

## TOPICAL OUTLINE OF THE *THEODICY*

by Michael J. Latzer, Gannon University

Since 1951, English-language readers of Leibniz's *Theodicy* (*Essais de Théodicée*) have been well-served by the elegant and readable translation of E. M. Huggard, published by Routledge & Kegan Paul (1951) and Open Court (1985), and edited by Austin Farrer. However, this edition has some conspicuous failings: it leaves Latin, Greek, and German phrases untranslated; provides a name index only, thus omitting Leibniz's own useful topical index; and completely omits the interesting and substantial synopsis, *Causa Dei Asserta* (a translation of which can be found in Paul Schrecker, *Monadology and Other Philosophical Essays*, Bobbs-Merrill [Library of Liberal Arts], 1965). The French paperback edition of the *Essais de Théodicée* published by Garnier-Flammarion (1969) does provide Leibniz's own topical index to his work, as well as compendious and invaluable notes on the text (589 in number!), but of course, this does not help readers with no French. There exists, then, very little help for the reader wishing to mine the depths of Leibniz's massive work, and who is thus forced to read it through from end to end to find out what is in it.

The following topical outline is offered to help remedy this situation. I have provided a tag-line indicating the gist of each numbered section of the work, and some indentation to help convey a sense of Leibniz's architectonic (progressive indentations indicating sections, subsections, and further sections of subsections). I hope that the outline may help make visible Leibniz's overall plan and argument, a forest otherwise invisible for the trees.

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**PREFACE** (Page references to Huggard translation—see T in abbreviations).

**p. 49-51** On the development of religion (“public dogma”)

50 Moses & Christ

**p. 51-52** Knowledge of God leads to love of God

52 Importance of knowledge of God

53 The project: Theodicy as refuting false notions of God; the two labyrinths

**p. 54-58** Various meanings of “fate”

55 The “lazy sophism”

56 Examples of incoherent fatalisms

57 Affirmation of freedom of will against fatalism

58 First mention of P. Bayle: his project of advancing faith by showing impotence of reason

**p. 59-61** Resume of problems of theodicy, and of Leibniz's solutions

**p. 62-66** Proximate cause of the book: Leibniz's longstanding polemic with Bayle

**p. 67-69** Leibniz's qualifications for undertaking this task

***PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION ON THE CONFORMITY OF FAITH  
WITH REASON***

(Section numbers are first; page references to T last.)

***1-5 Reason & Faith defined (73-76)***

- 2 Truths of reason of two kinds (74)
- 3 Synopsis of the harmony of reason and faith (74)
- 4 Theology & philosophy cannot conflict (75)
- 5 Cognitive status of mysteries of religion (76)

***6-31 Historical excursus on the relations between faith & reason, theology & philosophy (76-92)***

- 7-9 Latin Averroists, Plato, and Spinoza on a “world-soul” (77-79)
- 10 System of preestablished harmony as best-suited to combating this doctrine (79)
- 11 Latin Averroist doctrine of double-truth (80)
- 12-19 Luther and philosophy (81-85)
- 18-19 Eucharistic controversy (84-85)
- 20 Vedelius & Musaeus on faith and reason (86)
- 21 Problem of scriptural literalism (87)
- 22 Reason and the mystery of the Trinity (87)
- 23 Truths above reason vs truths against reason (88)
- 24-25 Against Bayle: an authentic mystery of faith could never be subject to irrefutable objections (88-89)
- 26-7 Corollary: every objection to a truth must be answerable (89-90)
- 28 No probabilistic argument can have force against religion (90)
- 29-31 Marks of true religion; authority of scripture (91-92)

***32-70 On Bayle’s atheological reasoning (92-112)***

- 32-33 Bayle’s reliance on probabilistic arguments (92-93)
- 34 God can be vindicated by general reasons, although not always in particular cases (93)
- 35-38 Univocity of divine names; God’s nature as refuting probabilities (93-95)
- 39 Against Bayle: a truly irrefutable objection to a mystery would overthrow it (96)
- 40 Believers need not be able to solve all objections (97)
- 41 Incomprehensibility vs indefensibility of mysteries (97)
- 42 Faith can triumph only through sound and superior reasons (97)
- 43-44 Fundamentals of natural (vs revealed) religion (98)***
  - 44 Preliminary answer to the problem of evil (98)
- 45 Luther quoted: the virtue of loving God in spite of appearances (99)
- 46-49 Bayle’s quotations in support of abandoning reason in favor of faith (99-101)
- 50 Reply: the objections opposed to faith are not demonstrably insoluble (101)

