

INDUSTRIA

PHIL 375: Advanced History of Philosophy



Leibniz's Theodicy

Fall 2008

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Cover Illustration: "Injustice" by Giotto di Bondone (ca. 1305-06)

In preparing the "Notes on the Text" sections, I have made use of the following two sources:

Leibniz, G.W., *Theodicy*, translated by W.H. Warren, revised and edited by Robert J. Mulvaney (unpublished manuscript).

Leibniz, G.W., *Essais de Théodicée*, edited by J. Brunschwig (Paris: GF Flammarion, 1969).

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Course Overview

Leibniz's *Theodicy*—it was lampooned by Voltaire and dismissed by many others, yet it remains one of the truly distinctive philosophical responses to the problem of evil to date. Leibniz's principal work on this topic, subtitled, "Essays on the Goodness of God, the Freedom of Man, and the Origin of Evil" (published in 1710), provides an account of how divine justice is compatible with evil in the world. In the process, Leibniz makes far-reaching metaphysical claims that transformed the philosophical landscape.

In this class we will critically examine Leibniz's *Theodicy*. We will give some attention to the philosophical context in which Leibniz was working, but we will also raise questions about the adequacy of Leibniz's solution for today's context. We will discover that, even though there are real problems for Leibniz's position, it cannot be too quickly dismissed.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance & Participation.
2. Weekly assignments (25%).
3. Two 5-8 page papers (25% each).
4. A cumulative final exam (25%), to be held on Tuesday, Dec. 16, at 3:30 pm.

Course Text

The following text will be available at the Valparaiso University Book Center:

Leibniz, G.W., *Theodicy*, Transl. E.M. Huggard (LaSalle, IL: Open Court, 1985).

All readings will be drawn from this text.

Attendance and Participation

Since this class meets only once per week, attendance is essential.

How to Use the Reading Guide: Since this is a small class, I want you to come ready to discuss the philosophical issues raised by the text. At the top of each *Reading Guide*, I have given you a brief overview of what is going on in that section of the text and I have indicated the main thing you should understand (marked with a ★).

I have also provided reading questions to help guide your readings and prepare you for the class sessions. You need not write up the answers to these reading questions, but you should take notes on the readings so that you can discuss them when we meet together.

Weekly Writing Assignments

In this course packet, I have included assignment sheets for the weekly writing assignments. There are a total of 14 weekly assignments included here, but you may drop 4 of them at your discretion. The assignments are worth 10 points each.

These writing assignments are oriented more towards “free writing” or “discovery.” Each of the prompts is designed to get you started thinking about one of the BIG QUESTIONS that will be raised in the readings for the week. With that in mind, these will not be graded as your papers will be graded: they will be graded on a pass/fail scale, and I will not provide substantial comments on the mechanics of your argument. I *may* provide some comments on how you might develop your ideas or on the problems that could arise for your view. But the main focus of these assignments will be for you to have a forum to start thinking and writing about the larger philosophical issues we will be touching on.

Due date: the writing assignments are due on the **Wednesday** prior to that week’s session. Submit them to the CourseVU website (instructions on this to be given in class).

Papers

There are two 5-8 page papers, due on the following schedule:

Oct. 3: First Draft of Paper 1 due

Dec. 5: First Draft of Paper 2 due

Oct. 10: Final Draft of Paper 1 due

Dec. 12: Final Draft of Paper 2 due

I am generally *not* considered an “easy grader” on papers. I do recommend discussing your topic with me in advance. I will also be available to read and comment on outlines or initial drafts at your request.

One of the most common mistakes students fall into with their writing is in thinking that their first draft is pretty close to their final draft. In my experience, a first draft is a *long way* from being a final draft, and it often takes several rounds of careful revision before you have something close to a good final draft. So, allow yourself some time for your paper—you’ll be glad you did.

If you are relatively new to philosophical writing and would like additional guidance on how to write a good philosophy paper, I recommend the following book, available from your standard online bookstores:

Vaughn, Lewis, *Writing Philosophy: A Student’s Guide to Writing Philosophical Essays*
(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

Honor Code

In keeping with the Honor Code, I must give you some sense of what constitutes “unauthorized aid.” The main things I would be concerned about in this class are:

- a. Papers: any sources that you use in your paper must be properly quoted and cited. I don’t expect you to do any outside research for the papers in this class—the only source that you will need is the course text. But if you do happen to consult other sources (whether formal research materials in the library or less formal research materials such as online write-ups), you must identify the source. If there is any uncertainty about what constitutes plagiarism or unauthorized aid on the papers, you should discuss it with me.

Of course, you are free to make use of peer reviews, visits to the Writing Center, meetings with me, etc., to sharpen your paper. In fact, I encourage *wide use* of such aids.

- b. Exams: you may study together (again, I encourage it!), but you may not make use of any notes or help from others (in any form) during the final exam.

If you are in doubt about whether anything else constitutes “unauthorized aid,” it is your responsibility to consult with me first.

Tentative Schedule

Below is a tentative reading schedule. Since we have only one session per week, the readings and assignments may be more lengthy and/or require more time than you are used to for a typical 50-minute class session. So, allow yourself some time, and begin working early in the week.

PREFACE

Aug. 29 Preface (49-72)

PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION

Sept. 5 PD §§1-40 (73-97)
Sept. 12 PD §§41-87 (97-122)

PART I

Sept. 19 §§1-31 (123-142)
Sept. 26 §§32-75 (142-163)
Oct. 3 §§76-106 (163-181) *Paper 1, First Draft due*

PART II

Oct. 10 §§107-134 (182-207) *Paper 1, Final Draft due*
Oct. 17 §§135-167 (207-228)
Oct. 31 §§168-196 (228-249)
Nov. 7 §§197-240 (249-275)

PART III

Nov. 14 §§241-282 (276-300)
Nov. 21 §§283-334 (300-326)
Dec. 5 §§335-376 (326-351) *Paper 2, First Draft due*
Dec. 12 §§377-417 (351-373) *Paper 2, Final Draft due*
plus *Mémoires de Trévoux* (389-392)

Leibniz Chronology

- 1649 Born in Leipzig on July 1. His father, Friedrich Leibniz, was a Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Leipzig.
- 1652 Leibniz's father dies. At a young age, he is admitted to his father's library, which becomes the foundation for all his future education.
- 1661 Leibniz enters the University of Leipzig, studies law and philosophy.
- 1667 Receives doctorate in civil and canon law at Altdorf University.
- 1668 Becomes court legal advisor to the Elector of Mainz.
- 1672 Departs for Paris in March, on a diplomatic mission for the Elector. He becomes acquainted with much of the French philosophy during this trip.
- 1673 Leaves Paris on a trip to London, January through March.
- 1675 Meets Nicolas Malebranche; invents the calculus.
- 1676 Returns to Germany, where he becomes the court librarian for Duke Johann Friedrich of Brunswick. On his way to Hanover, he stops in Holland and meets with Spinoza.
- 1680 Ernst August succeeds Johann Friedrich as Duke of Brunswick and Leibniz's employer.
- 1686 Composes the *Discourse on Metaphysics* and initiates correspondence with Antoine Arnauld.
- 1687 Travels throughout Germany, Austria, and Italy, researching the history of the Guelphs of Brunswick. Returns in 1690.
- 1696 Publishes the *New System of Nature and the Communication of Substances*, where he first introduces the Pre-Established Harmony.
- 1698 Georg Ludwig succeeds Ernst August and is Leibniz's new employer.
- 1704 Finishes *New Essays on Human Understanding*, a critique of Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.
- 1710 Publication of *Theodicy*.
- 1711 Meets Tsar Peter I and advises him on establishing scientific academies and universities in Russia. The Tsar appoints Leibniz as a legal counselor, but Leibniz declines. Leibniz proceeds to Vienna to advise Emperor Charles VI on establishing an academy of sciences there.
- 1714 Writes two systematic summaries of his philosophy, the *Monadology* and the *Principle of Nature and Grace*.
- 1714 Georg Ludwig is named George I, King of England. George refuses Leibniz's request to travel with him to England, and so he remains in Hanover.
- 1716 Leibniz dies in Hanover on Nov. 14.

Write about 200-250 words in response to the following prompt. These prompts are designed to get you started thinking about the topics we will discuss. There is no *expected* answer—I mainly want you to start with an answer to the question and then think about what reasons can be given in support of the answer.

Complete this writing assignment *before* doing the readings for the week.

Writing Prompt

From *The Atlantic Monthly*, June 2006, p. 21

To Be, Determined?

What would happen if no one believed in free will, but instead assumed that all their actions were predetermined? For one thing, according to a recent study, we'd end up with a lot of greedy cheaters. A psychologist and a marketing professor asked two groups of undergraduates to read passages from a book by the biophysicist Francis Crick. Students in one group read a passage that argued against the possibility of free will, while students in the other group read a neutral passage on consciousness. The subjects then took a basic arithmetic test on a computer but were told that, because of a glitch in the program, the computer would automatically feed them the right answer to each question unless they pressed a key to stop it. The computer secretly recorded what they did. The researchers found that those students who had read Crick's argument against individual agency were substantially more likely to cheat, and that they showed less faith in free will than their counterparts in a follow-up survey. The authors conclude that even if free will is an illusion, it is "an illusion that nevertheless offers some functionality" when it comes to encouraging moral behavior.



Image credit: Everett Collection

↳ Put yourself in the shoes of the test subjects who read the passage arguing against the possibility of free will. Why might that incline you to cheat? Is the reasoning valid?

Preface (pp. 49-72)

The Preface provides a general overview of the problems Leibniz will address in the *Theodicy* as well as some of the historical context for the discussion. Since this is largely a summary statement of what Leibniz *will* be arguing, he does not provide much defense for his positions here. But he does tell us some of the reasons he thinks it important to come to a resolution about these issues.

★ As you read this section, try to get a feel for Leibniz's motivation for writing this book, and try to detect what approach and methodology he will use in defending his account.

Key Terms

"love of God," "two famous labyrinths," freedom, necessity (various kinds), origin of evil, "Lazy Reason," *Fatum Mahometanum* / *Fatum Christianum*, Pre-established Harmony, reason, faith, principle of the best, union of body and soul

Reading Questions

1. What, according to Leibniz, is the relation between practice and understanding? (See pp. 49-52)
2. What is the argument that Leibniz calls "Lazy Reason"? What are the premises, and what is the conclusion?
3. Leibniz distinguishes between two sets of problems: those raised by philosophers and those raised by theologians (p. 59). What are the issues and why are they considered problematic?
4. Leibniz gives us his thesis statement on pp. 61-62. In the two full paragraphs on p. 61 Leibniz tells us how he will try to resolve the philosophical controversies (from the previous question), and in the paragraph spanning the bottom of p. 61 and the top of p. 62 he tells us how he will try to resolve the theological controversies. We will focus our readings on the philosophical controversies: what are the philosophical conclusions Leibniz will be arguing for in this book? (I count nine main conclusions.)
5. In the remaining pages of the Preface (pp. 62-72), Leibniz contextualizes his account within a larger dialog. Some of what he says will require background knowledge of the people he mentions (Bayle, Hobbes, Spinoza, etc.)—I will try to provide some of that in our class discussion. But you should try to get a sense of the dialectic—what is Leibniz responding to? How has he tried to enter the dialog? What methodology does he employ? What is the relation of these issues to the problem of evil?

Notes on the Text

p. 0 This edition of the *Theodicy* omits the epigraph Leibniz includes at the beginning of his text:

... *Quid mirum, noscere Mundum*
Si possunt homines; quibus est et mundus in ipsis
Exemplumque Dei quisque est sub imagine parva.

... What wonder that humans can learn

About the universe; since in themselves is also universe,
And in miniature each is an image of God.

- p. 54 *Fatum Stoicum*: fate of the Stoics. Leibniz is *contrasting* this form of determinism with the “Mohammedan” form. Leibniz is saying that the Stoics did not fall into “Lazy Reason.” Instead they simply called for the moderation of the emotions in light of the fact the outcomes of our actions are not within our control.
- p. 55 “*quod vitae sectabor iter?*”: What path shall I follow in life? (Ausonius, *Idylls* XIII, ca. 385). Also quoted in the description of one of Descartes’s dreams (AT X, 182-184).
- p. 58 “two principles, or two gods”: This is a reference to Manicheanism, referred to again in the middle of the following page. Manicheans believed in two basic principles—equal and opposite powers, one for good and one for evil. Manicheanism took a variety of forms, but this fundamental dualism is a central tenet, and it contrasts with the account of evil that Leibniz will defend.
- p. 58 *Socinians*: An anti-trinitarian sect formed in the Reformation period, principally by Lelio Sozzini (1525-62) and his nephew Fausto Sozzini (1539-1604). The Latin form of the surname is Socinus. *Vorstius*: Conrad Vorstius (1569-1622), a Socinian theologian.
- p. 63 “the greatest and most accomplished princesses”: princess Sophie Charlotte (1668-1705), later queen of Prussia, daughter of Ernst-August, elector of Hanover, and his wife Sophie, with whom Leibniz also corresponded.

Write about 200-250 words in response to the following prompt. These prompts are designed to get you started thinking about the topics we will discuss. There is no *expected* answer—I mainly want you to start with an answer to the question and then think about what reasons can be given in support of the answer.

Complete this writing assignment *before* doing the readings for the week.

Writing Prompt

(a) Do you have any beliefs that you would hold on to, even if there were *no* evidence or arguments *for* them?

(b) Do you have any beliefs that you would hold on to, even if there were (relatively strong) evidence or arguments *against* them?

Here's an example that might provide a reason to affirm these:

A father believes, contrary to evidence against the claim, that his son did not commit the murder. When pressed, the father can only say, "I just *know* that he didn't do it!"

Here's an example that might provide a reason to deny these:

A father believes, contrary to the evidence against it, that his psychic was right—he *should* leave his family and start a new life in the mountains of Colorado. He leaves his family, taking with him all their significant possessions and leaving them without any means of support.

↳ If you answered yes to either or both of the questions above, are you identifying a *limit* to what reason is capable of demonstrating? Or, on the other hand, are you identifying a way that your beliefs are sometimes *not sensitive* to reasons?

↳ If you answered no to both of these questions, do you think there is a *problem* with answering yes to either of these questions? If so, what is the problem?

Preliminary Dissertation, §§1-40 (pp. 73-97)

The main question at issue in the Preliminary Dissertation is this: What are the limits of reason? Whether or not you are interested in the theological disputes discussed here, this question should still have force. If we have beliefs that cannot be fully supported by reason, must we reject them? On the other hand, if we have strongly-held beliefs that contradict what our philosophical arguments conclude, do we have any basis for preferring our beliefs to the arguments? This is a hotly disputed topic—one that has obvious application to theology but not *just* to theology.

★ As you read this section, don't worry too much about the details of the theological positions under dispute. Instead, keep an eye on how reasons or beliefs are given priority.

Key Terms

reason, faith, experience, eternal truths ("verities")/positive truths, *a posteriori/a priori*, geometrical necessity /physical necessity/moral necessity, explain, comprehend, prove, uphold, justice

Reading Questions

1. How is the "Averroist" argument in §7 supposed to show a conflict between faith and reason? What is Leibniz's response? It appears that his objection is to the *conclusion*, not to the reasons that led them there, and he offers his own "cure" in §10. But how is disagreement about the *conclusion* of certain arguments supposed to show an incompatibility between faith and reason?
2. Leibniz gives one position on the relation of philosophy and theology in §17—what is the position? Leibniz also says that "there is something good in these answers: but one might abuse them." What is good about these answers? And what abuses are they open to?
3. How does the distinction of truths that are *above reason* and those that are *against reason* correspond with Leibniz's distinctions in kinds of necessity (§23)?
4. Can a truth be subject to irrefutable objections? Consider both *demonstrative* and *merely probable* objections (see §§24-28). Are we always obligated to consider such possible objections to our beliefs (see §26)?
5. How does Leibniz think faith differs from opinion?
6. What, according to Leibniz, are the differences and similarities between the moral judgments we might make of humans, given the circumstances, and those we must make of God (§§32 and following)? How does this connect with the question of the relation of faith and reason?

Notes on the Text

- §3 *Hi motus animorum...*: These agitations of soul and these great distinctions / Come to rest, scattered by throwing a little dust (Virgil, *Georgics*, IV, 87).
- §7 *Averroists*: Averroes (1126-1198) was an Islamic commentator on Aristotle. Averroists advocated a "double truth theory"—one and the same truth is expressed in one way in philosophy, and in another way in theology.

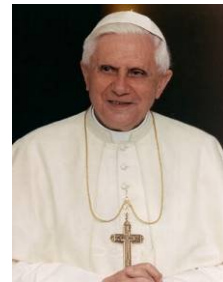
- §8 *Principio coelum...*: A spirit within first nourishes heaven and earth, / The liquid plain, the moon's bright orb, / And Titan's fires; and diffused through limbs a soul / Stirs the mass and with the vast body mingles. / Thence come men and beasts and winged kind.
- §8 *Deum namque ire...*: For deity pervades all lands, / The wastes of sea and depths of heaven; / To whom flocks, herds and men, / And all the race of beasts at birth / Own their slender lives and / Thither go back when loosed by decay.
- §9 Correction to line 14 of §9: "It is known that Spinoza recognizes only **one** substance in the world...."
- §11 *Corpuscular philosophy*: Corpuscularians were those natural philosophers who believed that natural events were to be explained solely in terms of particles of matter.
- §14 *Philosophia Scripturae Interpres*: Philosophy, the Interpreter of the Scriptures.
- §17 *μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος*: transition to another kind.
- §17 *Philosophia Theologiae ancillans*: Philosophy, the Maid of Theology.
- §22 *Passus est impassibiliter...*: He suffered, though unsufferingly. O ridiculous doctrine that at the same time builds up and tears down!
- §26 *formido opposite*: fear of the opposite.
- §31 *Abundamus dulcibus vitiis*: We have sweet vices in excess.
- §35 *ad actu ad potentiam valet consequentia*: It is valid to infer from the actual to the possible.
- §36 *sano sensu*: in a sound sense.

