The Quietism controversy was the single most urgent topic of discussion in France at the end of the seventeenth century. The Quietists advocated a love of God whose purity they tested in a way that led to their censure. The issue is the culmination of the enduring and fundamental debate concerning the will throughout the century, between (as we would call them) the libertarians, principally the Molinists, mostly Jesuits, and the compatibilists, notably the Jansenists and Dominicans. (Malebranche, for example, thought that the love as tested for by the Quietists was impossible; so did Leibniz. Typically, Descartes’s conception of the will had an acknowledged influence on both sides of the debate.) The paper focuses on the test itself that was deployed by the Quietists, elucidating its intrinsic philosophical interest, and the historical context for its appearance.
“Descartes on the Moral Guidance of the Passions”

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It has long been a contested question whether Descartes regards the passions as providing moral guidance. Whereas More praised Descartes for recognizing the passions as “lamps or beacons to conduct and excite us to our journey’s end,” Shaftesbury criticized Descartes for failing to regard the passions as directing us to moral ends, while La Forge denied that the passions, for Descartes, even inform us about what is good or bad.\(^1\) The question persists today, for while most commentators hold that the passions provide some moral guidance by informing us of good and bad, a recent article by Shoshana Brassfield, drawing on work by Sean Greenberg, argues that, according to Descartes, you “should never let the passions be your guide.”\(^2\)

This paper defends More’s view that Descartes did regard the passions as providing an important form of moral guidance. To make this case, the paper examines the main reasons for the opposing reading. The first is Greenberg’s claim, echoing La Forge, that the passions, for Descartes, are not representational, which implies that they cannot inform us of what is good or bad. The paper responds, first, that Greenberg overlooks important textual grounds for regarding the passions as representational. While Greenberg rebuts passages where Descartes appears to claim that passions represent, he does not attend to Descartes’s definition of the passions as perceptions, which entails that they have some representational content. Furthermore, the definition entails that the passions are kinds of sensations and, consequently, represent good and bad in the same way as sensations, which is precisely how More read Descartes. Second, the paper responds that the passions must represent good and bad in order for them to play the role of inclining the will, for Descartes only allows that the will is inclined by thoughts representing the true and the good (AT VI 28/CSM I 125; AT IV 602/CSMK 306; AT VII 432/CSM II 292).

The second reason, pointed out by Brassfield, is Descartes’s view that the passions provide unreliable guidance because they lead us to exaggerated misrepresentations of good and bad. While Brassfield is correct that Descartes did uphold this view in the early letters to Elizabeth (8 July, 1644 to 6 October, 1645), his view on the value of the passions changed significantly in the Passions of the Soul. For instance, the letters claim that the passions only indicate what is good or bad for the body (AT IV 284/CSMK 263), whereas the Passions claims that they also indicate the good of the soul (AT XI 432/PS 139). Most importantly, the letters claim that virtuous agents should only act from passions that have been “tamed” by reason, in other words, corrected in accordance with reason’s judgments of value (AT IV 287/CSMK 265). The Passions,

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however, holds that the passion of generosity, a passionate opinion about the value of the will, helps us to cultivate virtue by directing rational deliberation about our good and our ends, which entails that it does not require correction by reason (AT XI 453/PS 161). It follows that the passion of generosity reliably represents the value of the will. Since Descartes’s ethics ultimately revolves around recognizing the value of the will and directing it appropriately, it follows that the passion of generosity provides an important form of moral guidance.
For Spinoza whereas being virtuous and free consists in our power to moderate and restrain the passions, the lack of this very power is “bondage.” At the center of human bondage lies the phenomenon of *akrasia*: the situation wherein “even though [we] see the better for ourselves [we] are...forced to follow the worse.” Spinoza’s account of *akrasia* in the *Ethics* has recently received attention from commentators including Martin Lin and Eugene Marshall, who addressed this account within the context of the relative power and weakness of reason (*ratio*) and passion (*passio*). Although these commentators thereby contributed a great deal to a better understanding of human bondage and freedom in Spinoza’s ethical thought, they did so by considering the power and weakness of *solely* one kind of adequate knowledge—namely, reason. According to Spinoza’s taxonomy of knowledge in the *Ethics*, however, reason is not the only kind of adequate knowledge. There is, in addition, intuitive knowledge (*scientia intuitiva*), which Spinoza describes as constituting “the greatest virtue of the mind” and “the greatest human perfection.” Spinoza explicitly states that intuitive knowledge is “more powerful” than reason. But what exactly does this greater power promise in the face of the passions? Is intuitive knowledge liable to *akrasia*? More specifically, can we conceive of a situation wherein both an intuitive idea and a passionate idea exert power at the same time, and yet we end up following the latter? Or, is there something in Spinoza’s system that guarantees that intuitive knowledge will not be overcome by the passions? In this paper, I consider to what extent (if at all) intuitive knowledge is susceptible to *akrasia* by addressing these relatively unexplored questions in Spinoza scholarship. I argue that, given our modal status, it is not plausible to claim that *akrasia* would never apply to intuitive knowledge. Yet, it can reasonably be held that this superior kind of cognition is *less* susceptible (if not absolutely invulnerable) to *akrasia* than reason thanks to its greater affective power.