## TOPICAL OUTLINE OF THE THEODICY

- 51-54 Quotes from Origen and Celsus on the importance of reason in Christianity (102-103)
- 55 Bayle's slippage into outright irrationality (103)
- 56 Knowing the "what" without the "how" of mysteries is sufficient (104)
- 57-60 Answering objections does not require complete understanding (105-106)
- 61 Against Bayle's disjunction of divine and human reason (107)
- 62 Right reason vs corrupt reason (107)
- 63-66 Meaning of "truths above reason" (108-110)
- 67 More on Luther's attitude toward philosophy (110)
- 68-70 Descartes as proponent of the impotence of reason in religion (111-112)
- 71-87 Bayle's central argument regarding the impossibility of refuting arguments brought against mysteries** (113-122)
- 71-74 Bayle: to defend mysteries, reason would have to comprehend them** (113)
- 73 Leibniz: understanding does not require full comprehension (114)
- 75 Leibniz: attacker, not defender, must attain to self-evident certainty (116)
- 76 Bayle: confession of mystery is to admit defeat (117)
- 77-78 Leibniz: Bayle overestimates magnitude of defender's task (117-118)
- 79 Bayle: the unfairness of appeal to mystery (118)
- 80-81 The importance of antinomies in religion (119)
- 82-4 Bayle quoted against himself: he too admits that mysteries conflict only with appearances (120-121)
- 85-87 Warning against the dangers of trying to plumb mysteries (examples of Wyclif and Abelard); quote from Luther on the mystery of God's ways (121-122)
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## ESSAYS ON THE JUSTICE OF GOD AND THE FREEDOM OF MAN IN THE ORIGIN OF EVIL

- PART I:** "a full and clear exposition of this whole subject" (107)
- 1-6 Statement of the problems to be addressed** (123-127)
- 7-35 Condensed statement of Leibniz's doctrines on the goodness of God, the freedom of man, and the origin of evil** (127-143)
- 7 Proof of God's existence and attributes (127)
- 8-19 God's choice of the best world** (128-134)
- 8 Moral necessity of the choice of the best (128)
- 9-11 World without sin and evil would be inferior to this one (128-129)
- 12 Invocation of the aesthetic principle (130)
- 13-19 Denial that evils outnumber goods, damned outnumber saved (130-134)

- 20-21** Origin and taxonomy of evil (135-136)
- 22-35** Problems of God's cooperation (136-143)
  - 22-26** God's moral cooperation in evil (136-138)
    - 22-23 Antecedent and consequent will (136-137)
    - 23-26 God's permission of moral and physical evil (137-138)
  - 27-33** God's physical cooperation in evil (138-143)
    - 27-28 Problems raised by conservation (138-139)
    - 29-33** Evil as privative (140-142)
      - 31 Imperfection rooted in the original limitation of creatures (141)
  - 34-35 Divine cooperation and the human will (143)
- 36-106** *Problems of freedom and predetermination* (143-181)
  - 36 First problem: determinacy of contingent futurities (143)
  - 37-52** Second problem: divine foreknowledge as destroying freedom (144-151)
    - 37-38 Foreknowledge and determination (cf Boethius' problem) (144)
    - 39-41 Outline of theological responses to this problem: predeterminators vs mediate knowledge proponents (144-145)
    - 42-43 Leibniz's verdict on these positions (146-147)
    - 44-45 Geometrical and physical necessity contrasted (147-148)
    - 46-52** Against indifference of equipoise (148-151)
      - 47 The ground of foreknowledge: free actions foreseen in the possibles (149)
      - 48 On the embarrassment of Molinism (149)
      - 49 Against Buridan's Ass (150)
      - 50 Against Cartesian proof of equipoise (150)
      - 51 Lockean point about volition (151)
      - 52 Summary: soul as spiritual automaton (151)
  - 53-54 Can God then change the world? (miracles?) (151-152)
  - 55-58** Determinism and the moral life (153-154)
    - 55-56 Against the "lazy sophism" (153-154)
    - 57-58 Piety not obviated by determinism (154-155)
  - 59-66** On the soul's spontaneity (155-158)
    - 59 Spontaneity defined (155)
    - 60-61 Against the Cartesian account of spontaneity (156)
    - 62-66** Preestablished Harmony and the mind-body relation (157-158)
      - 62 Concise statement of Preestablished Harmony as applied to the soul (157)
      - 63 Freedom of soul in this scheme (157)
      - 64 Independence of soul in this scheme (157)
      - 65 Summation of these remarks on spontaneity (158)