Write about 200-250 words in response to the following prompt. These prompts are designed to get you started thinking about the topics we will discuss. There is no *expected* answer—I mainly want you to start with an answer to the question and then think about what reasons can be given in support of the answer.

Complete this writing assignment *before* doing the readings for the week.

Writing Prompt

In a very controversial speech on September 12, 2006, Pope Benedict XVI argued that faith *must* be reasonable.¹ The Pope's motivation for this recognition of faith as fundamentally reasonable was, in part, to enable cross-cultural dialogue. He said, "a reason which is deaf to the divine and which relegates religion into the realm of subcultures is incapable of entering into the dialogue of cultures."



The idea is this: if faith is considered to be outside of the realm of reason, then there is no way to find the connections among the various subcultures. If one subculture has a faith that leads it to value violence, then there is no way for other subcultures to make a rational appeal on behalf of more peaceful behavior. [Note: this was the controversial aspect of the speech—the Pope referred to a medieval dialogue that painted Muslims as fundamentally a violent culture.]

↪ Is the Pope right about this?

¹ The full text is available online at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2006/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20060912_university-regensburg_en.html.

Preliminary Dissertation, §§41-87 (pp. 97-122)

In the second half of the Preliminary Dissertation, Leibniz focuses on Bayle's specific arguments against the use of reason in defense of theological mysteries. The crux of Leibniz's response is that, although these mysteries are above reason, they are not against reason. Thus, although humans may not be able to *comprehend* or *prove* such doctrines as the Trinity, they *are* able to defend it against objections. And that is enough to show that these doctrines are not against reason.

★ As you read this section, pay attention to the ways Leibniz establishes this conclusion. Then ask yourself whether that *is* really enough to show that belief in the mysteries is reasonable.

Key Terms

reason, faith, incomprehensibility, lack of probability, indefensibility, appearances (of evil, of injustice, etc.), adequate notions, analogical understanding, *ad hominem* / *ad homines*

Reading Questions

1. Why does Leibniz believe that the objects of faith might be *incomprehensible*, or *lack probability*, but that they cannot be *indefensible* (§§41-45)? (Note that these three terms correspond to the three terms he introduced in last week's readings: comprehend, prove, and uphold.)
2. What reasons does Leibniz give for Bayle's conclusion that reason is destructive (§§46-49)? What is Leibniz's response (§§50-51)?
3. Leibniz does endorse a division of people that Origen describes (in §52). Given that faith is *reasonable*, does it follow that all will have equal access to the *reasons*? What then should we conclude about the relation of faith to reason? (See also Bayle's response to this in §53.)
4. In §§54-56, Leibniz raises a puzzle: if faith is not to be examined, how is it known what is to be believed? In support of this, he distinguishes between different kinds of notions or ways of understanding. What is the kind of reasonable faith he endorses? How is this similar to the ways we might understand other, natural, objects?
5. Why, according to Leibniz, is Bayle mistaken in conflating "accounting for" something and "upholding" something (§§57-59)?
6. Leibniz again emphasizes the difference between what is *above* reason and what is *against* reason. How does this distinction correspond with the distinctions of comprehending, proving, and upholding a thing (§§60-61)? Bayle claims that there is an equivocation involved in the use of this distinction (§63), and he supports this argument with a standard skeptical argument (§64). What is the alleged equivocation, and what is Leibniz's response?
7. In §§71-76, Leibniz gives what he calls Bayle's "strongest and most skillfully reasoned statements in support of his own opinion." At the start of the argument, Bayle concedes the point that the mysteries are "above reason" and argues that this would still support his conclusion. How so? Leibniz gives his responses as he presents the argument. Focus on how Leibniz appeals to the logical forms of the arguments to support his thesis. *Logic to the rescue!*

8. What does Leibniz's position entail about so-called "burden of proof" (not Leibniz's term)? Who is in a better position in a debate? And which party is obligated to advance a proof? (See §§77-78.)

Notes on the Text

- §46 *Destruit, aedificat, ...*: She destroys, she builds up, she changes square for round.
- §47 *De Varia Aristotelis Fortuna*: Concerning the Varied Fortunes of Aristotle.
- §50 *De Carne Christi*: Concerning the Body of Christ.
- §50 *mortuus est Dei...*: That the Son of God died is credible, because it is absurd; and that he was buried and rose again is certain, because it is impossible.
- §50 *Si placet tibi Deus...*: If you are pleased because God rewards the undeserving, you should not also be displeased because he damns the innocent.
- §56 *Non mi bisogna...*: I do not need it, and it does not satisfy me.
- §56 *Ne curiosus...*:
 Seek not inquisitively the causes of all things
 And what power was given the books of the Prophets,
 Inspired by heaven and full of the true God;
 Nor dare invade the secrets shrouded by the veil
 Of sacred silence, but modestly pass them by.
 Desire not to know, what the supreme Master
 Wishes not to teach, is learned ignorance.
- §56 *sacrata* instead of *afflata*: *consecrated* instead of *inspired*.
- §58 *respondens*: one appearing to meet a charge; the defendant.
- §60 *Christianity not Mysterious*: written by John Toland (1670-1722), published in London in 1696. Toland attempted to show that there is nothing in Christianity that was against reason or above reason, and so there is nothing in Christianity that can be called "mysterious."
- §67 *Argumentis talibus traducta...*: Latin original for the immediately preceding phrase.
- §73 *Non valet consequentia*: An invalid conclusion.
- §75 *de oppositis*: concerning opposites; *de sophisticis elenchis*: concerning the arguments of the Sophists. These are chapters in Aristotle's *Organon*, a collection of logical treatises.
- §76 *Scindapsus* or *Blityri*: these are nonsense words, like *blah*.
- §86 *Concordia Scientiae cum Fide*: The Agreement of Science with Faith; *Apologia Cyriacorum*: The Defense of the Followers of Cyriacus.
- §87 *Est aliqua causa...*: It is perhaps so secret a matter, that it is reserved for the better and more saintly, rather because of the grace of Him (God) than on account of their merits.
- §87 *Illic [Deus] gratiam...*: There God bestows grace and mercy upon the unworthy, here he dispenses wrath and severity to the undeserving; in both cases he is excessive and inequitable in the eyes of men but just and true in his own eyes. How it is just that he

should bless the unworthy is incomprehensible now, but we shall see when we come to that place, where man no longer believed, until the Son of Man shall be revealed.

§87 VIRGIL

Radiant (Daphnis) is amazed at the threshold of unfamiliar Olympus,
And under his feet he sees the clouds and the stars.

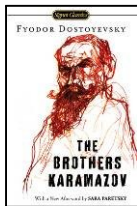
LUCAN

...There after he has been filled with the true light,
He beholds with amazement the wandering stars and the constellations
fixed at the pole, and he sees in how vast a night
lies our day.

Write about 200-250 words in response to the following prompt. These prompts are designed to get you started thinking about the topics we will discuss. There is no *expected* answer—I mainly want you to start with an answer to the question and then think about what reasons can be given in support of the answer.

Complete this writing assignment *before* doing the readings for the week.

Writing Prompt



In *The Brother's Karamazov*,² Dostoevsky includes this terrible story:

It was in the darkest days of serfdom at the beginning of the century[...]. There was in those days a general of aristocratic connections, the owner of great estates, one of those men—somewhat exceptional, I believe, even then—who, retiring from the service into a life of leisure, are convinced that they've earned absolute power over the lives of their subjects. There were such men then. So, our general, settled on his property of two thousand souls, lives in pomp, and domineers over his poor neighbors as though they were dependents and buffoons. He has kennels of hundreds of hounds and nearly a hundred dog-boys—all mounted, and in uniform. One day a serf boy, a little child of eight, threw a stone in play and hurt the paw of the general's favorite hound. 'Why is my favorite dog lame?' He is told that the boy threw a stone that hurt the dog's paw. 'So you did it.' The general looks the child up and down. 'Take him.' He was taken—taken from his mother and kept shut up all night. Early that morning the general comes out on horseback, with the hounds, his dependents, dog-boys, and huntsmen, all mounted around him in full hunting parade. The servants are summoned for their edification, and in front of them all stands the mother of the child. The child is brought from the lock-up. It's a gloomy cold, foggy autumn day, a capital day for hunting. The general orders the child to be undressed; the child is stripped naked. He shivers, numb with terror, not daring to cry. . . . 'Make him run,' commands the general. 'Run! run!' shout the dog-boys. The boy runs. . . . 'At him!' yells the general, and he sets the whole pack of hounds on the child. The hounds catch him, and tear him to pieces before the mother's eyes! . . .

Ivan challenges his brother Alyosha with this story, attempting to prompt a crisis of faith:

It's not worth the tears of that one tortured child who beat itself on the breast with its little fist and prayed in its stinking outhouse, with its unexpiated tears to 'dear, kind God!' It's not worth it, because those tears are unatoned for. They must be atoned for, or there can be no harmony.

↳ Does the *fact* of evil, illustrated by this story, provide evidence against the existence of a good God? What about the fact of catastrophic natural events (hurricanes, earthquakes, etc.)?

Obviously, this is the big question of this class. I'm inviting you now to record your initial ideas and start developing a defense for them.

² Book 5, Chapter 4: "Rebellion."

Part I, §§1-31 (pp. 123-142)

In this section, Leibniz presents the main problems and introduces the general structure of his response to these problems.

★ The main thing to understand from this passage is what, precisely, the problem is supposed to be and, in general, how Leibniz avoids the conclusion. Many key terms are introduced in this section of the text, so pay careful attention to the distinctions he draws.

Key Terms

"God is the first reason of things," contingency, necessity, possible worlds, understanding / will / power, being / truth / good, essence, existence, best, world, "ideal nature of the creature," original imperfection, metaphysical evil / physical evil / moral evil, will vs. permit, antecedent vs. consequent will, physical cooperation (*concoors*) / moral cooperation (*concoors*), conservation, continual creation, privation

Reading Questions

1. In §§1-6, Leibniz identifies two classes of difficulties, which are supposed to show an incompatibility of evil with human freedom and divine justice. What are the difficulties?
2. In §7, Leibniz provides a proof for the existence of God. What is the nature of the proof? How does Leibniz infer from the existence of contingent things to the existence of a supremely perfect being (complete in power, wisdom, and goodness)?
3. In §8, Leibniz introduces the Principle of the Best. What is the principle? And what justification does Leibniz give for believing that God operates according to this principle?
4. In §§9-19, Leibniz presents one main line of objection to his argument in §8: surely there could have been a better world than *this one!* How does Leibniz respond to this objection?
5. In §§20-25, Leibniz addresses "the more speculative and metaphysical difficulties." He distinguishes three kinds of evil—metaphysical, physical, and moral—and he identifies three relations God's will might have to evil—willing it antecedently, willing it consequentially, or merely permitting it. Work through these two groups of concepts—in what sense does God will any evil? And in what sense (and why) does God merely permit other evils?
6. §27 starts an argument about the concurrence (translated here as "cooperation") of God in moral and physical evils. Since, according to orthodox Christian doctrine, all things depend on God for their existence, couldn't we consider God a *cause of evil* insofar as he allows it to continue in existence? What is Leibniz's response to his question?

Notes on the Text

- §1 *Aspice, quam mage sit, ...*: Consider, how much more piercing our weapon may be! (Virgil, *Aeneid* X, 481)
- §10 *ab effectu*: from the effect.
Et si fata volunt...: And if the Fates so will, double poisons do good.

- O certe necessarium...:*
 O surely needful was the sin of Adam, which took the death of Christ to wipe it out!
 O blessed was that guilt which did require so strong and mighty a Redeemer's power!
- §16 *Je krümmer Holz...:* Crooked the sick, better the crutch: Slier the rogue, greater his luck.
Raro antecedentum...: After fleeing criminal 'tis seldom / Punishment limps not with halting foot. (Horace III, 2)
Abstulit hunc tandem...: Finally the punishment of Rufinus has stilled this tumult, / And vindicated the gods...
- §17 *Idem tamen benignus...:*
 But this same gracious
 Avenger subdues his wrath,
 And allows only few of the
 Ungodly to perish for eternity.
Ἀποκατάσις πάντων: The Complete Restoration of All.
Inque Deos iterum...:
 And again received by Destiny's decree among the gods,
 Our golden Apollo shall forever reign.
- §19 *De Amplitudine Regni Coelestis:* Concerning the Extent of the Heavenly Kingdom
- §20 *Si Deus est, unde malum? Si non est, unde bonum?:* If there be a God, whence cometh evil; if there be not, whence cometh good?
- §22 *ad perfectionem simpliciter simplicem:* for simple perfection in the simple sense.
- §24 *non esse facienda mala, ut eveniant bona:* We should do nothing evil that good may come to pass (Romans 3:8).
- §25 *sine quo non:* an indispensable condition.
- §30 *quantum non noxia corpora tardant:* as far as harmful bodies do not impede them.

Write about 200-250 words in response to the following prompt. These prompts are designed to get you started thinking about the topics we will discuss. There is no *expected* answer—I mainly want you to start with an answer to the question and then think about what reasons can be given in support of the answer.

Complete this writing assignment *before* doing the readings for the week.

Writing Prompt

Before reading the second half of this prompt, consider this thesis:

In order for my action to be free, I must be able to do otherwise.

For example, in order to freely choose to *not* to eat a piece of chocolate cake, I must *be able* to eat a piece of cake if I so choose. On this thesis, I would not be freely choosing *not* to eat cake if there's *no cake*. I wouldn't have any choice!

↳ Do you think this is true?

The thesis above is called the Principle of Alternate Possibilities (PAP). There are philosophical thought experiments, called "Frankfurt cases," that are designed to test our intuitions about PAP. Here is one example:

Black, an evil *neurosurgeon*, wishes to see White dead but is unwilling to do the deed himself. Knowing that Mary Jones also despises White and will have a single good opportunity to kill him, Black inserts a mechanism into Jones's brain that enables Black to monitor and to control Jones's neurological activity. If the activity in Jones's brain suggests that she is on the verge of deciding not to kill White when the opportunity arises, Black's mechanism will intervene and cause Jones to decide to commit the murder. On the other hand, if Jones decides to murder White on her own, the mechanism will not intervene. It will merely monitor but will not affect her neurological function. Now suppose that when the occasion arises, Jones decides to kill White without any "help" from Black's mechanism. In the judgment of Frankfurt and most others, Jones is morally responsible for her act. Nonetheless, it appears that she is unable to do otherwise since if she had attempted to do so, she would have been thwarted by Black's device.³

↳ If PAP is true, then we'd have to say that Mary Jones did not act freely in murdering White, since she did not have the ability to do otherwise (and, if that is true, then it seems she should not be held responsible for the murder). Does this seem to be the right thing to say? What went wrong with our initial thesis?

³ Quoted by Linda Zagzebski, "Foreknowledge and Free Will," Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/free-will-foreknowledge/> (accessed 20 May 2008).

Part I, §§32-75 (pp. 142-163)

In this section, Leibniz develops an account of contingency, arguing that even though future events can be *determined*, they are not *necessary*. Things *could have been otherwise*.

★ As you read these sections, as yourself: how *could* things have been otherwise? What would have had to be different?

The second project of this section is to begin developing an account of human freedom that is compatible with the determination Leibniz has already conceded. Leibniz argues that if there *weren't* determining factors in our choices, we wouldn't choose anything at all (like Buridan's ass, who wants the grass on *both* meadows and starves to death because there's nothing making him want to go to one instead of the other). [Note also that this mirrors Leibniz's argument from §8, that if there hadn't been a single best world, God would not have created anything at all.]

★ As you read this section, ask yourself whether this account of freedom is sufficient to preserve the moral judgments we make when we hold people responsible for their actions.

Key Terms

action of the creature, pleasure, perfection, freedom, spontaneity, choice, contingency, (freedom of) indifference, determination, absolute necessity, hypothetical necessity, predetermination, mediate knowledge (*better known as* middle knowledge), principle of contradiction, principle of determinant reason (a.k.a. principle of sufficient reason or PSR), "incline without necessitating," equipoise, System of Pre-Established Harmony

Reading Questions

1. In §32, Leibniz distinguishes the action of God from that of creatures. In §33, he identifies the object of the will. How do these support the theory of freedom he proposes starting in §34?
2. Starting in §36, Leibniz gives his argument for why contingency is compatible with determination. What are his reasons for thinking a future, determinate, event is nevertheless still contingent?
3. How, according to Leibniz, is there truth in both predetermination *and* Molinism (the belief in middle knowledge)? See §§38-43.
4. Why is God's choice to create this particular world a *free* choice (i.e., not necessary)? See §§44-45.
5. Can God change anything in the world? (See §§53-xx)
6. §§59-67 give a metaphysical framework for Leibniz's theory of human freedom. What is the Pre-Established Harmony (PEH), and how is it supposed to ground the spontaneity and independence required for freedom? Does this metaphysical framework provide a unique account for humans, or will it apply equally to other souls (animals, etc.)?

[Note: if you can't make sense of the PEH, just hang on and ask your questions in class! It takes some getting used to, and you may need me to repeat it about 4 times before it starts to make some sense.]

Notes on the Text

- §33 *bonum ex causa integra...*: good arises from some cogent cause, evil from some deficiency.
- §43 *Astra inclinant, non necessitant*: The stars incline [towards an end] but do not necessitate.
- §53 *Unumquodque, quando est...*: Whatever is *must* be, since it is; whatever will be, if it is true that it will be, must come.
- §55 *Novit Dominus mutare sententiam...*: The Lord knows how to change his judgment, if you know how to change your sin.
Si non es praedestinatus, fac ut praedestineris: If you are not destined [for salvation], act in such a way that you *will* be destined [for it].
- §56 *De Termino Vitae*: Concerning the Limit of Life.
- §57 *De Termino Paenitentiae Peremptorio*: Concerning the Inevitable Termination of Repentance
fatalia: things decreed.
Prudens futuri...: In dark night God wisely conceals the issue of future time.
- §59 *toto genere*: in every respect.
- §62 "...the evolution of perceptions must produce *pictures...*": the word *pictures* would be better translated as *images* (the French is *images*). This is a minor quibble, but it brings the terminology closer to other important terms, specifically, *imagination* and *representation*.
- §74 *κόλασιν οὐ τιμωρίαν*: punishment, not vengeance.

