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Leibniz's Worlds

The Connection between the Best Possible World and the Monadic Realm

Abstract

In this paper, I claim that in Leibniz's metaphysics, we can use the notion of world in a two-fold sense; on the one hand, to refer to highly complex divine thoughts, i.e. the ideal realm, and on the other hand, to refer to a network of living substances with their perceptions and appetitions, i.e. the substantial realm. Firstly, I will clarify the ideal realm in Leibniz's metaphysics, which consists of three combinatorial levels about the fundamental entities, namely the simple ideas in God's mind: complex ideas, complete individual notions and possible worlds. The second part is about the individual substances, i.e. the monads. In the third section, finally, I will discuss different ways to think about the connection between the ideal and the monadic world.

Keywords

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, best possible world, actual world, monads

Introduction

From Plato's *Timaeus* via Kant's regulative ideas to Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, the notion of *world* has played a crucial role in philosophy, simply because the world is essentially everybody's business (Cf. KrV B 867). Leibniz's philosophy surely counts as one whose most central concept is *world*, and thanks to Voltaire, probably no other Leibniz phrase is so well known as *the best possible world*. However, there are not only possible worlds, there is also an actual world, consisting of an infinite number of individual substances, called monads. This paper has two aims: the first is to examine the different meanings of the notion of *world* (possible and actual world), and the second is to understand in what way those meanings are related in Leibnizian metaphysics.

However, firstly, I will clarify three premises, which are justifiable, but which I will not justify in this paper. The first premise is that Leibniz is a nominalist – he rejects the existence of abstract objects, platonic forms, universals and the like. In Leibniz's metaphysics, there are only concrete entities, such as individual substances, mental states, perceptions, and so on.¹ The second

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Cf. Benson Mates, *The Philosophy of Leibniz. Metaphysics and Language*, Oxford Uni-

versity Press, New York – Oxford 1986, pp. 170–188.

premise is that Leibniz is a representative of *Divine Conceptualism*. For him, ideas are mental states, not mental states of finite minds but mental states of an infinite mind, more precisely God's mind (cf. GP II, p. 54).² The third premise is my claim that Leibniz's metaphysics has three ontological levels. The basic ontological level consists of divine ideas and their combinations, which God thinks. The individual substances constitute the second level of Leibniz's metaphysics, the realm of living entities, the actual world. The third level consists in extended bodies, which Leibniz often calls *phenomena* (GP II, p. 97). The first level depends on God alone because, to exist, the realm of ideas has to be thought by God. The second level depends on God and his ideas because the ideas are the "blueprints" for the creation of the individual substances. And the third level depends ontologically on the substances – Leibniz says that extended bodies result from substances; they are mere *phenomena bene fundata* (GP II, p. 306). Without the divine ideas, there are no substances, without substances there are no extended bodies, and thus, by transitivity, without ideas, there are no extended bodies.

1. The Ideal Realm

Since Middle Platonists like Philo of Alexandria, the platonic ideas were described as being present in God's mind to make platonism and theism compatible – God's mind is the *mundus intelligibilis*, and Leibniz certainly belongs to this tradition. In *On the Ultimate Origination of Things* (1697), Leibniz says:

"[T]hey [the ideas, essences, and eternal truths, JLP] exist (...) in God himself, the source of every essence and of the existence of the rest." (Ariew/Garber, pp. 151–152; GP VII, p. 305)³

In *New Essays*, Leibniz explicitly explains what he understands by 'in God':

"[H]ow a proposition about a subject can have a real truth if the subject does not exist[?] The answer is that truth is a merely conditional one which says that if the subject ever does exist it will be found to be thus and so. But it will be further asked what the ground is for the connection, since there is a reality in it which does not mislead. The reply is that it is grounded in the linking together of ideas. In response to this it will be asked where these ideas would be if there were no mind, and what would then become of the real foundation of this certainty of eternal truths. This question brings us at last to the ultimate foundation of truth, namely to that Supreme and Universal Mind who cannot fail to exist and whose understanding is indeed the domain of eternal truths." (Remnant/Bennett, p. 447; GP V, p. 429)⁴

The ideas, essences, and eternal truths depend on the "active power of God" (GP II, pp. 54–55)⁵ by God's mental activity. They are "in" God's mind. In *Monadology*, Leibniz writes:

"It is also true that God is not only the source of existences, but also that of essences insofar as they are real, that is, or the source of that which is real in possibility. This is because God's understanding is the realm of eternal truths or that of the ideas on which they depend; without him there would be nothing real in possibles, and not only would nothing exist, but also nothing would be possible." (Ariew/Garber, p. 218; GP VI, p. 614)⁶

1.1. Divine Ideas

No other philosopher has affirmed the Principle of Sufficient Reason [PSR] as much as Leibniz. Hence, let us now apply the PSR to the ideas that are in God's mind. What is the sufficient reason why God thinks what he is thinking? Why does God's mind entail the ideas it contains? In one of Leibniz's

Paris notes, *On the Origin of Things from Forms*, from April (?) 1676, Leibniz explains:

“Ideas exist in God in so far as the most perfect being arises out of the conjunction in the same subject of all possible absolute forms or perfections; but from the conjunction of simple possible forms there result modifications, that is, ideas, as properties result from an essence.” (Parkinson, p. 81; A 6.3, p. 521)⁷

Leibniz suggests that God does not have all ideas as brute facts in his mind, but that all the ideas, which God thinks, result from God's perfections or forms.⁸ In *A Most Perfect Being Exists* from November 1676, Leibniz characterises the “[p]erfections, or simple forms, or absolute positive qualities” as “simple” and “indefinable or unanalysable” (Parkinson, p. 97 and 99; A 6.3, pp. 575 and 577).⁹ Therefore, the sufficient reason for what God thinks is his own nature, “the ‘aggregate’ (cf. A VI, iii, 574) or conjunction of all perfections”.¹⁰ Interestingly, Leibniz tries to explain in *On the Origin* what it

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GP = Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Die Philosophischen Schriften*, edited by C. I. Gerhardt, 7 vols, Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, Berlin 1875–1890. Cited by volume and page.

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Ariew/Garber = Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, edited and translated by R. Ariew and D. Garber, Hackett, Indianapolis 1989. Original text: “... sed existere in quadam ut sic dicam regione idearum, nempe in ipso Deo, essentiae omnis existentiaeque caeterorum fonte.”

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Remnant/Bennett = Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *New Essays on Human Understanding*, edited and translated by Peter Remnant and Jonathan Bennett, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1981. Original text: “Mais on demandera encor, en quoy est fondée cette connexion, puisqu’il y a de la réalité là dedans qui ne trompe pas? La Reponse sera, qu’elle est dans la liaison des idées. Mais on demandera en repliquant, où seroient ces idées, si aucun esprit n’existoit, et que deviendroit alors le fondement reel de cette certitude des vérités éternelles? Cela nous mene enfin au dernier fondement des vérités, savoir à cet Esprit Supreme et Universel qui ne peut manquer d’exister, dont l’Entendement, à dire vray, est la Region des vérités éternelles (...).”