## *TOPICAL OUTLINE OF THE THEODICY*

- 66 Further explication of mind-body relation (158)
- 67-75** Morality, reward and punishment (159-163)
  - 67-72** Morality, reward, & punishment have a place even in necessitarian systems (159-161)
    - 68-71 Explication of the role of Morality, Reward, & Punishment in necessitarian systems (a fortiori in determinist) (160)
    - 72 Allusion to Hobbes-Bramhall debate (161)
  - 73-74 Role of punitive justice (161-162)
  - 73 Principle of the fitness of things (161)
  - 74 Natural consequences of wrongdoing (162)
  - 75 Summary remarks on morality, reward & punishment (163)
- 76-105** Election and reprobation (163-180)
  - 76-77 Preliminary remarks on this problem (163-164)
  - 78-80** God's principle aim with regard to man: 2 alternative views (164-165)
    - 78-79 The 2 views and their harmony (164-165)
    - 80 Antecedent and consequent will (165)
  - 81-84** On predestination (164-167)
    - 81 Absolute vs respective destination (166)
    - 82 Supralapsarians vs Infralapsarians (166)
    - 83 Destination to eternal life: absolute, or respective of merits? (167)
    - 84 Leibniz's view: God decrees the sequence as a whole (167)
- 85-105** Dispensation of the means to salvation/damnation (168-180)
  - 85 Problem: do God's actions evidence his will to save? Problem of sin and its remedies (168)
  - 86-91** Original sin (168-172)
    - 86 Three views on the origin of souls (169)
    - 87-91 Parallel problem: origin of forms (substantial, accidental) (169-172)
    - 88-89 Three views on the origin of substantial forms (170-171)
    - 90-91 Leibniz's doctrine of the origin of souls (172)
  - 92-94 Infant damnation (173-175)
  - 95-105** Adult damnation (175-180)
    - 95-98** Possibility of extraordinary aid (175-177)
      - 96-97 Digression on Friedrich Spee, SJ (176-177)
      - 98 Deathbed grace (177)
    - 99-101 Role of circumstance in conversion/perversion (178-179)
    - 102-103 Against mediate knowledge vis-a-vis damnation (179)
    - 104 God's choice reasonable, but inscrutable (180)

MICHAEL J. LATZER

105 Universal depravity and God's plan (180)

106 Summary: there is no refutation of beliefs founded on reason, and there are "a thousand ways of justifying the conduct of God" (181)

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**PART 2:** God's cooperation in moral evil (see sec.107, p. 182)

**107-240** *Bayle's objections* (182-275)

107 Statement of the problem: God's cooperation in moral evil (182)

**108-134** *Theological doctrine opposed by philosophical maxims* (182-205)

**109-115** Theological doctrine in 7 props (183-186)

109 (1) God's self-sufficiency (183)

110 (2) God's decision to create (Leibniz on the good) (183)

111 (3) God's creation of man (184)

112 (4) Man's fall and penalty (Leibniz on the natural consequences of wickedness) (184)

113 (5) God's election of a few (185)

114 (6) God's providence and omnipotence—He could prevent sin (Leibniz on antecedent and consequent will) (185)

115 (7) The complicated workings of grace and election (186)

**116-134** Nineteen philosophical maxims (187-205)

116 (1) God's goodness the only motive of creation (187)

117 (2) The infinite degree of God's perfections (187)

118 (3) The happiness of intelligent creatures the end of creation (Leibniz: this only the principal of many ends) (188)

119 (4) Implications of God's beneficence (Leibniz: analysis of antecedent, mediate, consequent wills in God) (189)

120 (5) Free will a gift worthy of a malevolent giver (Leibniz: utility of matter; principle of plenitude; metaphysical evil) (191)

121 (6) Culpability in God's permission of evil (Leibniz: the inviolable moral necessity imposed on God by the verities) (193)

122 (7) Analogy of a good master (Leibniz: rejection of anthropomorphism) (195)

123 (8) Analogy continued (Leibniz: paucity of evil, principle of plenitude invoked) (197)

