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Raphaële Andrault[1]

The internal struggles of the appetite: a secret teleology?

Abstract: This article examines the analogy between military tactics and the goal-directed functioning of appetites that Leibniz used both in the Discourse on Metaphysics (1686) and in his controversy with Stahl (1710). In so doing, my purpose is threefold: 1/ to question the unity of the concept of appetite in Leibniz; 2/ to show that Leibniz's notion of the explanatory role of appetites casts doubt on the traditional conflation between appetite and desire for self-preservation; 3/ to demonstrate that self-conscious appetites cannot be regarded as specific final causes of psychophysiological phenomena.

"Appetite" is a traditional notion that allows Early Modern physicians and philosophers to account for the final causality between the soul and its body. One single notion, that of appetite, covers wildly different cases: by virtue of a natural appetite, the plant attracts nutrients; the soul of an animal has the appetite of hunger, which causes its body to seek food; humans themselves may carry out a series of actions by "rational appetite," that is to say, by free will.[2] Appetite usually refers either to 1/ a certain capacity to seek out what seems good or agreeable and reject what seems bad, or 2/ to the representation of those things that are perceived as desirable or repugnant.

Leibniz's own notion of appetite, or "appetition," apparently fits into this general framework. According to him, "souls act according to the laws of final causes, through their appetitions, ends, and means. Bodies act according to the laws of efficient causes or of motion. And the two kingdoms, that of the efficient [causes] and that of the final causes, are in harmony with each other."[3] Appetitions are strivings towards ends that result in the seeking of means.

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[2] For such a conception, see *The Physiologia of Jean Fernel (1567),* Book 5, chap. 9, transl. John M. Forrester, Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2003, p. 343; see also Henricus Regius, *Medicina et praxis medica edition tertia,* Trajecti ad Rhenum, ex Officina Theodori ab Ackersdijck, 1668, p. 23.

[3] *Monadology,* § 79, GP VI, p. 620, in *Philosophical Essays,* ed. and transl. Ariew and Garber, Indianapolis: Hackett 1989, p. 223 (hereafter cited AG).

Even if Leibniz does not accept the principle of a direct, extrinsic causation between motions and appetites, the harmony between the two accounts well for the behavior of living beings, which is usually explained by the power that a soul exerts over its body. In both cases, the notion of appetite justifies accounting teleologically for the actions of living beings.

Accordingly, one could expect that over the course of his dispute with Georg Ernst Stahl, Leibniz would express his agreement with the notion that the soul's appetites might enable the physician to account for the functioning of the body, especially in cases in which anatomical structures and small organic motions fail to explain it. Surprisingly enough, however, Leibniz denies the explanatory value of conscious appetites regarding the functioning of the body. For example, the appetite or desire for self-preservation would have no explanatory value with respect to the physiological process of nutrition. To illustrate this point, Leibniz develops an analogy between military tactics and the goal-directed functioning of appetites.

In this article, I study the analogy with war, which Leibniz used both in the *Discourse on Metaphysics* (1686) and in his controversy with Stahl (1710). In so doing, my purpose is threefold: 1/ I want to question the unity of the concept of appetite in Leibniz; 2/ I want to show that Leibniz's notion of the explanatory role of appetites casts doubt on the traditional conflation between appetite and desire for self-preservation; 3/ I want to show that self-conscious appetites cannot be regarded as specific final causes of psychophysiological phenomena.

1. Appetite: wise strategy or unconscious inclinations?

In article 19 of the *Discourse on Metaphysics* (1686), Leibniz uses the analogy with war to illustrate the usefulness of final causes:

> it is unreasonable to introduce a supreme intelligence as orderer of things and then, instead of using his wisdom, use only the properties of matter to explain the phenomena. This is as if, in order to account for the conquest of an important place by a great prince, a historian were to claim that it occurred because the small particles of gunpowder, set off by the contact of a spark, escaped with sufficient speed to push a hard and heavy body against the walls of the place, while the little particles that make up the brass of the cannon were so firmly interlaced that this speed did not separate them, instead of showing how the foresight of the conqueror enabled him to choose suitable means and times and how his power overcame all obstacles (A VI-4, p. 1561; trans. AG, p. 53)

