

## Leibnizian Modality Again: Reply to Murray

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The reader emerging from Leibniz's early *Disputatio Metaphysica de Principio Individui* (1663) is left with the challenge of relating its broadly scholastic themes to his mature metaphysics. The connections are rarely obvious. Where the *Disputatio* is largely neutral about the extension of 'individual substance', (i) Leibniz's engagement with its most basic question—"How many?"—rendered the perennial monism/pluralism debate as much part-and-parcel of his metaphysic as it was for Spinoza's. Leibniz agreed that substances aren't divisible, but doubted Spinoza's no-shared-attribute route to the answer "One", urging that substance might be alike in respect of some attributes but not all (G I,141:L 198). Thus anticipating (ii) his own commitment to the Identity of Indiscernibles (PI), Leibniz came into possession of perhaps the most famous of his efforts to preserve the intension of 'individual substance' deeply important to him—that numerical distinction goes with qualitative difference, and numerical sameness with exact qualitative similarity. That synchronic thesis was, on the heels of indicting purely passive Cartesian extension, wed to a second intensional aspect of 'individual substance' requiring (iii) possession of a causally active "form or force" (G IV,507: L 501) that constitutes what is permanent in enduring things.

A patient accounting of these mature commitments (i) – (iii), attempted in chapters 5-7 of our *Substance and Individuation in Leibniz*,<sup>1</sup> depends at once on scholastic themes prominent in the *Disputatio* but less visible in mature texts and commentator's handling of them, and on what is absent from the early *Disputatio* but prominent in mature writings and the secondary literature. Accidents had been wittingly left aside in the early account. How are individual substances related to their qualities? Here, the exegetical and philosophical challenges become especially difficult. Well in place are various *de dicto* deliverances of intensional requirements (of separability, incommunicability, division, numerical unity) as Leibniz sees them; to this Leibniz weds a distinctive bit of high-level metaphysics, crucial details of which look to threaten his deepest commitments about individual substance itself. In particular, the separability requirement on individuals enjoying real (numerical) distinction sets uncomfortably alongside an emerging story of substances as closely linked to their individual accidents. The modal strength of that link, forged in large measure by the complete concept doctrine, is only tightened by a natural ally of that doctrine—PI—evidently grounding numerical sameness and difference in

qualitative similarity and dissimilarity. Insofar as sameness and difference is given in terms of the category of accident, the idea that substance is prior to accident in the order of being gets undone; insofar as numerical unity is delivered by qualitative similarity, the idea that numerical unity is primordial in the order of being gets challenged; insofar as qualitative character includes the category of relation to secure mirroring and harmony, the separability of substances, and the recurring notion that a principle of individual unity must be internal, are put under great pressure. Thus arise some knotty issues. The latter question, of (iv) Leibniz's approach to inter-substantial relations, emerges as central to understanding his distinctive modal approach to a metaphysics of individuation. This is particularly so when seeking out entailments of the complete concept doctrine for *de re* modal constraints on the qualitative clothing substances enjoy—for (v) Leibniz's essentialism, one might call it. As for properties themselves and the concepts expressing them: even if given a broadly Suarezian, weak-nominalist gloss, they are by their nature general, "common" in the formal if not material mode. Without availing himself of any Scotistic *entitas individualis* formally distinct from common natures, one is left to wonder (vi) whether the purely general and descriptive resources of a complete concept can serve to ground the avowedly *de re* modal claims of Leibniz's essentialism as literally (not just idiomatically) true.

The themes of (iv)-(vi) are taken up in chapters 2-4 of CH. In his critical review of our work on Leibnizian modality,<sup>2</sup> Professor Murray opts to focus on the middle material of Chapter 3 ("Essentialism"), which he predicts "will surely become one of the most widely discussed sections of the book." No prophets, we suspected early on (CH, "Introduction", 6) that reconsidering Leibniz's essentialism would earn all the attention of flogging a dead horse. We are happy to be wrong, and will be happier still if Murray is right—not so much because our conclusion about Leibnizian essentialism is proposed as a thesis on which all else stands or falls,<sup>3</sup> but because one cannot take it seriously without taking the under-appreciated themes of its two neighboring chapters more seriously still. Murray does not engage the textual and philosophical arguments informing our reconstruction of Leibniz's view on relations and relational truths, nor the threat of generality posed by the complete concept doctrine against *de re* modality. His narrower concerns are three: (I) to raise questions that need answering by anyone who (like us) defends the strong essentialist account; (II) to argue that our objections to moderate essentialism are not convincing enough to recommend giving it up as the most plausible reading of Leibniz; and (III) to raise some methodological concerns with our approach to Leibnizian texts.