124 (9) Analogy continued (Leibniz: extensive account of principle of plenitude, aesthetic principle, confused perceptions [prime matter]) (197)

125 (10) Analogy of a benevolent king (Leibniz: rejection of anthropomorphism) (199)

126 (11) Analogy of king continued (199)

## *TOPICAL OUTLINE OF THE THEODICY*

- 127 (12) Culpability of permitting preventable evils (Leibniz: evil as instrumental) (200)
- 128 (13) Further king analogy (Leibniz: differences in divine government) (200)
- 129 (14) More on permission of evil (Leibniz: God's obligation to choose the best) (201)
- 130 (15) God's omnipotence as disallowing permission of evil (Leibniz: Pre-established Harmony, God's obligation to prevent the evil of his choosing ill, power guided by goodness and wisdom) (201)
- 131 (16) Permission and responsibility (Leibniz: evil justified as preventative of greater ills) (202)
- 132 (17) More on responsibility (Leibniz against indifference; types of necessity) (202)
- 133 (18) Damnation: analogy of a prince; no clemency in pardoning only a few out of a rebellious mass (Leibniz: against the analogy; natural consequences of sin; the meriting of infinite punishment) (203)
- 134 (19) Analogy of a physician (Leibniz: rejection of all proffered analogies; need of taking the wide view of God's concerns) (205)
- 135-240** *Miscellaneous problems raised by Bayle* (207-275)
- 135 Some of Bayle's themes; general intent to suspend reason and bow to faith (207)
- 136-156** *Bayle on the hypothesis of the two principles (cosmic dualism)* (208-221)
- 136 Bayle and Leibniz on the history of this doctrine (208)
- 137 Historical excursus on Zoroaster ancient histories and etymologies of dualism (208)
- 144 Bayle on Zoroaster, et al; the embarrassment of Christians over the origin of evil (213)
- 145 Bayle's "Manichees": can the phenomena of nature be explained by a single principle? Leibniz: disorder in parts consistent with order in the whole (214)
- 146 Man, the summit of creation, casts doubt on the oneness of God. Leibniz: Phenomena must be seen as wholes to be judged rightly—man only a part of the "republic of Spirits" (214)
- 147 Leibniz: evil understood instrumentally plays a part in the whole (215)
- 148 Bayle stresses the preponderant misery of human life. Leibniz: denial that ills outnumber goods in human history and affairs (216)
- 149 Bayle: cosmic dualism supported by the very mixture of good and evil in experience. Leibniz: evil and instrumental again; dualism given an orthodox interpretation in terms of understanding & will/power in God's unitary nature (217)
- 150 Leibniz: the primacy of these perfections in the Trinity
- 151 Bayle again on man's misery, and a statement of the "trilemma" of evil. Leibniz: man as author of his own misery (217)

- 152 Bayle on Melissus' (=monist) position as most plausible a priori, Zoroaster's (=dualist) position as most plausible a posteriori. Leibniz: against ad hoc principia to explain disparate phenomena (218)
- 153 Leibniz' explanation of evil as privative (219)
- 154 Bayle on the Paulicians: contrary inclinations of the will require appeal to contrary principles Leibniz: soul as simple, evil chosen under the guise of a good (220)
- 155 Bayle offers an argument between Melissus and Zoroaster: M says evil follows from man's own wickedness, Z counters that such a God shouldn't have given man an inclination to evil. Leibniz: principle of plenitude; against perpetual miracles (220)
- 156 Bayle ("Paulicians") claims even the orthodox adduce dualism: the devil as originator of sin Leibniz: the true origin is the original imperfection of creatures Scripture too imprecise on demonology (221)
- 158-67 Problems on the moral cause of moral evil (222-227)**
- 158 Bayle on the equivalency of God permitting evil, and willing evil; Calvin cited. Leibniz: interpr of Calvin; the sense in which God wills evil (222)
- 159 Bayle: God must will sin, since he chose to create one from the infinite possible worlds containing Adam's sin. Leibniz: approves of the language here, but reiterates God's obligation to choose the best (222)
- 160 More on God's obligation to choose the best (223)
- 161 Leibniz on the equivocacy and improbability of Bayle's "prince" analogies (223)
- 162-65 Descartes' solution to freedom-foreknowledge (224-226)**
- 162 Descartes on God's absolute and relative wills (224)
- 163 Bayle's attack on Descartes' solution (225)
- 164 Leibniz's basic agreement with Descartes' solution (225)
- 165 Leibniz bolsters Descartes' solution (226)
- 166 On other suggestions of God's "despotism" (226)
- 167 On an anti-Gomarist satire ridiculing predestination: there is no election to salvation without an election to holiness (227)
- 168-192 Metaphysical problems on the moral cause of moral evil (228-247)**
- 168-74** On the possibility of things that do not happen (ie, can there be "possible worlds"? (228-235)
- 169 Epicurus' denial of the truth of contingent futurities (229)
- 170 Bayle on Chryssipus (230)
- 171 Abelard's view (233)
- 172 Wyclif & Hobbes' views (234)
- 173 Spinoza's view (234)
- 174 Leibniz's views on Bayle and Spinoza (235)