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Original text: “[L]a puissance active de Dieu.”

6

Original text: “Il est vrai aussi, qu’en Dieu est non seulement la source des existences, mais encore celle des essences, en tant que réelles, ou de ce qu’il y a de réel dans la possibilité. C’est parce que l’Entendement de Dieu est la Region des vérités éternelles, ou des idées dont elles dependent, et que sans lui il n’y auroit rien de réel dans les possibilités, et non

seulement rien d’existant, mais encor rien de possible.”

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Parkinson = Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *De summa rerum: metaphysical papers, 1675–1676*, translated by G. H. R. Parkinson, Yale University Press, New Haven – London 1992; A = Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe*, edited by the Academy of Sciences of Berlin, series 1–6, Darmstadt – Leipzig – Berlin 1928, cited by series, volume, and page. Original text: “Ideae sunt in Deo, quatenus ex formarum omnium absolutarum sive perfectionum possibilium conjunctione in eodem subjecto fit Ens perfectissimum; ex conjunctione autem formarum simplicium possibilium resultant modificationes, id est ideae, ut ex essentia proprietates.”

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Samuel Newlands believes that divine ideas are brute facts within the divine mind. He mentioned that his opinion violates the PSR, but Newlands's supposes that the only alternative to divine ideas as brute facts in God's mind will end up in Spinoza's *deus sive natura* and therefore, in Spinoza's identification of possibles with actual divine attributes. Cf. Samuel Newlands, “Leibniz on the Ground of Possibility”, *Philosophical Review* 122 (2013) 2, pp. 155–187, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1215/00318108-1963698>.

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Original text: “Perfectiones, sive formae simplices, sive qualitates absolutae positivae, sunt indefinibiles sive irresolubiles. (...) P e r f e c t i o n e m voco omnem qualitatem simplicem quae positiva est, et absoluta.”

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Robert Merrihew Adams, *Leibniz. Determinist, Theist, Idealist*, Oxford University Press, New York – Oxford 1994, p. 113.

means for ideas to result from perfections by drawing an analogy to properties resulting from essences. In other words, essences are logically prior to properties, and divine forms or perfections are prior to divine ideas. Hence, it seems adequate to understand ideas as grounded in perfections.¹¹ And there is obviously no sufficient reason why God has the perfections he actually has, because exclusively “God is sufficient” (Ariew/Garber, p. 218; GP VI, p. 613).¹² Our asking for sufficient reasons only comes to an end in God, because in God essence and actual existence are identical.¹³ Therefore, it can be said that the ideas are results of God’s knowledge of his perfections. As mentioned above, God’s perfections are positive, simple, and absolute, and thus, the results of God’s self-knowledge, the ideas, have to be simple, positive and absolute, too.¹⁴ These simple, positive, and absolute divine ideas, grounded in the divine perfections, constitute the first level as well as the basal elements of an immense *ars combinatoria*.

At all cost, Leibniz attempts to avoid Spinoza’s rejection of contingency.¹⁵ Therefore, he has to designate a sufficient reason for why all possibles are not actual. The combinatorial account – that the possible’s existence and their appearance do not depend on God’s volition, as Descartes holds, but only on the Principle of Contradiction [PC]¹⁶ – is nothing else than a highly complex anti-Spinozist argument and the reason for true contingency in Leibniz’s metaphysics. To carry out his anti-Spinozist argument and make sense of how there can be unactualised possibles, Leibniz enlists his combinatorial account of modality.

Before we go into more detail, I would like to highlight that it seems that combination requires operations: conjunction, at least. To combine is always understood as conjoining something with something distinct. The idea of a human being is not simple because it is the conjunction of the more basal ideas of rationality and living being. However, if the only operation of the divine mind would be conjunction, all ideas could be combined to one sequence of ideas because they all are simple and positive and therefore compatible in respect to the PC (Ariew/Garber, p. 41; GP IV, p. 433).¹⁷ If this would be the whole story, then Leibniz’s theory of modality would be indistinguishable from Spinoza’s rejection of contingency because there would exist merely one way a world could be. Hence, besides conjunction, negation must be another operation by which God’s mind can combine simple and positive ideas to more complex structures.

1.2. Complete Individual Notions

Every simple idea is an immediate result of divine perfections and all other complex ideal structures, which are finite, like complex ideas, are a result of divine combination of simple ideas. By conjunction and/or negation a finite number of simple ideas is combined by the divine mind to complex ideas, according to the PC. If the combination is brought from the domain of finite, to the domain of infinite-complex structures, then Leibniz reaches the second level of the *ars combinatoria*: the complete individual notions. In the *Discourse on Metaphysics* § 8 he says:

“[T]he nature of an individual substance or of a complete being is to have a notion so complete that it is sufficient to contain and to allow us to deduce from it all the predicates of the subject to which this notion is attributed.” (Ariew/Garber, p. 41; GP IV, p. 433)¹⁸

What Leibniz has in mind is that “prior”¹⁹ to creation all monads and individual substances, except God, exist only *sub ratione possibilitatis*. Although

there is an infinite number of possible substances, which will never be actualised by God's creation, they exist as *entia mentale* in God's mind, and every monad or substance *sub ratione possibilitatis* is represented in the divine mind by its complete individual notion.²⁰ The passage from the *Discourse* emphasises that all substances have a corresponding complete individual notion, which contains all the predicates of the substance. This is often called *Predicate-in-Notion Principle*, which plays an essential role in Leibniz's theory of truth.²¹ A complete individual notion is a sequence, ordered conjunction of an infinite number of simple and complex ideas and/or their negations, which are all together maximally-consistent. Hence, it holds for every idea *I* that either *I* or *not I* is part of a complete individual notion. Leibniz says:

"It is of the nature of an individual substance that its concept be perfect and complete, and contain all its individual circumstances, even contingent ones, down to the least detail."²²

God's mind forms complete individual notions, which we also can refer to as essences, possible substances or *possibilia*, by combining maximal-consistent

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For more detailed studies of the relation between divine perfections and divine ideas, please see: Massimo Mugnai, "Leibniz's Nominalism and the Reality of Ideas in the Mind of God", in: Albert Heinekamp, Wolfgang Lenzen, Martin Schneider (eds.), *Mathesis rationis. Festschrift für Heinrich Schepers*, Nodus Publikationen, Münster 1990, pp. 153–167; Robert Merrihew Adams, "God, Possibility, and Kant", *Faith and Philosophy* 17 (2000) 4, pp. 425–440, doi: <https://doi.org/10.5840/faithphil200017439>; Ohad Nachtomy, *Possibility, Agency, and Individuality in Leibniz's Metaphysics*, Springer, Dordrecht 2007, pp. 24–27; Sebastian Bender, *Leibniz' Metaphysik der Modalität*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2016, pp. 98–102; Ohad Nachtomy, "On the Source of Impossibility in Leibniz's Paris Notes and Some Remarks on Time and Space as Packing Constraints", in: Gregory Brown, Yual Chiek (eds.), *Leibniz on Compossibility and Possible Worlds*, Springer, Dordrecht 2016, pp. 21–35.

