questions: What is the ontological status of Good and Evil? What is it that *obliges* us to pursue the one and flee the other (p. 33)? The answers of the school are distinctive to the extent that they foresake traditional naturalism, embracing voluntarism in its place. This they do particularly concerning the second question. Grotius adopts a "creationist" position, holding that the good is good-for-us, because we have been so created. Pufendorf, still more radically voluntarist, holds that the good is good merely because it was commanded. Leibniz differs from both, though more sharply from Pufendorf, in not admitting the distinction upon which their thought is based, namely that between something's being good or evil and there being an obligation to pursue or flee it.

The interest of Sève's account lies not so much in the originality of its conclusions about Leibniz as in the size and detail of the background picture in which they are located. A couple of unfortunate technical points, which might easily have been avoided, increase the difficulty of reading with profit this in any case challenging book. First, the bibliography provided (233f), and referred to by abbreviations in the text, is slight. (The unconventional abbreviations for works of Leibniz also make it less helpful than would have been the standard ones of *Studia Leibnitiana*.) In the second place, the footnotes of this scholarly work are thick with further references which, according to a practice lamentably widespread in France, appear in a usable form only when first cited, and are not found in the bibliography. Since this book also lacks an index, the reader whose interest is caught by a particular reference to a given work has no choice but to trudge back through as many previous footnotes as may intervene until coming to its first mention.

Notwithstanding these objections, however, the specialist with an interest in the history of modern legal philosophy and Leibniz's place within it will find here an able and learned guide.

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[1] p. 17. See esp. A. Muralt: "La structure de la philosophie politique moderne" in *Souveraineté et pouvoir, Cahiers de la revue de theologie et de philosophie* (2) 1978.

[2] Of a doctrinal sort. Of course the notion of God continues to play its important role.

The Philosophy of Leibniz: Metaphysics & Language, by Benson Mates. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986. 280 pp. Reviewed by Jeffrey Tlumak, Vanderbilt University.

Mates' book has already been widely read and justly praised. It is full of clear, interesting arguments on most of the topics which engage contemporary readers of Leibniz, expertly and extensively marshalls texts, and includes a short but unusually good biography and outline of Leibniz's system. Since I write here for an unusually well-informed and well-motivate audience, I allow myself compressed formulations of controversial arguments, antecedently acknowledging need for elaboration. I focus on a cluster of interconnected, central concerns: the nature and role of nominalism, individual concepts, contingency, rational explanation, bestness and perception.

On Mates' nominalist account of Leibniz, reality is just substances-with-

individual-accidents (47-48, 173, 248), individual as belonging to one substance only (65, 196-197), and not hypostatized as an additional type of entity (48). The accidents are perceptions (37). There are no abstract entities (10, 73, 170, 173, 187, 246). Talk about abstracta is reducible to talk about the real (170-178). Language represents reality through ideas (187-188), and ideas are dispositions to think in certain ways (49-50, 175, 246). In particular, possibilia are ideas, and talk about possibilia is reducible to talk about God and his dispositions (49-50, 175-177, 246).

God and his states are pivotal to the proposed nominalism. And Mates seems prepared to acknowledge that from Leibniz's perspective the "true metaphysic" amounts much to the "true logic," since both amount to natural theology (5). Yet Mates largely underemphasizes theology, and faces some difficulties. His dispositional version of nominalism seems to violate Leibniz's insistence that God perfectly represents ("sees") everything possible all at once. God's knowledge is complete *scientia*, perfect understanding (where the Predi-cate-in-Subject principle articulates the notion of perfect understanding) which is totally determinate (so any change is a change in identity), wholly *sub ratione possibilitatis* in perspective, a priori and time-independent. In addition, since individual concepts are God's concepts and are, for Mates, temporally ordered series of complex properties (74, 87-89, 142), temporal series would be in God's ostensibly atemporal mind. Treating individual concepts as temporal sequences fits nicely with Mates' interesting distinc-

tion between concept-inclusion and concept-needing, where C needs C^1 iff some part of C expresses C^1, whereas C includes C^1 if it is impossible for some-thing to fall under C without falling under C^1. Inclusion requires needing but not conversely, and is part of his argument that the predicate-in-subject principle is necessary and sufficient for the truth of essential propositions only, not existential ones (9-10, 86-94). But I don't see why some non-temporal progressions cannot do the job as well, and generally find Mates' invocation of temporal notions at the ground level of analysis problematic.