## TOPICAL OUTLINE OF THE THEODICY

### **175-192** God and the Possibles (236-247)

- 175 Moral necessity in God is better than indifference of equipoise (236)
- 176-78 Supralapsarian views on God's arbitrary decrees (236-238)
- 179 Bayle on St Paul (238)
- 180 Bayle against God's arbitrariness (239)
- 181 Important statement by Leibniz on the inherent goodness of virtue (240)
- 182 Leibniz on Calvin, and on the Euthyphro dilemma (240)
- 183 Long selection from Bayle on God's subjection to preexisting truths (241)
- 184 A caution: even if "independent", truths cannot exist without God (243)
- 185 Bayle's vacillation: he toys with the Cartesian view (244)
- 186 Leibniz on the Cartesian view (244)
- 187-9 On the thesis of God's arbitrary decree as a misguided defense by Bayle and others against Stratonism (245-246)
- 190-92 On whether God's subjection to the region of truths is subjection to a *fatum* (190-192)

### **193-240** *God's choice of the best* (247-274)

- 193-194 Could God have done better? Alfonso of Castile, and Leibniz's response (247)
- 195-6 Is there a "best" universe? (249)
- 197-202 The opinion of Diroys that God cannot create the best (249-253)
- 203 Bayle's doubts about God's choosing the best (254)
- 204 Leibniz cites Malebranche's views as close to his own on the choice of the best; Malebranche on God's recourse to general laws (254)
- 205-6 Bayle in defense of this view on general laws (255-256)
- 207 Leibniz vs Malebranche: a miracle is not a departure from law (257)
- 208 God's choice of laws: the simplest and most uniform (257)
- 209 Consideration of the general good includes the good of non-rational creatures: this a source of moral and physical evil; important and problematic reference to the Fall (258)
- 210-214 Bayle's objections to Malebranche's views on God's recourse to general laws (259-261)
- 215 Bayle: prince analogy (architecture of a city); Leibniz: beauty and convenience can't always be had together (262)
- 216 Bayle: legislator analogy (263)
- 217 Bayle: the "Stoic blasphemy" of a too-great emphasis on aesthetic motives in God (263)
- 218-240** Does God's choice of the best violate his perfections? (264-274)
  - 218: 1st problem: does God lack the power to do better (from Arnauld) (264)

MICHAEL J. LATZER

- 219-21 Bayle: would not Omnipotence ensure the exclusion of all vice? Leibniz: some vice connected with the best system, and virtue exceeds vice anyway; against Hobbes on the latter point; and we must judge things from a universal perspective (264-265)
- 222 Leibniz: God loves virtue, hates vice supremely, but only antecedently; compromise must be made to ensure general good (266)
- 223-6 Arnauld's problems with God's choice of the best: violation of omnipotence, and would not universal salvation be a better plan than one including damnation? Leibniz on the necessity of God's choice of the best, and on his knowledge of the possibles (extensive and intensive) (266-268)
- 227-8 Bayle: God's freedom limited by choice of the best Leibniz: it is a "servitude" to His own nature (268-269)
- 229-30 Bayle: a syllogism to show that, if God loves His glory necessarily, and chooses the best, he must will vice as vice Leibniz: moral vs metaphysical necessity in God (269-270)
- 231 Bayle: choice of the best implies universal fatality; Adam's sin necessary. Leibniz: moral and metaphysical necessity contrasted again (270)
- 232 Bayle quotes Duns Scotus in favor of freedom of indifference in God. Leibniz: freedom requires only lack of metaphysical necessity (271)
- 233-5 Bayle: God's necessary love of His glory implies a necessary choice of the means thereto; the result is fatalism and the necessity of Adam's fall Leibniz: God loves His glory necessarily, but the decision to acquire this glory through creatures is free; this decision then necessarily involves the best means (271-272)
- 236-7 On Bayle's syllogisms (273)
- 1: implication that if the world is the best possible, and chosen by God necessarily, then He does not the salvation of all. Leibniz: antecedent vs consequent will
  - 2: God loves His work; this involves damnation of many; hence, God wills necessarily, etc. Leibniz: to act in a way bound by the good is to act freely
- 238-9 a Supralapsarian suggestion for making God blameless (his justice only revealed where there is sin and damnation): Leibniz says only the hypothesis of God's choice of the best renders Him blameless (273-274)
- 240 Leibniz acknowledges the general agreement of his and William King's views (274)