The prince at war is like God creating the world: he intelligently chooses means and intermediary ends according to his original purpose. Consequently, in order to explain these means, it is better to look at his primary goal. The comparison with military strategy aims at justifying the consideration of perfection and fitness in the explanation of natural phenomena. In this case, the *explanandum* is the structure of bodies, and the *explanans* God's wisdom. But this explanation of natural phenomena is not the only case in which Leibniz recommends appealing to final causes. In article 20, Leibniz, with reference to Plato's *Phaedo*, accounts for

Socrates' actions also by referring to the decisions of an intelligent agent. Indeed, one cannot explain why Socrates swallowed hemlock by referring to the small movements of his bones and nerves. The true explanation of Socrates' behavior flows from Socrates' own judgment, which makes him prefer swallowing hemlock to living in exile. In this second example, the *explanandum* is a behavior, that is, a complex set of human actions, which are both observable (and as such belong to physical phenomena) and related to a conscious plan that can be shared and communicated. The *explanans* is the rational decision, or will, of a human being, Socrates. Notwithstanding these differences, wise decisions of rational agents provide in both cases explanations for observable phenomena which are more intelligible than explanations in terms of material necessity or efficient causation.

In his defense of the use of final causes in articles 19 and 20 of the *Discourse on Metaphysics,* Leibniz does not mention the notions of will, volition, or appetition. As a matter of fact, the notion of appetite is quite rare in Leibniz's early texts. Leibniz uses the notion of appetite as the opposite of "aversion" in lists of definitions or in annotations from the 1670s.[4] But it is only in the *New System of the Nature and Communication of Substances* (1695) that souls or soul-like entities are said to be endowed with two fundamental properties: perception and appetition. From that work on, the notion of "appetition" will be conceived as a generic term that refers to unconscious natural appetites and animal tendencies toward new pleasures, as well as to intelligent volitions, also described as *rationales appetitus*. In the most famous presentations of Leibniz's system, where the notion of appetition appears, he neither defines it, nor comments on it: he only dogmatically presents it as one of the two key components of his own "pneumatics", or science of the soul, by means of which it would be possible to account economically for all kinds of feeling or affects. The notion of appetition is detailed only in Leibniz's correspondence and controversial exchanges. Leibniz first discusses it in his exchanges with Pierre Bayle, following the publication of the *New System.* In this context, the notion of appetite gains in importance. On the one hand, Leibniz now speaks of the "law of appetites" as parallel to, and harmonious with, the laws of motions which rule over physical causation.[5] The increasing importance of appetites is thus partly due to the development and spelling out of the hypothesis of pre-established harmony in the context of discussion with the "Cartesian" philosophers[6]. On the other hand, Leibniz now emphasizes the existence of an infinite number of "unconscious inclinations or appetitions," which explain why the soul often acts without knowing what it does, and why it often fails to enjoy new pleasures.[7] Indeed, Pierre

[4] See for example AVI-4, p. 1398 (*Definitiones cogitationesque metaphysicae*) or p. 1417 (*De affectibus*).

[5] Unpublished comments on Bayle's *Dictionary* (1702), "Rorarius", note L, GP IV, p. 545 ("les lois de l'appétit" are translated by "laws of desire" in *Leibniz's* New System *and Associated Contemporary Texts,* ed. and trans. By R. S. Woolhouse and Richard Francks, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1997, p. 101 – hereafter cited *New system*).

[6] I use the term 'Cartesian' as a convenient label. By 'Cartesians' I refer only to those French philosophers who, in the late seventeenth century, discussed and developed Descartes' metaphysics in new directions (and particularly in an occasionalist one).

[7] *New System,* p. 104, GP IV, p. 540 ("*J'ay déja montré plus d'une fois que l'ame fait beaucoup de choses sans savoir comment elle les fait, lorsqu'elle le fait par le moyen des perceptions confuses et des inclinations ou appetitions insensibles dont il y en a tousjours un grandissime nombre et dont par consequent il est impossible que l'ame s'apperçoive, ou qu'elle puisse les demeler distinctement"*).

Bayle did not understand how in a Leibnizian world in which the soul always acts spontaneously, the series of internal actions could make a dog's soul feel pain immediately after having felt pleasure. To explain his counter-intuitive claims about the spontaneity of the soul and to account for involuntary actions, Leibniz resorts to the notion of appetite: unconscious inclinations and appetites concur with conscious volitions, producing our perceptions; when these small appetites are stronger than our rational volitions, they trigger perceptions that thwart the conscious desires and anticipations of the soul. Accordingly, what explains the inner changes in the soul of the dog is less its conscious global appetite of eating, or of enjoying new pleasures, than the millions of tendencies of which the dog is not aware. In this case, the notion of appetite no longer refers to conscious decisions and wise strategies; it rather refers to secret and concealed motives. If there is any teleology here, it is a very different kind of teleology from the planned and intelligent strategy of a war prince.