In Section 1, I explain what the power of an idea consists in by having recourse to the unique relation between ideas and affects in Spinoza’s thought. This explanation is necessary in order to understand what constitutes an *akratic* action for him. In Section 2, I present Spinoza’s account

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3 Preface to Part IV of the *Ethics* (E).
4 Ibid.
7 *Ethics*, Part V, Proposition 25 (EVP25)
8 EVP27 Demonstration.
9 EVP36 Scholium.
10 The view that, unlike reason, intuitive knowledge is not susceptible to *akrasia* has been suggested by Ronald Sandler (2005). Sandler makes this point in order to explain in what sense intuitive knowledge is affectively more powerful than reason. His treatment of this issue, albeit intriguing, is too concise.
11 *Akrasia* is usually translated as “weakness of the will” or “incontinence.” However, as I show in Section 1, in Spinoza’s context “weakness of the will” would not be an appropriate description of the phenomenon at stake. This is simply because, for Spinoza, the mental power does not reside in a separate
of intuitive knowledge and the intellectual love of God (amor Dei intellectualis), which is an active affect that accompanies intuitive knowledge. I conclude this section by showing how, following EVP37—i.e., “There is nothing in Nature which is contrary to this intellectual love, or which can take it away” (my italics)—it appears that intuitive knowledge is not susceptible to akrasia. In Section 3, I argue that this appearance is misleading: Since intuitive ideas are the ideas of a finite mind actually existing in time, even the intellectual love of God accompanying these ideas cannot ensure absolutely that the power of these ideas will not be overridden by passionate ideas. In Section 4, I conclude by suggesting that akratic situations would nonetheless be less frequent in connection with intuitive knowledge than in relation to reason thanks to the greater power of the former. The greater power of intuitive ideas, I argue, consists in the fact that they are directly related to the essence of our mind, and thus involve ourselves more intimately than rational ideas, which relate to us only in a mediated and detached manner.

Bibliography


John Locke and David Hume can be seen as figureheads for two opposite views of personal identity. It is easy to think, in particular, that persons fare quite well according to Locke while facing almost total extinction according to Hume. My purpose in this paper is to reexamine that interpretation. Does a close reading of Locke’s “Of Identity and Diversity” and Hume’s “Of Personal Identity” yield univocal affirmation of that picture? My thesis is that in fact, the best interpretation of the two views shows them to have virtually all their essential components in common. On my reading, then, the traditional interpretation is, if not rather thoroughly confused, then at least in need of significant further support. The view I present should thus be of significant interest to anyone concerned with how best to understand personal identity according to these two British empiricists.

A few things require acknowledgement, of course. Yes, Hume’s language is more provocative, deprecating personal identity as a mere fiction or feigned principle of union, whereas Locke frames his account as less of a threat to the status quo, reassuring the reader, in the face of troubling and counterintuitive theses, that “the difficulty or obscurity that has been about this matter rather rises from the names ill used, than from any obscurity in things themselves.” Underneath the quite opposite tones of their accounts, however, I find that their two portrayals of personal identity are remarkably similar. In fact, I believe the cores of their views are the same. The force of my paper is to present a substantive interpretation of the two views and to explain why that interpretation shows the traditional understanding to be mistaken. The substantive interpretive contribution is that the common thread in these two British Empiricists’ notions of personal identity is what I refer to as the subsuming consciousness.