I. Strong Essentialism

There are a cluster of problems figuring in what we describe (CH 16-19, 87-89) as the project of modal individuation, some already familiar in the scholastic debate, others less so or not at all. The distinctive and difficult bit of high-level theory that Leibniz brought to his post-*Disputatio* reflections on the nature of individual substance arise largely from the P-in-S and CC package—the predicate-in-subject account of truth, and the complete-concept doctrine. From the mainly middle-years texts in which this package is stated and articulated one may extract what has come to be called superessentialism: since individual concepts express singular natures or essences of substances, (1) an individual could not have a different individual concept than the one it in fact has; and since such concepts are complete, (2) all the properties of an individual substance are essential to it; hence (3) Leibniz must deny transworld identity and claim that creatures are world-bound individuals. But Leibniz is no necessitarian: (4) the truth of work-a-day modal claims to the effect that some actual individual  $x$  could have been otherwise are preserved on a counterpart-theoretic semantics, according to which such claims are to be understood as talk about possible non-actual individuals that are similar to but not identical with  $x$ .

Our strong essentialist reading of Leibniz arises in the context of offering what we intended as a fair-minded evaluation of superessentialism. Superessentialism is *prima facie* plausible as a gloss on many suggestive texts. But supposing (as seems to us true) that the range of texts are not of one voice, one might take the liberty of distinguishing what some texts suggest Leibniz believed from what the texts overall commit him to believing. Leibniz states and defends (sticking with the neutral taxonomy) *Leibnizian essentialism*: singular individual concepts are complete, and no individual could have fallen under a different complete concept. In the familiar idiom of worlds (of which more below), this commits Leibniz to believing that for any individual substance  $x$ ,  $x$  has the same complete concept at any world at which  $x$  exists, which is manifestly silent about whether  $x$  exists at more than one world. The trick is evidently to secure (3) by other means. We argue at some length (CH 89-110) that, suggestive and natural glosses notwithstanding, nothing with sufficient textual and philosophical credentials can establish Leibniz's commitment to the metaphysical—avowedly not semantic—thesis of world-bound individuals (WBI). Here, as Murray notes, we lean heavily on the results of Chapter 2. The quick route to securing WBI by locating in complete concepts so-called relational properties—say, 'is-R-to- $s^*$ ' for some non-

actual  $s^*$ , or ‘is-in-an-F-world’ for some actually uninstantiated F—is scarcely more than a trick. Summarizing (CH 63-86): oft-cited syntactic considerations do not count against, and both scholastic precedent and textual evidence counts strongly for, Leibniz’s commitment to judging relational facts and properties as reducible to intrinsic monadic states of the relata. Nor does the thesis of harmonious mirroring help secure WBI (CH 97-103). Illustrating here (not summarizing) with a textual example: Des Bosses thought that Leibnizian essentialism plus harmonious correspondence did the trick, claiming that

If the monads of the universe get their perceptions of their own store, so to speak, and without any physical influence of one on the other; and if, furthermore, the perceptions of each monad correspond exactly to the rest of the monads which God has already created, and to the perceptions of these monads, and are harmonized so as to represent them; it follows that God could not create any one of these monads which thus exist without constructing all the others which equally exist now...(G II,493: L 610).

Leibniz replied that

The answer 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 harmoniously. There would be no deception of rational creatures, however, even if everything outside of them did not correspond exactly to their experiences, or indeed if nothing did, just as if there were only one mind... (G II,496: L 611)<sup>4</sup>

That reply, like others from Leibniz, does double duty: witness in passing the modally robust separability requirement already familiar in the *Disputatio*—echoing in its own way the related but distinct theme of the early-<sup>5</sup> and late-Leibniz that modal individuation must go by what is wholly internal to the individual substance itself.