One finds more or less the same use of the notion of appetite in the correspondence with Hartsoeker. In this correspondence too, the notion successively appears on two levels. 1/ It first appears at what I would call the esoteric level of the metaphysical doctrine: at this level, appetite is defined by Leibniz as the principle of change from one perception to another according to an order that is in harmony with the succession of bodily motions, *as if* the appetite were the cause of such or such motion in the body. 2/ When Leibniz has to explain a bit more how the soul's appetites and bodily motions correspond to each other, the concept of appetite is further explicated at a level that I would call a reactive, or exoteric level of explanation, appearing in cases in which Leibniz proposes specific answers to specific criticisms.[8] At this level, appetites emanate from an unconscious dynamics according to which agents are led to behave in ways opposite to their apparent purposes and own good. The problem is that such an unconscious dynamics, which by definition is concealed from the agent and possibly from witnesses, might not play the same obvious explanatory role as the wise decisions of free agents that are mentioned in the *Discourse on Metaphysics*. In other words, these two levels seem to conflict with each other. Such an amphibology of the notion of appetite appears clearly in the Leibniz-Stahl controversy.

2. The war analogy in the Leibniz-Stahl controversy

At the beginning of the controversy, Leibniz reminds Stahl of the principal components of his own system.[9] After having pointed out the necessity of admitting final causes, he explains how his own hypothesis of pre-established harmony allows him to use common-sense vocabulary and to account for common-sense beliefs. According to Leibniz's hypothesis, for example, no wish of the soul really causes a voluntary motion in the body; and reciprocally, speaking with

[8] See Letter to Hartsoeker, 1715, GP III, p. 510, § 22, cited below.

[9] On this controversy, see François Duchesneau, "Leibniz et Stahl: divergences sur le concept d'organisme," *Studia Leibnitiana,* 27:2, 1995, pp. 185-212. More generally, for the Leibnizian notion of living bodies, see *Leibniz. Le vivant et l'organisme,* Paris, Vrin, 2010.

metaphysical rigor, no bodily disorder can cause passion in the soul. But as a Copernican may say that the sun is rising, it is also possible to say that a motion of the body is voluntary whenever it occurs in agreement with noticeable perceptions or conscious decisions of the mind. Reciprocally, it is possible to say that the mind is affected by its body when bodily changes best account for the confused perceptions of the mind that occur concomitantly:

> I showed, I say, that certain concealed truths of great importance that can be elicited by the consideration of final causes would be difficult to elicit from efficient causes, since the ends of nature are sometimes manifest, while its efficient means are hidden. [...] Thus it comes about that, from the intention of the Author and from the appetite of the soul, effects may be foreseen whose proximate efficient causes in the body may be judged to be insufficiently explained [...]. From this connection with the body, moreover, and particularly with the fetus, of the sensations and affections that are expressed and appear more distinctly in the soul, it may be understood that confused perceptions and hidden appetites concur and agree no less with the internal functions of the body [*intestinis functionibus corporis*] that we call "involuntary", and with the entire formation of the fetus, even if it is not noticed. Certainly, when magnitude renders a thing sensible, this does not change its nature. But those motions are not incorrectly called "voluntary" that are connected to more distinctly conscious appetites, when we notice that our soul adapts means to ends, while in all other motions the appetite proceeds toward its ends by means that we do not notice. Consequently, those actions are properly called "voluntary" that we do deliberately and are conscious of.[10]

Let us rephrase this passage:

1. According to the beginning of the citation, final causes are sometimes more manifest than efficient causes, which are often hidden. This is exactly the argument of the *Discourse on Metaphysics*: under certain conditions, ends may be more obvious and explanatory than efficient proximate causes and mechanical details. Ends enable us to anticipate future effects; they also enable us to more straightforwardly understand present effects. There is thus a clear heuristic gain from ends, or final causes.
2. Nevertheless, the mind-body connection is not weaker in the cases where the perceptions or appetites remain hidden from us. In other words, appearances may be misleading: we do not always perceive the appetite that is the mental correlate of a motion of our body, but there should always be such a mental correlate. According to this second point, the appetite is not necessarily an obvious final cause –it may be hidden and unconscious: as such, it would have no specific explanatory role to play.
3. Still, there is an apparent specificity of voluntary motions, which seem to obey our conscious appetites. Accordingly, we could explain those so-called voluntary

[10] *Controvérsia,* Animadversions, Preamble §III, p. 29.