Write about 200-250 words in response to the following prompt. These prompts are designed to get you started thinking about the topics we will discuss. There is no *expected* answer—I mainly want you to start with an answer to the question and then think about what reasons can be given in support of the answer.

Complete this writing assignment *before* doing the readings for the week.

Writing Prompt

Go to the CourseVU website and view the short film *Balance* by Christoph and Wolfgang Lauenstein (it's about 7 minutes long).



Notice that in this film, the world begins and ends in harmony and equilibrium. And there are various experiments throughout at an optimal configuration.

↳ What generates the conflict? Is the conflict due to the nature of the world itself (unstable and insecure)? Or could there have been a satisfactory resolution?

Part I, §§76-106 (pp. 163-181)

Leibniz now turns to the problems specific to “revealed theology.” It will not be necessary to go into the minutiae of all the theological disputes Leibniz raises here. Leibniz says that “when [he] answered the previous objections, [he] opened up a way to meet those that remain.” So, pay close attention to how Leibniz draws on the arguments we’ve already looked at to (try to) resolve the problems in revealed theology as well.

There are three main lines of problems that Leibniz takes up in this section. In each case, he lays out the problem and the variety of responses that have been made to the problem (many of the theological positions and people Leibniz names may be unfamiliar to you—that’s okay). Then, once Leibniz lays out all the positions, he comes in and saves the day with one of his metaphysical theses.

★ Insofar as you are able to understand the problems, try to understand how the metaphysical positions are supposed to resolve the dispute.

But one further problem for Leibniz starts to take form in this section: how is it that the principle of the best (which provides criteria for God’s choice of the *whole*)—how is it that this principle accounts for the *moral* criteria we think would be incompatible with God’s goodness. For example, how is it that God’s choice would never include the damnation of innocents? And is this sufficient to account for the goodness of the whole, even though there *is* significant physical suffering by innocents in this world (consider the case of a baby born with unbearable physical deformities)?

★ Pay close attention to how Leibniz thinks the principle of the best functions as God considers which of the array of possible worlds to actualize.

Key Terms

natural theology / revealed theology, God conceived metaphysically vs. God conceived morally (§77), absolute vs. respective destination, order of God’s decrees, “one total decree” (§84), the origin of forms, substantial form / accidental form, “identity of the person” (§89)

Reading Questions

1. Remind yourself of the difference between natural and revealed theology, discussed in the *Preliminary Dissertation*.
2. The first problem of revealed theology Leibniz takes on is the problem of the relation of predestination to the freedom of the will (§§77-84). What is the problem? Leibniz’s response to the problem is given in §84, and it relies on the Principle of the Best. How, according to Leibniz, is the Principle of the Best supposed to solve the problem?
3. The second problem of revealed theology Leibniz addresses is the problem of the origin of souls (§§85-89). This is a problem because souls are thought to be infected with an original sin—if the souls are *created* by God at each conception, then God is creating something with a propensity to evil. Instead, theologians need an account of how the propensity to sin is passed on from the parents. What are the possible responses to this problem? Leibniz gives his answer in §§90-91. What does his answer have in common with the standard responses?

4. The final problem is the question of what criteria God uses to distinguish those he saves from those he will condemn (§§92-106). He divides this problem into subclasses—the death of innocents, those who become evil as a matter of will, and those who are evil as a matter of circumstance. Does Leibniz’s appeal to *particular* evils in §105 justify his optimism that there *is* an answer to this question, even if we can’t *know* it?

Notes on the Text

- §76 *Remonstrants* and *Counter-Remonstrants*: the name “Remonstrants” was given to the seventeenth century followers of Arminius, they are also often called “Arminians.” The “Counter-Remonstrants,” as the name implies, were those that disagreed with the Remonstrants. The central dispute was over the nature of free will in salvation and whether the doctrine of predestination eliminated or reduced free will in an unacceptable way.
- §80 *de Auxiliis*: concerning aids [to grace].
- §82 *Praedestinati*: the predestined.
Praesciti: the foreknown.
- §84 *in signo rationis*: logically; in the sense of the proof.
- §86 *per traducem*: by transfer. *Traductionism* is the view that all human souls were in Adam and were passed down, transmitted, through the generations at conception.
- §87 *perfecti habia*: possessing perfection.
- §87 “I have shown elsewhere that the notion of Entelechy is not altogether to be scorned”: Leibniz is referring to the “New System of Nature and Communication of Substances,” published in 1695, where he argues that the Cartesian theory of matter, as mere extension, fails to provide an adequate explanation for bodily motion. We need something over and above matter to account for the *force* that is conserved in motion, and this, Leibniz thought, is one reason to preserve the Scholastic theory of substantial forms.
- §88 *Eduction*: drawing out.
- §89 *Morte carent animae*: Souls are free from death. (Ovid, *Met.* XV, 158)
- §92 *Orat. de Baptismo*: Sermon on Baptism.
poenam sensus, non damni: physical punishment, not punishment from loss.
Nodus Praedestinationis Solutus: Solution to Problems Regarding Predestination.
- §95 *Quod facienti, quod in se est, non denegatur gratia necessaria*: “Who does what rests with him, to him the necessary grace will not be denied.”
Thom. Quest. XIV...: Thomas, Question 14 on Truth, article 11, paragraph 1. And also Bradwardine, *On the Cause of God*, not far from the beginning.
- §97 *Cautio Criminalis...*: Criminal Caution, about the Proceedings against Witchcraft.
- §100 *Quod vitae sectabor iter?*: What way of life shall I follow?
in virtute sanctae obedientiae: in virtue of holy obedience.
- §101 *Veridicus Christianus*: The Truth-Speaking Christ.

Write about 200-250 words in response to the following prompt. These prompts are designed to get you started thinking about the topics we will discuss. There is no *expected* answer—I mainly want you to start with an answer to the question and then think about what reasons can be given in support of the answer.

Complete this writing assignment *before* doing the readings for the week.

Writing Prompt

Leibniz raises the following question:

If God exists, whence cometh evil? If God does not exist, whence cometh good?

↳ Do you think Leibniz is right that those who argue against the existence of God will have a more difficult time accounting for the source of goodness?

Part II, §§107-134 (182-207)

This section provides an extensive discussion of Bayle's position. Leibniz quotes Bayle's propositions and objections, and provides a reply to each. The main focus here is to show that the arguments of Part I can resolve the difficulties Bayle raises, and so reason supports faith rather than being contrary to it.

★ Note Leibniz's concession that "the greatest [difficulty] lies in maintaining that God co-operates [better: *concur*s] morally in moral evil, that is, in sin, without being the originator [better: *author*] of sin, and even without being accessory thereto." Pay close attention to how Leibniz thinks he can resolve this difficulty. God permits sin, but he is neither perpetrator nor accomplice—how can that be?

Key Terms

"co-operates morally" (or *concur*s morally), "originator of sin" (or *author* of sin), permitting, directing, rule of the best, moral evil, goodness/wisdom/ power, primitive antecedent will, mediate will, final and decisive will, free will, moral necessity

Reading Questions

1. In §§109-115, Leibniz quotes Bayle's "seven theological theses." Note the ways Leibniz agrees, disagrees, or interprets these theses. Are there any that he would reject? Are there any that he thinks is "above reason," i.e., requiring special revelation?
2. In §§116-134, Leibniz responds to Bayle's "nineteen philosophic maxims." Again, pay attention to which of the maxims Leibniz likes and which he rejects.
3. What is God's attitude toward the happiness of men (§§118-119)?
4. Reflection question: Leibniz says, in §121, that "to permit the evil, as God permits it, is the greatest good." In what sense, then, is it *evil*? Can we preserve our ordinary moral judgments? For example, the Holocaust was *evil*, but, as it was permitted by God, it was part of some larger good (!). How can we make sense of this?

Notes on the Text

§112 *De Vita, Morte et Resurrectione*: Concerning the Life, Death and Resurrection.

§117 *De Providentia Dei*: Concerning the Providence of God.

De Doctrina Christiana: Concerning Christian Doctrine.

Cum cogitator Deus...: When thinking of God, one thinks of something of which nothing is better or higher. Even more: you cannot find a person who thinks that God is such that we can find something better than him.

§119 *De Occultis Dei Beneficiis*: The Hidden Benefits of God.

De Occultis Dei Poenis: The Hidden Punishments of God.

Tolluntur in altum, / Ut lapsu graviore ruant: They are raised to the highest point / So that their downfall is harder. (Claudian, *Contre Rufin*, I, 22-23)

- ἔχθρῶν δῶρα ἄδωρα*: The gifts of an enemy are not gifts.
Hostibus eveniant talia dona meis: That my enemies should receive such gifts!
Abusus non tollit usum: The abuse does not eliminate the use.
Scandalum datum et scandalum acceptum: scandal in the giving, scandal in the receiving.
- §120 *in Ecclesia militante, in statu viatorum*: In the Church, militant, in the state of a pilgrim.
- §121 *Di cuius jurare...*: By whose dread power the gods themselves do fear to take an oath in vain. (Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI, 324)
Voluit Deus ora loquentis...: The god would have stopped her lips as she spoke: but her voice had already rushed into the air. (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, III, 295-296)
Si mala sustulerat, non erat ille bonus: If evil is removed, then it is not good.
- §122 Aristotle, *Rhetoric* II, 23, 1399b 22-26 (given here in both Greek and Latin):
 For example, that a gift was given in order to cause pain by its withdrawal. This notion underlies the lines:
 God gives to many great prosperity,
 Not of good will towards them, but to make
 The ruin of them more conspicuous.
- §124 *Quae rationi contraria sunt...*: What is contrary to reason, we must believe that a Wise Person cannot do.
- §128 *Inciivile est nisi tota lege inspecta judicare*: It is contrary to the law to judge without the whole law having been considered.
- §132 *Τὸ εἶναι τὸ ὄν...*: That which is must needs be when it is, and that which is not must needs not be when it is not. (Aristotle, *De Interpretatione*, 19a 23-24)
- §133 *Mandemus memoriae...*: Never forget what Thrasea often said (this great, if indulgent, man): who hates vices hates men.
- §134 *O altitudo divitiarum et sapientiae*: O the depth of the riches of wisdom [of God]. (Romans 11:33)

Write about 200-250 words in response to the following prompt. These prompts are designed to get you started thinking about the topics we will discuss. There is no *expected* answer—I mainly want you to start with an answer to the question and then think about what reasons can be given in support of the answer.

Complete this writing assignment *before* doing the readings for the week.

Writing Prompt

In contrast to Leibniz's arguments that this is the best of all possible worlds, Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) argues that this is the *worst* of all possible worlds:



[This] is the worst of all possible worlds. For possible means not what we may picture in our imagination, but what can actually exist and last. Now this world is arranged as it had to be if it were to be capable of continuing with great difficulty to exist; if it were a little worse, it would be no longer capable of continuing to exist. Consequently, since a worse world could not continue to exist, it is absolutely impossible; and so this world itself is the worst of all possible worlds. For not only if the planets ran their heads against one another, but also if any one of the actually occurring perturbations of their course continued to increase, instead of being gradually balanced again by the others, the world would soon come to an end. Astronomers know on what accidental circumstances . . . all this depends . . . [W]e will hope that the astronomers have not miscalculated, and consequently that the mechanical perpetual motion realized in such a planetary system will also not, like the rest, ultimately come to a standstill. Again, powerful forces of nature dwell under the firm crust of the planet. As soon as some accident affords these free play, they must necessarily destroy that crust with everything living on it. This has occurred at least three times on our planet, and will probably occur even more frequently. The earthquake of Lisbon, of Haiti, the destruction of Pompeii are only small, playful hints at the possibility. An insignificant alteration of the atmosphere, not even chemically demonstrable, causes cholera, yellow fever, black death, and so on, which carry off millions of people; a somewhat greater alteration would extinguish all life. A very moderate increase of heat would dry up all rivers and springs. The animals have received barely enough in the way of organs and strength to enable them with the greatest exertion to procure the sustenance for their own lives and food for their offspring. Therefore, if an animal loses a limb, or even only the complete use of it, it is in most cases bound to perish. Powerful as are the weapons of understanding and reason possessed by the human race, nine-tenths of mankind live in constant conflict with want, always balancing themselves with difficulty and effort on the brink of destruction. Thus throughout, for the continuance of the whole as well as for that of every individual being, the conditions are sparingly and scantily given, and nothing beyond these. Therefore the individual life is a ceaseless struggle for existence itself, while at every step it is threatened with destruction. Just because this threat is so often carried out, provision had to be made, by the incredibly great surplus of seed, that the destruction of individuals should not bring about that of the races, since about these alone is nature seriously concerned. Consequently, the world is as bad as it can possibly be, if it is to exist at all. Q.E.D.⁴

↳ Do you think the evidence Schopenhauer gives supports his conclusion? Is he right? If so, do you think this view is incompatible with Leibniz's argument that this is the best of all possible worlds?

⁴ Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, trans. E.F.J. Payne, 2 vols. (New York: Dover, 1958), II.46 (583f.).

Part II, §§135-167 (207-228)

This section explores the issues of Manicheanism (also called Zoroastrianism), which held that there were two eternal principles, one good and the other evil. The overall structure of this section divides into three main parts: (1) whether there is a natural explanation for the belief in two opposing deities; (2) whether disorder in nature provides evidence for a principle of evil; and (3) whether free will provides evidence for a principle of evil.

★ Pay close attention to how Leibniz responds to each of these questions. Remember, Leibniz believes the burden of proof is on those who admit of two principles—do the arguments in favor of two principles meet this demand?

Key Terms

“two intelligent principles” (§136ff.), “image of the Divinity,” physical evil, moral evil, permission, rule of the best, moral necessity

Reading Questions

1. In §§135-143, by his own concession, Leibniz is “carried ... too far” in discovering the origin of the belief in an evil principle. The important thing to notice is that he is taking this belief seriously, but giving an alternative account of its origin.
2. In §§144-151, Leibniz considers the arguments in favor of Manicheanism. According to these arguments, the presence of evil and disorder in the world is sufficient to justify a belief in *two* opposing principles, one good and the other evil. What is Leibniz’s response to this argument?
3. In §§152-153, Leibniz says that evil does not need an explanation by appealing to a principle of evil. Why not?
4. §§154-167 concerns the origin of *moral* evil. Why might moral evil support the “two principles” theory? Consider the examples given in §§161-163. Do you think these examples support the claim that God *wills* moral evil rather than merely *permitting* it?

Notes on the Text

- §135 *ἐπέχειν*: to hold (i.e., to suspend). The Pyrrhonians were skeptics, and so, in light of the fact that they could know nothing, they advocated the suspension of judgment.
- §137 *Placat equo Persis...*: Persia propitiates Hyperion, crowned with rays, / with horses, no sluggish victims for the swift God. (Ovid, *Fasti*, I, 385-386, transl. A.S. Kline, 2004)
- §139 *virī militares*: men of arms; *feudum Arimandiae*: feudal estates of the Arimanni. This apparently is a reference to a militia of free men who were given land in payment for their services.
- §140 *ob metum*: with fear.

- §142 *Teutates, pollensque feris...*: Teutates, powerful Hesus' savage shrines, /And Taramis, whose altar is no less cruel than those of Diana (Lucanus, *Pharsalia*, I, 444-45, transl. E. Ridley). [double check]
Taranis aram non mitiorem ara Dianae Scythicae fuisse: the altar of Taran was not less cruel than that of Diana.
- §146 *Saepe mihi dubiam...*: My mind has often wavered between two opinions: [have the gods a care for the world or is there no ruler therein and do mortal things drift as dubious chance dictates?] (Claudian, *In Rufinum*, transl. M. Platnauer, 1922)
- §147 *ut Spartam quam nactus est ornet*: to improve Sparta, which is its due.
Jupiter in parvo cum cerneret...:
When Jove looked down and saw the heavens figured in a sphere of glass
he laughed and said to the other gods:
"Has the power of mortal effort gone so far?
Is my handiwork now mimicked in a fragile globe?
An old man of Syracuse has imitated on earth the laws of the heavens,
the order of nature, and the ordinances of the gods.
Why should I take umbrage at harmless Salmoneus and his mock thunder?
Here the feeble hand of man has proved Nature's rival."
(Claudian, *Carmina minora*, 51, 1-6 and 13-14)
- §150 *Si non vult Deus esse malum...*:
"If God does not desire evil, why does he not forbid it?" it is said. "It makes no difference, whether he has been the author and executor of evil or that, though able to prevent it, he allows his beautiful works to be used for criminal sin; for if he in his omnipotence should want all to live in innocence, the holy will would not degenerate nor would a human hand be stained with on evil deed.
"Therefore God has instituted evil, for he regards it from the high heaven and tolerates it and allows it to happen as if he himself had created it; for he himself has created what, although he can destroy it, he does not annihilate, but allows to spread during a long period of usage."
(Prudentius, *Hamartigenia* [*The Origin of Evil*], 640-649, transl. J. Stam)
- §152 *principium maleficum*: an evil principle; *primum frigidum*: a first (or primary) coldness.
- §154 *Video meliora proboque, / Deteriora sequor*: I see the better part and I approve, / I follow the worse. (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, VII, 20)
- §156 Ἀποκατάστασις Πάντων: Universal Restoration.
- §158 *conditio sine qua non*: a necessary condition.
- §164 *inter voluntatem signi et beneplaciti*: between the will of the sign and the will of good pleasure. (Simply restating what is immediately preceding this phrase.)
- §166 *crudelem esse misericordiam...*: It is a cruel mercy to will the misery of some in order to be merciful.
- §167 *Fur praedestinatus, de gepredestineerde dief*: For Predestination, of a Predestined Thief.

