

# 10

## Leibniz and Spinoza on Substance and Mode

*Christia Mercer*

For decades, scholars have attributed forms of Spinozism to Leibniz. Because Leibniz heard about Spinoza's *Ethics* in the winter of 1675–76, because he uses Spinozistic terminology in essays of 1676, and because some of his comments reek of Spinozism, it has often been assumed that he was deeply influenced by the thought of Spinoza and it has sometimes been claimed that he was himself a Spinozist for a while in the 1670s. Ludwig Stein began the discussion in 1890 with his proposal that Leibniz went through a "Spinoza freundliche" period between 1676 and 1679.<sup>1</sup> In 1900, Bertrand Russell made the point with characteristic verve: Leibniz "tends with slight alterations of phraseology, to adopt (without acknowledgment) the views of the decried Spinoza."<sup>2</sup> More recently, Robert Adams has claimed that in 1676 Leibniz toyed with Spinozistic pantheism where the latter is taken to be the denial of "the ontological externality" of created things.<sup>3</sup>

In this paper, I argue that Leibniz was never a pantheist of any sort. While it is surely true that he was fascinated with the metaphysics of the *Ethics* and that he responded to the details of Spinoza's system for much of his long life, it is false that Spinozistic pantheism ever seriously tempted him. Once we place the essays of 1676 in their proper historical and philosophical context and once we consider all the relevant texts, the specter of pantheism dissolves and Leibniz's conception of the relation between God and creatures emerges as one in a long line of Platonist accounts. In section 1, I summarize the evidence that scholars have presented for Leibniz's so-called pantheism. In sections 2 and 3, I present the proper theological and philosophical context within which to compare the views of Leibniz and Spinoza. In section 4, I

show that, once we place Leibniz's works of 1676 in this context, it is possible to discern for the first time exactly how he conceived the relation between God and creatures. In section 5, I reconsider some of the evidence offered for Leibniz's so-called Spinozistic pantheism and show that it implies neither pantheism nor anything else theologically unorthodox. Finally, in section 6, the substance-mode relation as used by Leibniz is briefly compared to that of Spinoza. Against the historical and philosophical background set in the previous sections, the radical difference between the two positions becomes clear. We can safely conclude that Leibniz was not tempted by Spinozistic pantheism.

### 1. Leibniz's 'Spinozistic Pantheism'<sup>4</sup>

Leibniz was introduced to the philosophy of the *Ethics* and to Spinoza himself in 1676. According to the standard story of Leibniz's philosophical development, the *earliest* signs of his metaphysics appear in 1679. Therefore, it has been reasonable to assume that a window of opportunity existed in the years 1676–79 within which Leibniz might have absorbed important aspects of Spinoza's thought *before* constructing his own philosophy.<sup>5</sup> The German editors of Leibniz's philosophical papers added significantly to the debate when they published for the first time in 1980 all the notes and papers surrounding Leibniz's first contact with Spinoza's *Ethics*.<sup>6</sup> During the four years Leibniz spent in France (1672–'76), his intellectual energies were focused primarily on mathematical and technical problems. The results include the construction of a calculating machine that was successfully demonstrated in early 1675 and the development of the calculus in the autumn of that year. Also in the fall of that year, Leibniz met and became friendly with Ehrenfried Walther von Tschirnhaus, a young nobleman from Saxony, who had spent time in both England and the Netherlands. When Tschirnhaus arrived in Paris, he had a letter of introduction from Henry Oldenburg, the secretary of the Royal Society, to Leibniz; he also had a thorough familiarity with the philosophy of Spinoza, which he had acquired during a lengthy stay in Amsterdam.<sup>7</sup> When Leibniz met Tschirnhaus in September 1675, he found the young man intellectually promising and personally engaging. The two developed a friendly relationship and began working together on mathematical matters.<sup>8</sup> By early 1676, Tschirnhaus had gotten to know Leibniz well enough to trust him with an account of the *Ethics*, or at least an account of its salient features. The brief notes that Leibniz took on their discussion—probably from February 1676—constitute his first reference to that text and indicate that he had gotten the gist of Spinoza's metaphysics. Leibniz writes, for

example, that "God alone is substance . . . Creatures are nothing but modes" (VI iii 385). Within days of writing these notes, Leibniz began to produce a number of philosophical essays to which the Academy editors have given the title *De summa rerum* and which cluster around the topic of God and God's relation to creatures. It is in these essays that Leibniz refers to Spinoza, uses Spinozistic terminology, and appears to embrace 'Spinozistic pantheism'.