> motion by identifying the ends that are foreseen by the mind, i.e. "conscious appetites," with the final causes of these motions. In other words, the apparent dissymmetry between voluntary and involuntary motions would justify a certain kind of explanatory specificity, or a specific scheme of explanation for voluntary motions only.

These three arguments together are a little bit puzzling. On the one hand, appetites are regarded as legitimate final causes. On the other hand, their explanatory role is not systematic, and depends on the fact that these appetites are conscious. And yet, the fact that appetites are sometimes conscious and sometimes unconscious does not change anything in the real production of phenomena, nor in the systematic connection, or harmony, between phenomena. Hence, Leibniz seems alternatively to promote and dismiss the appeal to appetites in the explanations of bodily motions.

Leibniz's reluctance to refer to appetites as final causes of bodily motions is confirmed by the second use of the war analogy:

> Since perceptions and appetites of the soul respond to all vital motions of an animal, it is necessary that these truly be many; since indeed the multitude of vital motions is great, it is likewise necessary that they be confused or obscure so that they, on account of multitude and habit, will not be noticed by us [...]. It can indeed be said that the end is simple, namely, self-preservation; and that the means to it, generally considered, are few, namely, appropriate nutrition and secretion. But this is as if one argued with a certain military leader, maintaining that nothing would be easier than to put an end to the war. He would say, in fact, that it is simply a matter of the Gauls being struck down, and then of entering into Lutetia. The goal is simply peace; the means are no less simple: to overcome the enemies in battle and to take their principal cities. But how many things are here required for the means of means? Thus, likewise, innumerable partial vital motions are required for nutrition and secretion to take place properly; and to all these singular motions of the body, appetites correspond in the soul, even though we are not aware of them.[11]

What is striking is the fact that the war analogy is used in the exact opposite way from its use in the *Discourse on Metaphysics*: here, the aim no longer is to legitimate the appeal to wise voluntary decisions as final ends of noticeable phenomena; the aim is rather to balance the obvious explanatory role of conscious appetites conceived as final causes by the existence of innumerable unconscious appetites and intermediary perceptions of means. Conscious intentions are just the tip of the iceberg; they conceal the internal dynamics needed to understand the functioning of the body, the functioning of the soul, and even the relationships between the two. The plan of the military leader implies not only an initial and global aim, but also means, and means of means, and even means of means of means – since it is always possible to further analyze the sequence of perceptions or appetites and the sequence of bodily

[11] *Controvérsia,* Leibniz Exception to Enodation XX, p. 317.

motions that contribute to produce the noticeable action or effect that we seek to explain. According to this passage, to claim, as Stahl does, that the end of the soul is the conservation of the body, is not informative or explanatory at all. This end, the conservation of the body through nutrition, is too general to be informative, even if one may consider that it allows in some cases to anticipate the behavior of humans and animals. This passage thus offers good reasons not simply to regard appetites as expressions of a univocal striving for self-preservation. Appetites are more specific than that. They are tendencies towards *certain* means.

In the *Discourse on Metaphysics,* the war analogy justifies the use of conscious aims as final causes: this analogy emphasizes the global strategy and final aim of the military leader. By definition, such an aim is simple, obvious, and known to the agent. In the Leibniz-Stahl controversy, the war analogy rather emphasizes the dreadful complexity of military tactics. Tactics implies a multitude of secondary means that are not entirely obvious, even for the agent, who is not always able to grasp them in one single glance. The notion that appetites are more numerous than one can imagine and remain partly hidden from us raises at least three questions which will be addressed subsequently.

