "contextures sans vie" and "vivant organique", with which Leibniz introduces his speech. In particular, the most interesting element that emerges from this round of references is the strong tie that connects the concepts of "*principium activum totalis*" and "*unum per se*".

The characterization of the concept "unum per se"is, as is known, very "ancient" in the thought of Leibniz. Regarding the characterization of the natural machine as "*substantia vivens*" (I take this expression from A VI, 4 A 531) this expression appears at least from the mid sixteen eighties. In the sense that, in the texts from the 1680s (as A VI 4 has shown us), Leibniz hinges the problem of the distinction between various types of "aggregates" and various types of "machines", artificial or living, around the concept of "unum per se". Substances, living substances, those which later will be defined as "organisms" (somewhere between 1686 and 1702), are distinguished from that group of beings which Leibniz calls "organica artificialia" <sup>12</sup>. The living machine, in fact, "remains always

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> In the letter to R.Chr. Wagner as well the first entelechy is called "principium activum" (apart from "principium vitale"), cfr. GP VII, 529).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> About the first recurrence of the word "organism" in Leibniz, see *Du rapport general de toutes choses*, A VI, 4 B, p. 1615 and A.M. Nunziante, "*Corpus vivens est automaton sui perpetuativum ex naturae istituto*. Some Remarks on Leibniz's Distinction between *Machina naturalis* and *Organica artificialia*", in *Studia Leibnitiana*, SH 32 (2004), 203-216. On the "organica artificialia", see *Genera terminorum, Substantiae* (1683-1685?), A VI 4, A, 567.

the same machine that it was before"<sup>13</sup>, also in its smallest parts, while the machine built by the art of man "is not a machine in each one of its parts" (Monad. §64). The key to all this lies in the fact that every portion of (organic) matter is not only divisible but "is also currently subdivided into infinity", because otherwise, concludes Leibniz (Monad §65): "it would be impossible for each portion of matter to express the entire universe".

Living substances are therefore "unum per se" by way of their "expressive" capacity, and this is actuated and made concrete by perception, or by the capacity to "express a world" (DM, §36). In a letter to Arnauld of September/October 1687 he says that:

"L'expression est comune à toutes les formes, et c'est un genre dont la perception naturelle, le sentiment animal, et la connoissance intellectuelle sont des especes" (GP II, 112).

And in DM §36 he says that:

"Tellement qu'il semble quoyque toute substance exprime tout l'univers, que neantmoins les autres substances expriment plustost le monde que Dieu, mais que les Esprits expriment plustost Dieu que le monde" (A VI, 4, 1586-1587).

In other words, that essential property that belongs to the concept of "unum per se", seems to be satisfied only if in the *substantia automata* is present a "*principium unitatis*" that corresponds to the "*prima Entelechia*" (A VI 4, A, 559): and it is this very "perceptive" contribution given by this last that is able to render "one" the animal machine thus animated. And in particular, any living substance is "one" because it perceives "the whole universe"<sup>14</sup>. It appears to me that the elements to underline concerning this are three:

- i. the use by Leibniz of the concept of "expression" (living substances express the universe and spirits express "God")
- ii. the fact that if organic matter were not "currently subdivided into infinity", it would be impossible for each portion of matter "to express the entire universe"
- iii. the special type of relationship that exists between the perceptive act expressed by the "entelechia prima" (that will subsequently be called "dominant monad") and the resulting and total "biological" singularity (or "individuality") of the natural machine.

This last is a point to be developed along various lines. Apart from anything else, one could ask oneself whether it is possible to express the singularity/totality relationship also in terms of a part/whole relationship, and how this can happen. Here however the argument becomes more difficult to follow and it is necessary to proceed in an orderly manner.

Let us fix some first conclusions about this part of the work.

From a linguistic point of view, the expression "monas dominans" appears towards the end of the Seventeenth century and its use becomes more diffused in the texts of the beginning of the Eighteenth century. It is treated as part of a lexical and conceptual constellation to which belongs the notion of "unum per se". The concept of dominant monad therefore cannot be separated from its "family connection" with the theme of "life" and "organic living being" (as defined by Leibniz during the 1680s). The dominant monad is what actuates an organic body because it brings, or confers, life to it.

But what does it mean to confer "life" on organic body? And in what measure is an effectively "living" organic body still a "singularis" (or "individual") substance?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Leibniz an Arnauld (september/october 1687), GP II, 126; and the "classical" text of, *Systeme nouveau de la nature*, GP IV, 481.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> See Divisio terminorum ac enumeratio attributorum (1683-1685?), A VI 4, A 559.