## TOPICAL OUTLINE OF THE THEODICY

### **PART 3: “physical evil, that is, sorrows, sufferings, miseries”**

#### **241-63 Remarks on the Origin of Physical Evil (276-288)**

241 General themes: 1) physical evil as necessary consequence of moral evil; 2) suffering as purgative; 3) connection btwn physical and metaphysical evil; 4) disorder and irregularity as part of a greater order (276)

**242-46** Illustrations (mathematical, geological) to illustrate the point about the relativity of “disorder” (277-278)

246 Disorder does not include “inequality of conditions” (against Bayle); principle of plenitude cited (278)

**247-9** Bayle against the view of God as concerned to preserve general laws(279-280)

247 This makes God a remote architect unconcerned for humanity. Leibniz: harmony of efficient and final causes, physical and metaphysical goods (279)

248 Bayle: how a few little miracles could improve things. Leibniz: principle of the best determines which miracles will be permitted (279)

249 Leibniz on the nature of miracles (280)

**250-63** On the Suffering of Creatures (280-288)

250 Animal pain: animals not automata, but because not reflexively conscious, suffer only slightly (280)

251 Rational creatures: does physical evil not outweigh physical good? (Bayle) Leibniz: we must compute both pleasure and absence of pain, then it is clear that good predominates (281)

252-7 Remarks on the benefit of moderation, the pleasures of the mind, the controllability of pain, etc. (282-284)

258 Evil (here physical) seems to predominate because, being rarer, it is the more noticed; against Bayle’s ancient authorities on the greater misery than good in human life (284)

259 Leibniz agrees that moral evil outweighs good in human life, due to our vices and original sin, but not that pain outweighs its opposite; against Bayle, feeling is no measure of good and evil (285)

260 Leibniz surveys ancient sentiments on the misery of life, but judges life generally tolerable—more so when the comforts and hopes of religion are included (286)

261 Bayle on the misfortunes of the great. Leibniz: others are well-content ((286)

262-3 Leibniz cites Maimonides approvingly that all that is needed, strictly, is that good outweigh evil in the universe, not in human life—we cannot draw universal conclusions from man’s misery; wide panorama of the metaphysical good in the universe (287-288)

**264-72 Guilt, Punishment & Damnation (289-293)**

- 264 Bayle not permitted to disregard the role our sins play in our physical misery, when it is a question of ascribing the latter to God (incidental remarks on Bayle's inconsistency as a critic) (289)
- 265 The permission of punishment thus justified as soon as the permission of sin is (289)
- 266-72** On Damnation (290-293)
- 266 Socinian objection to hell, based on the incommensurability of infinite punishment and finite guilt Leibniz: duration of punishment caused by duration of guilt (290)
- 267-68 Leibniz in support of endless damnation (291)
- 269 the damned retain a freedom which renders them enduringly culpable (292)
- 270 Leibniz defends King's views on damnation against Bayle's critique (292)
- 271 more on the voluntary wickedness of the damned (293)
- 272 Diversity of opinion on the mutability of the pains of the damned, the possibility of being rescued from damnation, etc Leibniz: no living person is justified in thinking itself reprobate; God has given us sufficient information "to put us in fear of the greatest of misfortunes" (293)
- 273-341** *More on the Origin of Evil in the Freedom of Creatures* (294-330)
- 273-75 the Angelic Fall; source of evil in the devils' own natures; God's abandonment of the reprobate (294-295)
- 276 How God "hardens hearts" (295)
- 277 Freedom and bondage the same (voluntary slavery to sin) (296)
- 278 How we sin; the nature of pleasure; the love of God as the greatest pleasure (297)
- 279-82 the infallible certainty of election and reprobation distinguished from metaphysical necessity; Leibniz chides loose language on this topic (297-298)
- 283-7** Augustine & Augustinians (300-302)
- 283 Leibniz rejects reprobation of infants, pagans, those "deprived of natural light", and making God's decree arbitrary (not guided by reasons) (300)
- 284 Approving summary of Augustinian theodicy (300)
- 285 contra Augustine, Leibniz maintains that God does will to save all men (antecedently) (301)
- 286 Predestination to salvation includes provision of the means thereto (301)
- 287 agreement of Aug and Leibniz on the will (302)
- 288-341** Freedom (302-330)
- 288 Analysis of freedom: intelligence + spontaneity + contingency (302)
- 289 Intelligence: distinct vs confused knowledge(=bondage); sin based on confused knowledge (303)
- 290-301** Spontaneity (303-309)
- 290 Defined: the source of action within the agent (303)