12

Original text: "[E]t ce Dieu suffit."

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Cf. A 2.1, p. 589.

14

A quality is simple, if it is not reducible to more simple qualities, like the quality *being human* is reducible to the more basic qualities *being a living being* and *being rational*. A quality is positive, if it is not a negation or privation. And finally, a quality is absolute if it is unlimited, unconditional, or unrestricted. Cf. A 6.3, p. 502; A 6.2, p. 397; C pp. 51, 60.

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Cf. Baruch Spinoza, *The Collected Works of Spinoza*, vol. 1, edited and translated by Edwin Curley, Princeton University Press, Princeton (NJ) 1985, pp. 436–439 (E1p33).

16

Cf. GP VI, p. 413; GP VII, p. 299; GP VI, p. 612; GP VII, pp. 199, 355, 420.

17

Cf. GP VII, p. 194. Cf. Ohad Nachtomy, "On the Source of Impossibility in Leibniz's Paris Notes and Some Remarks on Time and Space as Packing Constraints", in: G. Brown, Y. Chiek (eds.), *Leibniz on Compossibility and Possible Worlds*, pp. 21–35, pp. 25–27.

18

Original text: "Cela estant, nous pouvons dire que la nature d'une substance individuelle ou d'un estre complet, est d'avoir une notion si accomplie qu'elle soit suffisante à comprendre et à en faire deduire tous les predicats du sujet à qui cette notion est attribuée."

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Because of God's atemporality, which Leibniz defends in many cases, most prominent in the correspondence with Samuel Clarke, the term 'prior' has only a logical and not temporal meaning.

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Cf. Nicholas Rescher, *The Philosophy of Leibniz*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood (NJ) 1967, pp. 13–16.

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For example, in Leibniz's *Primary Truths from 1686 or 1689*, cf. C, pp. 518–523. C = Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Opusculæ et fragmenta inedita*, edited by L. Couturat, F. Alcan, Paris 1903.

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Translation from R. M. Adams, *Leibniz*, p. 31; A 6.4/B, p. 1600. Original text: "... quia de natura substantiæ individualis est, ut notio ejus sit perfecta atque completa, omnesque circumstantias individuales etiam contingentes ad minima usque contineat (...)."

ent ideas. Only a subset of all complete individual notions was actualised by divine creation; God created individual substances corresponding to their complete individual notions, thus, they are like “blueprints” for creation.

If there is a one-to-one relation of correspondence or a conceptual link between substances and their complete individual notions, and if a substance is “like a mirror of God or of the whole universe, which each one expresses in its own way” (Ariew/Garber, p. 42; GP IV, 434),²³ it follows that its corresponding complete individual notions must be like a mirror too (cf. GP VI, p. 618). Every substance, as well as its corresponding complete individual notion, has a distinct and non-disposable “world-environment”²⁴ which is expressed by a substance and its corresponding complete notion. Let us call this doctrine the *Universal Expression Doctrine* (UED).²⁵ UED emphasises that all relations of a substance x must be represented in the corresponding complete individual notion of x . Certainly, UED is in conflict with another central doctrine of Leibniz’s metaphysics: with the *World-Apart Doctrine* (WAD). In the *Discourse of Metaphysics* § 14 Leibniz says “that each substance is like a world apart, independent of all other things, except for God” (Ariew/Garber, p. 47; GP IV, p. 439).²⁶ While UED suggests that any substance cannot exist apart from its world-environment, WAD, however, proposes that each substance can do so. And due to the one-to-one relation of correspondence between substances and their complete individual notions, it seems that the same is true for the complete individual notions. The conflict between UED and WAD is defused by reducing relations to predicates, which ground relations. As assumed at the beginning of this paper, Leibniz is a nominalist. Therefore, he does not believe in the existence of relations as an irreducible ontological category. Within a nominalistic framework, there is no conceptual place for relations, but indeed, Leibniz calls a relation a mere *ens mentale* or *rationis* (Cf. GP VI, pp. 491–492). What we call a relation is, in fact, grounded in the ideal realm. Hence, Benson Mates says:

“Leibniz’s dictum that ‘there are no purely extrinsic denominations’ becomes, therefore, the assertion that every relational property of an individual is reducible, in his sense of ‘reducible’, to nonrelational properties of that and other individuals; and thus is ‘grounded’ in the accidents of those individuals.”²⁷

A relation is, in fact, a relational idea of a complete individual notion. Peter denied Christ, therefore, the complete individual notion of Peter contains the complex idea *denier of Christ*, and Christ’s complete individual notion contains the complex idea *denied by Peter*. A complete individual concept is linked to its world-environment by rational ideas. Even if Mates’s suggestion is not uncontroversial within contemporary debates, the real stumbling block is the question of whether relational ideas are essentially part of a complete individual notion or not.²⁸ If relations are reducible to relational ideas, then UED and WAD can be at least alleviated. WAD guarantees that a complete individual notion is completely determined and individuated. Given UED, every complete individual notion is linked to any other notion that is part of its world-environment.

1.3. Possible Worlds

The possible worlds, which are sequences of complete individual notions, form the third level of Leibniz’s combinatorial approach. However, not every arbitrary combination of complete individual notions forms a possible world – only the series of notions which are compossible can constitute a possible

world. Compossibility is the central Leibnizian concept against Spinoza's claim that all possibles are actual. Leibniz responds against Spinoza: not everything possible is also actual, because not every combination of possibles is actualisable together. Only specific compossible combinations of possibles are actualisable.

Within current debates about the interpretation of compossibility there are two major positions: First, the *Logical Interpretation* and second, the *Lawful Interpretation*.²⁹ The most prominent representatives of the *Logical Interpretation* of compossibility are Benson Mates, Nicholas Rescher and Ohad Nachtomy. They focus on a short phrase from a short note, which Leibniz has written between the 1680's and 1690's, titled "Definitiones: Ens, Possibile, Existens". In this work Leibniz explicitly writes:

"The *compossible* is that which, with another, does not imply a contradiction."³⁰

Thus, a possible world is a series of an infinite number of logical, consistent, complete individual notions and ideas.³¹ There exists a possible world in God's mind, which contains Adam's complete individual notion, entailing the complex idea *the first man*. According to the *Logical Interpretation* of compossibility, it follows that God could not combine this notion with another notion, which also entails the idea of *the first man*. This world, the two notions are part of, would not be compossible by a logical contradiction within the possible worlds, because two complete individual notions would

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Original text: "... comme un miroir de Dieu ou bien de tout l'univers, qu'elle exprime chacune à sa façon (...)."