It is striking that, since the publication of the *De summa rerum* papers, two Leibniz scholars have used them to argue for Leibniz's Spinozism. Independently of one another, Mark Kulstad and Robert Adams have adopted the term 'pantheism' and argued that, while Leibniz was always opposed to some elements in Spinoza's metaphysics, he was not opposed to others. It is interesting that Kulstad and Adams offer the same passages from the *De summa rerum* and related texts as evidence for Leibniz's 'Spinozistic pantheism'.<sup>9</sup> In particular, Leibniz makes three claims that strongly suggest an endorsement of Spinozism. For example, in October 1676, Leibniz took notes on some letters that Oldenburg had received from Spinoza. Leibniz writes: "It can surely be said that all things are one, that all things are in God, in the same way the effect is contained in its full cause [*causa sua pleni*] and a property of any subject [is contained] in the essence of that same subject" (VI iii 370). Now, consider a related passage of April 1676, this time from the *De summa rerum* essays:

It seems to me that the origin of things from God is of the same kind as the origin of properties from an essence; just as  $6 = 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1$ , therefore  $6 = 3 + 3$ ,  $= 3 \times 2$ ,  $= 4 + 2$ , etc. Nor may one doubt that the one expression [unam expressionem] differs from the other, for in one way we think of the number 3 or the number 2 expressly, and in another way we do not; but it is certain that the number 3 is not thought of by someone who thinks of six units at the same time. It would be thought of, if the person were to impose a limit after three had been thought. Much less does someone who thinks of six units at the same time think of multiplication. So just as these properties differ from each other and from essence, so do things differ from each other and from God!<sup>10</sup>

In both of these passages, Leibniz claims that things are related to God as properties are related to essence. About texts like these, Adams asserts: "Leibniz is *not* moved to speak clearly of the world as an additional 'result' *outside* the divine being."<sup>11</sup>

As for the second claim, consider another passage of April 1676 also from the *De summa rerum* essays:

There is the same variety in any kind of world, and this is nothing other than the same essence related in various ways, as if you were to look at the same town from various places; or, if you relate the essence of the number 6 to the number 3, it will be  $3 \times 2$  or  $3 + 2$  [sic], but if you relate it to the number 4 it will be  $6/4 = 3/2$ , or  $6 + 4 \times 3/2$ . So it is not surprising that the things produced are in a certain way different. (VI iii 523; Pk 83)

Although the text is not clear, the suggestion is that the divine essence is like a town in that it can be viewed variously and like a number in that it can be expressed in a variety of ways. It follows that like the different mathematical expressions of the number 6 or the different views of the same town, each creature is different from the others and yet contains the same divine essence. The same point is made more clearly in another text from an essay of the same month:

The essence of God consists in the fact that he is the subject of all comparable attributes. But any property or affection of God involves his whole essence. . . . But when all other things are related to any attribute, there result modifications [*modificationes*] in it. Hence it comes about that the same Essence of God is expressed wholly [*expressa sit totali*] in any kind of World. (VI iii 514; Pk 69–71)

Here the implication is that a world is a modification of God and thereby expresses or in some sense contains the divine essence.

Finally, most persuasive of all is the fact that Leibniz applies the substance–mode relation to God and creatures. He writes in an essay apparently composed in preparation for his meeting with Spinoza:

It can easily be demonstrated that all things are distinguished, not as substances (i.e., radically) but as modes. . . . Therefore, the essence of all things is the same, and things differ only modally, just as a town seen from a high point differs from the town seen from a plain. If only those things which are separated are really different or which one can perfectly understand without the other, it follows that no thing really differs from another, but that all things are one, just as Plato argues in the Parmenides.<sup>12</sup>

As Adams reads this passage, “Leibniz flatly affirms the Spinozistic idea that finite things are only modes.”<sup>13</sup> Kulstrud concurs: “we can easily believe that Leibniz is saying here that God’s essence is the essence of all things, and that it follows from this that [finite] things are not separate substances at all, but rather modes or properties of God, contained in God’s essence.”<sup>14</sup>

On the basis of these and other facts, the following developmental

story has suggested itself. Leibniz arrived in Paris in 1672, a young whipper-snapper from the (philosophical) backwoods of Germany, with lots of philosophical ideas, but no original system of his own. In Paris, he directed his formidable energies toward mathematical and physical problems. With the invention of the calculus in 1675, he was ripe to return to philosophy. When Tschirnhaus placed the metaphysics of Spinoza at his feet toward the beginning of 1676, Leibniz found it enormously enticing. On his way to Hanover in the autumn of that year, he made a pilgrimage to Amsterdam where he met and exchanged philosophical arguments with Spinoza himself. Over the next few years, Leibniz struggled with Spinozism and other philosophical positions until his own system was born in 1679. This is an impressive developmental story based on a number of well-documented facts.