3. Appetite as a *motus primo primi*?

A first problem raised by the war analogy is the difficulty of bringing together, term by term, the sequence of appetites and the sequence of physical motions. According to the Leibniz-Stahl controversy, we have the following sequence: the perception of the end, or the appetite to preserve oneself, triggers the appetite for means (nutrition), which in its turn triggers the appetite for means of means (swallowing such food, etc.). This psychic sequence leads from a global intention, or conscious appetite, to the innumerable smaller appetites that compose this conscious appetite. In other words, the sequencing goes from large-scale to small-scale. But how are we to put together this analytic decomposition of conscious appetites and the efficient sequence of physical motions? Indeed, according to other Leibnizian texts, we get another kind of sequencing, which is harmonious with that of thoughts:

> The representation of the present state of the universe in the dog's soul produces in it the representation of the subsequent state of the same universe, just as in the things represented the preceding state actually produces the subsequent state of the world. In a soul, the representations of causes are the causes of the representations of effects. And since this subsequent state of the world includes the blow on the dog's body, the representation of that subsequent state in its soul includes the pain which corresponds to that blow.[12]

In the body, the cause (the blow) triggers the effect (hematoma), which triggers another effect (the dog's flight); while in the soul the cause (the representation of the blow) triggers the

[12] Unpublished comments on Bayle's Note H (*Dictionary*, 1702. edn.), GP IV 532; trans. *New System*, p. 77

effect (the perception of pain), which triggers another effect (the appetite or instinct to flee[13]). The two causal series, physical and psychic, correspond exactly to each other. In this case, the appetite ends the series of perceptions. Appetite is a result, not an initial impulse, or a *motus primo primi*, as seems to be the case in the war analogy[14]. The problem partly arises from the fact that when Leibniz insists on the concomitance between the soul and its body, as is the case in his replies to Bayle, he rather speaks of "perceptions." But if we introduce appetites, we do not know where exactly their place is in the whole series. Appetitions are considered the efficient causes of new perceptions, since they are often defined as tendencies toward new perceptions; but it happens that some very confused efforts or appetitions are said to result from small "imperceptible" perceptions. Several commentators have recently emphasized this difficulty. Julia Jorati has shown that the notion of appetite seems sometimes to be redundant with other key notions of Leibniz's philosophy of mind.[15] Indeed, it is somehow difficult to understand the respective causal and explanatory roles of perceptions and appetites in Leibniz's philosophy of mind: Leibnizian perceptions themselves trigger new perceptions according to the immanent force, or law of inner change, of souls or soul-like entities; consequently, what is the specific role of appetites, which are supposed to be the dynamic elements in this framework? Before Jorati, Jonathan Bennett had pointed out that the more Leibniz was led to explain in detail the functioning of appetites, the less these appetites seemed teleological. As he wrote about a passage from the *New Essays*:

> A worse trouble [...], is that the picture Leibniz is drawing here does not seem teleological; it is too much like mere itch-scratching [...] [M]etaphysics says that each monad falls within the realm of final causes, but all Leibniz is offering us here are spurs, springs, imbalances – efficient causes.[16]

Though I do not agree with Bennett's general view in this paper,[17] I think that his diagnosis on the very notion of appetite in the *New Essays* is correct: appetites do not always introduce an obvious teleological dimension in explanations, especially when Leibniz develops the notion that countless small appetites and inclinations partly account for the behavior of living beings.

4. The heuristic role of pre-established harmony

From the *Discourse on Metaphysics* to his answers to Father Tournemine, Leibniz explains that the hypothesis of pre-established harmony allowed him to naturally account for phenomena, or more precisely to account for the noticeable correlation between certain physical and psychic

[13] On this assimilation, see *Controvérsia*, p. 27: "appetite (in which I include, depending of circumstances, the instinct to flee)".
[14] GP V, p. 175.
[15] "Why Monads Need Appetites," in *Für unser Glück oder das Glück anderer': Vorträge des X. Internationalen Leibniz-Kongresses Hannover, 18.–23. Juli 2016*, ed. Wenchao Li, Hildesheim: Olms, 2016, vol. 5, p. 121-29.
[16] "Leibniz's Two Realms", in Rutherford and Cover eds., *Leibniz: Nature and Freedom,* 2005, p. 135-155, here p. 148.
[17] See J. McDonough, "Leibniz's Two Realms Revisited", *Noûs,* 42-4, 2008, p. 693-696, here p. 690.

