Metaphysical (Ontological) Assumptions

There are many possible worlds that consist of substances (called *monads*) and their properties (called *modes*).

Possible worlds are describable as an infinite conjunction subject - predicate propositions (universal or singular affirmatives) in which the subject stands for a substance or group of substances and the predicate stands for a property. A proposition is *necessarily true* if it is true in every possible world, it is *possibly true* if it is true in at least one possible world, and it is *contingently true* if it is true in the actual world but not necessary. Some propositions are necessary, including essential truths, and the truths of logic and mathematics. Others, including particular facts about individuals, are contingent.

The actual world is a possible world.

Properties are ranked according to their perfection (aka moral value).

Some substances are conscious (called souls). (Leibniz thinks every substance changes in a process that tends towards consciousness.)

When a soul choose to act, it always chooses what it thinks is the better alternative.

Principle of Sufficient Reason. Every event (instantiation of a property in a substance) or group of events (including the existence of the actual world) has a cause or "reason" for its existence.

Theorem. A unique omnipotent, omniscient, and benevolent god exists.

Proof. The actual world must have a cause by the Principle of Sufficient Reason. To have produced the actual world, this being must have the necessary power, wisdom (knowledge) and will (towards the good) to have produced the actual world. QED.

Theorem. The Principle of the Best. The actual world is the best possible world.

Proof. This result follows from the fact that each world can be evaluated for its degree of moral value by summing the value of its instantiated properties. God, who is omniscient, knows which one this is, has the power to choose it, and has chosen it from all other possible worlds because he, as a soul, chooses what he believes is best. The evidence that God always chooses the best is indirect. We can tell he does so by observing that the effects of his choice, namely the actual

world. We can see by inspection that it the best. Therefore, the agent that chose it acts for the best.

Theorem. God understands the (necessarily true) essences of substances and he understands those contingently true propositions would be true in any possible world. In the actual world he has caused properties to be instantiated in substances according to these essences and according to the contingent truths he understands would be true in that world.

Theorem. Evil is a privation.

Proof. This result follows from the fact that what we mean by a substance being evil is that it instantiates less perfect properties.

Theorem. The evil in the world is not necessary because it is due to God's consequent will.

Proof. Though God will the good absolutely (unconditionally), a comparison of the truths of the various possible worlds shows that the best of all worlds, namely the actual world, requires the joint instantiation of less than perfect properties. The propositions describing these are in general not true in every possible world, and therefore they are contingently and not necessarily true.

Theorem. An implication may be necessary without the consequent itself being necessary.

Proof. Let $\square$ represent the adverb "necessarily" and $\rightarrow$ the verb "implies." The claim in symbols, then, is that $\square(P \rightarrow Q)$ may be true without $\square Q$ being true. Proof is by construction of a case. Suppose, for example, that *John is a human* is true. Nevertheless, there is a necessarily true about essences, namly, *Necessarily, if John is a frog, then John is a reptile.* That is, the implication from being a frog to being a reptile is necessary. But John, who is human, is not even a reptile. It is not even true, much less is it necessarily true, that he is a reptile. Thus, though, it is *Necessary, if John is frog, he is a reptile* is true but this is not true *Necessarily, John is reptile*. QED.

Corollary. God causal actions are not absolutely necessary but only hypothetically necessary.

Proof. God's understanding of the actual world, which is consists in his knowing an infinitely long conjunction of facts detailing the actual world. In symbols, $\square((P_1 \& P_i \& P_n)) \rightarrow P_i)$ may be true without $\square P_i$ being true, where $P_1 \& P_i \& P_n$ represents the description of the actual world, and P_i represents one of the truths listed in that description.

Corollary (Compatibilism). Human action is both determined and not necessary.

Proof. Part I. Human action is determined because the truth o f any proposition P_i describing a particular action follows necessarily from the fact that God has chosen to make true the infinite conjunction of propositions, represented by $P_1 \& P_i \& P_n$, that describe the actual world and that fact of logic that this conjunction necessarily implies each of its conjuncts, i.e. from the fact that $\Box((P_1 \& P_i \& P_n)) \rightarrow Pi)$. Part II. Human action is free because the proposition P_i that describes it true in the actual world but false in other possible worlds, and is therefore contingently, not necessarily, true. Because the action is not necessary, it is free. QED.

Corollary (Boethius). God's foreknowledge is consistent with human freedom.