But it is false. The first point to note is that there are some significant facts that conflict with this story. Perhaps the most damaging of these is that many of the core doctrines of Leibniz’s metaphysics are in place in 1671–72.<sup>15</sup> Among these doctrines is the commitment to the self-sufficiency and activity of substance where the idea is that created substances have their own principle or source of activity and hence are metaphysically distinct from God. Once we recognize that Leibniz arrived in Paris with his core metaphysics in hand, it seems much less likely that Spinoza’s system would have so overwhelmed him. Another fact that conflicts with our developmental story is that there are a number of passages throughout the Paris period that imply a distinction between God and creatures. As in his pre-Paris texts, Leibniz insists that each created substance has its own principle or source of activity in terms of which its actions can be explained and in terms of which it can be distinguished—as a substance—from God. For example, in an essay written sometime in 1673–75, he explains “that every substance acts [*agere*] and every acting thing [*agens*] is called a substance. Now we can show from the inner principles of metaphysics that what is not active does not exist, for there is not such a thing as mere potentiality to act.” Leibniz continues:

There are certainly many and important things to be said . . . about the principle of activity or what the scholastics called substantial form, from which a great light is thrown on Natural Theology and . . . the mysteries of faith. The result is that not only souls but all substances can be said to exist in a place only through the operation of their active principle, that souls can be destroyed by no power of body, and that every power of acting [*omnem agenti vim*] exists from the highest mind whose will is the final reason for all things, the cause being universal harmony; that God as creator can unite the body to the soul, and that in fact, every finite soul is embodied, even the angels are not excepted.<sup>16</sup>

There is much that is interesting here. What is most important for our purposes, however, is the fact that God creates substances so that, although their power ultimately depends on their divine source, nevertheless the substances have their own power of acting and therefore are distinct from their creator. Roughly, Leibniz's assumption seems to be that, because created substances have their own principle of activity and their own substantial form and because they are embodied in some bit of matter, they are in some obvious sense distinct from God. The texts of 1676 are strewn with evidence of a similar distinction between God and creatures. According to Leibniz, the active things in a world are mind-like substances which are "the true entities" and "are one."<sup>17</sup> He insists that each substance contains its own "principle of individuation" (VI iii 490: Pk 51) by means of which it is distinguished from every other substance (and presumably therefore from God). At times, Leibniz is explicit about the relation between God and creatures: "God does not form part of things, rather, he is their principle."<sup>18</sup>

On the basis of such facts, it is perfectly clear that our original developmental story contains serious mistakes. But these facts themselves do not preclude the possibility that Leibniz went through some sort of Spinozistic frenzy in 1676. While it is surely noteworthy that the young man arrived in Paris with his core metaphysics in tow and that there are signs of that metaphysics in 1676, it remains perfectly possible that, at the heady culmination of his work on the calculus, he found the grandeur of Spinoza's system enticing. Besides the texts that Kuitstad and Adams highlight, there are a number of others that, though not exactly Spinozistic, blur the distinction between God and creatures. In fact, throughout 1676, Leibniz is happy both to offer the distinction noted above between the activity of God and that of creature and to blur that distinction. It is clear that, according to Leibniz, God is *in* created things. For example, as part of an account for the destructibility of creatures, he argues that "God is indeed the form of life" so that whatever "participates in life is not able to be distinguished" (VI iii 295). In a related essay, he insists that "there is something divine in mind . . . and this is the same as the omniscience of God" (VI iii 391: Pk 43).

Nor is that all. There are other passages written in 1676 which are even more extreme. Leibniz writes:

This [divine] mind, like a soul, exists as a whole in the whole body of the World; the existence of things is certainly due to this mind. It is the cause of itself. Existence is nothing other than that which is the cause of consistent perceptions. The reason [*ratio*] of things is the aggregate of all the requisites of things. God comes from God. The whole infinite is one.