There are three components to the concept of a subsuming consciousness. First is a particular version of consciousness itself, centered on the idea of “reflected thought” or “perception of perception”; I argue that Locke and Hume propound this version as the fundamental, defining aspect of a person. Second, consciousness, as the two philosophers understand it, has the ability to ‘subsume’ experiences and facts, and this subsumption is the basis for the formation of a person’s comprehensive, individuating self-concept. Third, Locke and Hume include a concept of reality from a third-person perspective, an externalist condition which serves as a check against false beliefs about oneself.

The first portion of my essay explains each of these three components in detail and shows why their conjunction represents the most defensible interpretation of both philosophers’ accounts. The second part I devote to answering some of the many objections that are bound to arise over my attempted rapprochement; I realize that whatever the case may be, Locke and Hume sound

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13 Ibid., 52.
extremely different, and it may be quite difficult to imagine any alternative to their holding strongly contrasting, if not mutually exclusive views about personal identity.

The core of my interpretation is the view of consciousness itself. I start by examining the common interpretation of Locke’s account, which characterizes it as saying that a mental phenomenon is \textit{conscious} if and only if there is another mental phenomenon which perceives it. I first show why that interpretation is problematic. The alternative I propose, which I argue is more faithful to Locke’s own words, suggests that consciousness is a mental phenomenon with \textit{perception itself} as its essential intentional content. Consciousness is not, then, only able to be predicated of lower-level mental phenomena, as a relational property; it is a robust mental phenomenon of its own. What the resultant view suggests is that it is having a working concept of the relation between perceiver and percept that is the sufficient condition for consciousness.

I consider two main objections. The first is that Hume’s ‘bundle view’ is irreconcilable with Locke’s more robust-sounding affirmation of the existence of persons, and the second is that Locke and Hume have different views of diachronic and synchronic identity. Hume is normally seen as mostly denying the possibility of diachronic identity while offering a fairly precise account of synchronic identity (if a mostly nihilistic one), while Locke is seen as committing to robust diachronic identity without much of a picture of synchronic identity. I attempt to rebut both objections directly, armed with the interpretation centered on the subsuming consciousness.

My hope for the paper is that it shows how Locke’s and Hume’s views of personal identity might not be quite as opposed as the usual understanding would imply. When viewing personal identity as the result of a particular kind of mental phenomenon which subsumes other mental phenomena under one umbrella of “self”, much of the apparent divergences in their accounts can be seen as aiming to describe the same basic notion.
We offer a novel reading of Hume’s *Dialogues* according to which its main point is to present, to both Pamphilus and the reader, two different approaches to religious belief and to living a religious life: the traditional approach, represented by Demea, and the enlightened one, represented by Cleanthes and, perhaps surprisingly, by Philo too. Demea reveals his religion to be rooted in servility, self-deception, and fear. Seeing this, Cleanthes and Philo, who demonstrate independence, probity, and repose in their religious outlook, try to steer Demea onto the road to true piety. This involves trying to get him to think for himself about religious matters and, in particular, to accept the design hypothesis because he sees for himself that it’s persuasive. In observing these moves, Pamphilus and the reader are given an object lesson both in achieving true piety, which involves coming to religious beliefs on one’s own and on the basis of good reasons, and in avoiding impiety, which plagues us when we come to religious beliefs out of fear or on the basis of the testimony of authorities.

At first, Demea claims that people should believe in God on the basis of the pronouncements of appropriate authorities (see, for example, DNR 1.1, 2.2, 3.12). Consequently, Cleanthes’ empirical, design argument strikes him as too individualistic to be acceptable. The kind of reasoning it employs – examining complex, well-organized mechanisms in nature, and concluding from observation that nature as a whole has a designer – is one that people can carry out on their own, unassisted by established religious institutions, thus taking away from the necessity of such institutions. Demea, given as he is to philosophical servility, finds such philosophical independence unsettling.