II. From a theoretical point of view.

If we reflect on the "*characteres*" typical of a living being, I believe that we could agree that Leibniz's thought – at least as it can be assumed from the letter to De Volder of 1703 – highlights (at least) three essential elements for every kind of organism:

1) the concept of "function". Rather: the concept that defines all those *characteres* that gravitate around the notion of "function" (in the 1680s) or of "perception" (late 1690s).

2) the concept of "organization". Or those *characteres* gravitating around the notion of "organization" (and these are mostly characteristics of an self-reflexive kind).

3) the concept of "expression". That goes back to the *characteres* gravitating around the notion of "expression", or to what has been defined as the "expressive capacity" of living substances<sup>15</sup>.

[4) and then there is the concept of "terminus" or limit, but we will leave this aside for the moment].

Let us discuss the aforementioned points.

1) the function is the activity carried out by the soul and is considered by Leibniz as a sort of "ordering structure" that renders *unum* the organic body which has been substantiated by itself. The purpose of the living organic body is that of being "*sui perpetuativum*", that is of continually perpetuating itself (staying constantly alive). There is no doubt – writes Leibniz in *De scribendibus medicinae elementis* (1680-82) – that our life is like a flame that can be found ("*reperitur*") not only in the heart but also in every part of the body<sup>16</sup>.

2) Already from this last text of the beginning of 1680s we can see how the problem of the definition of life is, according to Leibniz, a problem of "organization". Organization is the principal characteristic of living substances (and therefore of plants, animals, human beings). This principal characteristic is further characterized as "ordered relationship of every part with the whole". This is the reason of the distinction between "artificial" and "living" according to Leibniz. The living organism represents an integral unity that is organized in each and every part.

But "parts" of what? If I think about the perception of my corporeal structure I cannot help thinking that my corporeal (organic) body constitutes the whole of what I can perceive about myself. Notwithstanding, it is also evident that "perception" or the "perceptive act", with which I think of myself, does not seem to be a mere "part" of my organism. In fact, Leibniz says that perceptive, entelechial or reflexive acts are not parts of the reference organism.

Sight (or, perhaps better, the "capacity" of sight) is not part of the organic body, although it is *expressed* through an organic body (or as a function of an organic body). I believe that between "parts" and the "whole" (when the whole is seen not as a mere result of aggregations, but as an

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> See R.M. Adams: *Leibniz. Determinist, Theist, Idealist*, Oxford University Press, New York Oxford, 1994, pp. 263-264.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> De scribendis medicinae elementis (1680-1682), in E. Pasini, cit., p. 215. For the definition of "living being" such as "Automaton sui perpetuativum", see *Tabula notionum praeparanda* (1685-1686), in A VI 4, A, 633. In the same text Leibniz distinguishes between the "propagativa" capacity and the "perpetuativa" capacity of the animal machine. A living being is not forced to be "propagativum" of himself, but he must be at least "sui perpetuativum", in order to be "living".

"integral term") there is a relation not of homogeneity (as in the case of body and sight) but of *expression*.

3) what does Leibniz often tell us about the *pars/totum* relationship? That it must be a relationship between homogeneous terms, in the sense that they must have at least one property linking them together. This property can be for example the fact of "possessing an extension". In the case of a living being, we can speak about a *homogeneous* relationship between a *body* and its *organs*. In the sense that both "possess an extension". Therefore the organs are rightly entitled to be "parts" of the body.

How is the relationship between the concepts gravitating around the lexicon of organization (the functionally organized being, the being capable of organization, the being principle of organization) and the whole organism considered as a whole-one? In this case, what plays the role of the "whole" and what that of the "part"? In other words: what is the relationship between the vital "functiones" of the animal machine and the organism itself considered as a "totum"? According to a first and most immediate sense, it is clear that these are not homogeneous terms and therefore they cannot hinge on a whole/part relationship (monads are not parts of the corporeal substance). Yet, at a second level of interpretation, it is also clear that if we do not consider as an organism a simple extended aggregation (the organic body), but if it is the "terminus integralis" of the organic functions that constitute it, then this relation should be seen exclusively under a formal profile, as a game of relationships between infinite "partial" functions. These - although they could be seen as "parts" of the "whole" to which they refer, are in any case linked by the capacity of expressing in a complete (i. e. integral) and therefore self-sufficient way the same vital character of the whole organism. It is this very *character* that – according to the mature Leibniz – *dominates* the relation between the infinite entelechial centres of the organism rendering them organic, that is subordinate to its expression.