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Nicholas Rescher, *Leibniz. An Introduction to his Philosophy*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1979, p. 50.

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This notion is used, for example, in James Messina, Donald Rutherford, "Leibniz on Compossibility", *Philosophy Compass* 4 (2009) 6, pp. 962–977, p. 975, footnote 9, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-9991.2009.00262.x>; A 6.4, p. 964; Sebastian Bender, "On Worlds, Laws and Tiles: Leibniz and the Problem of Compossibility", in: G. Brown, Y. Chieck (ed.), *Leibniz on Compossibility and Possible Worlds*, pp. 65–90, 69; Yual Chieck, "Compossibility and Co-possibility", in: G. Brown, Y. Chieck (ed.), *Leibniz on Compossibility and Possible Worlds*, pp. 91–124.

26

Original text: "... que chaque substance est comme un monde à part, independant de taut autre chose hors de Dieu (...)."

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B. Mates, *The Philosophy of Leibniz*, p. 219.

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Jan Cover and John Hawthorne, for example, deny that complete individual notions contain

relational properties. This position has an immediate influence on other related topics, like transworld identity, superessentialism, etc. Cf. Jan Cover, John O'Leary Hawthorne, "Leibnizian Essentialism, Transworld Identity, and Counterparts", *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 9 (1992) 4, pp. 425–444.

29

Both interpretations were characterized by Fred D'Agostino, by the labels *Analytic* and *Synthetic* Interpretation. Cf. Fred D'Agostino, "Leibniz on Compossibility and Relational Predicates", *Philosophical Quarterly* 26 (1976) 103, pp. 125–138, doi: <https://doi.org/10.2307/2219130>. There are some other interpretations of compossibility, which are more or less modifications of the two paradigmatic strategies, like the *Cosmological Interpretation* by Messina and Rutherford (cf. J. Messina, D. Rutherford, "Leibniz on Compossibility"), or Wilson's *Logical/Lawful Hybrid Interpretation* (cf. Margaret Wilson, "Compossibility and Law", in: Steven Nadler (ed.), *Causation in Early Modern Philosophy*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park (PA) 1993, pp. 119–133).

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Translation from J. Messina, D. Rutherford, "Leibniz on Compossibility", p. 975, footnote 9; A 6.4, p. 967.

31

B. Mates, *The Philosophy of Leibniz*, p. 75.

entail both the idea *the first man*, which is incompatible with the PC. Hence, in the *Theodicy*, Leibniz says:

“For it must be known that all things are connected in each one of the possible worlds: the universe, whatever it may be, is all of one piece, like an ocean: the least movement extends its effect there to any distance whatsoever, even though this effect becomes less perceptible in proportion to the distance.” (Huggard, p. 128; GP VI, p. 107)³²

However, one objection against the *Logical Interpretation* of compossibility is that there is little textual evidence for this interpretation. On the contrary: firstly, there are some instances where Leibniz explicitly says that substances are creatable on their own, isolated from all other substances. For example, in a letter to Bartholomew Des Bosses from April 1715, Leibniz says:

“If all monads get their perceptions out of their own store, so to speak, and without any physical influence of one upon another; if, furthermore, the perceptions of each monad correspond exactly to the rest of the monads which God has now created, and to their perceptions; then God cannot have created anyone of these monads which now exist without having constituted all of the rest, etc. My reply is easy and has already been given. He can do it absolutely; he cannot do it hypothetically, because he has decreed that all things should function most wisely and harmoniously.” (Loemker, p. 611; GP II, p. 496)³³

Secondly, the *Logical Interpretation* seems to be incompatible with WAD, because this interpretation entails that every complete individual notion is conceptually linked to all its worldmates. Hence, neither a complete individual notion nor a substance is ontologically independent of other notions or substances.³⁴

Therefore, some authors prefer another interpretation of compossibility: *Lawful Interpretation*.³⁵ According to *Lawful Interpretation*, two distinct possible substances are compossible if they are suitably linked at least under one law, which God wishes to uphold.³⁶ In a letter to Antoine Arnauld from June 1686, Leibniz says:

“There were an infinity of possible ways of creating the world, according to the different designs which God might form, and each possible world depends upon certain principal designs or ends of God proper to itself, i.e. certain free primitive decrees (...) or laws of the general order of this possible universe, to which they belong, and whose notion they determine, as well as the notions of all the individual substances which must belong to this same Universe.”³⁷

And in some remarks about a letter to Arnauld, written in May 1686, Leibniz writes:

“[A]s there exists an infinite number of possible worlds, there exists also an infinite number of laws, some peculiar to one world, and some to other, and each possible individual of any one world contains in the concept of him the law of his world. (...) for instance if this world were only possible, the individual concept of a body in this world, containing certain movements as possibilities, would also contain our laws of motion (...) as mere possibilities.”³⁸

It seems that Leibniz has in mind that not any arbitrary set of possible substances is combinable, but only a set of possible substances, linked by at least one law, i.e. a law of nature, which represents a sufficient reason for God to create this world, because a world without at least one law of nature is less perfect than a world with at least one law of nature.

While the *Logical Interpretation* of compossibility depends only on the PC, the *Lawful Interpretation* seems to depend on the PSR. According to the former interpretation, a possible world is a compossible sequence of complete individual notions with all their monadic (i.e. their intrinsic ideas) and relational ideas, which do not involve any contradiction, therefore the PC satisfies this sequence. Following the latter interpretation, a possible world

is a set of complete individual notions, which all contain the same laws of natures and the:

“... supposition that coexisting substances fail to instantiate lawful relations is incompatible with the Principle of Sufficient Reason (PSR). (...) [O]nly sets of substances that instantiate laws have a possible sufficient reason for their existence.”³⁹

It follows that the role the PC and the PSR play in the combination of complete individual substances seems to determine which interpretation is preferred.

Whatever interpretation one chooses, it is clear that in a first sense, Leibniz uses the notion of *world* to refer to highly complex divine thoughts, in other words, arrangements of compossible substances *sub ratione possibilitatis*.⁴⁰ The sequence of the perfect compossible possibles, which is the best possible world, is the foundation for the pre-established harmony within the monadic realm. This issue will be addressed in the subsequent section.