Write about 200-250 words in response to the following prompt. These prompts are designed to get you started thinking about the topics we will discuss. There is no *expected* answer—I mainly want you to start with an answer to the question and then think about what reasons can be given in support of the answer.

Complete this writing assignment *before* doing the readings for the week.

Writing Prompt

Anything that is true is necessarily true. Anything that is false is necessarily false.

So, if you attended class last week, it was *necessary* that you attend class. That is, if it is false that you missed class last week, it is *impossible*—you *could not have* missed class.

↳ Evaluate the above claims. Are they true? What reasons can you give for or against them? (Try to steer clear from the “isn't it just *obvious*?” sort of response—we have pretty strong intuitions about possibility, but how *reliable* do you think those intuitions are?)

Part II, §§168-196 (228-249)

This section focuses on *metaphysical objections* to Leibniz's account of the origin of moral evil. In particular, Leibniz focuses his attention on the nature of possibility and necessity. The argument of this section has three main parts: (1) whether necessitarianism is true (§§169-174); (2) whether God creates the moral requirements and eternal truths (§§175-192); and (3) whether God could have decided to act contrary to moral constraints (§§193-196).

★ The main thing to notice in this section is how Leibniz distinguishes the various kinds of necessity and why he thinks blind or absolute necessity is contrary to God's nature while moral necessity is a "happy necessity." Why is moral necessity the best expression of God's character?

Key Terms

metaphysical necessity, moral/hypothetical necessity, blind necessity, contingent futurities, certain, determinate, possible, indifference of equipose, priority of nature/priority of time

Reading Questions

1. In §§169-174, Leibniz considers various arguments for the claim that things that don't happen (or haven't yet happened) are impossible. This is a view called necessitarianism — the only possible world is the actual world. Why does Leibniz think this view is false?
2. In §§175-192, Leibniz considers an ancient question: is an action right because God commands it, or does God command it because it's right? What is Leibniz's answer to this question? What reasons does he give for his position?
3. In his argument of §§175-192, Leibniz draws a distinction between the things that depend on God's will and those that depend on his intellect. Why is this distinction important?
4. In §§193-196, Leibniz considers one further possibility: that God knows of the moral constraints on his actions and yet chooses to act in a way that is contrary to those constraints. *Could* God have created a world that is less-than-best?

Notes on the Text

§169 *De Fato*: Concerning Fate.

Contendit omnes nervos Chrysippus...: Chrysippus exerts every effort to prove the view that every *axiom* is either true or false. For just as Epicurus is afraid that if he admits this he will also have to admit that all events whatever are caused by fate (on the ground that if either of two alternatives is true from all eternity, that alternative is also certain, and if it is certain it is also necessary. This, he thinks, would prove both necessity and fate), similarly Chrysippus fears that if he fails to maintain that every proposition is either true or false he will not carry his point that all things happen by fate and spring from eternal causes governing future events. (transl. H. Rackham, *De Oratore*, Book III, p. 217)

§170 Notice that this section includes a lengthy quotation from Bayle's *Dictionary*, starting on line 4 of this section, and extending through the end of the first paragraph on p. 232. This section is rough going—do your best to wade through it.

περὶ δυνατῶν *me scito*...: About things *possible* you must know that I judge according to Diodorus. And therefore if you are about to come, you must know that your coming is *necessary*; if you are not, then your coming is *impossible*. Now then consider which judgment gives you the greater pleasure, that of Chrysippus or this one, which was too much for the digestion of our teacher Diodotus. (Transl. W. Glynn Williams, *The Letters to His Friends*, vol. 2, p. 195)

Vigila, Chrysippe, ne tuam causam...: Keep a good lookout, Chrysippus, so as not to leave your position undefended; you have a great tussle about it with that stalwart logician Diodorus Therefore every false proposition about the future is an impossibility. But this is a view that you, Chrysippus, will not allow at all, and this is the very point about which you are specially at issue with Diodorus. He says that only what either is true or will be true is a possibility, and whatever will be, he says, must necessarily happen, and whatever will not be, according to him cannot possibly happen. You say that things which will not be are also 'possible' — for instance it is possible for this jewel to be broken even if it never will be —, and that the reign of Cypselus at Corinth was not necessary although it had been announced by the oracle of Apollo a thousand years before Diodorus holds that only what either is true or will be true is possible. This position is connected with the argument that nothing happens which was not necessary, and that whatever is possible either is now or will be, and that it is no more possible for things that will be to alter than it is for things that have happened; but that whereas in the things that have happened this immutability is manifest, in some things that are going to happen, because their immutability is not manifest, it does not appear to be there at all, and consequently, while the statement 'This man will die of this disease' is true in the case of a man who is suffering from a deadly disease, if this same statement is made truly in the case of a man in whom so violent an attack of the disease is not manifest, none the less it will happen. It follows that no change from true to false can occur even in the case of the future. (transl. H. Rackham, *De Oratore, Book III*, pp. 205, 207, 211-13)

περὶ δυνατῶν: concerning possibles.

γέγραφε δὲ καὶ Χρύσιππος...: Chrysippus has written wonderful things on this subject.

περὶ τῆς συντάξεως τῶν τοῦ λόγου μερῶν: Concerning the arrangement of the parts of language.

Οὐ πᾶν δὲ παρεληλυθός...: Not everything in the past is true of necessity, which seems to be the opinion of the school of Cleanthes.

§172 *omnia rei non futurae requisita*: restatement of the immediately preceding phrase.

§173 *cogitationem, non intellectum concedit Deo*: giving God thought, but not understanding.

§174 *ubi bene, nemo melius*: where there is good, there is no better.

ubi male, nemo pejus: where there is evil, there is no worse.

§175 *ad extra*: towards what is external to him.

§178 ἀνυπευθυνίαν: right.

§182 *ubi stat pro ratione voluntas*: where the will takes the place of reason.

§186 *Spectatum admissi*: Admit what is seen.

§190 *timere, ubi non est timor*: to fear where it is unnecessary to be afraid.

§194 *Minus bonum habet rationem mali*: A lesser good counted as an evil.

Write about 200-250 words in response to the following prompt. These prompts are designed to get you started thinking about the topics we will discuss. There is no *expected* answer—I mainly want you to start with an answer to the question and then think about what reasons can be given in support of the answer.

Complete this writing assignment *before* doing the readings for the week.

Writing Prompt

Can God create a stone that is too heavy for him to lift?

If so, then there is something God cannot do (i.e., he cannot lift the stone).

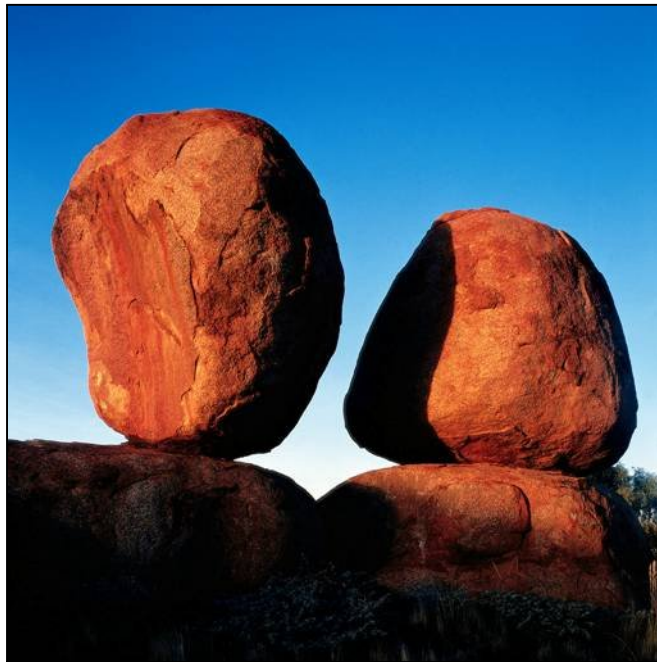
If not, then there is something God cannot do (i.e., he cannot create such a stone).

Either way, there is something God cannot do.

And, if there is something God cannot do, then he is not omnipotent.

Hence, God is not omnipotent.

↳ Respond to the argument above. Is it right? If not, where does it go wrong?



Part II, §§197-240 (249-275)

This section concludes Part II of the *Theodicy*. Leibniz takes on several more of Bayle's objections, which gives him an opportunity to expand on his theory. Among the issues raised in this section are (1) whether the world as it is would satisfy a truly wise and virtuous person; (2) whether God could improve upon things with particular acts of his will (i.e., miracles); and (3) whether God was free in creating, if he is *bound* to create the best possible.

★ One of the most interesting things that emerges in this section is an account of God's freedom. In essence, all the objections raised in this section of the text are centering on this question—is God truly *free*? Pay close attention to Leibniz's answers to this question and see if you can come up with the necessary and sufficient conditions for divine freedom. This will be important when we consider *human* freedom and the ways it is like (or unlike) divine freedom.

Key Terms

"the supreme freedom of God," indifference of equipoise, metaphysical necessity, moral necessity, particular/general acts of will, general laws of nature/miracles, nature *or* natural, simplicity *and* productivity, law of the best, freedom of indifference / freedom from constraint, determined

Reading Questions

1. In §§197-202, Leibniz considers whether the perfection of this world would be satisfying to a wise and good person. Leibniz expands on his claim that God creates the best of all possible worlds. What are the objections to this that are raised in the text? Why does Leibniz think these objections are mistaken?
2. In §§203-217, Leibniz discusses whether God acts according to a single *general* will or according to many *particular* wills. (I.e., does God decide that a *particular* person will suffer, or does he decide on a *general* structure of the world that happens to result in that particular person suffering?) Why might your answer to this question be problematic, given the evidence of evil in the world? How does Leibniz address this problem?
3. What is the place of miracles in Leibniz's philosophical system?
4. §§218-240 take on the question of God's freedom directly. Given Leibniz's system, why might one think that God is *not* free? What are the conditions of God's freedom, according to Leibniz? Is God's freedom compatible with necessity?

Notes on the Text

§209 *Idem Chrysippus in eod. lib...*: In the same book Chrysippus also considers and discusses this question, which he thinks worth investigating: whether men's diseases come by nature; that is, whether nature herself, or Providence, if you will, which created this structure of the universe and the human race, also created the diseases, weakness, and bodily infirmities from which mankind suffers. He, however, does not think that it was nature's original intention to make men subject to disease; for that would never have been consistent with nature as the source and mother of all things good. "But," said he,

- "when she was creating and bringing forth many great things which were highly suitable and useful, there were also produced at the same time troubles closely connected with those good things that she was creating"; and he declared that these were not due to nature, but to certain inevitable consequences, a process that he himself calls *κατὰ παρακολούθησιν* [*as an incidental result*]. "Exactly as," he says, "when nature fashioned men's bodies, a higher reason and the actual usefulness of what she was creating demanded that the head be made of very delicate and small bones. But this greater usefulness of one part was attended with an external disadvantage; namely, that the head was but slightly protected and could be damaged by slight blows and shocks. In the same way diseases too and illness were created at the same time with health. Exactly, by Heaven!" said he, "as vices, through their relationship to the opposite quality, are produced at the same time that virtue is created for mankind by nature's design." (Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights*, book 7, chapter 1, transl. J.C. Rolfe, 1927)
- §211 *Et citharoedus Ridetur chorda qui semper oberrat eadem*: the harpist who always stumbles over the same chord is sure to be laughed at.
- §212 *de maximis et minimis*: concerning the maximum and the minimum.
Si similibus addas similia, tota sunt similia: If one adds similar to similar, the results are similar.
Si similibus similia addas similiter, tota sunt similia: If one adds what is similar among similar things to other similar things, the results are similar.
Non tantum similia, sed et similiter posita: Not only similar, but similarity is also given.
- §214 *ad prudentem gubernatorem pertinet...*: It belongs to a prudent governor to overlook any lack of goodness in the part in order to increase the goodness of the whole.
- §216 *Nulla lex satis commode omnibus est...*: No law is entirely beneficial to all; one asks only that it is useful for the majority and in the whole.
- §217 *Duplici ratione diligas oportet...*: For two reasons, then, it is right to be content with that which happens to thee; the one, because it was done for thee and prescribed for thee, and in a manner that had reference to thee, originally from the most ancient causes spun with thy destiny; and the other, because even that which comes severally to every man is to the power which administers the universe a cause of felicity and perfection, nay even of its very continuance. (Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, Book V, chapter 8, transl. George Long, 1879)
Intelligentia extramundane: extra-worldly Intelligence.
supramunda: above the world.
Melius est dare quam accipere: It is better to give than to receive. (Acts 20:35)
- §220 *πρώτον ψεῦδος*: primary error.
statum legalem pro naturali: he took "the state of society for the state of nature."
- §227 *ad maximum, ad omnia*: to the maximum, to all.
ad optimum: to the best.
quippe vetor fatis: because fate prohibits it. (Virgil, *Aeneid*, I, 39)

- §228 *compelling*: In this section, and elsewhere throughout this reading, the English translation translates the French word, *nécessiter*, with the English word *compel*. Given the importance of the concept of *necessity*, this is unfortunate. Whenever you see some form of the English word “compel,” think “necessitate.” (cf. §230)
- §230 *conditio sine qua non*: a necessary condition.
- §239 *Si non errasset, fecerat illa minus*: had she not failed, she would have accomplished less. (Martial, *Epigrams*, I, 21)
- §240 *Sic placuit superis; quaerere plura, nefas*: So the gods have decided; it would be sacrilege to ask for more.

Write about 200-250 words in response to the following prompt. These prompts are designed to get you started thinking about the topics we will discuss. There is no *expected* answer—I mainly want you to start with an answer to the question and then think about what reasons can be given in support of the answer.

Complete this writing assignment *before* doing the readings for the week.

Writing Prompt

The idea of Utopia is deeply rooted in our society. Here are a couple (very different) expressions of that idea:

“Drag and Drop World”



“Utopia” by Alanis Morissette



[short video links available on the course website]

↳ What is a “Utopia”? Does the concept apply differently than what we’ve been calling the “best of all possible worlds”? Is the concept of Utopia coherent? Why/why not?

Part III, §§241-282 (276-300)

In the transition to Part III, Leibniz announces that he will now consider the causes of *physical evil*. (1) The first part of this section is dedicated to considering whether physical evils exceed physical goods. Leibniz thinks not—physical goods, he argues, exceed physical evils. (2) The second part of this section then shifts to a consideration of the “greatest physical evil”—damnation. Here he raises some considerations for and against the view that damnation is not consistent with the character of God. His conclusion is somewhat tentative, but remember the distinction of the Preliminary Dissertation—all he needs is to *support* the view, not to *comprehend* it. (3) In the final part of this section, Leibniz begins to consider how the free will of creatures accounts for the moral evil in the world. In this section, his main project is to clarify what is meant when we say someone acts freely.

★ Pay particular attention to Leibniz's arguments for the conclusion that physical goods exceed physical evils—is he maintaining a consistent set of premises? Also, focus on his discussion of free will. What is his preferred notion of freedom? Is it incompatible with necessity?

Key Terms

moral evil, physical evil, metaphysical evil, system of general harmony, miracle in relation to us / miracle of the “highest kind,” physical good, free will, pleasure, love, necessary / certain

Reading Questions

1. Why does Leibniz think that the cause of physical evil will be less troublesome? What, exactly, is the relation between moral evil and physical evil?
2. In §§242 and following, Leibniz argues that any irregularities are merely apparent. What is his argument for this conclusion?
3. In §§251-261, Leibniz argues that among humans specifically, physical goods are greater than physical evils, which is to say pleasure and happiness exceeds suffering and pain. What is Leibniz's account of human happiness? And how does this enter into his argument for the conclusion that happiness is more abundant?
4. In §§266-272, Leibniz considers the specifically theological problem of damnation. Why might this present a problem for Leibniz's theory? How does Leibniz try to avoid the problem? (Note how tentative his conclusion is at the end of §272.)
5. In §§273-282, Leibniz begins to discuss how the freedom of humans accounts for the presence of evil. What does he consider problematic about how free will has been discussed? What account of freedom does he prefer?

Notes on the Text

§241 *Poena est malum passionis, quod infligitur ob malum actionis*: Punishment is an evil of suffering, imposed because of action. (Grotius, *Justice of War and Peace*, Book II, Ch. 20, paragraph 1)

Nostrorum causa malorum / Nos sumus: We are ourselves the cause of our sufferings.