Let us make a final argumentative effort. Let us contaminate the texts. Let us take as a reference the argumentations taken from a very famous text written in 1686 (*Generales inquisitiones de analys notionum et veritatum*). It is a text of logic. But a very *peculiar* test of logic. Let us proceed in order: first of all, Leibniz reminds us that there are "integral" (i. e. "perfect") terms to which the "partial" (i. e. "imperfect") terms of a discourse refer.

Before reflecting on the relation between "integral" and "partial", Leibniz takes time to reflect on the notion itself of "term" and to distinguish between different kinds of "terms". There are therefore:

a) simple primitive terms (such as "A": these are irresolvable or taken as irresolvable terms)

b) terms composed of mere simple terms (such as "AB")

c) simple derived terms (that do not arise from simple composition, but by means of the use of some simple part -i. e. through the use of some primitive syncotagorema -as in the example "A in B".

d) compound derived terms (that are composed of other derived terms)

e) more complex cases that derive from the combination of the aforementioned points<sup>17</sup>.

Leibniz thus imagines a combinatory scheme of this kind: there are many kinds of "integrals". Some are defined as "compound" or as "derived" in the sense that they are resolvable in more elementary combinations of terms (they can be divided into the "partial" elements from which they result). Others are "simple", that is they cannot be divided, according to the same scheme of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> See Generales inquisitiones de analys notionum et veritatum, A VI, 4, A, 742-743

combined division, and for this very reason they are called "purely integral terms" (which correspond to point a) of the quoted scheme).

These purely integral terms are thus "independent of the partials" in the sense that they do not result from the combination of other partial elements, but on the contrary they make the definition of "partials" possible, because without them the "partials" would lose their reference and would thus sink into total insignificance. Let us read Leibniz's words:

"Sed tamen ante partiales et particulas explicari debent illi integrales qui aut non resolvuntur, aut non nisi in integros. Et tales integrales a partialibus independentes utique esse necesse est, saltem generales, ut *Terminus, Ens*, nam his ipsi partiales indigent, ut transeant in integrales, ultimum enim complementum partialis vel obliqui, ut in integralem transeat, cum sit integrale, rursus in integralem et partialem resolvi non potest." (*Generales Inquisitiones*, A VI 4 A, 741).

Now: what are these "purely integral" terms of which Leibniz writes? What are these simple "primitive terms" that are "independent of the partials" in the sense that they do *not* result from a further process of combination and composition? The first simple integral mentioned by Leibniz, the first element in the quoted scheme, is constituted from the notion itself of "*terminus*".

This affirmation may seem surprising, but actually it is not at all so if we consider it in a mathematical language: the concept of "term" represents the "purely integral", i. e. it represents a "whole" (*totum*) that it is not made up of the composition of sub-elements (as a sum of points does not constitute a line), but it represents the result of a relationship of complex order, the principle of mixing of a function.

And the other "simple primitive" terms, *alias* purely integral, apart from the ideal beings as those logical-mathematical: what are they?

Here they are: the "*being*" (real, not abstract); the "*existing*", the "*individual*", the "*ego*" <sup>18</sup>. This means, if I am not mistaken, everything "existent" in a substantial sense (or "concrete" as Leibniz himself underlines), that is living substances (including the human being) and, in a word, "organisms". Relating to these then, there subsist "partial terms" ("*respectivi*") and the first among these that Leibniz mentions is that of "being identical" ("*idem*").

What conclusions can be drawn from all this?

That function, organization and expression are "simple terms" of the Leibnizian theory on organisms: that is they are not deducible *characteres*. And this, perhaps, is due to the fact that the very notion of *character* is not deducible from a logical point of view. But from an ontological or – if we prefer – a metaphysical point of view the "character" is what renders a monad "*distinguée*". (PNG §3). And therefore *alive*<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Generales Inquisitiones, A VI 4, A2, p. 744.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> See: H. Ishiguro: "Is there a conflict between the logical and metaphysical notion of unity in Leibniz?", in *Akten des VII Internationaler Leibniz-Kongresses. Berlin, 10-14 September 2001*, Bd. I, 535-541.