

# Rationalising individuality : the notion of individuality in biology, philosophy, (bio)ethics

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**Stellingen**  
Behorende bij het proefschrift

**Rationalising Individuality.**

The notion of individuality in biology, philosophy,  
(bio)ethics

Van

*Maurizio Salvi*

1. Organisms are loci of integrated complexity, with features undetectable from knowledge only of their constituents. (this thesis)
2. An organism is a homogeneous structure of heterogeneous constituents that join in a variable and composite unity persisting over time despite its structural-qualitative changes. (this thesis)
3. The organic unity theory can be used as a reference in ethics if we agree that living beings have a minimal value in themselves as existing biological entities (this thesis)
4. The possibility to interact with the biological matrix of humans or animals revolutionises the role of human beings in Nature: from the human being as a 'passive object' of natural processes, to the human being as an active actor of the Natural evolution (this thesis)

5. (...) we cannot claim a theory on individuality if it is not responsive to what different branches of biological sciences tell us about this topic, from neuroscience to genomics, from embryology to psychology. (this thesis)
6. (...) most of the conceptual tools that had been used in medical ethics (autonomy, beneficence, and justice) hardly apply to biotechnology. We thus need new interpretative tools to use to discuss the ethics of biotechnology. Such a new approach should be able to investigate both the biological and ethical factors involved in biotechnology. (this thesis)
7. Organism in its reality is as essential to an explanation of its elements as elements are to an explanation of the organism (Ritter).
8. A certain property which seems emergent in terms of a certain theory may not be emergent with respect to different theoretical contexts (Egidi)
9. La connaissance de la vie nous introduit à la vie de la connaissance d'une façon extraordinairement intime (Morin)
10. L'intelligence organise le monde en s'organisant elle-meme (Piaget)
11. Our desire to know our own nature is not solely theoretical and this knowledge by itself will not settle the question of how we ought to live. However, in fixing the range and limits of the possibilities open to us, we determine what alternatives we can choose amongst when we choose how to live and be. (Nozick)