phenomena.[18] In other words, pre-established harmony aims at explaining what is noticeable. And yet, during the Leibniz-Stahl controversy, pre-established harmony is rather used to show the existence of an uninterrupted series of psychic events, most of which remain completely hidden from the agents. Indeed, according to the analogy with military tactis, some confused and hidden appetite would have to correspond to each small organic motion in the body, and conversely. In this last case, pre-established harmony encourages reconstructing the whole series of secret appetites in harmony with the internal functions or struggles within the body. The *explanandum* of pre-established harmony has changed: the *explanandum* no longer is the striking correspondance between some decisions of the mind and some voluntary motions of the body; it is rather the apparent break down of this correlation which Leibniz relates to the fact that the constant correlation between thoughts and motions remains in most cases hidden from us. On the one hand, pre-established harmony is no longer mentioned to justify common-sense impressions, nor to interpret them according to the "metaphysical rigor". Pre-established harmony is rather mentioned to balance our conscious motives with unconscious appetites – that is to say, to relativize the informative nature of our conscious motives. On the other hand, what has an explanatory value here no longer is some distinct and noticeable thoughts and appetites; on the contrary, as has been noted by François Duchesneau, it is the small internal motions of the body to which, by analogy, and according to pre-established harmony, hidden appetites correspond.[19] To put it schematically, the explanation does not go from the soul to the body, as is usually the case for voluntary motion, when an intention of the soul explains a motion of the body. The explanation goes from the body to the soul. The series of bodily motions entices us to reconstruct by analogy the continuous series of perceptions and appetites that are joined by means of imperceptible links. Instead of resorting to noticeable psychic events in cases in which the detail of bodily mechanisms does not seem to be informative enough, we have to use what we know of this bodily mechanism as a model for dividing our conscious appetites into a multiplicity of unconscious appetites. By analogy, the anatomy of bodies sheds a new light on what turns out to be an internal and secret strategy of the soul.

5. Appetites as final causes?

In these conditions, is it still possible to say that the appetite has explanatory value with respect to bodily motions? And is it still possible to say that psychic events – either perceptions or appetites – provide final causes that allow us both to foresee and to better explain physical events? To be sure, according to the dogmatic esoteric presentation of Leibniz's hypothesis, appetites *are* final causes. However, as soon as Leibniz argues about the legitimate way of

[18] Extract from 'Comment on an article in the Mémoires de Trévoux for March 1704' (1708), GP VI, p. 595, trans. in *New System,* p. 249: "My aim was to explain naturally what they explain by perpetual miracles, and in doing so I attempted only to give an explanation of the phenomena, that is to say, of the relation we perceive between the soul and the body."

[19] Art. cit., p. 201: "La zone des phénomènes de perception et d'appétition conscientes fournit matière à une investigation empirique des dispositifs et processus sensitivo-moteurs corrélatifs des représentations de l'âme. Et, en vertu des principes architectoniques de continuité et de l'identité des indiscernables, il est possible de prolonger cette investigation empirique en recourant à des hypothèses analogiques sur les corrélations entre mécanismes physiologiques et représentations infraconscientes, ce que Leibniz qualifie de petites perceptions et d'appétitions se transformant en instincts."

explaining the motions of our own body, he rather discourages regarding our distinct appetites and conscious plans as final causes. We could object that the Leibniz-Stahl controversy does not really reflect Leibniz's opinion. But we can find exactly the same analysis of appetites in the correspondence with Hartsoeker:

> A l'égard de l'Harmonie préétablie entre les modifications de l'âme et du corps, et l'exécution de nos appétits par les organes, il faut que les appétits et par conséquent les perceptions dont ils naissent, aillent à un parfait détail de tout ce qui se fait dans les organes, à fin que ces appétits soient exécutés, ce qui profiterait s'il nous était possible de faire l'analyse de nos perceptions confuses. Et autrement sans ce détail, ce ne serait point un appétit parfait et entier de tout cet objet, mais seulement quelque chose d'approchant. Et comme notre entendement et par conséquent notre volonté n'est point capable de ce détail, notre simple volonté (si l'appétit va à la fin sans aller aux moyens et moyens des moyens) n'est pas un appétit que le corps soit obligé de suivre et d'exécuter ; il ne l'est que dans les mouvements intérieurs volontaires, non empêchés, où l'appétit confus seconde la volonté ou l'appétit distinct, par un parfait détail, les organes étant faits exprès pour cela. Cependant nos mouvements intérieurs involontaires ne laissent point de répondre à nos appétits confus et inaperceptibles, mais ces mouvements dépendent aussi peu de l'empire de la volonté que ces appétits dépendent peu de notre entendement [...]. Si ces méditations paraissent un peu obscures, ce n'est qu'à cause de leur profondeur et de l'attention dont elles ont besoin sur tout quand on ne les peut exposer qu'en abrégé tel que demande l'étendue d'une lettre.[20]