2. The Monadic Realm

In the previous chapter, the examined cases referred to entities *sub ratione possibilitatis*, which are all part of an immense combinatorial “procedure”, beginning with the most fundamental objects, the divine ideas, and ending with the most complex structures, the possible worlds. With his combinatorial account of modality, Leibniz could fend off Spinoza’s claim that everything possible is actual. Due to his conception of compossibility (whatever interpretation), Leibniz can explain why not all possibles are actual. Only possibles which are compossible are actualisable. Until the 1680’s, the complete individual notion dominated Leibniz’s metaphysical considerations, but between

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Huggard = Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Theodicy*, edited and translated by E. M. Huggard, Open Court, La Salle (IL) 1985. Original text: “Car il faut savoir que tout est lié dans chacun des Mondes possibles: L’Univers, quel qu’il puisse être, est tout d’une pièce, comme un Ocean; le moindre mouvement y étend son effet à quelque distance que ce soit, quoique cet effect devienne moins sensible à proportion de la distance (...)”

33

Loemker = Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Philosophical Papers and Letters*, edited and translated by L. E. Loemker, 2nd ed., Reidel, Dordrecht-Boston 1969. Original text: “Si Monades omnes ex propria penu, ut sic loquar, et sine ullo physico unius in aliam influxu perceptiones suas habent, si praeterea cujuslibet Monadis perceptiones caeteris quae nunc a Deo creatae sunt Monadibus earumve perceptionibus praecise respondent, non poluit ergo Deus ullam ex his quae nunc existunt Monadibus creare, quin alias omnes conderet etc. Responso est facilis et dudum data. Potuit absolute, non potuit hypothetice, ex quo decrevit omnia sapientissime agere et ἀρμονικωτάτως.”

34

Cf. B. Mates, *The Philosophy of Leibniz*, p. 192.

35

For example, Ian Hacking, “A Leibnizian Theory of Truth”, in: Michael Hooker (ed.), *Leibniz. Critical and Interpretative Essays*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 1982, pp. 185–195; Jan Cover, John O’Leary Hawthorne, *Substance and Individuation in Leibniz*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1999, pp. 87–142.

36

J. Messina, D. Rutherford, “Leibniz on Compossibility”, p. 965.

37

Translation from: Bertrand Russell, *A Critical Exposition of the Philosophy of Leibniz*, Routledge, London 2005, p. 79; GP II, p. 51.

38

Translation from: M. Wilson, “Compossibility and Law”, p. 130; GP II, p. 40.

39

J. Messina, D. Rutherford, “Leibniz on Compossibility”, p. 968.

40

Cf. Ohad Nachtomy, “Leibniz on Possible Individuals”, *Studia Leibnitiana* 34 (2002), pp. 31–58, p. 32.

1680 and 1684 the terms *entelechy* and *forma substantialis* became more and more important until he finally used the term *monad* for the first time in 1695 to describe a substance which is “a being capable of action” (Ariew/Garber, p. 207; GP VI, p. 598).⁴¹ As mentioned above, there is a one-to-one relation of correspondence between substances or monads and complete individual notions. Before going into this one-to-one relation, let us clarify what Leibniz understands by the term *monad*.

2.1. Individual Substances and Monads

What God creates, when he actualises the best possible world, is a unique set of individual substances, the monads.⁴² Individual substances are the only actual beings within Leibniz's metaphysics. In the *Discourse on Metaphysics*, the *Principles of Nature and Grace, Based on Reason* and *Monadology*, he characterises monads as ontologically simple, non-extended beings and their existence depends only on the creation and annihilation by God (cf. GP IV, pp. 433–434; GP VI, p. 598; GP VI, p. 607). If monads are simple beings, what distinguishes one monad from another? If they are simple, they seem to be perfectly similar beings, although according to the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles there cannot be distinct, but perfectly similar beings (Cf. A 6.4, p. 554). Only the perceptions of two individual substances are suited to distinguish them. A monad's perception is a representation of the whole “surrounding” substantial realm from its unique point of view. Through perceptions a monad is related in a certain manner to its surrounding monads without being related causally (Cf. GP IV, p. 483). In the *Discourse of Metaphysics* § 9 Leibniz says:

“[E]very substance is like a complete world and like a mirror of God or of the whole universe, which each one expresses in its own way, somewhat as the same city is variously represented depending upon the different positions from which it is viewed. Thus the universe is in some way multiplied as many times as there are substances, and the glory of God is likewise multiplied by as many entirely different representations of his work.” (Ariew/Garber, p. 42; GP IV, p. 434)⁴³

A monad “mirrors” the whole world, consisting only of substances, from its *situs*, its “location” or “perspective” within the monadic realm.⁴⁴ Yet holding that one representation of the “surrounding” universe follows another, a substance requires a principle of change. This is the appetite. Leibniz distinguishes three kinds of monads. Firstly, there are substances which only have perceptions and appetite. He calls them entelechies or simple substances. However, there are some monads which have memory too. Leibniz calls them souls, that is, *les âmes* (cf. GP VI, p. 610). Furthermore, the highest monads are the souls, that is, spirits, that is, *les esprits*. They have perceptions, appetite and memory, but they differ from souls because they have self-consciousness and the ability to link perceptions with innate ideas (cf. GP VI, pp. 608–610, 611–612).

If someone advocates a more Aristotelian interpretation of Leibniz's metaphysics – for example in the comments of Nicholas Rescher on the *Monadology* – monads could be regarded as unifiers of corporal aggregates.⁴⁵ For Leibniz, all bodies are infinitely divisible. Thus, every body is an aggregate of other divisible bodies *ad infinitum*. According to Leibniz, there is no reality in bodies because there is no unity. Therefore, for Leibniz bodies are not real beings, but just phenomena. Because bodies are mere aggregates and not real beings, they need an external unifier. Every monad could be interpreted as a unifier for a corporal aggregate. Because the aggregate itself has no unity, something different must guarantee its unity. And monads perform this role.

For Leibniz, to be is the same as to be united. Without unity, there is no being. In this sense, only substances together with their perceptions, apperceptions and their appetition are true beings inside the monadic realm, because they are true unities.

3. The Connection between the Ideal and the Monadic Realm

As previously discussed, all monads are in some way linked to complete individual notions.⁴⁶ Hence, all monads have corresponding complete individual notions, but not all notions have corresponding monads (*connexion des choses*, cf. GP II, p. 41), because God has chosen to actualise only one compossible sequence of complete individual notions. An infinite number of compossible sequences remain as possibles without ever attaining the status of actuality. However, what exactly is the link between a complete individual notion and a monad, that is, between the status *sub ratione possibilitatis* and actual existence? In *De Natura Veritatis, Contingentiae et Indifferentiae* from the 1680's, Leibniz says:

“He [God, JLP] contemplates [*perspicit*] from the notion of any substance all its accidental [*accidentium*] truths without the exterior help, because it contains all the others and the whole universe.” (A 6.4, p. 1517)⁴⁷

41

Original text: “...un Etre capable d'Action.”