- §243 *Ordinatissimum est, minus interdum ordinate fieri aliquid*: Leibniz translates for you in the next sentence: "It belongs to the great order that there should be some small disorder."
- §244 *oleum per deliquium*: oil formed by dripping.
- §250 *quonium sub Deo justo nemo innocens miser est*: Again, Leibniz supplies the translation: "it is impossible that an innocent creature should be unhappy under such a master as God."
O fortunatos nimium, sua qui bona norint!: O those most happy ones, who know their blessings! (Virgil, *Georgics*, II, 458)
- §251 *Sapientia prima est, / Stultitia caruisse*: The first [step toward] wisdom is freedom from stupidity. (Horace, *Epistles*, I, 1, 42)
Si non culpabor, sat mihi laudis erit: 'Tis praise enough for me not to be blamed.
- §254 *Felix, qui potuit rerum...*: Happy he who can understand the causes of things! / All fears and inexorable Fate / He hath trampled under foot. (Virgil, *Georgics*, II, 490-492)
- §255 *Cuius potest accidere, quod cuiquam potest*: What can happen to everyone can happen to anyone. (Publilius Syrus (1st century B.C.), cited by Seneca in *To Marcia, On Consolation*, IX, 5; and *On Tranquility of the Mind*, XI, 8)
- §256 *Extat ut in mediis turris aprica casis*: As the sunny tower rises amid hovels.
Quantus Eryx, et quantus Athos...: Great as Erix, great as Athos, Father Apennine raises with joy his snowy crest to the breezes. (Virgil, *Aeneid*, XII, 701-703)
- §258 *πλείω τὰ χρηστὰ...*: Mortals possess more good than evil things.
Quae spirant θεόπνευστον pectus: which reveal a soul inspired by God.
Fortuna cyathis bibere nos...: Since Fate bids us drink of the cup in hand, / She gives us three evils for a single good.
- §259 "M. Bayle says . . . that the very fact that men have this feeling...": This passage (through to the end of §259) is translated unusually. The difficulty here is in how to render the ideas in English. Leibniz uses the French term for evil, *mal*, and good, *bien*, in this passage to describe physical evils and godos, which, in English, would be better translated as pleasure/displeasure or happy/unhappy. But interpreting it that way takes away from the passage. Here is a very straightforward rendering of the passage:
"M. Bayle says regarding this that it is sufficient that men have this feeling [*sentiment*] to judge that they are unhappy [*mal*], since it is this feeling [*sentiment*] that is the measure of good [*bien*] and evil [*mal*]. But I say that the present feeling [*sentiment*] is anything but the true measure of good [*bien*] and evil [*mal*] past and future. I grant that one is unhappy [*mal*] during these gloomy reflections, but that does not preclude our having been happy [*bien*] before, or that, all things considered, good [*bien*] does not surpass evil [*mal*]."
- §260 *De Utilitate ex Adversis Capienda*: On the Uses to be Derived from Adversity.
De Occultis Dei Beneficiis: On the Hidden Benefactions of God.
- §261 *Vendidit hic auro patriam...*: He sold his country for gold and imposed upon her a powerful master, for gold he passed laws and afterwards rescinded them. (Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI, 621-22)
Plaudite: Applaud!

Δότε κρότον καὶ πάντες ὑμεῖς μετὰ χαρᾶς κτυπήσατε: Applaud and let everybody stamp with pleasure!

§262 *Doctor Perplexorum*: Teacher of the Perplexed.

§265 *per la predica*: for the sermon.

§267 *Locis Theol., loco de Inferno*: Theological Sources of Proof, section on Hell.

De Fide: On Faith.

Quod non cessante peccato non potest cessare poena: Since sinning ends not, punishment too cannot end.

Nec mirum damnatos semper torqueri...: It should cause no surprise that the damned are eternally punished, for they blaspheme God without end, and since thus they ever sin, therefore they are ever punished.

Sunt qui dicant, nec displicet responsum: Many assert, which does not displease me, the damned in hell ever sin and therefore are eternally punished.

§272 *At pater omnipotens aliquem...*:

But wroth was the Father Almighty,
That from dark Orcus a mortal should rise again to life's light,
And Apollo's breed, finder of such potent cures,
With lightning stroke he dashed beneath the Stygian waves.

(Virgil, *Aeneid*, VII, 770-773)

meliolem mentum: Better understanding.

non plus ultra: not the highest; i.e., it will have a limit in terms of its intensity.

§276 *Sed non sineret bonus fieri male...*: But good would not have been permitted to become evil, had not Almighty been able to derive good from evil.

§278 *Plato voluptatem dicebat escam malorum*: Plato called lust the lure of evil. (Cicero, *De Senectute*, XIII)

§282 *odium antecedaneum*: antecedent aversion.

Write about 200-250 words in response to the following prompt. These prompts are designed to get you started thinking about the topics we will discuss. There is no *expected* answer—I mainly want you to start with an answer to the question and then think about what reasons can be given in support of the answer.

Complete this writing assignment *before* doing the readings for the week.

Writing Prompt

Reflect on the following set of cases:

- (i) Ralph has become very angry with Fred and intends to kill him. He goes to a store and purchases a gun. He then hides behind a bush, and when Fred emerges from a building he pulls the trigger, shooting and killing Fred.
- (ii) Ralph has become very angry with Fred and intends to kill him. As in (i), he goes to a store and purchases a gun. He hides behind a bush, and when Fred emerges from the building he pulls the trigger. His gun jams and Fred walks away unscathed, ignorant of the fact that he was about to be shot.
- (iii) Ralph has become very angry with Fred and intends to kill him. He goes to a store and purchases a gun. But, when he goes to find Fred, he spies Fred in his car, stuck on a railroad track with a train on its way. Ralph sees that Fred will be struck by the train if he does not do something. Ralph does not shoot Fred. Instead, he decides *not to save* Fred and leaves. Fred is hit by the train and is killed.
- (iv) Ralph has become very angry with Fred and intends to kill him. But he is in the middle of a good novel and decides to wait until later to go buy a gun. By the time he is done with the novel, Fred has left on a trip to Italy, and Ralph has lost any opportunity to kill Fred.

↳ Consider each of the four cases. Is Ralph equally blameworthy in these cases? If there is a difference in blameworthiness, what accounts for the difference? If not, why not (after all, our legal system wouldn't *punish* these different acts equally)?

Part III, §§283-334 (300-326)

In this section, Leibniz gives us his account of human freedom. There are three conditions necessary for freedom: intelligence, spontaneity, and contingency. This section gives a brief description of intelligence, a more lengthy discussion of spontaneity, and then an even lengthier discussion of contingency, contrasting it with indifference.

★ Pay close attention to Leibniz's definitions. What is it for a human to act freely? And in what sense can humans control their will?

Key Terms

free will, intelligence, spontaneity, contingency, "inclines without compelling [necessitating]," distinct / confused knowledge, indifference

Reading Questions

1. In §288, Leibniz gives his summary account of freedom. Try to state Leibniz's theory in your own words.
2. §289 provides us with a definition of intelligence. What is this requirement, and why is it necessary for freedom?
3. §§290-301 defends an account of spontaneity, contrasting it with other theories. What is it for an act to be spontaneous, according to Leibniz? Can you come up with examples that might support or raise problems for this requirement?
4. §§302-325 discuss the contingency requirement. The main focus of this section is to show that indifference of equipoise is (a) impossible; and (b) undesirable. What are Leibniz's arguments for these two claims? (Note: much of the argument is driven by quotations of Bayle—Leibniz gives his reasons for treating it this way in §319.)
5. In what sense, according to Leibniz, does a person have mastery over her will? §301 and §§326-329 will help you answer this question.

Notes on the Text

§284 *De Lib. Arb.*: On Free Will.

De Genesi ad Lit., c. 15, *Contra Epistolam Manichaei*, c. 36: On Genesis, Chapter 15; against the letter of Manichaeus, chapter 36.

Firmissime creditor Deum justum et bonum impossibilia non potuisse praecipere: It is believed most firmly that a just and good God cannot have ordered things that are impossible. (*Book on Nature and Grace*, ch. 43)

Nemo peccat in eo, quod caveri non potest: Nobody commits a sin when he does something that cannot be avoided. (*On Free Will*, Book III, ch. 16 and 17; *Corrections*, Book I, ch. 11, 13, and 15)

Neque sub Deo justo miser esse quisquam, nisi mereatur, potest: this is the Latin for the immediately preceding clause.

- Habebat adiutorium per quod posset, et sine quo non vellet, sed non adiutorium quo vellet*: He had help, by which he was able, and without which he was unwilling, but he had no aid in willing. (*Book on Corruption*, ch. 10, 11, and 12)
- Liberum arbitrium usque adeo in peccatore non periit...*: So little has free will been lost in case of sinners, that by it precisely all those who sin sin with pleasure. (*To Bonifacius*, Book I, ch. 2 and 3)
- §285 *non singulos generum, sed genera singulorum*: Not individuals of kinds, but kinds of individuals.
- §286 *Praedestinatio sanctorum nihil aliud est...*: Predestination of saints is nothing but foreknowledge and the preparation beforehand of God, by which those who are redeemed are redeemed with greater certainty.
- §287 *Si utrumque tantundem diligimus...*: If we love both equally well [i.e., if we love the precepts of justice and the habits of the flesh equally], then will we will forsake neither of the two. Further, we must act in conformity with what is the more pleasing to us. (*To the Galatians*, ch. 5)
- Nihil tam in nostra potestate est...*: Nothing is so much in our power as the will itself, for it is immediately ready when we will. (*On Free Will*, III, 3; *On the Kingdom of God*, V, 10)
- Aut voluntas non est, aut libera dicenda est*: Either there is no will, or it is free. (*On Free Will*, III, 3)
- Perquam absurdum est, ut ideo dicamus...*: It is utterly absurd for us to assert that it does not pertain to our will (freedom) to will to be blessed, because from some good natural constraint we are unable not to will it. We also dare not say that not the will (freedom) but the necessity of righteousness exists with God. Because he cannot sin, must he be denied free will? (*On Nature and Grace*, 46-49)
- Aguntur ut agant, non ut ipsi nihil agant*: They are incited that they may act, not that they may not act. (*On Corruption*, ch. 2)
- §288 “inclines without compelling” would be better translated “inclines without necessitating” (in the original: *incline sans le nécessiter*).
- §296 *tangam in tabula rasa*: as upon a blank slate (a jab at Locke).
- §297 *Frustra, Medea, repugnas...*: You struggle in vain, Medea, / Which god opposes you, I know not. (Ovid, *Metamorphosis*, VII, 11-12)
- Sed trahit invitam nova vis...*: But a new force drags the resister on, desire urging one, / Reason another; I know the better and approve, / Yet I follow the worse. (Ovid, *Metamorphosis*, VII, 19-21)
- Di ne hunc ardorem mentibus addunt...*: This passion the gods give not to spirits, / Euryalus, or is not his wild desire to each a god? (Virgil, *Aeneid*, IX, 184-85)
- §298 *Diss. de providential Dei actuali*: Dissertation on the Real Providence of God.
- Quia enim Deus operatur ipsum velle...*: Since God creates the will itself, we will the more, the more strongly he acts; but whatever we do when we will, that we have in our power most.

- a dic cur hic*: say why (you are) here.
- §299 *unconscious / conscious*: The translator has used the term “conscious” and “unconscious” where the original simply speaks of *sensing* or *not sensing* something (as in sensation). This is an unfortunate translation, since the term *consciousness* at the time was undergoing transition. (And especially since Bayle later in this passage says we can know these things through *reflection*, which presumably would be *conscious* but not *sensed*.)
- voluntas non potest cogi*: the will cannot be forced.
- §300 *fatum Astrologicum*: Astrological fate.
- §301 *Spontaneum est, cujus principium est in agente*: That is spontaneous, the origin of which is to be found in the one who acts.
- §313 *Non magic incepto vultum...*: His speech begun, no more does his face move / than a hard stone, or stands the Parian rock.
- §317 *Te copias, te consilium et tuos praebente Divos*: You supplied the troops, the plan, and your gods. (Horace, *Odes*, IV, 14, 33-34)
- §320 *Chimaera Chimaeram parit*: The chimera begets a chimera.
- §321 *Mà ch’i principii poi non corran punto...*: If, however, the original elements do not wholly depart from their straight path, who does not understand that in the end all their motions reunite again and that by a fixed order the new things always arise again from the old, unless by their declination the first motions establish a new beginning that snaps the skein of Fate and does not allow one cause to follow another to infinity? So, I say, for mortals there is the free and independent will, by which each of us goes wherever his desire leads him. Therefore we depart from one another in our motions and keep neither definite times nor places, but each of us does by himself as his will bids him. In these things, without any doubt, the individual will of each of us is in command and from it the members of the body obtain their motions.
- §323 *τὸ αὐτοκίνητον*: The automotive.
- Agitur, ut agat*: It is actuated that it may act.
- §326 *Fertur equis auriga, nec audit currus habenas*: The steeds run away with the charioteer and the chariot does not obey the reins. (Virgil, *Georgics*, I, 513)
- §331 *De Fato*: On Fate.
- §333 *Praeparatio Evangelica*: Evangelical Preparation.

Write about 200-250 words in response to the following prompt. These prompts are designed to get you started thinking about the topics we will discuss. There is no *expected* answer—I mainly want you to start with an answer to the question and then think about what reasons can be given in support of the answer.

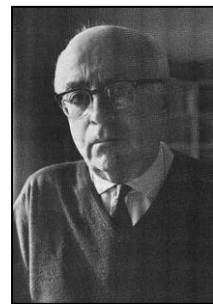
Complete this writing assignment *before* doing the readings for the week.

Writing Prompt

The German philosopher T.W. Adorno (1903-1969) famously wrote:

“Writing poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric.”

By this he meant that any attempt to construct a work of art that presents the world as coherent and meaningful has failed to take into account the radical evil of Auschwitz. Art can no longer fulfill this function—there is no overarching story that can make sense of our history.



↳ Is Adorno right about this? Leibniz's theory—that all evils contribute in some way to a greater good—suggests that Adorno is wrong. Can we distinguish Leibniz's metaphysical theory from the question of whether *we* could ever *give meaning* to the history of radically evil events? Or does radical evil entail that Leibniz's theory is false?



Entrance Gate for Auschwitz: “Arbeit Macht Frei”: Work makes one free.

Part III, §§335-376 (326-351)

This section is actually a continuation of the third part of the last section—defending a particular account of contingency. The main question of this section is whether there is any indifference entailed by divine freedom—does God ever act arbitrarily? There are a couple of possible examples of divine arbitrariness considered—the laws of nature and the union of mind and body. Once Leibniz responds to these, he considers whether the sort of contingency he is advocating places limits on God's knowledge of future events (answer: NO).

★ Notice that Leibniz presents his account of God's freedom as continuous with his account of human freedom. In what ways might we think they're *discontinuous*? Also, notice the role of *reasons* in governing action. The Principle of Sufficient Reason has been a consistent motivation for Leibniz's theory.

Key Terms

laws of nature, law of continuity, absolute necessity / moral necessity / something absolutely arbitrary, mind-body union, representation, divine foreknowledge

Reading Questions

1. In §§340-349, Leibniz argues that the Laws of Nature are not arbitrary. What are his reasons for thinking that God could not have set up the laws differently?
2. §§352-357 present the mind-body problem in a unique way—if mind and body are distinct kinds of substances, how can the states of one correlate with the states of the other. For example, why would a particular motion in the body result in pain rather than pleasure? (Notice Bayle's suggestion that we could have done without pain altogether, which is to say that the *metaphysical evils* would not necessarily entail *physical evils*.) What is Leibniz's account of the relation of mind and body?
3. In §§358-59, Leibniz raises one further, more general, question: why must God operate according to rules *at all*? What is Leibniz's answer to this question? Do you find this answer satisfying?
4. What is the relation of contingency (properly conceived) and divine foreknowledge? See §§360-367.
5. In §§368-372, Leibniz takes up Bayle's dilemma: If Adam sinned freely, then the fall was not foreseen; if Adam did not sin freely, then he is not guilty. Summarize Leibniz's argument for how his system dissolves this dilemma.

Notes on the Text

§348 This translator omitted a phrase at the end of the first sentence: "...as I have shown earlier in M. Bayle's *Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres*."

This reference is to his "Letter...on a General Principle Useful in Explaining the Laws of Nature Through a Consideration of the Divine Wisdom..." July 1687, where he initially formulates the principle of continuity. (This letter is in Loemker, 351-354.)

- §350 *O sancta mater natura, aeterne rerum ordo*: O holy Mother Nature, eternal order of things.
- §351 ... *populos umbrosa creavit / Fraxinus, et foeta viridis puer excidit alno?*: ... the shady ash created people, / And of the fertile alder a lusty boy was born?
- §361 *Suavis Concordia*: Sweet Harmony.
- §362 *Sed Te / Nos facimus, Fortuna, Deam, caeloque locamus*: But thee, / Fortune, we make a goddess and place in heaven. (Juvenal, *Satires X*)
- Qui potest provideri, quicquam futurum esse, quod neque causam habet ullam, neque notam cur futurum sit?*: How can anything be foreseen that has no cause and no distinguishing mark of its coming? (Cicero, *De Divinatione*, II, vi, 17, transl. W.A. Falconer)
- Nihil est tam contrarium rationi...*: Surely nothing is so at variance with reason and stability as chance? Hence it seems to me that it is not in the power even of God himself to know what event is going to happen accidentally and by chance. For if He knows, then the event is certain to happen; but if it is certain to happen, chance does not exist. (Cicero, *De Divinatione*, II, vii, 18, transl. W.A. Falconer)
- Est autem fortuna; rerum igitur fortuitarum nulla praesensio est*: Leibniz provides his own translation: "There is luck, therefore future events cannot be foreseen."
- §363 *Sequitur porro nihil Deos ignorare, quod omnia ab iis sint constituta*: It follows that the gods are not ignorant of anything, for all things were ordained by them. (Cicero, *De Divinatione*, II, li, 105, transl. W.A. Falconer)
- §366 *De Incoacta Libertate*: On Unrestrained Freedom.
- De Auxiliis*: On the Aids [of Grace].
- Jansenius a Thomistis, gratiae per se ipsam efficacis defensoribus, condemnatus*: Jansenius condemned by the Thomists, the supporters of the efficiency of grace by itself.
- §368 *Dextrum Scylla latus, laevum implacata Charybdis / Obsidet*: Scylla guards the shore on the right, and unappeased Charybdis on the left. (Virgil, *Aeneid III*, 420)
- §371 *Calvinismus Religio Bestiarum*: Calvinism, the Religion of Beasts.
- determinationem ad unum secundum qualitatem actus licet non quoad ejus substantiam*: determination to something in conformity with the nature of the act, not with respect to its substance, is allowable.
- §372 *truncatio Malcuth a caeteris plantis*: A separation of Malcuth from the other plants.
- Imperium in Imperio*: a dominion within [God's] dominion.
- §373 *Enevatio Tractatus Theologico-politici, una cum demonstratione geometrico...*: Invalidation of the Theologico-Political Essay, with a geometrically arranged proof that Nature is not God, on which proposition the aforesaid opposing essay exclusively rests.
- Arcana Atheismi Revelata*: The Revealed Secrets of Atheism.
- Certamen Philosophicum Propugnatae...*: Philosophical conflict in defense of divine and natural truth against the principles of J.B., Amsterdam, 1684.
- §375 *Lucii Antistii Constantis...*: The singular book on the law of Churchmen by Lucius Antistius Constans.