Murray “wonders whether there is any difference between superessentialism and strong essentialism that gets one any philosophical mileage.” We sought mileage of a sort rather different from what Murray seeks and doesn’t find. If in judging what Leibniz believed, the texts are suggestive of superessentialism, we reckoned it worthwhile to show that Leibnizian essentialism itself does not entail WBI.<sup>6</sup> And that is just one (evidently most visible, if not most important) piece of a large picture we aimed to reconstruct. The advantage we urge for strong essentialism, on textual and philosophical grounds, is not that it offers a better semantic accounting of how to go about vindicating our ordinary *de re* modal judgments of contingency, but rather that it gives more faithful voice to the full range of views driving Leibniz’s

metaphysics—views about relational facts as second-rate, about God’s work being done once He fixes the intrinsic histories, about a modal separability requirement on really distinct substances, and so on. Compare: it is one thing to work at motivating and rendering plausible a metaphysical story according to which causation is immanent not transeunt (intra-, not inter-), and quite another to engage the project of rescuing ordinary causal judgments that seem to include inter-substantial claims which the metaphysic excludes and seem to exclude intra-causal claims which the metaphysic includes.<sup>7</sup> The metaphysics-semantics connection—the M-S connection—is bigger than strong essentialism (or immanent causation) itself.

In Part 1 of his article, Murray does not take issue with our arguments against superessentialism and for a strong essentialism of (1) and (2) but not-(3). His concern is with (4). As just noted, this strong essentialism by itself entails no modal semantics—nor, more weakly, a general theory about what grounds contingency. So the remaining issue of (4) in this context is one of philosophical bookkeeping among the superessentialist claims (1) – (4) on the table. (4) is on the table because it is agreed on all hands that Leibniz owes us some story connecting his modal metaphysics with our usual and preferred claims of contingent property-attribution, and because some (notably those favoring a superessentialist gloss) have taken putative counterpart texts to gesture in that direction more promisingly *as a semantics of de re modal attribution* than other gestures—say, hypothetical necessity or infinite analysis accounts of contingency. Thus we ask, finally: quite apart from whether Leibniz in fact employs counterpart-theoretic resources in evaluating *de re* modal claims (or some class of them: of this more below), *can* those resources be consistently run in harness with his metaphysics? Our point, by way of attending to what Murray describes as “surrounding nodes in logical space,” was to argue that, appearances to the contrary notwithstanding, they can (CH 119-123).

Murray has his doubts that they can. The cumulative effect of Murray’s doubts is to show that CH is not at all clear about how the M-S connection generally is to be played out. Part of the difficulty is that there is too little in what Leibniz says—owing perhaps to obscurity in his own mind about the connection between (1)-(2) and (3), perhaps to theological sensitivities, perhaps to the very real difficulty of how to go about wedding a metaphysical story articulated in some natural language to a semantics that seems very much at deviance with its own use in that articulation—to move confidently forward with any general account on his behalf. Murray’s concern is that moving forward could well take one in different directions:

‘Leibniz believes truly that God exists’ emerges readily on the counterpart approach as expressing a contingent attribution, but is necessary if one pressed for a transworld grounding of *de re* ascriptions of such intrinsic belief states. One must proceed cautiously here. (A) It may well be that a straight transworld semantics (which we do not attribute to Leibniz) cannot, without much ado and fiddling in details, yield an M-S connection charitable enough to vindicate our modal intuitions about commonplace ascriptions such as this one. If so, then all the more reason to look elsewhere (CH 120-22)—to a more forgivable (because, famously, more malleable) counterpart approach, say. (B) But even the counterpart approach, if deployed in the service of some charitable M-S connection, may itself not work without much ado and fiddling in details: it too may be in some ways more restrictive, in other ways more permissive, vis-à-vis the metaphysic. Thus some non-intrinsic duplicates of Adam will count as his counterparts, but also some intrinsic duplicates will not count as counterparts—the latter in such cases where our modal intuitions recommend relational impossibilities (think of Kripkean cases of necessity-of-origin, for example). (C) And what counts as intrinsic may turn out to be more restrictive than one at first suspects. Shy of any reasons for attributing to Leibniz the liberal notion that every open sentence in natural language expresses a property, one is inclined to judge ‘Leibniz believes truly that God exists’ to be true by virtue of Leibniz’s believing that God exists and it’s being the case that this belief is true. The second of these needn’t detain us. The first, ‘believes that God exists’, will for Leibniz go the way all inner perceptual states of monads go. On the picture urged in Chapter 2 of CH, such states “are monadic: that they count as expressions of a thing outside it cannot be derived from anything intrinsic to that state” (CH 74). We stand by that much. One might extract from such details as Leibniz gives, on this general picture, a proto-theory of the truthmakers for propositional attitude attributions according to which *content* is determined extrinsically. If so, a belief state may be intrinsically duplicated while taking on a different content. On this account, Murray’s question “Is the property of ‘freely choosing to travel to Paris’ intrinsic or not?” would be answered “Yes and no: the state of freely choosing is intrinsic, the content rendering it *of Paris* is not.”<sup>8</sup> So Murray is of course right: Leibniz’s believing and Leibniz’s freely choosing—no more or less than his garden-variety headaches—are all alike intrinsic and (according to strong essentialism) written into Leibniz’s complete concept; but evidently they are contingent (according to our modal intuitions). Whether Leibniz can offer an M-S connection to handle this remains the prize question. Our point (of CH 119-23) was that

counterpart theory isn't an inconsistent approach toward doing so.

## II. Moderate Essentialism

Murray recommends that one should evaluate a proposed rendering Leibniz's essentialism in terms of "whether it helps him"—helps, that is, to advance Leibniz's original aims for contingency in securing views on freedom and theodicy. The advice is well-taken, providing one lets Leibniz define a sense of contingency and a staunchly compatibilist freedom for himself, not for oneself and one's favored contemporary presumptions about how (say) to secure moral responsibility worth having. Suppose that Leibniz's freely choosing is intrinsic. Granting this, Murray argues that there is "reason to be concerned" about our strong essentialist reading, since Leibniz insists that free actions are contingent, and that "contingent properties of a substance are contingent because of their 'mode of containment' in the individual concept." The weaker, moderate essentialist rendering Murray finds preferable thus urges on Leibniz's behalf a distinction between intrinsic and essential properties—the former contingent, the latter necessary. Murray cites the Leibniz-Arnauld Correspondence and a text from Grua (383: *De libertate creaturae et electione divina*) in support of a moderate "superintrinsicist" essentialism, arguing that Leibniz's endorsement of (SI<sub>1</sub>)

(SI<sub>1</sub>) For every property P had by an individual  $x$ , if an individual lacked P, it wouldn't be  $x$ .

is weaker than strong essentialism and superessentialism. That is right, at least if one evaluates (SI<sub>1</sub>) on the broadly Lewisian terms that Murray employs but nevertheless dislikes: as we argue (CH 129), moderate essentialism as characterized by (SI<sub>1</sub>) does not entail that there are no worlds at which  $x$  exists and lacks P. So far, so fair. But from this conclusion, one can fairly recommend moderate superintrinsicist essentialism over strong essentialism and superessentialism only if the Leibniz-Arnauld and Grua texts indeed establish a commitment to "distinct modes of property-containment in individual concepts" able to forge a modally significant distinction between intrinsic properties and essential properties as the weaker (SI<sub>1</sub>) characterizes it.

At the risk of mounting a tired horse, we still wonder if the texts establish what moderate essentialism needs from them. Leibniz was no realist about species construed as mind-independent universals, but he was nevertheless happy enough to admit them as abstractions from individual concepts. Filter out those facts about Adam that Leibniz describes in the long July 1686 letter to Arnauld as "truths

of contingency or fact, the individual circumstances of place and time and so on” (G II,49: LA 54-5)—that is, abstract from what completely defines a particular human (Adam) to leave behind just those defining features common to humans in general, the concept of the species of human being. In this passage Leibniz says that this “abstract specific concept”—what we called a “species concept” in CH—contains “necessary or eternal truths” of Adam. Heeding our own advice of Chapter 1 (§2.2, comparing scholastic with contemporary modal taxonomies) to approach ‘essence’ and its cognates and related modal expressions cautiously, we expanded on our earlier<sup>9</sup> conviction that Leibniz’s talk of properties within a complete concept of substance *a* applying to it “necessario ac perpetuo”—as below in Grua 383—may not imply the modal contrast with intrinsic properties of *a* that moderate essentialists urge:

One ought to distinguish what is of the essence of a particular thing and what is of the concept of that thing. Of the essence of a [particular] thing is what pertains to it necessarily and perpetually; of the concept of an individual thing on the other hand is also what applies contingently or per accidens... (*De libertate creaturae et electione divina*: Grua 383).