42

As a part of a discussion with Christian Wolff about Leibniz's understanding of perfection, Leibniz writes in a letter to Wolff from May 1715: “Perfection is the harmony of things, or the state where everything is worthy of being observed, that is, the state of agreement [*consensus*] or identity in variety; you can even say that it is the degree of contemplability [*considerabilitas*]. Indeed, order, regularity, and harmony come to the same thing.” – Ar-iew/Garber, p. 233–234; LW, p. 172 (LW = Gottfried Wilhem Leibniz, *Briefwechsel zwischen Leibniz und Christian Wolff*, edited by C. I. Gerhardt, H. W. Schmidt, Halle 1860). Original text: “P e r f e c t i o est harmonia rerum, vel observabilitas universalium, seu consensus vel identitas in varietate; poses etiam dicere esse gradum considerabilitatis. Nempe ordo, regularitas, harmonia eodem redeunt.” The actual world, which is linked to the best of all possible worlds as a complex divine thought like a particular being is linked to its essence, is “the richest collection of beings, united by the greatest order, leading to the greatest harmony and the greatest range of opportunities for intellectual contemplation”. – Donald Rutherford, “The Actual World”, in: Maria Rosa Antognazza (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Leibniz*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2018, pp. 65–85, p. 76.

43

Original text: “De plus toute substance est comme un monde entier et comme un miroir

de Dieu ou bien de tout l'univers, qu'elle exprime chacune à sa façon à peu pres comme une même ville est diversement représentée selon les différentes situations de celui qui la regarde. Ainsi l'univers est en quelque façon multiplié autant de fois qu'il y a de substances, et la gloire de Dieu est redoublée de même par autant de représentations toutes différentes de son ouvrage.”

44

Leibniz's whole metaphysical system can be interpreted as a huge explication of the Christian doctrine that everything is created in an image of God, therefore, every substance does not only mirror the universe but the deity too. Cf. Edward Craig, *Mind of God and the Works of Man*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1987.

45

Cf. Nicholas Rescher, *G. W. Leibniz's Monadology*, University of Pittsburgh Press, London 1991, p. 51.

46

Cf. Hans Poser, *Leibniz' Philosophie. Über die Einheit von Metaphysik und Wissenschaft*, Felix Meiner Verlag, Hamburg 2016, pp. 150–155.

47

Original text: “Deus (...) in qualibet singulari substantia ex ipsa ejus notione omnium ejus accidentium veritatem perspicit, nullis extrinsecis advocatis, quia una quaeque alias omnes totumque universum suo modo involvit.”

A complete individual notion, which is connected to a single individual substance, i.e. a monad, entails any accidental truth about the monad. Substances mirror to a certain extent their complete individual notions on the substantial level of Leibniz's ontology. Nevertheless, there is not only a link between a monad and its corresponding notion, but there is also a connection between any perception of a monad and the ideas entailed in its complete individual notion. And the change of perception which is guaranteed by the monad's appetite is connected to the unique sequence and the relation between the monadic ideas of its complete individual notion and its relational ideas. To use a metaphor: the complete individual notion, which is a unique sequence of monadic and relational ideas, is like a software, which enters the hardware, i.e. the substantial and living being. In some sense, the software, the notion, is a "non-living"⁴⁸ entity, while the hardware, the monad, is a living creature. The first is immutable, the latter a spontaneous and changing being (cf. GP II, p. 270). In this sense, Leibniz represents a position called *exemplarism*.

"Exemplarism is the theory that the ideas of all possible created beings exist eternally in God's mind and act as models or exemplars for those among them that God chooses to create."⁴⁹

In Leibniz's case, the exemplars of created monads are their corresponding complete individual notions.

3.1. *Striving Towards Existence – a Misunderstanding*

Creatures are created. However, what should we think of the notion of *creation* in Leibniz? A number of Leibniz scholars, such as David Blumenfeld or Arthur Lovejoy,⁵⁰ interpreted some essays from the 1680's and 1690's, especially some passages in *On the Ultimate Origination of Things*, as Leibniz's "esoteric story of creation". There, Leibniz says, for instance:

"[W]e must first acknowledge that since something rather than nothing exists, there is certain urge for existence or (so to speak) a straining toward existence in possible things or in possibility or essence itself; in a word, essence in and of itself strives for existence. Furthermore (...) all possibles (...) strive with equal right for existence in proportion to the amount of essence or reality or the degree of perfection they contain (...)." (Ariew/Garber, p. 150; GP VII, p. 303)⁵¹

One might think that Leibniz claims that every possible substance, i.e. every complete individual notion can actualise itself. The actualisation of possibles seems to be like Charles Darwin's (or Adam Smith's) survival of the fittest, but the criteria for possibles to become actual depends on their compossibility and their intrinsic perfections. However, in the end, there is a sequence of compossible possibles, which is the perfect sequence of possibles, which comes into actuality. Hence, within this framework, the link between possibles and actuals seems to be a very natural one. It is part of the nature of some compossible possibles to actualise themselves because they are the best and most perfect combination of possibles. But "[s]uch a reading, however, is untenable"⁵² because of two main arguments at least:

First, there is much textual evidence in Leibniz oeuvre. Only a divine decree is the sufficient reason because a single compossible sequence of possibles was actualised. Hence, Leibniz says in the *Theodicy* without any ambiguity:

"One may say that as soon as God has decreed to create something there is a struggle between all the possibles, all of them laying claim to existence, and that those which, being united, produce most reality, most perfection, most significance carry the day. It is true that all this struggle can only be ideal, that is to say, it can only be a conflict of reasons in the most perfect understanding, which cannot fail to act in the most perfect way, and consequently to choose the best." (Hugard, p. 1063; GP VI, p. 236)⁵³

Thus, indeed, the urge of existence or the straining towards existence is Janus-faced. On the one hand, the degree of a possible world's perfection does not depend on God's volition, but it is a result of the perfections, which are contained in the complete individual notions, which are compossible and establish together a possible world. It is a result of a combination only according to the PC and not according to the PSR. Alternatively, as Leibniz puts it:

"[I]t is obvious that the essences of things [the possibles, JLP] depend on the divine nature [the divine mind, JLP], existences on the divine will."⁵⁴

Certainly, it is an intrinsic fact, which makes a certain possible world the best possible world. On the other hand, it is only a divine decree that can actualise the perfect sequence of compossible possibles. In some sense, God has to evaluate in respect to his tendencies what compossible sequence of possibles is worthy of being created. What the sequence "looks like" does not depend on his tendencies, but what sequence is actualised depends only on God's tendencies. There is no *necessary* link between the perfection of a certain possible world and being actual.