## TOPICAL OUTLINE OF THE THEODICY

- 291 Spontaneity in terms of the doctrine of monads and preestablished harmony ((304)
- 292 Descartes' inadequate views on the soul as extrinsically determined (304)
- 293-4 Bayle's attack on the Cartesianism of Regis: holding on, agnostically, to both freedom and providence (305)
- 295 Bayle's attack on the "inward testimony" argument for freedom (305)
- 296-7 Against Bayle, Leibniz defends inward testimony of our spontaneity (even vis-a-vis perceptions) (306)
- 298 God as remote, not proximate, cause of the will; role of grace does not impede freedom (306)
- 299-300 Leibniz joins Bayle's attack on inward testimony as the source of philosophic truth—but "philosophic meditation" is such a source, and reveals our spontaneity (307-309)
- 301 Can we "will" our wills? (309)
- 302-31 Contingency (310-320)**
- 302 Third criterion of freedom is contingency, not indifference (=absence of inclining reasons) (310)
- 303 Denial of causeless events; on Epicurus' "swerve" (310)
- 304 Bayle's advocacy of free will as perfect indifference (311)
- 305 Leibniz against this; Augustine and Aquinas cited in favor of determination (311)
- 306-7 More from Bayle in favor of freedom as indifference (311-312)
- 308-9 selections from Bayle now *against* indifference, in favour of scholastic analysis of the determination of the will (312)
- 310-11 Leibniz's opinion of this view; role of confused perceptions (313-314)
- 312-13 Bayle and Leibniz: indifference as undesirable sort of freedom (314-315)
- 314-15 No actual example of it can be adduced (316)
- 316-18 Bayle and Leibniz on the desirability of freedom as guidance by reasons, the more surely the better (316-318)
- 319 Bayle turned against himself: is God "necessitated" for being guided by reasons? (318)
- 320 Against Scholastic indifference (319)
- 321 Against Epicurus' swerve (320)
- 322 Against Carneades' indifference (320)
- 323 Platonic considerations in favor of the soul's (self) determination (321)
- 324-5 Antecedent and consequent wills in the soul, competition of inclinations (321-322)
- 326-9 Analysis of our "indirect" power over the will and passions (322-323)

MICHAEL J. LATZER

- 330-1 Survey of ancient and scholastic views, distinction between determination and necessity (324)
- 332-36** Chrysippus the Stoic (325-327)
- 332 Evil and the original constitution of souls; the cylinder analogy (325)
- 333 Cicero and Bayle on Chrysippus (325)
- 334 Chrysippus' use of instrumental and aesthetic interpretation of evil (326)
- 335-6 Leibniz on Chrysippus: original fault lies in the forms, not in matter; evil as involved in the best system (326-327)
- 337-41** Divine freedom (327-330)
- 337 Superiority of divine will over human; God's perfect determination (327)
- 338 God's predestination of souls thus fully reasonable, not despotic; Luther and Calvin agree (328)
- 339 God's freedom does not require that He be able to act unreasonably (328)
- 340 The embarrassments of Bayle's defence of God as despot (329)
- 341 mixture of themes: plenitude, instrumentality of pain, chain of being (330)
- 342-51** *Pain, Dynamics, Efficient & Final Causes* (330-335)
- 342 Bayle's suggestion that degrees of pleasure could substitute for pain (330)
- 343 pain and the principle of plenitude (331)
- 344 Bayle on the arbitrariness of laws *Must* law entail pain and evil? (331)
- 345 Natural laws as founded on the principle of the best, not necessity (332)
- 346-7 Illustration of the non-demonstrability of dynamical laws (332-333)
- 348 Against Cartesian dynamics (333)
- 349 Thus, laws of motion neither arbitrary nor necessary, but selected by the Supreme Wisdom (moral necessity) (334)
- 350 efficient causes founded on final, and on principle of fitness (334)
- 351 against ascribing too much to God's choice: some properties necessary (of physical dimensions) (335)
- 352-59** *Laws of the Union of Body & Soul* (336-340)
- 352 Bayle's dilemma: either we allow interaction, or arbitrary occasional causes Both options disagreeable (336)
- 353 Preestablished harmony as the solution to this problem; remarks on Bayle's aporetic method (336)
- 354 Bayle again on the superfluity of pain (337)
- 355 Leibniz's view on law—must be founded on reasons; pain could be indispensable (338)
- 356-7 body, soul and representation (339)
- 358 Bayle's critique of King on pain: why recourse to laws? (340)