On this reading, ‘essence’ refers to the incomplete species concept which is a subset of the complete individual concept, and the relevant contrast between “modes of containment” in complete concepts isn’t evidently of the modal sort needed by moderate superintrinsicist essentialism. Leibniz used ‘essence’ in that way again to Arnauld later in the letter cited above, and in *De libertate fato gratia Dei*:

[T]here is nothing in me at all that can be conceived in general terms, that is in terms of essence, or of a specific or incomplete concept, from which one can infer that I shall necessarily take [the journey], whereas from the fact that I am a man one can conclude that I am capable of thought; and consequently, if I do not take this journey, that will not do violence to any eternal or necessary truth. (G II,52: LA 58).

In this complete concept of possible Peter, which I grant is observed by God, are contained not only essential or necessary things, namely those flowing from an incomplete or species concept...but also existential things, so to speak, or contingent items are included there, because it is of the nature of an individual substance that its concept is perfect or complete (Grua 311).

That a property *P* of some individual *a* is “essential” in Leibniz’s usage here does not entail the falsity of strong essentialists claim that *a* could not have different intrinsic properties from those actually contained in its complete concept.

It is worth noting, too, that while it is “easy to show” that the moderate

superintrinsicist essentialism of (SI<sub>1</sub>) is weaker than our strong essentialist reading of Leibniz, it is considerably more difficult to ignore the texts committing Leibniz to a stronger (SI<sub>2</sub>):

(SI<sub>2</sub>) For any property P had by an individual *x*, if *x* lacked P, then *x* wouldn't exist.

Murray does not broach (SI<sub>2</sub>), but the difficulty of showing it to be weaker than strong essentialism underscores the importance of those texts in which Leibniz commits himself to (SI<sub>2</sub>) rather than (SI<sub>1</sub>).

You will object that it is possible for you to ask why God did not give you more strength than he has. I answer: if he had done that, you would not exist. (Grua 327)

...[W]hen I ask what would have happened were Peter to have not denied Christ, it is being asked what would have happened were Peter not Peter, because denying is contained in Peters complete concept. (Grua 358)

A falsity would therefore exist, if I did take [the journey], which would destroy the individual or complete concept of me, or what God conceives or conceived of me before deciding to create me... (G II,52: LA 58)

Perhaps someone else can show that (SI<sub>2</sub>) really is weaker than strong essentialism: in the meantime, these claims look to entail that, for any property P in the complete concept of individual substance *a*, there is no possible world at which *a* exists and lacks P. That's contemporary-speak for (1) and (2) of strong essentialism.

Let us postpone for Section III below the suitability of contemporary-speak about worlds, central to Murray's doubts about our claim (a part of Argument 1) that moderate essentialism lacks the resources to explain why Leibniz should insist that his many-Adams and many-Sextuses talk is not strictly and literally talk about the our actual Adam and Sextus. A distinct objection (CH 125-26) was that, since it denies individuals have their complete concepts essentially (contemporary sense), moderate essentialism is committed to there being more complete concepts than possible individuals. Here Murray claims that we "simply resurrect...the worries raised in the Arnauld correspondence itself over whether or not Adam has posterity essentially. Does God choose to create Adam, all other facts about Adam following necessarily? Leibniz says no. The...strong essentialist tr[ies] to maintain consistency here by holding that Leibniz really means 'yes' but that he can fly under the radar... This is surely trying to have it both ways" (p. 79). Well, we intended to do more than resurrect worries, by constructing arguments to address what has seemed to many scholars as a persistent sense that *Leibniz himself* is trying to have it both ways, and by considering general strategies for understanding