"The 'demand' or 'claim' that possibles make for existence refers strictly to the magnitude of the reason they offer to God to create them."⁵⁵

Secondly, complete individual notions and possible worlds cannot have an intrinsic power to actualise themselves because, for Leibniz, only actual entities have powers, and "for nothing can obtain existence by its own force, but only by the decree of God" (A 6.4, p. 557).⁵⁶ Only God as *actus purus* can create and actualise that sequence of possibles, which contains the highest intrinsic degree of perfections, i.e. the best, or perfect possible world. Leibniz's abso-

48

The word "non-living" is in quotation marks because, according to Leibniz's *Divine Conceptualism*, in some sense the ideas are alive because they are identical with divine thoughts.

49

Linda Zagzebski, "Individual Essence and the Creation", in: Thomas Morris (ed.), *Divine and Human Action. Essays in the Metaphysics of Theism*, Cornell University Press, Athaca – London 1988, pp. 119–144, p. 135.

50

David Blumenfeld, "Leibniz's Theory of the Striving Possibles", *Studia Leibnitiana* 5 (1973), pp. 163–177; Arthur Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being. A Study of the History of an Idea*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (MA) 1936, pp. 144–182.

51

Original text: "[P]rimo agnoscere debemus eo ipso, quod aliquid potius existit quam nihil, aliquam in rebus possibilibus seu in ipsa possibilitate vel essentia esse exigentiam existentiae, vel (ut sic dicam) praetensionem ad existendum et, ut verbo complectar, essentiam per se tendere ad existentiam. (...) pari jure ad essentiam tendere pro quantitate essentiae seu realitatis, vel pro gradu perfectionis quem involvunt."

52

D. Rutherford, "The Actual World", p. 67.

53

Original text: "L'on peut dire qu'aussitost que Dieu a decerné de créer quelque chose, il y a un combat entre tous les possibles, tous pretendans à l'existence; et que ceux qui joints ensemble produisent le plus de réalité, le plus de perfection, le plus d'intelligibilité, l'emportent. Il est vray que tout ce combat ne peut être qu'idéal, c'est à dire il ne peut être qu'un conflit de raisons dans l'entendement le plus parfait, qui ne peut manquer d'agir de la maniere la plus parfaite, et par consequent de choisir le mieux."

54

Translation from: D. Rutherford, "The Actual World", p. 68; A 6.4, p. 557. Original text: "Ex his patet Essentias rerum pendere a natura divina, existentias a voluntate divina."

55

D. Rutherford, "The Actual World", p. 67.

56

Original text: "... neque enim propria vi sed decreto Dei existentiam obtinere possunt."

lutely theocentric metaphysics rules out Blumenfeld's and Lovejoy's theory of striving towards existence.

3.2. *Creation out of Nothing and Divine Preservation*

Since the possibles cannot bring themselves into existence, their actual existence requires an external source. Leibniz anticipated Blumenfeld's and Lovejoy's hypotheses when he emphasises in *Monadology* and in *Principles of Nature and Grace Based on Reason* that substances do not come into existence and pass away naturally. As mentioned above, Leibniz claims that monads are simple unextended entities. But only what is not simple, but composite and has parts, can come into existence and pass away naturally. Therefore, “[s]ince the monads have no parts, they can neither be formed nor destroyed” (Ariew/Garber, p. 207; GP VI, p. 598)⁵⁷ naturally (cf. GP VI, p. 607). From a logical point of view, this argument is valid, but the premises are more or less controversial. For our purpose, however, we only have to focus on the solution Leibniz offers to the problem of the origin and fading of substances.⁵⁸ If monads cannot come into existence and pass away naturally, they come into existence and pass away supernaturally: “par creation” (GP VI, p. 607). Connected immediately to the concept of creation, for Leibniz the Christian doctrine is that human beings are created in the image of God. This doctrine is extended to all created beings because every monad imitates God by exemplifying divine perfection in a more or less imperfect, i.e. limited manner, and hence, is “like a little divinity in its own realm” (Ariew/Garber, p. 223; GP VI, p. 621).⁵⁹ All creatures, i.e. all monads “receive their being in the form of limitations of the divine perfections of power, knowledge, and will”.⁶⁰ Therefore, Leibniz says in *Monadology* § 48:

“God has *power*, which is the source of everything, *knowledge*, which contains the diversity of ideas, and finally *will*, which brings about changes or products in accordance with the principle of the best. And these correspond to what, in created monads, is the subject or the basis, the perceptive faculty and the appetitive faculty. But in God these attributes are absolutely infinite or perfect, while in the created monads or in entelechies [...] they are only imitations of it, in proportion to the perfection that they have.” (Ariew/Garber, p. 219; GP VI, p. 615)⁶¹

Because all monads imitate the creator and therefore share divine perfections, sometimes more, sometimes less, in a limited way, it seems that in “creation, God communicates his perfections to finite beings”.⁶² But what exactly does Leibniz mean by the term ‘creation’?

In Leibniz's oeuvre, we can find two distinct, but strongly connected uses of the notion of ‘creation’: *creatio ex nihilo*⁶³ and *creatio continua*. It seems to be odd, indeed, to speak about creation out of nothing in a proper sense within Leibnizian metaphysics, because according to the previous section we already know that “prior” to creation, there is the ideal realm, i.e. an infinite number of possibles. For this reason, there is something “before” creation, namely God's complex thoughts. Nevertheless, we can speak about creation out of nothing in an improper sense, because “before” creation, there are indeed no living beings that are more or less independent of God. Only the actualisation of a compossible sequence on possibles “is full of life” (Ariew/Garber, p. 207; GP VI, p. 598).⁶⁴

It follows from God's timelessness (cf. C, p. 76) and Leibniz's theory of the ideality of time⁶⁵ that creation out of nothing cannot be a historical event, located in time (Cf. GP VII, p. 373–374). Therefore, creation out of nothing must be interpreted as a single eternal act.⁶⁶ In the second letter to Samuel Clarke from 1715, Leibniz says:

“I do not say the material world is a machine or watch that goes without God’s interposition, and I have sufficiently insisted that creatures need his continual influence.” (Ariew/Garber, p. 323; GP VII, p. 358)⁶⁷

In this passage he emphasises the doctrine of divine preservation and the reason for this is really simple: If creation out of nothing is a single eternal act, then in every moment the creation is created in the very same eternal act. From God’s eternal perspective (and for Leibniz as a theist this perspective is the proper perspective), *creatio ex nihilo* and *creatio continua* coincide.⁶⁸ According to Leibniz, both are absolute miracles, as he emphasises against Samuel Clarke in his fourth response:

“There are miracles of an inferior sort which an angel can work. He can, for instance, make a man walk upon the water without sinking. But there are miracles which none but God can work, they exceeding all natural powers. Of this kind are creating an annihilation.” (Ariew/Garber, pp. 331–332; GP VII, p. 377)⁶⁹

It is a miracle that God actualised what he thought before, and the result is an infinite number of living beings, all connected to their complete individual notions in God’s mind, like a particular being is connected to its essence.