Write about 200-250 words in response to the following prompt. These prompts are designed to get you started thinking about the topics we will discuss. There is no *expected* answer—I mainly want you to start with an answer to the question and then think about what reasons can be given in support of the answer.

Complete this writing assignment *before* doing the readings for the week.

Writing Prompt

The problem of evil is not unique to philosophers who take an explicitly Christian view of things, as Leibniz does. The ancient philosopher Epicurus (341 BC-270 BC) posed the following puzzle:

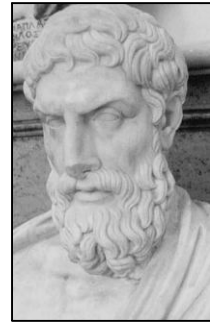
God either wishes to take away evils and is unable; or he is able, and is unwilling; or he is neither willing nor able; or he is both willing and able.

If he is willing and unable, he is feeble, which does not agree with the character of God;

If he is able and unwilling, he is malicious, which is equally at odds with God;

If he is neither willing nor able, he is both malicious and feeble and therefore not God;

If he is both willing and able, which is alone suitable for God, from what source then come evils? Or why does he not remove them?⁵



(For those of you who remember your logic, notice that this is a Proof by Cases, with each case leading to contradiction.)

The conclusion in each of the cases is that either God has a character flaw (and is therefore *not* God) or that there are evils in the world that are incompatible with his character. In every case, we are led to a contradiction. So, if you think that God exists (and has the character as described), then you have a real problem.

✎ Given everything we've discussed this semester, how would you evaluate this argument? Is it right? If not, where do you think it goes wrong?

⁵ The source of Epicurus' quotation is Lactanus, *De Ira Dei* §13, quoted in Donald Rutherford, *Leibniz and the Rational Order of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 7.

Part III, §§377-417 (351-373)

This part of the readings divides into two main sections: (1) §§377-404: Leibniz addresses one final problem—whether God's conservation of the created order makes him the author of sin; and (2) §§405-417: Leibniz provides a retelling of a dialogue of Laurentius Valla, as a way of summarizing his solution to the problem of evil.

★ In the first part of this reading, pay particular attention to the relation among three close concepts: concurrence, conservation, and continual creation. In the second part, see if you can identify once again the main lines of Leibniz's theory.

Key Terms

divine co-operation [concurrence], conservation, continual creation, positive reality, essential / natural, dependence, priority of time / priority of nature, "every simple substance embraces the whole universe" [a.k.a. Universal Expression]

Reading Questions

1. In §§377ff., Leibniz introduces one final issue. What is the issue, and why might it present a problem?
2. Is conservation the same thing as continual creation? See §§382ff.
3. Bayle concludes from the doctrine of divine concurrence the thesis that our souls cannot act. (See §399.) What is Leibniz's response to this? What are the metaphysical principles that he depends on in his account?
4. In the retelling of Laurentius Valla's dialogue, Leibniz introduces a claim that hasn't come up elsewhere in the *Theodicy*. In §414, when Theodorus is preparing to view some of the possible worlds, Leibniz includes a parenthetical claim—the Sextus that appears in the possible worlds is not the same as the Sextus in the actual world. Why not?

Notes on the Text

- §377 *co-operation*: in this section, and throughout, the translator has chosen the term "co-operation" to translate the French word *concoure*. A better translation would be *concurrence*, which is the theological term of art for the issue Leibniz is discussing.
- §376 *De Tribus Impostoribus*, Herberto L.B. de Cherbury, *Hobbio et Spinoza*: On the Three Imposters, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Hobbes, and Spinoza.
- §378 *Hexaëmeron*, *Homil.* 2: The Six Days of Creation, Discourse 2.
Sicut aberrandi causa meta non ponitur, sic nec natura mali in mundo existit: Just as a mark is not set up in order to be missed, so neither does the nature of evil occur in the universe. (Epictetus, *The Enchiridion*, XXVII, transl. Sanderson Beck)
- §379 *De iside et Osiride, et Tr. De Animae Procreatione ex Timaeo*: On Isis and Osiris, and the discourse on the creation of souls, according to [Plato's] *Timaeus*.
- §382 *semper fluunt, nunquam sunt*: They always flow and never are.

- §384 *Analysis Euclidea*: Euclidean Analysis.
- §387 *non entis nulla sunt accidentia*: Non-being has no accidents [i.e., accidental properties].
operari sequitur esse: Acting follows after being.
Suavis Concordia Humanae Libertatis: The Sweet Concord of Human Freedom.
- §388 *in signo rationis*: In the sense of reason.
- §390 *in signo anteriore rationis*: In the sense of the priority of reason.
- §392 *Accidentia profligata*: Removed accidents.
Causae secundae agunt in virtute primae: Secondary causes act by virtue of a primary cause.
 Footnote to §392: In this section, Leibniz says that he wishes to see a demonstration by François Lami. One of Leibniz's correspondents sent him this demonstration, and Leibniz continued his reflections on this subject in the journal *Mémoires de Trevoux* in July 1712. The full text of this response is included on pp. 389-392 of our text.
- §404 *liberet si liceret*: I might, were I free to do so.
- §409 *Exul inopsque cades irata pulsus ab urbe*: You will die poor and in exile, driven in anger from your fatherland.
- §410 *Desine fata Deum flecti sperare precando*: Hope not that the fates of the gods may be turned aside by prayers. (Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI, 376)
- §414 *Qualisque videri / Coelicolis et quanta solet*: In the guise and grandeur in which she is wont to appear before the denizens of heaven. (Virgil, *Aeneid*, II, 591-592)
- §415 *Solemque suum, sua sidera norat*: A sun of its own it knew, and stars of its own.

Appendix A: Causa Dei

The *Causa Dei* was included as a fourth appendix in the publication of the *Theodicy*, but it is omitted from your text. This was meant to be a Latin summary of the overall argument of the *Theodicy* (which was written in French). While it does repeat several of the same arguments, some are expressed differently here, and so this may shed light on what Leibniz is arguing in the main body of the *Theodicy*.

The text below is an unpublished translation by W.H. Warren, revised by Robert J. Mulvaney, with minor corrections. Used with permission.

APPENDIX IV DEFENCE OF GOD'S CAUSE BY RECONCILING HIS JUSTICE WITH HIS OTHER PERFECTIONS AND ALL HIS ACTS

1. The defense of God's cause not only concerns divine glory but is of benefit to us all, as we thereby honor God's greatness, that is, the power and wisdom, love his goodness and all emanations there from, his justice and holiness, and imitate them as far as we can.

This essay has two parts. The first one we may consider as rather introductory in nature and the second as the main body of the work. The first treats separately divine greatness and goodness. The second embrace both subjects, including thereby providence as regards all creatures and guidance as regards rational beings, that is, respecting piety and salvation.

2. Stricter theologians have given God's greatness more attention than his goodness, whereas those of more liberal views have done the opposite. Really orthodox theologians, however, look on both perfections as equal in importance. The error tending to lessen God's greatness may be called Anthropomorphism, and that tending to detract from his goodness Despotism.

3. God's greatness will be vigorously defended particularly against Socinians and certain Semi-Socinians, among whom Conrad Vorstius has been the greatest sinner in this respect. This may be traced moreover to two main sources, namely, Omnipotence and Omniscience.

4. Omnipotence includes both God's independence of other things and dependence of everything on him.

5. God manifests independence in existing and acting. This is particularly true of existing, since he is necessary as well as eternal and is, as we are wont to say, a thing in itself. Whence it follows that he is also infinite.

6. Naturally and morally God is independent in acting. He is naturally independent, because he is absolutely free and undetermined in acting, unless by himself. He is morally independent, however, since he is *ἀνυπεύθυνος*,⁶ or nobody is his superior.

7. Dependence of Things on God applies not only to everything possible, or to all things not involving contradiction, but to everything real as well.

8. Possibility of the reality of things not actually existent rests on divine existence. For were God non-existent, nothing would be possible. Therefore these possibilities have been present in the ideas of divine understanding for all eternity.

9. Realities in existing and in acting depend both on God's understanding and on his will. This is by all means true regarding existence, since God created all things free and supports them also. The doctrine that divine preservation is a continuous creation is good, as a ray derives continuous existence from the sun, though maintenance of created things is neither by God's existence, nor by necessity.

10. Things depend on God in acting, since he enters into acts of things, that is, as far as there is any perfection in these acts, which must certainly emanate from God.

11. God's participation (ordinary or non-miraculous) is moreover at the same time immediate and particular. Certainly it is immediate, since the effect depends on God not only because its cause originates

⁶ Not dependent.

with him, but also because he participates in producing the effect neither more nor less remotely than in producing its cause.

12. God's participation, however, is particular, because it is directed not only toward the thing's existence and action, but toward the nature and qualities of its existence also, in so far as it has any perfection, which always comes from God, the Father of Light and Giver of every good thing.

13. So much for God's power. We come next to his wisdom, which we call Omniscience because of its infinite nature. Since this (no less than Omnipotence) is perfect in the highest degree, it includes every idea and every truth, that is, whatever can be understood as well as what cannot be understood, all of which are subjects of the understanding. At the same time it takes in both possibilities and realities.

14. Among possibilities is included what we call knowledge derived from simple intelligence. This deals with things and their relations, both of which are either necessary or contingent.

15. Contingent possibilities may be viewed partly as separate and partly as distributed throughout the countless complete worlds possible, God being fully cognizant of each, albeit only one of them ever came into existence. For the assumption of many actual worlds leads nowhere, since our world comprises the whole body of created things of every place and time. In this connection we shall use the word in this sense.

16. Knowledge of realities, or of this existent world and of all the things therein, past, present and future, is denominated as phenomenal knowledge. This in nowise differs from knowledge of this same world viewed as possible, as derived from simple intelligence, save for what is added by cogitative knowledge, by which God intuitively is conscious of his determination to cause this world to exist. Further than this no other basis for God's foreknowledge is needed.

17. What is called middle knowledge is included in knowledge from simple intelligence, according to the explanation of its meaning already given. Should anyone be desirous, however, of a middle knowledge intermediate between simple intelligence and phenomenal knowledge, the latter and middle knowledge may be given a different interpretation from that usually offered. That is, they may be viewed as applicable not only to future things conditionally, but to possible contingencies in general. Knowledge from simple intelligence is thereby used in a more restricted sense, that is, as related to possible and necessary truths, whereas middle knowledge is confined to possible and contingent truth, and phenomenal knowledge to contingent and real truth. Then middle knowledge will have this in common with knowledge from simple intelligence—that it relates to possible truths—and with phenomenal knowledge—that it relates to contingent truths.

18. So much for God's greatness. We shall now consider divine goodness. As wisdom, or knowledge of truth, is a perfection of the understanding, so goodness, or predilection of good, is a perfection of the will. To be sure, each will has goodness as its objective. That is at least apparently true, but the divine will not only has goodness but truth at the same time.

19. Accordingly I shall give my attention to the will as well as to its objective, that is, to good and evil, which provides the reason for will and non-will. Furthermore in connection with the will I shall consider its nature and character.

20. Appertaining to the nature of the will is freedom, which consists in the action of the will being voluntary and subject to deliberation, and besides in its exclusion of necessity, which does away with deliberation.

21. Metaphysical necessity, the opposite of which is impossible, or implies contradiction, is excluded. But moral necessity, the opposite of which is inconsistent, is not. For though God can make no mistake in choosing and furthermore always chooses what is in the highest degree consistent, yet this in no wise militates against his freedom but rather renders it more perfect. Opposition of it would first arise, if but a single possible objective of the will were present or only a single possible aspect of the thing. In that case there would be no choice and it would be impossible for the wisdom and goodness of the acting individual to be commended.

22. Therefore those individuals fall into error, or at least make very injudicious use of language, who affirm that the only things possible are those that actually happen, or which God chooses. Such was the error made by the Stoic Diodorus in Cicero, and among Christians by Abelard, Wycliffe and Hobbes. When we come later to defend human affairs, we shall have more to say regarding freedom.

23. So much for the nature of the will. A division of the will now follows. For our present purpose this is essentially twofold in the character. One will is antecedent and consequent; the other creative and permissive.

24. By the first division the will is antecedent or anticipatory, or consequent or definitive; or what is the same thing, it is either inclining or determining. The former is not so complete; the latter is complete or absolute. Some persons to be sure are wont (at first thought) to explain the first division differently, saying that God's antecedent will (the salvation of all men, for example) come before consideration of the acts of creating things; whereas the consequent will (damning of some men, for example) come after. But the former also precedes other of God's will and the latter comes after, since consideration itself of the act of creating things not only is anticipated by certain of God's wills but also anticipates certain of them, without which the act of creating things cannot be supposed. Therefore Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scots and others use this division in the sense we do, directing the antecedent will to something good in itself and according indeed to its actual degree. This will for that reason is only in proportion to this, but the consequent will takes all things into consideration and makes the final decision. So it is absolute and decisive and, when a question of the divine will, always has its full force. Should someone, however, not approve of my explanation, I shall not quarrel with him over words. If he prefers he may use the terms prior and final for antecedent and consequent.

25. The antecedent will is thoroughly earnest and pure and not to be confounded with velleity (where anybody, were he able, would will, and would like to be able [i.e., I would if I could, and I wish I could]), which does not happen with God. Nor is it to be confused with the conditional will, which at present we are not considering. The purpose moreover of God's antecedent will is to take care of all things good and to avert whatever is evil, to the extent they are good and evil and in proportion to the degree they are so. God himself also made clear how earnest this will is, when he so emphatically said that he does not will the death of the sinner, but wishes all man to be saved and hates sin.

26. The consequent will comes from the union of all antecedent wills, so that without doubt, if the effect of all cannot be in force at the same time, the greatest possible effect may thereupon be obtained through wisdom and power. This will usually is called a decree.

27. From what has just been said, obviously antecedent wills are also not entirely fruitless but have their effect, even though that effect may not always be perfect but limited by the joint effect or other antecedent wills. The determining will, however, arising from all the inclining wills, always attains its full effect, when the willing person does not lack power, which can by no means pertain to God. This axiom of course is applicable only to the determining will, namely, that he who has the ability and the will achieves his purpose. For since power implies the knowledge necessary for action, we assume that nothing is wanting within or without for such action. Nor does God lack any happiness or perfection in willing, even though all his wills do not produce their full effect. For he wills in fact good things only in proportion to the degree of goodness in each individual, his will finding its highest satisfaction in obtaining the best result.

28. The second division of the will includes a creative will having to do with one's own acts, and a permissive will concerned with the acts of others. For it is sometimes permissible to allow certain things (that is, not to prevent them), which it is not permissible to commit. An instance of this would be sins, of which we shall speak presently. The proper subject of the permissive will, however, is not what is permissible but permission itself.

29. So much for the will. We now pass to the cause of the will, or to good and evil, each of which is threefold in nature, metaphysical, physical and moral.

30. The term metaphysical applies in general to the perfection and imperfection of things that are not even endowed with reason. Christ said that our Father in heaven takes care of the lilies of the field and of the sparrows, and in Jonah (Jonah 4,11) God is said to have regard even for dumb animals.

31. The term physical applies particularly to the joys and sorrows of substances endowed with reason, in which place the evil of suffering belongs.

32. The term moral is applied to the virtuous and wicked acts of those substances endowed with reason, among which belongs the evil of sin. In this sense physical evil is wont to arise from evil, though not always in the same persons. Since it can be seen to be a deviation, however, this is successfully corrected, as the innocent do not wish not to have suffered. With further regard to this matter, see Paragraph 55.

33. God wills goodness in itself, at least antecedently. Therefore he wills the perfection of things in general, as well as the happiness and virtue of all reasoning substances in particular. Indeed, as we have already pointed out, he wills good to each individual according to the degree of his goodness.

34. Though evils are not part of God's antecedent will, save as it tends to exclude them. Yet they are sometimes, albeit indirectly, part of his consequent will, because occasionally greater good is impossible of attainment, when evils are excluded. Exclusion of evils in this case is not fully accomplished and, though present in the antecedent will, they fail to appear in the consequent will. Therefore Thomas Aquinas, following Saint Augustine's lead, said not inaptly that God permits evils to exist, so as not to exclude many things that are good.

35. Metaphysical and physical evils (for example, imperfections in things and evil of punishment in individuals) sometimes become indirect good, the means as it were to greater good.

36. Moral evil, however, or the evil of sin, never is of the nature of an expedient, for (as the apostle counsels) evil should never be committed to attain good. But it is sometimes merely of the nature of a condition, which we view as indispensable, or of something attached and concomitant, that is, something without which we cannot get the good that is due, but that good also implies the privation of the evil that is due. Yet evil is not permitted on the principle of absolute necessity but on that of fitness. For there must be a reason why God permits rather than forbids evil. We cannot assume, however, that the reason of the divine will comes from anything but good.

37. The evil of sin with God is also never a subject of his creative will but only at times of his permissive will, because God never commits a sin himself but at most only permits one now and then.

38. However, respecting permission of sin the general rule is the same for God as for man, namely, that no one should let another sin, unless he were himself going to commit a wrong act by preventing it. I will put it briefly by saying that it is never allowable to permit a sin, unless one is in duty bound to do so. For further details regarding this matter, see Paragraph 66.

39. Therefore, among the subjects of his will, God has the best as his ultimate purpose. But whatever its kind he has good as his purpose, even though it be of minor importance, in fact things of indifferent nature, together with the evil of punishment which often serves as a means. The divine will, however, does not include the evil of sin, except it be an indispensable condition of a thing otherwise obligatory, in the sense in which Christ said (Matt, 18, 7) that it must needs be that offence come.