*his own efforts* at flying under the radar. The point is that the worries are indeed there. Each substance has a complete individual concept expressing all the (monadic, we argue, but never mind) facts about that individual, and truth consists in the containment of the predicate-concept in the subject-concept. Does God choose to create Adam, other facts about him following necessarily? Leibniz does not say “no”: he says “yes,” but hastens to secure a more significant “no” by adding that the necessity is happy when a necessary conditional with a moral hypothesis as antecedent yields a contingent consequent. Distinguishing possibility *ex alterius hypothesi* from possibility *sua natura* was one way he headed below the radar. Distinguishing propositions provable by finite analysis from those not so provable was another way. Not so obvious in the texts, but there for contemporary reflection by good commentators, is the route of distinguishing properties which do from properties which don’t depend upon laws of nature.<sup>10</sup> Quite obvious in several texts, and there for contemporary reflection by good commentators, is the route of other Adams, other Sextuses, other worlds.<sup>11</sup> All of these are “rescue-operations,” as we call them in CH, efforts to head below the radar, efforts to secure what seems (to Leibniz and the rest of us) the obvious fact that Peter’s sinning was contingent. Leibniz engages them all, as well he should given the CC and P-in-S package: what motivates Murray’s preferred hunt for “distinct modes of containment” in complete concepts is precisely what motivates the hunt for hypothetical necessity, for infinite analysis, for counterparts, for *some* M-S connection. Having expressed doubts about the textual viability of Murray’s preferred route, we considered—as Leibniz himself did—that node of logical space called counterparts. Is it viable? In the context of Murray’s objection, that question looks rather to be a question about counterpart theory itself, not about Leibniz: “The counterpart theorist contends that individuals have all properties necessarily, but that we can ground claims about contingency in the existence of counterparts. This is surely trying to have it both ways.” No, and yes: the counterpart theorist does not contend that individuals have all properties necessarily, precisely because contingency is grounded in the existence of possibilia that aren’t actualia. So, at least, Leibniz is tempted sometimes to think. Let’s work our way toward another look at that.

### III. Methodology

Two methodological themes inform Murray’s article. Implicitly, he urges us away from the anachronism of possible-worlds talk in approaching, struggling to

understand, and reconstructing Leibniz's modal views. And explicitly he encourages students of Leibniz to approach his metaphysics—especially, one gathers, his metaphysics of modality—less “one-dimensionally” by taking seriously Leibniz's views of God's relation to sin, of freedom and of a theology adequate to account for evil and providence. The latter is surely good advice: a more conscious heeding of it would have enriched our own work, if not taken it in different directions. In CH we did not pause to consider, for example, the proposal that Leibniz's theology supports his apparent endorsement of WBI: God is not responsible for creaturely sin if that very creature couldn't have existed unless it made those bad choices.<sup>12</sup> But of course God avoids responsibility for such choices, on *this* picture, if that very creature makes them at every world at which it exists. So one oughtn't move too quickly.

One might move too quickly in other ways. In setting the context for one important and fascinating theme of Leibniz's philosophical theology, concerning divine knowledge of conditional future contingents and creaturely sin, Murray reminds us of the famous Keilah passage of I Samuel 23:7-13 and the two bits of knowledge God shared with David: Saul would besiege the city were David to stay in Keilah, and were David to stay he would be handed over to Saul by the inhabitants of the city. Leibniz discusses this story and its counterfactuals in the mid-late 1680s, as Murray notes, and again in the *Theodicy* (1702-10). We discuss it once in late 1999, on the heels of a section (§2.1 of Chapter 3) called “God and Possible Worlds,” where we take issue with Margaret Wilson's argument against the possibility of reading Leibniz as availing himself of counterparts. Early in §2.2 comes a transition (permit us this quotation of ourselves):

We said in §1 that although Leibniz was willing to deploy the idiom of possible worlds in modal contexts, he deployed the vehicle of possible worlds primarily for discussing theological issues associated with his accounts of creation and theodicy.... That is true, as far as it goes. It went far enough in the context; but here the respect in which it paints with too wide a brush becomes relevant. For creation-theoretic, theodicean, and modal concerns will eventually intersect. Could God have created otherwise than He did? Must I have committed this sin? So the question before us here, in seeking evidence that Leibniz thought about what grounds the truth of *de re* modal claims, is rather more precisely this: whether or not the idiom of possible worlds figures in the few—if few there be—places where Leibniz gives clear evidence of a concern about the truth-makers for (say) modal attributions of divine or creaturely freedom, and whether the counterpart picture is discernibly at work

in them. (CH 116)