As soon as Leibniz is led to detail the teleological value of the appetite in the framework of his pre-established harmony, he is also led to admit that things are "more complicated than one might think at a first sight." Appetites as conscious wishes rarely suffice for causing voluntary motions if they are not helped by secondary appetites for means which are in harmony with internal motions. Consequently, teleological explanations seem neither obvious nor easy. Leibniz gives Hartsoeker good reasons not to regard appetites as final causes. First, he provides reasons not to regard them as those final causes that were promoted by means of the war analogy in the *Discourse on Metaphysics* – that is to say, as explanations of physical phenomena that would be more intelligible, obvious and straightforward than explanations in terms of small mechanical motions. Second, Leibniz's clarifications of the notion of appetite, whether in the Leibniz-Stahl controversy or in the letters to Hartsoeker, challenge the usual teleological understanding of the notion. In Stahl's view for example, which is in accordance with the traditional view in medicine, appetite is by definition something noticeable that really causes actions in situations that are beyond simple automatic bodily motions. By definition, appetite, that is, the desire toward an end, is "distinctly conscious" and accounts for means that are very

[20] Leibniz to Hartsoeker, GP III, p. 510, § 22.

few and simple. As Stahl puts it:

> the soul wants life, which is lasting conservation of its body, for it not only pertains to the soul that the body be and endure (I mean physically), but it pertains to it absolutely [...] Now since the ends are not very many in vital affairs, the means are not an immense multitude either, but rather the former are very few, and the latter certainly not many [...].[21]

The teleological explanatory value of appetite usually requires admitting a real psychophysiological causality that Leibniz denies. Denying such a psychophysiological causality, and acknowledging instead the causality of a multitude of secret appetites as Leibniz does, leads to depriving appetites of their common teleological explanatory value with respect to bodily functions. As we have seen in article 19 of the *Discourse on Metaphysics*, Leibniz grants a crucial role to "large-scale final causes that are traceable back to God"[22], or to teleological principles rooted in God's choice in creating the world. But we can still wonder if it leaves any decisive and irreplaceable explanatory power for small-scale final causes. In any case, such small-scale final causes of organic motions are not identified with the conscious appetites of animals and human beings – for example, seeking pleasure, happiness, or self-preservation.

6. Conclusion

The different uses of the war analogy cast doubt on the generic identity between conscious volitions and secret appetites, which cannot have the same explanatory value in Leibniz's philosophy. In the *Discourse on Metaphysics,* this analogy indicates that men's conscious ends and global strategies are legitimately conceived of as final causes: these conscious ends allow us to explain phenomena that are not easily rendered intelligible through mechanical causes. On the contrary, the war analogy in the Leibniz-Stahl controversy implies regarding conscious ends and general goals as psychic elements that are either not explanatory, or partially misleading. The aim of the military leader (to win the war) does not really explain the series of actions that will lead to his success or failure (his tactics and his reactions to events that do not entirely depend upon him). There is only partial coincidence between the initial goal of the military leader and the series of actions that he will successively trigger. With the analogy between the psychophysiological functioning of the human body and military tactics, Leibniz wants to show that the soul's appetite for self-preservation is not the final cause of organic motions. The desire for self-preservation has no explanatory value at all. It is far too general to explain anything. But in so doing, Leibniz particularly insists on the fact that most of our appetites remain hidden and, above all, do not depend upon our will. Accordingly, we might first wonder if the secret appetites of our mind that correspond one by one to the small organic

[21] Stahl's *Enodations,* XX, in *Controvérsia,* p. 149. On this point, see Duchesneau, art. cit. p. 188-191.
[22] Daniel Garber, *Leibniz: Body, Substance, Monad*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 266.

motions of our body belong to the same kind of mental states as the conscious and intelligent aims promoted in the *Discourse on Metaphysics* – more importantly, do they have the same epistemological use? Second, we might wonder what is the right scale of teleological explanations for Leibniz with regard to the psychophysiological functioning of living beings.