40. Up to this point what I have said concerning God's individual greatness and goodness may be looked upon as introductory to this essay. I shall now consider those things common to both qualities. In this instance therefore those things common to greatness and goodness do not come wholly from goodness but also from greatness (that is, wisdom and power). For greatness enables goodness to attain its purpose. Moreover goodness is concerned either with created things in general, or with intelligent things in particular. In the former case in conjunction with greatness it brings about providence in creating and governing the universe. In the latter case it establishes justice, particularly in governing substances endowed with reason.

41. Since wisdom directs God's goodness, which reveals itself in created things in general, as a result divine providence manifests itself throughout the entire range of the universe, God must be given credit for having chosen the best from the countless arrangements of things possible and for having chosen the very one actually in existence. For all things in the universe subsist in harmony with one another, nor does the Omniscient One come to a decision till he has taken all things into consideration, and indeed not till he has considered them in their entirety. Respecting parts taken individually, the will can be antecedent, but respecting the whole it must be regarded as final.

42. Strictly speaking therefore we may say that properly there is no need of divine decrees. However, we may also say that God has made only a single decree, namely, that the present sequence of things should come into existence, after everything about it had been considered and compared with things entering into other sequences.

43. Consequently God's determination is also irrevocable, since all arguments that can be brought against it have already been considered. Because of this, however, no other necessity arises except the conditioned consequence (*necessitas consequentias*), or the so-called hypothetical necessity, that is, conditioned by supposed foresight and foreordination. On the other hand, there exists no unconditioned necessity, or that of the logical consequence (*necessitas consequentia*), because another arrangement of things was possible,

both in parts and in the whole, and in choosing the sequence of contingencies God made no change in their contingency.

44. Furthermore, in view of this certainty of things, our efforts and prayers for the attainment of future things are not in vain. For most certainly there were also included in God's idea of the existing sequence of things as a possibility, antecedent to his determination (were this sequence chosen), these future prayers together with other causes of the effects, and it stands to reason that they were contributory to the selection not only of this sequence but also of the events it includes. And what God now decides to do, or to permit to be done, are already determined by him at that time he decided what he was going to do, or to permit to be done.

45. As we have already pointed out above, things are not absolutely determined by divine foreknowledge and providence, nor by what we do or fail to do, but by their causes and reasons. Therefore were anyone to say that prayers, or diligence and toil, were wasted, he would be falling into that sophism, which the ancients were wont to call idle. Regarding this matter more will be said later in Paragraphs 106 and 107.

46. The Almighty, however, by virtue of this infinite wisdom in conjunction with his immeasurable goodness, has so arranged things that, all things taken into consideration, nothing better than his works can ever be created. He has moreover brought all this about so that things are in perfect harmony and most beautifully adjusted to one another; formal causes, or souls, with material causes, or bodies; efficient or natural causes with those that are final or moral; and the kingdom of grace with the kingdom of nature.

47. Hence if anything in God's works seems open to criticism, we should infer that our understanding of it is defective, and that the wise man, who really understood it, would come to the conclusion that there is no better to be desired.

48. Moreover it follows from this that nothing can be more productive of happiness than serving such a good God, and that he should be loved above everything else and implicit confidence should be placed in him.

49. The strongest reason, however, for choosing this best sequence of things (namely, the one now existing) was Christ *θεάνθρωπος*,⁷ who must be regarded as the created thing that reached the highest pinnacle in this most excellent sequence of things, the head as it were of the created world, in whom all peoples shall be blessed, and through whom all created things are to be released from the bondage of corruption and brought into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

50. What we have said will suffice for providence in general. Goodness, moreover, particularly as it relates to intelligent creatures, in common with wisdom forms the basis of justice, which in its highest perfection is holiness. Justice therefore in this broader sense does not include merely exact law but equity too and consequently commendable mercy at the same time.

51. So in general justice may be divided into justice in the narrower sense and holiness. In the narrower sense justice is concerned with physical good and evil, that is, of intelligent creatures, whereas holiness is concerned with moral good and evil.

52. Physical good and evil enter into this life here as well as into the life hereafter. In this life there are on the whole many who bemoan the fact that human nature is exposed to so many evils. They never stop to think that most of these evils owe their origin to the sins of mankind. Nor do they realize that we fail to show enough gratitude for the divine benefits we receive but pay more attention to our misfortunes than we do to our blessings.

53. Other persons show disapproval because physical good and evil in particular are not apportioned on the basis of moral good and evil, or because it often happens that the reward of those who are good is evil and that of those who are wicked is good.

54. These complaints are to receive two answers. One given by the apostle Paul, when he says that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us (Romans 8, 18). The other, made by Christ himself in his most beautiful parable, that except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it die, it brings forth much fruit (John 12,24).

⁷ The God-Man.

55. Not only therefore do these sufferings meet with abundant compensation, but they contribute also to the increase of happiness; and these evils are useful as well as necessary. See Paragraph 32.

56. The difficulty is far greater with regard to future life, for the objection is raised concerning this question that there too evils greatly exceed good things, since only few are chosen. Origen to be sure completely abolished eternal damnation. Certain of the ancients, Prudentius among the number, believed only a few would be eternally damned. Others held that every Christian would finally be saved, to which view Hieronymus seems to be inclined at times.

57. We need not have recourse, however, to these paradoxes and rejectable things. The true answer is rather that the full grandeur of the kingdom of heaven should not be judged on the basis of our knowledge. For the glory of the blessed in the divine conception may be so great that the evils of all the damned cannot be compared with this goodness. Moreover Scripture makes us aware of the existence of an incredible number of blessed angels, and nature itself discloses to us a great variety of created things, revealed by new discoveries, so that we are better able to realize the superiority of good over evil than were Saint Augustine and other ancients.

58. Our earth beyond all doubt is nothing but a satellite of a sun, and [there are as many suns] as there are fixed stars. Beyond all the fixed stars is supposed to lie an immense space. Nothing therefore keeps us from assuming that happy beings inhabit suns, or rather the space beyond these suns. Furthermore happy planets may exist, or be created, after the fashion of paradise. Christ made special reference to the heaven of the blessed when he said: in my Father's house are many mansions. Certain theologians give this region the name Empyreum, locating it beyond the stars or suns, albeit no definite statement can be made as to the abode of the blessed. In the mean time, however, it may be assumed that probably there are many abodes for rational creature in the visible universe, some of whom are happier than others.

59. Consequently the argument derived from the multitude of the damned rests on nothing but our ignorance and is met by the single answer we gave above. Were all things known to us, it would be evident that nothing is to be wished for man better than what God has created. Furthermore the punishments of the damned only continue because of their persistent sinfulness. Having in mind these things, an eminent theologian, John Fechtius, in his excellent book, entitled "Concerning the State of the Damned", very effectively refutes those persons who deny that sins deserve punishment in the future life, as if God's real justice could ever cease.

60. Finally the most serious difficulties are those emanating from God's holiness, or perfection, as these qualities pertain to the moral good and evil of others, since his holiness causes him to love virtue as well as to hate vice in others, and since it keeps him aloof as far as possible from every corrupting influence and from all contact with evil. Yet crimes are prevalent everywhere in God Almighty's kingdom. However, such difficulties as arise on this account are so effectively overcome even in this life by the aid coming from Divine Light, that pious persons and those who love God find it possible to derive as much satisfaction as need be from the result.

61. The objection is made that God by all means concurs too much with sin and not enough with mankind. Furthermore through his will, which both creates and permits sin, God both physically and morally concurs too much with moral evil.

62. They think moral concurrence exists, since God, though not contributing to sin by his acts, at least permits or does not prevent it, though he could.

63. They say, however, that God really concurs both morally and physically, since he not only does not stop sinners but even aids them by giving them power and opportunities. For this reason therefore we find in Holy Scripture those passages, wherein we are told that God hardens the hearts of the wicked and lends them assistance.

64. Certain individuals therefore are daring enough to infer that, either in both respects or in at least one, God is the accomplice of sinners, in fact that he is the originator of sin, whereby they nullify divine holiness, justice and goodness.

65. Other persons would like to eliminate divine omniscience and omnipotence, in a word, God's greatness, since they act as if he were either unaware of evils and not concerned at all about them, or unable to cope with their number. Such was the view held by Epicureans and Manicheans. Socinians teach

something similar but different in character and more benign. For every good reason they take care not to drag divine holiness in the mire, even though they err in giving up other of God's perfections.

66. In meeting the charge of moral concurrence in permitting sin, we must first further extend what we started to say above, that permission to sin is allowable (or morally possible), when it proves to be obligatory (or morally necessary). By this we mean it is impossible to prevent the sin of another without harm to one's self, in other words, without violating those obligations we owe to others or to ourselves. For example, a soldier in time of special peril should not desert the post under his charge even to stop two friends getting ready to fight a duel (See Paragraph 36). We should not take this to mean, however, that in God's case he is under any obligation to abide by human standards, but *θεοπροπεπῶς*,⁸ since otherwise we should be detracting from his perfections.

67. Furthermore had God not chosen the best sequence of things in the universe (which includes sin), he would have been guilty of something worse than all sins of created things, since then he would have detracted from his own perfection and whatever depended on it, as well as from the perfection of others. For divine perfection must not depart from the most perfect choice, since whatever is less good partakes of the nature of evil. And God as well as everything else would be destroyed, were he to lack power, or to err in knowledge, or to be deficient in will.

68. God's physical concurrence in sin led many persons to jump at the chance of regarding him as the cause and originator of sin. The evil of sin consequently then would also become an object of God's creative will. For this reason especially Epicureans and Manicheans revile us. But God in enlightening the mind is in this case also his own vindicator in the souls of those who are pious for truth. Therefore I shall explain to what extent God may actually though not formally concur in sin, or in what is good in evil.

69. Evidently the answer must be that certainly in created things and in their good and evil acts there is no purely positive perfection and reality that is not due to God. The imperfection of the act, however, consists in privation, arising from the original limitation of created things, derived from their own being as far back as the time when they were in the state of pure possibility (that is, in the realm of eternal truths, or in the ideas existing in divine understanding). For a thing without limitation would be a God and not created thing. The created thing, however, is said to be limited, because it has bounds or limits to its size, power, knowledge, and to all of its perfections. So the basis of evil is necessary but its origin nevertheless is contingent, that is, it is necessary for evils to be possible but contingent for them to be real. Because of the harmony of things, however, the transition of evil from possibility to reality is not contingent, because it is in full accord with the best sequence of things, of which it is a part.

70. Now what I shall have to say about the privative nature of evil, according to Saint Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Lubinus, and other ancient and modern writers, since it seems many persons without basis, or at least very obscure, I shall explain from the very nature of things, so that nothing will seem worthier of belief. For I shall make use by way of analogy of what is material and can be perceived by the senses, something that also rests on a privation and which the celebrated natural philosopher Kepler called the natural inertia of bodies.

71. To use a simple example, there is no doubt, when a river carries boats along, that it imparts to them velocity, which is limited by their inertia, and other things being equal that the more heavily the boats are loaded, the more slowly they will be carried along. Thus it comes about that the river is the cause of the speed and the load of the slowness; positive because of the impelling force, but negative because of the inertia of the thing impelled.

72. For nearly the same reason we must say that the God allots perfection to his creatures, which is limited by the way it is received. Hence good things come from divine power but evils from the sloth of created things.

73. Similarly the understanding often lapses into error through heedlessness and the will is often destroyed through lack of inclination to act. How often the mind, when it should rise even to God, or attain the highest good, falters because of the inertia of the created thing!

74. Thus far we have answered those persons, who think God concurs too much with evil. We shall now replay to those, who assert that mankind does not concur with it enough, or not enough to be culpable of sinning, in order evidently that they may throw the charge back on God. These opponents seek

⁸ As is befitting a God.

to prove this assertion partly from the impotency of human nature and partly from the lack of divine grace necessary for the support of our nature. We shall therefore turn our attention not only to the corruption in human nature but also to what it retains of the divine conception from the state of innocence.

75. Next we shall consider the origin as well as the nature of human corruption. Its rise is to be traced to the fall of the first human beings and to the spread of the infection. The cause and nature of the fall must be considered.

76. The cause of the fall, that is, why man fell with the knowledge, permission and concurrence of God, should not be sought in a despotic power of God, as if justice or holiness were not his attributes, which certainly would be true had he no regard for right and equity.

77. Nor is the cause of the fall to be sought in any indifference on God's part respecting good and evil, justice and injustice, as if he had established them by virtue of his power. Such an assumption would lead to the conclusion that he could establish anything whatever with equal justice and reason, that is, with none at all. This again would nullify all esteem for his justice and even for his wisdom, since he would have no choice in his acts, nor any basis for choice.

78. Nor should the cause of the fall be ascribed to any will falsely imputed to God, which in no sense is holy, nor worthy of being loved. As if, having nothing else in mind but the glory of his greatness and devoid of goodness, he would create wretched beings out of inhuman pity, that he might have compassion on them; and would will sinners out of a perverted sense of justice, that he might punish them. All such things are despotic and wholly foreign to true glory and perfection, which should adorn both his greatness and his goodness.

79. The real root of the fall, however, lies in the original imperfection, or weakness, of created things, because of which, as we said above, sin was an integral part of the best possible sequence of things. Thus it came about that the fall of man was properly permitted without any opposition of divine virtue and wisdom, rather it could not be prevented without doing harm to these perfections.

80. Mr. Bayle's idea of the nature of man's fall is not that God condemned Adam to be punished for his sin, as well as his posterity for their future sins, and to fulfill this sentence instilled into him sinfulness. Sinfulness is rather the result of the power of the first sin itself, just as if a physical connection existed between the two as, for example, many other sins are the outcome of drunkenness.

81. Propagation of the infection, coming from the fall of the first man, naturally follows as a result of being transmitted to the souls of posterity. No better explanation of this propagation seems possible than to assume that the souls of posterity were already infected in Adam. For the better understanding of this matter, we must bear in mind that from the observation and teaching of modern writers it seems probable that animals and plants are not formed from some confused mass but from a body already preformed to some extent in the latent seed and previously animated. By virtue of the original divine blessing, it follows from this that certain organic beings of all living things (in fact in the case of animals the form of imperfect animals), as well as their souls, formerly existed after a fashion in the primordial form (*protoplastus*) of every species, and from these in course of time all things were involved. It must be said, however, that the souls and animated beings in the seed, which were destined for human bodies, along with other seminal animalcules having no such destination, remained in the sentient nature, until differentiated from the others through ultimate conception. At the same time the organic body was fashioned in human form and its soul was raised to the stage of rationality (I shall not attempt to say whether this happened as the result of an ordinary, or extraordinary, act of God).

82. From this it is also clear that it is not established with certainty that rationality pre-exists. A possible supposition, however, is that not only the human organism, but rationality too, pre-exist in things, already divinely pre-established and ready to become productive sometime, since the distinct impulse, so to speak, precedes the act. At the same time also the corruption, derived from Adam's fall, of the not yet human soul, acquires with the later appearance of the stage of rationality the power of the original sinfulness. Moreover, from the latest discoveries, it appears that the living creature and the soul come solely from the father, whereas at conception the mother contribute only the amnion (the form of the ovule, as is supposed) and the growth necessary for the perfection of the new organic body.

83. Because of what we have said, not only do philosophical difficulties concerning the origin of forms and souls disappear, but also those relating to the immateriality, as well as the indivisibility, of the soul, the conclusion from which is that no soul can come from another soul.

84. Theological difficulties regarding the corruption of souls also disappear, so that it cannot be said that a pure, reasoning soul, either in its pre-existing state or when newly created, is amalgamated by God with a corrupt mass of matter, and thereby must become corrupt itself.

85. Now there is a certain propagation by layering (*tradux*), which is, however, somewhat easier to understand than what Saint Augustine and other eminent men established, that is, not a propagation of souls from souls (which, as Prudentius makes clear, was also rejected by the ancients and is not in accord with the nature of things), but a propagation of the animated being from the animated being.

86. What we have said will suffice for the cause of our corruption and next we shall consider its nature and composition. It consists of original sin and of those sins to which it gives rise. So great is the power of original sin that it renders men weak in their native qualities and, prior to their regeneration, dead in spiritual matters. Their minds are centered on sensual things and their wills on things that are carnal, so that by nature we are children of passion.

87. We should not, however, accept Mr. Bayle's opinions and those of other opponents, impugning divine benevolence, or at least beclouding it with certain objections of theirs, according to which those who have been exposed only to original sin and have not come into full use of reason, and so are without actual sin (infants, for example, dying before baptism and outside the church), are by necessity destined to eternal flames. Such matters were better left to the clemency of the Creator.

88. In this place I also wish to express my appreciation of the temperateness of John Huelsemann, John Adam Oslander, and certain other eminent theologians of the Augsburg Confession, who have shown themselves favorably disposed toward this view.

89. Traces of the divine conception are also not wholly extinct, as I shall show presently, but they can be revived by God's kindly grace, so as to lead to spiritual things, even to the extent of bringing about conversion by grace alone.

90. Moreover original sin does not wholly alienate God's universal benevolence from the corrupt human race. For God none the less so loved the world that despite its wickedness he gave his only begotten Son for the benefit of mankind.

91. Derivative sin is two fold in its character, that is, it is active or the result of habit. Practice of corruption depends on the two, that is, so that it varies in its degrees and modifications and manifests itself in acts in different ways.

92. Active sin consists both in acts that are merely internal and in those made up of internal and external acts. It comprises acts both of commission and of omission. It is partly deserving of censure because of natural weakness, and partly wicked because of corruption of the soul.

93. Sin resulting from habit arises from evil acts that are either of frequent occurrence or at least very effective, because of the number or the force of their impressions. Hence wickedness traceable to habit contributes additional depravity to the original corruption.

94. But even though this servitude to sin prevails throughout the whole life of the unregenerate person, [we] need not [say that no] act of unregenerate persons is ever really virtuous, or even innocent, but all are essentially sinful.