57

Original text: “Les Monades, n’ayant point de parties, ne sauroient être formées ny dé-faites.”

58

For a detailed reconstruction of the premises, please refer to: Hubertus Busche, “Übernatürlichkeit und Fensterlosigkeit der Monaden”, in: Hubertus Busche (ed.), *Monadologie*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin 2009, pp. 49–80.

59

Original text: “... chaque esprit étant comme une petite divinité dans son département.” Note that in this context, Leibniz refers only to minds. For a detailed study about the importance of the Christian doctrine of the image of God in Leibniz’s metaphysics, please refer to: E. Craig, *The Mind of God and the Works of Man*.

60

Donald Rutherford, *The Rational Order of Nature*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1995, p. 178.

61

Original text: “Il y a en Dieu la Puissance, qui est la source de tout, puis la Connoissance, qui contient le detail des Idées, et enfin la Volonté, qui fait les changemens ou productions selon le principe du Meilleur. Et c’est ce qui répond à ce qui dans les Monades créées fait le sujet ou la Base, la Faculté perceptive et la Faculté Appetitive. Mais en Dieu ces attributs sont absolument infinis ou parfaits, et dans les Monades créées on dans les Entelechies (...) ce n’en sont que des imitations à mesure qu’il y a de la perfection.”

62

D. Rutherford, *The Rational Order of Nature*, p. 179.

63

Leibniz, like many other early modern philosophers and theologians, classifies nothingness as the *nihil privativum*, i. e. the privation of something.

64

Original text: “... est plaine de vie.”

65

Cf. GP VI, pp. 491–492; Christina Schneider, *Leibniz’ Metaphysik. Ein formaler Zugang*, Philosophia Verlag, München 2001, pp. 77, 93–98.

66

The so-called same-action-thesis is supported not only by Leibniz, but by Suárez, Descartes and Malebranche too. Cf. David Vander Laan, “Creation and Conservation”, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Available at: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/creation-conservation/> (accessed on 27 June 2019).

67

Original text: “Je ne dis point que le Monde corporel est one Machine ou Montre qui va sans l’interposition de Dieu, et je presse assés que les Creatures ont besoin de son influence continuelle.”

68

Cf. Aloys Pichler, *Die Theologie des Leibniz aus sämtlichen gedruckten und vielen noch ungedruckten Quellen*, vol. 1, Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, Hildesheim 1965, pp. 251–254.

69

Original text: “Il y a des miracles d’une sorte inferieure, qu’un ange pent produire; car il peut, par exemple, faire qu’un homme aille sur l’eau sans enfoncer. Mais il y a des miracles réservés à Dieu et qui surpassent toutes les forces naturelles, tel est celui de créer ou d’annihiler.”

4. Conclusion

For Leibniz, creation requires divine ideas. Nevertheless, for Leibniz creation as an actualisation of a subset of all possibles, i.e. the most perfect sequence of compossible complete individual notions and some ideas, is a miracle. It is a transition from “non-living” combinations of ideas “in” God’s mind to living and spontaneous substances “outside” the divine mind, which are beings less dependent on God than ideas, complete individual notions and possible worlds. The relation between the possibles in God’s mind and substances is like the relation between an exemplar or an essence and a particular being or like a perfect blueprint and its realisation.

Jan Levin Propach

Leibnizovi svjetovi

Veza između najboljeg mogućeg svijeta i monadne domene

Sažetak

U ovom radu tvrdim da u Leibnizovoj metafizici možemo koristiti pojam svijet na dva načina. U jednu ruku, tako što se referiramo na visoko kompleksne božanske misli, odnosno na idealnu domenu, a u drugu ruku, za referiranje na mrežu živih supstancija s pripadnim percepcijama i stremljenjima, odnosno na supstancijalnu domenu. Najprije, pojasnit ću idealnu domenu u Leibnizovoj metafizici, koja se sastoji od tri kombinatorne razine o temeljnim entitetima, tj. od jednostavnih ideja u Božjem umu: kompleksne ideje, potpuni individualni pojmovi i mogući svjetovi. Drugi dio bavi se individualnim supstancijama, odnosno monadama. U trećem, konačnom dijelu raspravljam o različitim načinima na koje se može misliti o vezi između idealnog i monadnog svijeta.

Ključne riječi

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, najbolji mogući svijet, postojeći svijet, monade

Jan Levin Propach

Leibniz' Welten

Das Verhältnis zwischen der bestmöglichen Welt und dem Monadenreich

Zusammenfassung

In diesem Beitrag unterstelle ich der Leibniz'schen Philosophie eine zweifache Verwendung des Welt-Begriffes. Auf der einen Seite kann der Begriff Welt auf hochkomplexe göttliche Gedanken, also den ideellen Bereich in Leibniz' Metaphysik, bezogen werden. Auf der anderen Seite kann als Welt der Bereich des lebendigen Seienden, also der individuellen Substanzen und Monaden, bezeichnet werden. Zunächst werde ich den ideellen Bereich, welcher bei Leibniz aus drei durch Kombinationen gebildeten Bereichen besteht, erläutern: Dies sind zunächst die einfachen Ideen, dann die komplexen Ideen, die vollständigen Begriffe und schließlich die möglichen Welten. Anschließend wird der Fokus auf die Monaden und ihre Perzeptionen und Appetitionen gerichtet, bevor in einem letzten Schritt die Verknüpfung beider Bereiche – des ideellen und des monadischen – ausgeleuchtet werden soll.

Schlüsselwörter

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, bestmögliche Welt, aktuelle Welt, Monaden

Jan Levin Propach

Les mondes de Leibniz

La relation entre le meilleur monde possible et le royaume des Monades

Résumé

Mon travail entend éclairer le phénomène de double application du concept de monde qui traverse la philosophie leibnizienne. Ce concept peut en effet désigner à la fois les pensées divines hautement complexes (le domaine idéal dans la métaphysique de Leibniz) et le domaine des êtres vivants, c'est à dire des substances individuelles et des monades. Je vais d'abord développer le domaine idéal qui se laisse structurer en trois dimensions formées par combinaisons : les idées simples, les idées complexes, les notions complètes et enfin les mondes possibles. Puis je mettrai le focus sur les monades et leurs perceptions et appétitions. Il faudra dans un dernier temps mettre en lumière les connexions qu'entretiennent le domaine des idées et celui des monades.

Mots-clés

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, meilleur monde possible, monde actuel, monade