We claim that it is because of Demea’s misgivings about natural theology that Philo enters into the protracted argument he has with Cleanthes in dialogues 2-8. Philo and Cleanthes spar over the design argument not because they have a genuine disagreement – they both accept the design hypothesis, as we see at several points throughout the *Dialogues* (see DNR 10.36, 12.2-4, 12.8-9, 12.33) – but because Philo wants to coax Demea into engaging in empirical natural theology (as he almost does, in DNR 7.2, 7.4, 7.7, 7.9, 7.12). Philo wants this because he hopes to improve Demea’s character, from someone enslaved by authoritarian orthodoxy to someone who exhibits true, freethinking piety.

Philo’s attempt fails, though, for instead of being moved to engage in empirical natural theology, Demea stumbles through an attempt at a demonstrative, a priori argument. The problems with his argument are not just logical, but also characterological, in that (1) the manner of his presentation is so muddled as to suggest that he is merely repeating talking points, rather than

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14 References to the *Dialogues* are to David Hume, *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, in *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion: And Other Writings*, ed. Dorothy Coleman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). This work is cited in the text as “DNR” followed by dialogue (or part) and paragraph numbers.
showing freedom of thought; and (2) the putative certainty of his conclusion suggests that, rather than being open to experience, he wants to find an unshakeable foundation for his religion (see DNR 2.6, 2.10).

Nevertheless, Cleanthes and Philo’s demolition of Demea’s a priori argument has the valuable function of moving Demea, in DNR 10.1, to reveal the true foundation of his religion. As Demea sees it, what moves us to turn to God – and we take him to be waxing autobiographical – is suffering. We seek an end to our pain, and, in our fear and despair, we turn to invisible agents in the hopes that they will end our pain – pain that they inflict – in exchange for our complete servitude. The picture this paints, of both God and Demea, is off-putting: God is an incomprehensible despot and Demea is a self-loathing sycophant. When Philo begins to point out that Demea’s God would really be the author of evil, Demea leaves the conversation rather than staying and facing the truth about himself. This is not surprising – Demea, possessed as he is by despair, servility, and self-deception, is ill-equipped to begin the project of becoming truly pious.

But the Dialogues do not end on this sour note. Instead, dialogue 12 presents us with a model of true religious reverence in the form of Philo and Cleanthes having a harmonious discussion about how to live the religious life. Most important, Philo and Cleanthes do not present this model just to us, but also to Pamphilus, Cleanthes’ ward. The Dialogues give Pamphilus an object lesson both in avoiding the impiety exemplified by Demea and in achieving the true piety exemplified by Philo and Cleanthes.
As a mathematician, Leibniz rejects infinite number. He argues that the very notion of infinite number is contradictory. But as a metaphysician, Leibniz accepts the actual infinite. According to Leibniz, there are infinitely many creatures in even the smallest particle of matter. Are Leibniz’s mathematical commitments out of step with his metaphysical ones? In this paper, I address the apparent tension between these views, and argue that they can be reconciled.

There are two ways to formulate this tension. First, one could argue that Leibniz’s rejection of infinite number is inconsistent with the existence of infinitely many substances. I call this the “general concern”. It is widely agreed that Leibniz has a viable solution to the general concern (Russell 1900, Rescher 1955, Ishiguro 1990, Arthur 2001). According to Leibniz, what it means to say that there are infinitely many substances is that there are more substances than any number can specify. Thus, there are infinitely many substances, but no infinite number of them.

Second, one could argue that Leibniz’s theory of corporeal substance runs afoul of his rejection of infinite number. For Leibniz, rejecting infinite number amounts to rejecting all infinite wholes, i.e. wholes with infinitely many parts. But a corporeal substance is a form-body composite, the body of which is actually infinitely divided. Thus, a corporeal substance seems to be an infinite whole. I call this the “specific concern”. There is an unresolved disagreement in the literature as to whether Leibniz can adequately respond to the specific concern, and if so, how to understand his response (Carlin 1998, Arthur 2001, Brown 2005).

Though there is disagreement, there is a common—and mistaken—presumption that the specific concern is more difficult for Leibniz to answer than the general concern. I argue, to the contrary, that the widely accepted solution to the general concern can be used for the specific concern as well.

