

Brückenschläge: Daniel Ernst Jablonski im Europa der Frühaufklärung, ed. Hartmut Rudolph, et al. Dössel: Verlag Janos Stekovics, 2010. Pp. 439, numerous color plates.

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In 2011, the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy published, after a wait of 313 years, Leibniz' great 1698 irenical treatise entitled *Unvorgreiffliches Bedencken* ("Unprejudiced Thoughts") on Lutheran-Calvinist re-unification (A IV, 7, pp. 462 ff.)—a work which the eminent Reformation-scholar Irena Backus has rightly called Leibniz most important contribution to philosophical theology before the 1710 *Théodicée* itself. (The Academy-edition offers, on facing pages, both the "First Version" of *Unvorgreiffliches Bedencken*—the radical, boldly anti-Cartesian, Calvin-doubting version—and the shorter, more diplomatic (but also less philosophically effective) "Final Version.")

Both versions of Leibniz' *Unvorgreiffliches Bedencken* are responses to the so-called *Kurtze Vorstellung* ("Short Representation") of Lutheran-Calvinist differences by the Calvinist preacher to the Prussian court in Berlin, Daniel Ernst Jablonski (Oxford-educated and broad-minded); the *Kurtze Vorstellung* (1697) was first published by Dr. Hartmut Rudolph (distinguished retired editor of Leibniz' *Politische Schriften*) in a *Sonderheft* of *Studia Leibnitiana*, "Labora Diligenter," in 1999.

Now Hartmut Rudolph, the world's leading authority on the Leibniz-Jablonski connection, has given us (together with two colleagues, J. Bahlcke and B. Dybas) a splendid large book on Jablonski as "bridge-builder," linking not just Lutherans and Calvinists, but also Berlin and Hannover, Leibniz and Berlin intellectuals, and indeed all those who helped set up the Berlin Academy of Sciences at the dawn of the 18th century.

Three of *Brückenschläge*'s best chapters are by Dr. Rudolph, and perhaps the very finest (and most Leibniz-relevant) is the one entitled, "Academy and Internal Protestant Church-Union: Bridge-building of the Court-Precacher to the Republic of Letters and to the Lutheran Confession." The elaborate title gives a precise sense of the sheer range of this remarkable chapter, which casts more light on Leibniz (and his countless Berlin connections) than many a full-length book. Since Leibniz was obsessed with religions re-unification through "wise charity" and *benevolentia universalis*, not through Cartesian or Calvinist *fiat*—and with the institutionalization

PATRICK RILEY

of that wisdom and benevolence in the Berlin Academy—Rudolph’s new bridge-building contributions are of the greatest possible value. Indeed the world of Leibniz-Scholarship owes an enormous debt to Hartmut Rudolph, and it is a pleasure to acknowledge that indebtedness in the leading Anglophone Leibniz-forum.