95. For in civic matters even unregenerate persons from love of virtue and of the public welfare, and under the impulse of an upright motive, nay more, out of respect for God, may act without showing any sign of evil intent of ambition, of personal interest, or of sensual desire.

96. Yet their acts always come from a corrupt source and are always alloyed with some evil (though sometimes only such as results from habit).

97. Moreover human corruption and depravity, great as they may be, for that reason nevertheless do not excuse man, nor exempt him from punishment as they might, were he not acting of his own volition and with full freedom. For traces of the divine conception still remain, as a result of which God's justice suffers no detriment when he punishes sinners.

98. These traces of the divine conception consist in part of the innate light of reason and in part also of congenital freedom of will. Both are necessary for the virtuous as well as for the corrupt act, that is, so that we may know and will what we do; and we can also keep from the sins we commit, provided we apply ourselves with enough zeal.

99. This innate light consists partly of simple ideas, and partly of complex conceptions arising from them. Therefore it happens as a result that God and his eternal law are engraved on our hearts, albeit they are often obscured because of human negligence and ignoble passions of sensual things.

100. Contrary to certain modern writers, however, this light is proved partly by the Holy Scriptures, which testify that God's law is graven on our hearts, and partly by reason, since necessary truths can be proved only by innate principles of the mind and not by induction from the senses. For induction from particulars never leads to a necessary universal.

101. Through all human corruption, no matter how great it may be, freedom remains unaffected, so that man, albeit there is not the slightest doubt he is going to sin, never commits any of his sinful acts from necessity.

102. Freedom is as exempt from necessity as from coercion. Necessity is occasioned neither by the futurity (*futuritis*) of truths, nor by God's foreknowledge and foreordination, nor by the pre-arrangement of events.

103. Nor should futurity be in any way confused with necessity, for though the truth of future contingencies is determined, certainty is still objective, or the determination of the truth in these contingencies is infallible.

104. No more does God's foreknowledge, or his foreordination, impose any necessity, albeit they themselves are also infallible. For in the ideal sequence of possibilities God visualized things as they were going to happen in the future, among which he saw man sinning of his own free will. Yet in deciding on the existence of this sequence, he did not change the nature of things, nor make necessary what was contingent.

105. Neither is this pre-arrangement of things, nor this sequence of causes, prejudicial to freedom. For though nothing ever happens for which the reason could not be given, and there is never an indifference the same toward both sides (where everything in and outside a free substance must behave exactly the same toward the two opposing sides), since in the active cause, and in concurring things, there are always certain predispositions, which some persons call predeterminations. These determinations, however, must be said to be merely inclining, not necessitating, so that some indifference, or contingency, always remains. Nor is our emotion, or desire, ever so impelling that the resulting act follows it from necessity. For as long as a man is of sane mind, even though he be urged on most strongly by anger, thirst, or some like cause, still some reason can always be found for resisting the impulse, and sometimes mere reflection is enough to cause him assert his freedom and exercise control of his passions.

106. Therefore predetermination, or pre-arrangement, for the reasons I have given, is so far from introducing a kind of necessity, opposed to contingency, freedom, or morality, that it serves rather in this very respect to show the difference between Fate, as viewed by Mohammedans and Christians, that is, between what is absurd and what is rational, for the Turks entirely ignore causes, whereas Christians and all persons of intelligence deduce effects from causes.

107. The Turks believe, so they say (albeit I question if they are all so bereft of common sense), that it is futile to try to avoid the plague and other evils. The reason they give is that future events, or those that are determined, are going to happen, no matter what we do or fail to do. That of course is not true, since reason teaches us that whoever is sure to die of the plague is most certainly not going to avoid its causes. For, as the German proverb truly says, death is bound to have its cause. That is equally true of all other events. See paragraph 45.

108. There is also no coercion in acts that are voluntary. For though ideas of external things have very great influence on our minds, yet a voluntary act is always spontaneous, so that its origin is in the one acting. This is more clearly explained than hitherto by the harmony existing between body and soul, which God predetermined from the beginning.

109. Until now we have given attention to the weakness of human nature. We shall next speak of the aid given by divine grace, to the inadequacy of which our opponents object, that they may thereby throw the blame from man back on God. Grace, however, is twofold in kind, one sufficing for the person doing the willing, and the other helping us to will.

110. It should be said that no one is denied sufficient grace for willing. There is an old maxim to the effect that grace will not fail him who does everything within his power; and God forsakes only those who forsake him, according to the old Fathers of the Church, is an observation made by Saint Augustine himself. This sufficient grace manifests itself either in the usual way through the Scriptures and the

Sacraments, or in the extraordinary way, which must be left to God, such as was used in the case of Saint Paul.

111. For though there be many peoples who have never received Christ's doctrine of salvation, and though we cannot think that [the message will never affect] those who had never heard it, since in the instance of Sodom Christ himself expressed the opposite opinion, yet the saving, or damning, of persons without Christ is not something necessary, even though they may have done everything naturally possible. For we do not know all God's ways, nor do we know whether he does not vouchsafe something of an extraordinary nature to those, for example, who are at the very point of death. For we must regard it as certain, further emphasized by the case of Cornelius, that unto those, who have made good use of the light they have, shall be given the light they need and have not received, even though it is not vouchsafed them even until the hour of death.

112. For just as the theologians of the Augsburg Confession acknowledge that there is some faith, after their purification by baptism, in the infants of believers, albeit no traces of its existence are recognizable, similarly there is nothing to prevent God in some extraordinary way from bestowing on those persons mentioned above, even though until then they were not Christians, some necessary light in their hour of death, which until then they had not had throughout their whole life.

113. So *οἱ ἔξω*,⁹ who are only denied preaching from a foreign land, must also be left to the mercy and justice of the Creator, though we do not know to whom he may give help or what impelling reason he may have for so doing.

114. Since it is at least certain, however, that grace itself of willing, particularly such grace as is crowned with a happy outcome, is not granted to everybody, adversaries of truth take this as evidence of God's hatred of mankind, or at least as showing his personal prejudice, because he lacks regard for the misery of mankind, and because he does not save everybody when he can, or at least does not choose those who are deserving.

115. In fact, if God created most of mankind merely to claim for himself glory for justice from their unceasing wickedness and misery, he would deserve no credit either for goodness, or wisdom, or even for true justice.

116. Though it is a vain reply, we are said to be no more in God's sight than worms are in curs. For this disparagement would only increase, not lessen, his austerity. All God's benevolence would vanish, were he to care no more for mankind than we do for worms, for we neither can care for them, nor do we have such a desire. God's providence, however, overlooks nothing because it is small, nor is it troubled because it is great. He feeds the sparrows and loves mankind, providing the former with food and bestowing happiness on the latter, in so far as this depends on him.

117. Should anyone go further, however, and claim that God's power is so unrestricted and his administration of affairs so exempt from rules, that he can even justly damn an innocent person, then we should find it hard to understand, not only what God's idea of justice is, but also what difference there is between such a ruler of the universe, who can be deservedly charged with hatred of mankind and tyranny, and some powerful and evil principle of things.

118. For obviously such a God must be feared for this greatness, not loved for his goodness. As stands to reason, tyrannical acts do not call forth love but hatred, no matter how great be the actor's power. In fact the greater that power, the stronger will be the hatred, albeit manifestations of it be repressed through fear.

119. Those also, who are worshippers of such a Master, would be led in imitation of him to turn away from love of mankind to austerity and cruelty. Therefore certain persons under the evil pretext of God's absolute right attribute acts of such a nature to him that they have to admit, if a man behaved in that way, he would be acting in a very wicked manner. Consequently for this reason certain persons have voiced the opinion that things regarded as wicked in others are not so in God, because for him there is no fixed law.

120. However, reason, piety and God himself bid us take a far different view of him. His supreme wisdom with his exceeding goodness causes him to comply in fullest measure with the laws of justice, equity and virtue, so that he manifests concern for all his creatures, especially for those endowed with

⁹ Outsiders.

reason, which he created in this own image, and therefore he creates as much happiness and virtue, as the best type of universe can contain, and allows no more vice and misery than has to be permitted in the best sequence of things.

121. And even though we may seem as nothing compared with infinite God himself, this very matter is a prerogative of his infinite wisdom, namely, his ability to take the most perfect care of infinitely small things. Though they stand in no apparent relation to him, yet toward one another they have relations and are insistent on the arrangement which God bestowed on them.

122. After a fashion geometers are imitating God in this matter, since in their new analysis of infinitesimals, by comparing infinitely small and unassignable quantities with one another, they derive greater and more useful results than anyone would suppose could be in assignable magnitude themselves.

123. Having discredited God's hatred of mankind, which is an utterly false notion, we shall uphold with good reason his supreme love of mankind. He ardently willed that all men should come to the knowledge of truth, become converted from their sins to virtue and finally obtain salvation. He made this will manifest by providing the numerous supports of grace. If all the things he willed, however, have not always come to fruition, without question we should attribute such failure to the resistance arising from the wickedness of mankind.

124. Yet there are those who will say that his supreme power could render this wickedness void. My answer to this objection is that it may be true, albeit there is no obligation forcing him to do so, nor on the other hand is it according to reason.

125. The objection will now be made that goodness as great as we rightly ascribe to God would be more than he could be expected to show. On the contrary the best God should be expected to provide the best things, at least the very goodness of his nature would lead us to expect as much.

126. Here we must go back with Saint Paul to the abundance of supreme wisdom, which certainly did not permit God to violate the disposition and nature of things regardless of law and order, so that universal harmony was thrown into confusion and other sequences of things than the best were chosen. Moreover that sequence carried the provision that all men were to be left free and consequently some also to their wickedness. We infer the latter from the fact that this is what really happened. See paragraph 142.

127. God's love of mankind, however, or his will to bring salvation to all men by those means, which he provides for them and even for the wicked in sufficiency, very often indeed in abundance, appears to be universal, even though grace does not meet with victory in all men.

128. Moreover in producing its full effect I do not see why grace must needs achieve its end by virtue of its nature, or by itself, since it is possible on account of resistance or circumstances for the same measure of grace to produce a different effect in one person than in another. Nor do I see how it can be proved either by reason or revelation that grace is always victorious to such an extent that it can overcome resistance and disparities of circumstances no matter how great they may be. It is not meet that the wise man put forth superfluous powers.

129. However, I do not deny it sometimes happens that God makes use of that triumphant grace in opposition to the most insuperable obstacles and the most bitter resistance, leading us to conclude that we should never feel despair about anyone, albeit we should not lay down any rule from this.

130. A far more serious error is made by those, who bestow grace, faith, justification and regeneration only on the elect, as if (contrary to experience) the *πρόσχαιροι*¹⁰ were all hypocrites and could not receive spiritual aid from baptism, holy communion, or in general from the Scriptures and the Sacraments; or as if one of the elect, or of those once truly justified, could fall back into sin, or into wrong doing; or also, as others believe, as if no one of the elect in the midst of his wickedness forfeits the grace of regeneration. These same individuals are wont to demand of the faithful the most unyielding belief in constant faith, since they either deny that faith is enjoined on the damned, or they assume the belief in what is false is demanded of them.

131. Taken too strictly, however, this doctrine, which is purely arbitrary and baseless, and also entirely different from the dogmatic statements of the early church, as well as from Saint Augustine himself, can influence practice and give rise not only to presumptuous conviction of future salvation in the mind of an irreligious person, but also to anxious doubt as to present admission into grace in the mind of a pious

¹⁰ Former believers.

person, and in fact can incur the risk of producing in the minds of both too great certainty or hopelessness. So, next to despotism, I should like to advise very strongly against this kind of particularism.

132. Happily, however, it turns out that most persons moderate the severity of an innovation of such importance and so paradoxical, and that those who are left and defend such a dangerous doctrine stay within the bounds of the mere theory and in practice do not draw from it wrong conclusions; while the pious ones among them, as is fitting in accordance with the better doctrine, devote themselves to their own salvation in childlike fear and with full confidence in God's love.

133. We can be certain of our faith, grace and justification, as far as we are conscious of those things now taking place within us. Moreover we have good hopes of our future constancy, though we show only moderate concern regarding it. Therefore the Apostle warns us that he who stands should beware lest he fall. But even though we are convinced that we are among the elect, we should be unremitting in the zeal of our piety and not put the slightest trust in future repentance.

134. What has been said will suffice to disprove the charge brought against God of hatred of mankind. We must now show that God is no respecter of persons, that is, that there no justification whatever in reproaching him with lack of reason in choosing the elect. Christ is the basis of election, but if certain persons are the less partners of Christ, it is on account of their own persistent wickedness, which God foresaw with disapprobation.

135. In this connection, however, the question again comes up as to why different aids, some internal and others at least external, are given to different individuals, enabling one to overcome wickedness, while in another are themselves overcome? Widely different views are held regarding this matter. For there are those who think God has given less aid to the wicked, or more to those who make less resistance. Still others suppose in case of the latter that the same measure of aid has been more efficacious, whereas others again refuse to believe that in God's sight men differ in any respect by being endowed with a better nature, or at least with one that is less evil.

136. At all events there is no doubt that among God's reasons for his choice is consideration of the nature of the object. Taken by itself, however, the excellence of the objects does not always provide the reason for his choice. In a fixed world, the fitness of the thing for a specific purpose often receives greater consideration.

137. So it can happen that the most beautiful, or the costliest, stone is not chosen for a building, or for an ornament, but that one which best fills the particular need.

138. Since all men are spiritually dead, it is safest to suppose that they are uniformly but not similarly wicked. Therefore in their evil inclinations they may show differences, and so it may happen that preferences are those, who in the course of things are placed in more favorable circumstances, where they are afforded (at least finally) fewer chances to give way to their particular forms of wickedness and more chances to attain grace.

139. So also our theologians from experience recognized a significant difference in men, certainly in external aids to their salvation, even though inner grace was the same, and in the arrangement of external circumstances influencing us they had recourse to the *βάθος*¹¹ of Saint Paul; whilst men are often either perverted, or improved, by the chance of birth, education, conversation, social life, and fortuitous circumstances.

140. So it happens that we know of nothing on which to base election, or put our trust in, save Christianity and the perfect constancy of that blessed state we foresee; and that we can set up no precept above that, which we must recognize as effectual, and on account of which men could even beguile themselves, or look down on others.

141. For God occasionally subdues unusual perversity and overweening obstinacy in a person who makes resistance, so that no one has any doubt of his compassion, as Saint Paul points out in his own case. Sometimes too, midway in the journey of life, those who have long been good fall from grace, so that no one trusts too much in himself. Yet very often those, who show less perversity in the resistance they offer and greater zeal for what is good and true, are sensible of increased benefit from divine grace, so that no one belittles the importance of human behavior in attaining salvation. See Paragraph 112.

¹¹ Depth. This is a reference to Romans 11:33, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out!"

142. βάθος¹² itself, however, lies hidden from us amid the provisions of divine wisdom, or in the profoundness of God and (what amounts to the same thing) in the universal harmony of the world. That alone has brought it about that just this sequence of the universe, with its events that excite our wonder and its judgments which we reverse, God deemed to be the best and to be preferred above all others. See paragraph 126.

143. In this life through the medium of the light of nature itself the kingdom of the material world more and more discloses to us God's critical judgment, while by means of the discoveries of these later days the systems of the macrocosm and microcosm are beginning to be revealed.

144. But God's kingdom, that the most marvelous part of the universe, is a wonder, with the magnificence of which, illumined by the light of divine glory, we shall at some future time be deemed worthy of becoming better acquainted. At the present time, however, we can come in contact with it only through the eyes of faith, that is, through the most unwavering trust in divine perfection. Moreover the more we learn how to use not merely the power and wisdom but the goodness of the Supreme Mind as well, the more God's love will be kindled within us, and more we shall be inspired to imitate divine goodness and justice.

¹² Depth.

Appendix B: Suggestions for further reading

If you would like to pursue some of the topics raised in the *Theodicy* further, here are some suggestions for where to start. These are focused on *Leibniz's* response to the problem of evil—if you would like more general readings on the problem of evil, let me know and I'll make some other suggestions.

Introductory Texts

Broad, C.D., *Leibniz: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), Chapter 7.

Jolley, Nicholas, *Leibniz* (London: Routledge, 2005), Chapter Six, "The Problem of Evil."

Faith and Reason

Antognazza, Maria Rosa, *Leibniz on the Trinity and the Incarnation: Reason and Revelation in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), esp. chapter 13.

Jolley, Nicholas, "The Relation Between Theology and Philosophy," in Garber and Ayers(eds.), *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 363-392.

Optimization and the Principle of the Best

Brown, G., "Leibniz's Theodicy and the Confluence of Worldly Goods," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 26, 571-91.

Rutherford, Donald, *Leibniz and the Rational Order of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), chapters 1-3.

Wilson, C., "Leibnizian Optimism," *Journal of Philosophy* 80, 765-83.

Creation and Concurrence

McDonough, Jeffrey, "Leibniz: Creation and Conservation and Concurrence," *The Leibniz Review*, 2007: 31-60.

Lee, Sukjae, "Leibniz on Divine Concurrence," *The Philosophical Review* 113, 203-248.

Moral Necessity

Adams, Robert, "Moral Necessity," in Rutherford and Cover (eds.), *Leibniz: Nature and Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 181-193.

Murray, Michael "Pre-Leibnizian Moral Necessity," *The Leibniz Review*, 2004: 1-28.

Sleigh, R.C., "Moral Necessity in Leibniz's Account of Human Freedom," in Newlands and Jorgensen (eds.), *Metaphysics and the Good: Themes from the Philosophy of Robert Merrihew Adams* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

Freedom of the Will

Greenberg, Sean, "Leibniz against Molinism: Freedom, Indifference, and the Nature of the Will," in Rutherford and Cover (eds.), *Leibniz: Nature and Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 217-233.

Murray, Michael, "Spontaneity and Freedom in Leibniz," in Rutherford and Cover (eds.), *Leibniz: Nature and Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 194-216.