Proof. It is true by definition that if anybody, call that person S, knows that P (in symbols KsP), it necessarily follows that P, because by definition we can only know something that is true.   In symbols, $\Box (KsP \rightarrow P)$. This fact applies to the special case of God as well: $\Box(KgP \rightarrow P)$. On the hand, an implication may be necessary, as it is here, without the consequent being necessary. That this happens with knowledge is shown by constructing a case. If John knows there is milk in the refrigerator, then necessarily there is milk in the refrigerator: $\Box(KjP \rightarrow P)$. But "necessarily there is milk in the refrigerator", i.e. $\Box P,$ is false because John can run out of milk, i.e. there is a possible world in which the refrigerator lacks milk. If I know that the sun will rise tomorrow, it follows necessarily that the sun will rise tomorrow, but it is not the case that it is necessary that the sun will rise tomorrow, because there is a possible world in which it explodes befoe it can rise.

Free Will

Leibniz adopts Aristotle's notion of voluntary action to explain his notion of free will, or action caused by a free choice of the will:

An action is *voluntary* or caused by a *free* act of the will if two conditions are met:
   (1) the action is not compelled by a force external to the agent, i.e. the causal sequence that leads to the action originates with the agent's choice as its first cause.
   (2) the cause of the action (i.e. the first cause in the causal sequence that leads to the action) is a deliberate choice on the part of the agent (i.e. it is the result of a rational choice).

Theorem (Compatibalism). An action that is the result of free will is both determined and not necessary.

Proof. Let us suppose the a action is caused by a free act of the will. This action is described by a proposition that is true in the actual world. It is part of a longer all inclusive conjunuction of propositions describing the all events in the actual

world through out its history. Moreover, it is this infinite conjunction describing all the events in the actual world that God understood prior to creation, and that he chose to make true by creating the actual world. At creataion he knew that this infinite conjunction was true, and that therefore every individual conjunct that makes up the infinite conjunction is true. Because each individual conjunction describing an individual event follows logically from the infinite conjunction, each individual event was determined to be true at creation. However, even though determined in this sense, some events are contingent, because they do not occur in every possible world and the individual proposition that describes them are not true in every possible world. These individual propositions therefore are not necessary. QED.

Background Debate in the 16th Century Telology.

Predeterminators. (Dominicans, Augustinians, Thomists, William of Ockham). In order to know the future, that future event must be instantiated in a causal sequence that leads up to that evert. What makes the future event determinate is not that God knows it will happen, but the existence of this causal series, the knowledge of which is (at least in part) the basis of God's knowledge that the future event will occur.

Mediate Knowledge. (Franciscans (Fonseca) and Jesuits (Molina).) There are three kinds of knowledge:

> Knowledge of Possibles. This knowledge of essences in the mind of god independently of or prior to any actual creation. i.e.knowledge of essential definitions like *every cow in an animal*.

> Knowledge of Intuition. This is knowledge of that an indvidual creature exists. ("Intuition" is traditionally understaood as the faculty of perceiving by the senses that something exists but without knowing what concept it falls under.)

> Conditional Knowledge. Knowledge of conditionals. For example, God knows the conditional: *If Keilah were to be besieged, the inhabitants would deliver David to the enemy*. Molina contends that part of God's knowledge is conditional. For example, he knows the conditional: *if Peter were questioned and afforded God's grace, he would have reject God''s grace and denied Christ.* Therefore, Molina says, God is justified in determining the fact that Peter will deny him.

Leibniz, in effect, rejects the dispute. His view is that the Tomists and Dominicans are right that the facts in the actual world are determined. They are determined because they are described in the infinitely long proposition that describes the truths of the actual world and that God chose to make true when he created the actual world. Because each individual fact follows from this

infinite conjunction, it is "determined."   Among these determined truths, some are necessary because they are true in every possible world, and some are only contingent because although they are true in the actual world, then are not true in every possible world. For example, *I am hungry at time t* may be true in the actual world but would not be true in every possible world. The so-called "possibles" in the threefold classification above would count according to Leibniz as essential definitions true in all possible worlds and therefore as necessary. Among the truths that describe the actual world are some conditionals. Some of these are necessary, for example, *if Bossy is a cow, then Bossie is an animal*. Others, however, are not necessary, for example, *If I come to dinner, I will bring some wine.* The theologians, according to Leibniz, just don't understand the right way to classify what they are talking about.

Note on Citations. You may use these notes to guide you in writing your paper. They are intended to help you read and find the relevant views in the works of Leibniz himself. These notes, however, count as a secondary source. When attributing an opinion to a historical figure like Leibniz, however, it is a scholarly requirement that you cite the primary source, i.e. a text written by that figure himself, not secondary sources. If you attribute any of the views mentioned in the notes to Leibniz, you must cite a reference in Leibniz's text, for example a paragraph number in the Open Court English translation of the *Theodicy*. Doing so will require you to find actual places in the text where he expresses the view you are attributing to him.