Murray does not take up details of Leibniz's earlier 1680s reflections on the Keilah conditionals. But consider from this period Leibniz's claim that God's knowledge of the second counterfactual scenario "is not knowledge of [our] Keilites, whose complete concept involves not [actually] being besieged...but rather is knowledge of other possible Keilites, who have everything in common with them except those things connected with the hypothesis of the siege" (A 6.4.1789-90). This is at least suggestive, isn't it? The pre/post-volitional details are perhaps not yet fully in place. But years later in the *Theodicy* Leibniz would again inquire after "the foundation God has for seeing what the people of Keilah would do" (T §41: H 146)—posing precisely the truth-maker issue of what grounds the relevant counterfactual. He replies (now indicating his reduction of *scientia media* to a species of *scientia simplicis intelligentiae*):

I resort to my principle of an infinitude of possible worlds, represented in the eternal verities, that is, in the object of divine intelligence, where all conditional futurities must be comprised. For the case of the siege of Keilah forms part of a possible world, which differs from ours only in all that is connected with this hypothesis, and the idea of this possible world represents that which would happen in this case. (T §42: H 146).

This seems to us—as it did in CH—more than suggestive. After quoting the famous Sextus passage of *Theodicy* §414 and warning of possible-world anachronism, Murray urges that "when we look at passages such as the Sextus text from the *Theodicy*, we need to be cautious about what Leibniz does and does not affirm with them. Maybe there are straightforwardly modal implications of such analogies. But it is not clear that Leibniz saw them or cared to see them." What it seems to us that Leibniz cared to see in T §414 are *other possible worlds* ("we shall see a whole world that [God] might have produced, wherein will be represented anything that can be asked of him; and in this way one may know also what would happen if any particular possibility should attain unto existence"), *similarity of worlds* ("if you put a case that differs from the actual world only in one single definite thing and in its results, a certain one of those determinate worlds will answer you"), *other-worldly inhabitants* ("I will show you some [worlds], wherein shall be found...several Sextuses resembling him"), and so on. Indeed one can scarcely avoid seeing much the same at work already back in the comfort of Leibniz's early March 1686 letter launching the Arnauld Correspondence (cf. G II,15: LA 9). When such texts were on the tip of Leibniz's pen, we doubt that if one were to ask him about the connection between other Adams or Sextuses and the assessment of *de*

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re modal ascriptions about our Adam or Sextus, one would (as Murray puts it) “be met by a furrowed brow.”

One might of course wish for more—for (say) something from Leibniz connecting a counterpart picture with (say) the doctrine of infinite analysis. Encouraged by passages from theological quarters, we attempted to do that on Leibniz’s behalf.<sup>13</sup> One might wish to see hypothetical necessity in the mix too. Still in theological quarters, that is what we suggest Murray is quite helpfully doing at the end of his article. Already in the early *Confessio* one sees an account of permission at odds with a strong closure principle—that willing is closed under *known material implication*: Leibniz denies that if one wills that P and knows that If P then Q, then one wills that Q. The weaker principle—that willing is closed under *willed material implication*—is arguably harder to deny, and the postvolitional passage struck from *De Libertate, Fato Gratia Dei et Connexis* is well-struck: God’s willing the truth of

(12) If Peter is in C, then Peter denies.

looks to entail God’s willing that Peter deny. So God wills the antecedent, not the consequent, and knows the conditional. But to reckon (12) an object of divine knowledge isn’t to claim that “Peter sins because Peter must,” as Murray suggests. As a contingent consequent of necessary conditional, Peter’s sinning is, as Leibniz would have put it to Arnauld during these years, merely necessary *ex hypothesi*.

