

*Of Body and Substance Truly One*

Body is not a substance, but an aggregate of substances. Indeed, it is composed (*constat*) from many really distinct [bodies], like a pile of wood, a heap of stones, a flock, an army, a fishpond in which many fish are swimming; and each body is actually divided into many contained bodies.

Now there are no substances where there is no substance, nor are numbers where there are no unities, and so it is necessary that besides bodies there are certain substances truly one or indivisible, aggregates of which constitute bodies.

The error of the material philosophers lies in this, that, having recognized the necessity of unity, they sought substance in matter, as if there could be any body which really would be one substance. And so they took refuge in atoms as the ends of analysis. Nevertheless, since every body is composed (*constet*) of diverse substances, it doesn't matter whether the parts cohere or not. Furthermore, the nature of indivisibility cannot be rendered (*reddi*) to atoms.

And so, since every body is a mass or aggregate of many bodies; no body is a substance; and so substance must be sought apart from corporeal nature.

A substance is, however, something truly one, indivisible, and therefore ingenerable and incorruptible, which is a subject of action and passion; and, as I would say in a word that very thing which I understand when I say "Ego" (moy), which subsists,

even if my body has been removed by parts, so that my body is really in perpetual flux, with me surviving. No part of my body can be assigned which is necessary to my subsistence, nevertheless at no time am I without some united material part.

At the same time, I have need of an organic body, although there is nothing in it, which is necessary to the subsistence of me.

I understand something analogous in all animals, and, in a word, I would say in every true and truly one substance.

Moreover, there are infinitely many simple substances or creatures in any particle of matter; and matter is composed from them, not as from parts, but as from constitutive principles, or immediate requisites, just as points enter into the essence of the continuum but not as parts, indeed there is no part except that which is homogenous to the whole; but the substance is not homogenous to matter or body; no more so than a point to a line.

In every substance there is nothing other than that nature or primitive force from which the series of its internal operations follows.

From any state of a substance or its nature, the series can be known, that is, all of its past and future states.

Furthermore, any substance whatsoever involves the whole universe, and from a state of it the states of the others can also be known.

The series of different substances agree perfectly among themselves, and each expresses the whole universe in its own way. And in this agreement consists the union of soul and body, and likewise that which we call the operation of substances outside of themselves.

The more perfect a substance is, the more distinctly it expresses the universe.

329<sub>3</sub> *Differentia Inter Constitutionem Lineae ex Punctis et Materiae ex Substantiis* – A.  
VI.ivB.1673-4

*A Difference between the Constitution of a Line from Points and of Matter from  
Substances*

There is this difference between how a line is constituted by points, and how matter is constituted from substances which are in it: the number of points is not determinate, but the number of substances, even if it is infinite, is nevertheless certain and determinate, indeed the latter arises from the actual division of matter not merely from the possible [division]. Nor indeed is matter divided in every possible way, but with certain proportions remaining, as machines, fishponds, flocks. A line is not an aggregate of points even though a body is an aggregate of substances.

Those who posited atoms, saw part of the truth. Indeed, they recognized that we must arrive at some one indivisible being, which is the basis of multitude, but they erred in this, that they sought that unity in matter, and they believed that a body could exist which is truly one indivisible substance.

We must consider whether or not there must be something in Matter besides those indivisible substances.

*The Part is less than the Whole*

**Definition**

The lesser is what is equal to a part of another (the greater of course).

**Axiom**

Everything is equal to itself.

**Demonstration**

Whatever is equal to a part of the whole is less than the whole, *by the definition of the lesser.*

Now a part is equal to a part of the whole, to itself of course, *by the axiom.*

Therefore the part is less than the whole. Q.E.D.

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<sup>1</sup> The three following translations are from the Latin texts as they appear in G. W. Leibniz, *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe* (Darmstadt and Berlin: Berlin Academy, 1923-) cited by series, volume, and page. They have been grouped together with Leibniz's famous notes on his conversation with Michel Angelo Fardella in 1690 by the Akademie editors under the title *Cumunicata ex Disputationibus cum Fardella*. A translation of those notes is available in Roger Ariew and Daniel Garber, *G. W. Leibniz Philosophical Essays*, (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1989) 101-104; a helpful discussion of the background of the meeting between Leibniz and Fardella is available in Daniel Garber, "Leibniz and Fardella: Body, Substance, and Idealism," in Paul Lodge, ed., *Leibniz and his Correspondents* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 123-140. Thanks to Paul Hoffman, Jeremy Hyman, and Benjamin King for their helpful suggestions concerning the present translation.