## TOPICAL OUTLINE OF THE THEODICY

- 359 Leibniz's answer: laws as constituting order and beauty; principle of the best cited (340)
- 360-66 Problems of Foreknowledge (341-344)**
- 360 conformity of foreknowledge and freedom in Leibniz's system; the ground of foreknowledge; authorities cited (341)
- 362 Determination vs necessity (342)
- 363 manner of God's prevision; two sorts of vision in God (342)
- 364 Against the Socinians' denial of divine foreknowledge (343)
- 365 Against Descartes' perplexity on this score; Valla against Boethius; remote and proximate cause of the determination of the will (343)
- 366 historical excursus on grace & free will (344)
- 367-76 Labyrinth of Necessity Revisited (345-351)**
- 367 Summary of the labyrinthine problems, with recommendation of Leibniz's own solution (345)
- 368 Statement by Bayle on the acuteness of the problem (345)
- 369 Leibniz's solution again; understanding the sin of Adam (346)
- 370 Bayle's dilemma: the soul wholly determined, or not; list of proponents of each view (347)
- 371 Leibniz's solution as a middle position: influence on soul, plus the soul's own contribution The basic agreement of all parties, except Hobbes and Spinoza (geometric necessity lambasted) (347)
- 372 Spinoza compared unfavourably with the Cabala (348)
- 373-4 Brederburg on Spinoza; moral vs metaphysical necessity again (349-350)
- 375-6 anecdotal digression on Spinoza (350-351)
- 377-404 Problems of God's Co-operation with the actions of Creatures (351-365)**
- 377 problems here concern God's goodness (cause of sin?), and our freedom; "co-operation of God" defined (351)
- 378 Evil as privative; moral evil as source of physical (352)
- 379-80 Plato on matter as source of evil; Leibniz: evil grounded in the possibles (352-353)
- 381 a problem: God's cooperation in evil acts; various alternative views (Bayle and scholastics) (353)
- 382-91 Conservation (354-358)**
- 382 continuous creation? (354)
- 383 Cartesian view of continuous creation (354)
- 384 more on continuous creation (355)
- 385 Leibniz's interpretation of continuous creation (355)
- 386-7 Bayle's interpretation (356)

MICHAEL J. LATZER

- 388-90 Leibniz's response (357-358)  
391 Continuous creation and personal identity (358)  
**392-5** Substance/accidents distinction (359-360)  
392 Bayle denies this (359)  
393 Leibniz warns against Spinozism (359)  
394-5 Bayle and Leibniz argue this question (360)  
396-98 Substantial forms must be created; Leibniz's theory of biogenesis (360-361)  
**399-404** Soul as active or passive? (362-365)  
399 Bayle's view (362)  
400 Leibniz invokes preestablished harmony; danger of making God the author of sin (362)  
401-2 Bayle: can soul be active, not knowing how it produces its ideas? (363-364)  
403-4 Leibniz's decisive answer to this problem (364-365)  
**405-12** *Laurenzo Valla's Dialogue on Free Will contra Boethius* (365-369)  
**413-17** *Leibniz's continuation of this; myth illustrative of God's choice of the best (the "Schlussmythos")* (369-373)

Michael Latzer  
Liberal Studies Department  
Gannon University  
109 University Square  
Erie, PA 16541 USA  
e-mail: latzer001@mail1.gannon.edu