To see this, I begin by clarifying an ambiguity about how the specific concern is supposed to arise. Previous treatments of this issue have been unclear about whether it is the corporeal substance itself that yields an inconsistency with Leibniz’s rejection of infinite number or whether it is the body of the corporeal substance. I show that the apparent inconsistency arises only with respect to the body of the corporeal substance. This is because it is the body of a corporeal substance that is actually infinitely divided. It is the body—not the substance—that has infinitely many parts. Thus, the crucial question to ask is this: is the body of a corporeal substance an infinite whole?

I answer this question in two stages. First, I provide an account of how Leibniz understands wholes. Leibniz distinguishes genuine wholes from what I call “fictional wholes”, a distinction almost completely ignored in previous treatments of this issue (cf. Arthur 2001). A fictional whole is a collection of parts that can be referred to only individually. A genuine whole, on the other hand, is a collection of parts that can be referred to as a whole. I show that Leibniz’s rejection of infinite wholes is a rejection of infinite genuine wholes in particular.
Second, I argue that, for Leibniz, the body of a corporeal substance is not an infinite genuine whole. A body is, for Leibniz, merely a fictional whole. This is true even when the body is joined to a soul, with which it constitutes a composite corporeal substance. A body is merely a fictional whole precisely because it is actually infinitely divided. As such, there is no such thing as the collection of all its parts. The body cannot be referred to as a whole because there is no complete collection of parts to be referred to.

Thus, Leibniz’s solution to the general concern applies to the specific concern as well: the body of a corporeal substance has infinitely many parts without thereby having an infinite number of parts. On this basis, I conclude that Leibniz’s mathematical commitments regarding the infinite are not out of step with his metaphysical ones after all.
“Rationalism and the Foundational Role of Empirical Knowledge within Wolff’s German Metaphysics”

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In his 1728 *Preliminary Discourse on Philosophy in General*, Christian Wolff offers a taxonomy of knowledge in which the connections between the sciences are established according to how they contain the conditions of one another. An upshot of this analysis is the dependence of general and deductive sciences upon more particular and experiential ones. Specifically, Wolff asserts (a) the dependence of theology—and of the related moral sciences—upon teleology, and (b) the dependence of teleology upon physics. For a philosopher traditionally labeled as a rationalist, this certainly seems like an odd conclusion. It implies that the existence and properties of God, themselves a foundational aspect of the rest of Wolff’s metaphysical system, are not derivable from reason alone but require experiential confirmation. As such, it seems in conflict with Wolff’s rationalist commitments.

In this paper, I show that Wolff’s assertions in the *Preliminary Discourse* are not at odds with the metaphysics expounded in his German works. An overview of the metaphysical picture in the *German Metaphysics* shows that they are rather a direct result of Wolff’s views regarding natural science and its connection to morality and God.

My argument is based on two important aspects of Wolff’s philosophy: his antivoluntarism, and his belief that it is a duty of the human being to know God. From the belief that God’s will is inevitably subject to a notion of good perfectly logical and intelligible, Wolff derives a view of creation as a perfectly coherent, cohesive, causally connected and mechanistic whole. From the belief that it is a human duty to know God, in turn, and from a tacit premise that no cause can be fully understood unless its effects are also comprehended, Wolff derives a duty to know God’s creation. To properly reverence and honor God, we must know him, and to know him, we must know what he creates. In this process of knowing God and his creation, both reason and experience are indispensable. Reason and its principles of contradiction and sufficient reason, on the one hand, maintain a preponderant role in determining the existence and general properties of the creator. Empirical observation, on the other, confirms and specifies this knowledge by providing information on the perfections of God’s creation, which at the level of pure reason could only be known at an abstract theoretical level.

Against a background of antivoluntarism, of knowledge of nature as a duty towards our creator, and of a combination of experience and reason as the source of complete true knowledge, Wolff’s apparently surprising remarks regarding the foundational role of empirical science become perfectly compatible with his metaphysical tenets in the *German Metaphysics*. As it turns out, Wolff’s rationalist philosophy does not only accommodate modern natural science and its methods but, what is more, it also makes them a necessary part of morality and piety.

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15 *Discursus Praleiminaris de Philosophia in Genere - Einleitende Abhandlung über Philosophie im allgemeinen.*