Mates identifies a complete concept with an *infima species*, but not with the individual substance, which has the concept. Most of what Leibniz says surely requires this view. But did Leibniz sometimes make the further move to identifying the individual with an *infima species* (in the strict (mathematical or metaphysical, not physical) sense), and so identify it with a (maximally determinate) essence, with a complete concept? McRae adduced textual evidence for this view in *Leibniz: Perception, Apperception, and Thought*, and made the interesting sugges-tion that this is how Kant read Leibniz (79-83), but there seems to be some systematic reason for taking it seriously too. Al-though Leibniz regards it as merely nominal, he accepts Aristotle's criterion of substance as always subject of true predication, never predicable. But if substances are the ultimate subjects of predication, what else can they be for an immaterialist except essences? (Here the recent controversy about Leibniz's views on "corporeal substance" is naturally relevant.) Matter and informed parcels of

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matter are ruled out. The only remaining alternative would be individual spirits. But, given the operative, Aristotelian theory of predicables, one can intelligibly say that spirits *have* essences only if one allows the essential-accidental predicate distinction to apply to them, since things without accidental properties *are* their essences (*Metaphysics* Z, 6). Though Leibniz makes the necessary-contingent predicate distinction for substances, he does not make the (deep, non-temporal) essential-accidental one. Therefore, Leibniz's immaterialism, essentialism, and Aristotelian criterion of substance and theory of predicables seem jointly to entail that substances are maximally determinate essences.

Again, Leibniz did not seem to embrace this commitment, but I do suggest he held the following (variant nominalistic) view. A complete concept is not a maximally consistent general concept but a rule or law for generating an infinite sequence of non-abstractions, non-repeatable, non-transferable, intrinsically non-relational activities called 'perceptions.' (As regards non-relationality, distinct knowledge of A's state gives knowledge of the co-occurring states of all other monads, but 'can know others by attention to A alone' does not imply 'must know others in order to know A,' and it is the latter which is relevant to the internal-external relation question.) Abstractions properly apply only to phenomena and allow for shared, repeatable features. Real accidents do not, but are the unique, non-repeatable foundations of the identities ideally constructed from close similarities among points of views. (One consequence is that the identity of indiscernibles does

not hold for abstractions. Similar ideal things are distinguishable only numerically when co-present). The individuation of an accident is just as infinitely complex a process as is the individuation of the substance it modifies, and this because what mode it is depends on what substance it modifies. This explains why, not only does each substance express all others from a unique point of view, but each state follows from its predecessors, and contains its successors — a state is defined by its unique, infinite set of predecessors and successors. Only A can have B_1, that is, only the being with B_1, C_8, D_{42}... can have B_1. Laws governing abstractions such as number (laws relating generalities), even an infinite ordered set of such abstractions, can be wielded to exhibit geometrically necessary connections in a finite number of steps, as with proof by mathematical induction. The elements of such series are homogeneous, and can be similarly treated through repeated application of the same rule of progression. Not so with laws governing unique series of actions; they're not general laws, but all individual laws.

Counterfactual predication is only possible *sub species generalitatis*, and *sub species generalitatis* means empirically based. We identify a real individual via an actual world, uniquely identifying description of the phenomenal body it dominates, and then, keeping in mind that it's *that* individual we're talking about, we wonder what the observable series of things would be like if not-Ø, given that Ø. This helps explain, what is otherwise a puzzling feature of Leibniz's epistemology, his repeated insistence that (setting God aside), for us all real definition, that is, all proof of possibles, ultimately requires

appeal to experience. From the perspective of our identificational semantics, possible worlds do not come first, with the actual world conceived as one of them. The actual world comes first, and epistemic possibilities are constructed on the basis of the lawlike dispositions of real individuals, discovered by us only through encounterable, repeatable features. (And modal discourse about mere possibles is not *about individuals*, but about complete concepts, though accessible to *our* contemplation only as incomplete concepts, just as 'round squares are impossible' is not about round squares, but about the concept round square).

Moving on, Mates contends that the ultimate answer to 'Why?' questions concerning any created monad's state is 'God so chose.' (86; but compare 168), and that the real basis for contingency is that God could have chosen not to create this actual world (112). But the counterpressures to this include Leibniz's staunch repudiation of theistic voluntarism, and the serious case (made by Adams and others) for saying that there are some relational truths which do not depend on God's will, do not assert actual world existence, yet are contingent (such as that this is the best possible world). (It is useful in this 'root of contingency' debate to distinguish the contingent, as the neither necessary nor impossible, from the contingently true, as the (actually) true but not necessary. Sometimes proposed accounts of contingency are only plausible as accounts of the contingently true).

Mates also charges Leibniz with confusing reasons with causes (86, 158-162, 230). Reasons are propositions, timeless abstract entities which stand in logical relations to one another and to that for which they are reasons, answers to questions of the form 'why is such and such the case?' Causes are things or events or circumstances, with which it makes sense to associate spatiotemporal coordinates. Leibniz is charged with shifting illicitly in his cosmological argument from the principle of sufficient reason, a trivial corollary of the Predicate-in-Subject principle, to the law of universal causation (158). But propositions cannot be causes.

I do not understand this criticism, especially in light on Mates' own nominalist account. Aside from the acknowledged linguistic fact that Leibniz's use of 'causa' (with its lineage in 'aitia') is much broader than our post-Humean use of 'cause,' the propositions which God entertains, being species of (compound) concepts, are ontologically reducible to God's capacities (and in turn to various of His individual accidents). So to deny propositional causation is to deny divine causation, an unpalatable result, Indeed, in the *narrower* sense of 'cause', in which spatiotemporal items are causes, the extramundane reason for the world cannot be its cause. At the level of *substantial* explanation, there are no (narrower) causes. And *apparent* causation at the level of phenomena is cashed out in terms of explaining a priori what happens in the effect in terms of the more distinct perceptions of the monads which well-found the apparent cause (one example of perception's explanatory role).