Few of us can honestly report to feeling *no unease whatever* with the route of hypothetical necessity, or the route of infinite analysis. Or that of counterparts. Where the latter gets a deeper and more versatile grip at the level of semantic detail but suffers relatively fewer texts, hypothetical necessity enjoys more visibility but has the feel of a wholesale gesture. Infinite analysis waits somewhere in the middle. In the meantime, Leibniz’s metaphysics—modal and otherwise—offers a rich, if difficult, environment for reflecting on historical and philosophical views of God and creatures. We are indebted to Professor Murray for engaging a philosophical part of our effort to understand Leibniz.

Notes

<sup>1</sup> Cambridge, 1999. We’ll abbreviate this volume by ‘CH’.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Murray, “Critical Review of Cover and Hawthorne on Leibnizian Modality,” *The Leibniz Review* 10 (2000), pp. 73-86.

<sup>3</sup> As one reviewer—laying our intentions fairly enough aside—inclines toward reading the book: “The overall interpretation [Cover and Hawthorne] offer is so

closely knit that if one part collapses, the others will follow. The arguments for the component parts are, for the most part, very strong.” Pauline Phemister, “The Thisness of It,” *Times Literary Supplement*, 30 June 2000, p. 30.

<sup>4</sup> See also G IV,440: L 312; G IV,530. Relational truths of correspondence about any substance at a world are supervenient hypothetical necessities at best, following only on the supposition of other facts external to the substance, not intrinsic to its own nature. “There is a hypothetical necessity when a thing’s being other than it is can indeed be understood through itself, but it is necessarily as it is only non-essentially (*per accidens*), on account of other things outside itself already presupposed” (cf. Grua 271).

<sup>5</sup> “The early-Leibniz” — ignoring, crucially, the *Confessio*, where Leibniz’s mouth-piece proposes an account that “has not entered the mind of any scholastic even in a dream,” namely, “a principle of individuation, outside the thing itself” (A 6.3.147). The principle was, predictably and happily enough, short-lived.

<sup>6</sup> We have encountered, in conversation, the following criticism: “Your strong essentialist gloss isn’t the view Leibniz held: it is the view he should have held, if he wanted to be consistent.” Given the difficulty of imagining that Leibniz wanted to be inconsistent, the force of the criticism evades us. The criticism that we are not sufficiently sensitive to theological issues might run more deeply (though, as we suggest briefly in Section III below, it is unclear how that charge, if it sticks, would affect our stance on WBI).

<sup>7</sup> The analogy is imperfect, as all analogies are: one might fairly wonder if Leibniz thinks the measure of truth to be preserved in ordinary causal claims isn’t less than that measure of truth to be preserved in ordinary modal claims. There is more than one way to “preserve the phenomena.”

<sup>8</sup> Forgetting about Leibniz, for a moment: an intrinsic duplicate of yours may well be wishing to travel to Paris\* if Paris\* were a near-enough duplicate of Paris. Our point is simply to note what may be misleading in Murray’s claim that “belief states are intrinsic.” One virtue of Murray’s discussion here is to show how difficult it is properly to hook up a definition of relational (cf. CH 66-9) with a definition of intrinsic (cf. footnote 17, CH 68).

<sup>9</sup> J. A. Cover and John Hawthorne, “Leibniz on Superessentialism and World-Bound Individuals,” *Studia Leibnitiana* 22 (1990), 175-83.

<sup>10</sup> See Robert Merrihew Adams, *Leibniz: Determinist, Theist, Idealist* (Oxford, 1994), 32-3.

<sup>11</sup> See Fabrizio Mondadori, “Reference, Essentialism, and Modality in Leibniz’s Metaphysics,” *Studia Leibnitiana* 5 (1973), 73-101, and “Leibniz and the Doctrine

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of Inter-World Identity,” *Studia Leibnitiana* 7 (1975), 21-57; Michael V. Griffin, “Leibniz on God’s Knowledge of Counterfactuals,” *The Philosophical Review* 108 (1999), 317-43.

<sup>12</sup> Margaret Wilson, “Possible Gods,” *The Review of Metaphysics* 32 (1979), 729; Robert M. Adams, *Leibniz* (1994 *op. cit.*), 56.

<sup>13</sup> As a stab: the complete concept C\* counts as a counterpart of the complete concept C of Adam just in case the distinctness of C from C\* is provable only by infinite analysis (where anything finitely provable for C is also provable for C\* and vice versa).

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