Mates thinks Leibniz's postulation of different degrees of clarity in the perceptions of substances (monads) is completely ad hoc (200). He is also dubious about the meaning and equiva-

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lence of three of Leibniz's various explanations of "bestness," (70). But I think an elaborate case can be made for saying that the postulation is explanatorily basic and crucial to understanding why all the various formulations are equivalent (more perfection=more distinct perception=more activity=more quantity of essence=more positive reality=more affirmative intelligibilty=more phenomenal variety governed by simpler laws=more harmony=more universal laws=more beauty). (I expect much of this case to be included in Donald Rutherford's book, now in manuscript.) The situation in stark outline is this: degree of clarity of perception is the fundamental criterion of degree of metaphysical perfection, and degree of metaphysical perfection is necessarily correlated with degree of both moral and physical perfection. Therefore, since the best is the most perfect metaphysically, morally and physically, the most clearly perceiving is the best.

God's perfection is explained principally in terms of his power, knowledge, and will. Creatures acquire limited versions of these, and are more perfect to the degree to which they are less limited in activity (intrinsic force), perception, and appetite (will). (Mates doesn't have much to say about force or appetite.) Every will naturally strives to bring about what seems best, and the perfection of will is only limited by its capacity to accurately distinguish the good. God's will is supremely perfect *because* he is omniscient, so He never mistakes the apparent for the real. Each creature is confusedly omniscient, but perceives distinctly with only varying, limited scope. So, in general, perfection of will is explainable in

terms of perfection of perceptions. By showing how appetitions are just modifications of intrinsic force, so that their perfection too is ultimately a function of perceptual acumen, we deduce that approximation to diving omniscience, or ratio of distinct to confused perceptions, is the primary measure of *monadic* perfection. Then, by showing how superior interregulation of monads is a function of the extent to which what's perceived in one monad serves to explain a transition in the state of another and vice versa, we can show *worldly* perfection is ultimately explained by perceptual activity.

Since moral perfection is for Leibniz virtuous or just action, greater metaphysical perfection entails greater moral perfection for those monads, viz. rational souls or spirits, who are capable of moral perfection. But physical perfection (=pleasure) is also necessarily connected to metaphysical perfection in that pleasure is for Leibniz just conscious perception of an increase in perfection (and when that pleasure endures without leading to subsequent greater misery, it is happiness), and so, given the essential interconnection of all things in a world, animal souls and spirits (that is, those monads capable of a degree of physical perfection), can't help but enjoy greater physical perfection whenever there's an increase in metaphysical perfection, so long as they're aware of it. (As an aside I note that awareness here must be construed as something more minimal than thought, since thought for Leibniz requires apperception, and only spirits, not animal souls, are capable of apperception.) So, overall, the explanatory hierarchy seems to be this: the value of a just action (moral

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perfection) is founded on the fact that it produces pleasure (physical perfection), which is in turn explained by its effect in increasing the metaphysical perfection of the agent and the world. Metaphysical perfection is basic.

If we didn't fundamentally associate increase in metaphysical perfection with increase in clarity of perception, it would not follow that increase in metaphyscial perfection leads to increase in moral and physical perfection. For if overall the monads weren't more aware of the universe's development, even if such development were occurring, they wouldn't experience pleasure, nor would they more reliably act justly. I hedge by saying 'overall' because locally it might seem that greater metaphysical perfection does not imply greater physical perfection. For example, in the metaphysical sense, one who suffers pain is more perfect than one lacking sensation altogether. But in this case the metaphysically more perfect one is physically less perfect, or at least that's true if the incapacity to have any physical perfection is properly described as being less physically perfect, rather than as being neither physically perfect nor imperfect. (In at least one place Leibniz himself seems to opt for the second description. In the 1714 letter to Bourguet (L 662) he says that when an intelligent being loses his understanding without pain and without sin it is still (metaphysical) evil).

Perhaps the best way of summing things up is this: though sufficient metaphysical perfection implies happiness and justice, the converse is false. Metaphysical evil does not imply pain or sin, since without sufficient metaphysical perfection pain or sin is impossible, though of course some metaphysical evil is a necessary condition for pain or sin (witness God).

As a final indication of how explanations of bestness revert to considerations of perception, consider the claim that the best world is richest, containing the most variety. But there seem to be many possible worlds which are equally, infinitely varied and rich. The richest worlds then seem to be, not characterized merely by more predicates, but by more intensive manifestations of (already) infinitely many predicates. And intensive manifestations are just more distinct (active, intelligible, etc.) ones. So the notion of variety *itself* must be explicated in terms of clarity of monadic perception.

In this piece I sought potential problems in order to provoke discussion. They were not easy to find. And even if some of what I suggest is well-taken, it should not mask my genuine admiration for this masterful book.