Particular minds exist, in short, simply because the highest Being judges it harmonious that there should exist somewhere what understands, or is a certain intellectual mirror, or replica of the world. To exist is nothing other than to be Harmonious; the mark of existence is consistent perceptions. (VI iii 474: Pk 25)

For our purposes, it is particularly important that God is supposed to be *in* the world. When we combine comments like these with the passages taken from the *De summa rerum* and related texts quoted above, we are left with the strong impression that Leibniz's views about the relation between God and creatures are either confused or inconsistent. On the one hand, he suggests that God is distinct from created substances; on the other, he says that God is in creatures *and* that creatures are properties and modes of God. Is there any way of making sense of these claims?

The short answer is yes. I offer an explanation in sections 2 and 3 of how—for Leibniz and many other theists—God is in creatures and creatures are in God. In the process, I show that the query about Leibniz's pantheism is misguided. In fact, the assumption that a pantheist is someone who denies that finite things are "outside the divine being" is historically wrong-headed.<sup>19</sup> For the sake of convenience, I center my discussion of Leibniz's "Spinozistic pantheism" around an analysis of the substance-mode relation as it applies to God and creatures, what I call the *divine substance-mode relation*. There are at least two assumptions at work in the discussions about Leibniz's "Spinozistic pantheism": (1) the pantheist is someone who denies that created things are ontologically external to God; (2) to use the substance-mode terminology of the Spinozistic sort (that is, to use the divine substance-mode relation) is equivalent to denying the ontological externality of creatures. From these two assumptions it follows that, because Leibniz describes the relation between God and creatures in *De summa rerum* and related texts as that between substance and mode and because he implies that relation in other passages, he was tempted by Spinozistic pantheism, at least for a while. I argue below that both of these assumptions are false. Leibniz's acceptance of the divine substance-mode relation implies nothing about pantheism, of any variety. This becomes clear when we place his use of the substance-mode terminology within two philosophical traditions: Platonist theism and the important (but unnoticed) history of the substance-mode relation. Let's consider each of these in turn.

## 2. Pantheism, Ontological Externality, and Theism.

Against the history of Judeo-Christian theism, our first assumption seems odd and I believe that most medieval, Renaissance, and early

modern philosophers would have taken it to be so. In fact, as far as I can tell, the theism of such thinkers *demand*ed that everything depend entirely on God, that everything be *in* God, and that God be *in* everything. The New Testament is full of such demands. As Paul writes to the Ephesians, there is: "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and *in* you all" (Ephesians 4:6). Concerning the fact that everything is *in* God, consider this passage from Acts: "For in Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28); while Paul writes to the Romans: God is that "of whom all things are, through whom all things are, *in* whom all things are" (Rom. 11:36). These sorts of biblical passages encouraged early theists, whether the first-century Jew, Philo of Alexandria, or the fourth-century Christian, Augustine of Hippo, to believe that God was *in* everything and everything was *in* God. In brief, within the context of western theism, an insistence on the ontological externality of creatures simply seems wrong-headed. According to the greatest Jewish and Christian thinkers, there is *nothing* external to God and moreover the ontological *inclusion* of creatures *within* the divine is theologically exactly right. Consider these remarkable claims in the eleventh-century *Monologion* by Anselm of Canterbury. First Anselm explains: "The supreme essence is in and through all things. All things are through and in—and out of—the supreme essence" (sect. 14).<sup>21</sup> Let us think that there is no distinction between God and creatures, Anselm insists: "This [divine] spirit exists unqualifiedly. Compared to it, created things do not exist" (sect. 28).<sup>22</sup> In the fifteenth century, Marsilio Ficino wrote a letter to a friend that contains a brief dialogue between God and the soul. In Ficino's dialogue, God explains:

"I am both with you and within you. I am indeed with you, because I am in you; I am in you, because you are in me. If you were not in me you would not be yourself, indeed, you would not be at all." God continues: "Behold, I say, do you not see? I fill heaven and earth, I penetrate and contain them. . . . Behold, do you not see? I pass into everything unmingled, so that I may surpass all; for I am also able to enter and permeate at the same time, to enter completely and to make one, being unity itself, through which all things are made and endure, and which all things seek."

In brief, God exclaims: "In me are all things, out of me come all things and by me are all things sustained forever and everywhere."<sup>23</sup>

Nor were such theists either philosophically or theologically unsophisticated. They were perfectly aware of the grave theological problems that such views about the relation between God and creatures posed. As Augustine nicely makes the point, worrying aloud to God in

the *Confessions*: "Without you, whatever exists would not exist. But does what exists contain you? I also have being . . . which I would not have unless you were in me. Or rather, I would have no being if I were not in you" (book I, sect. 2). For such theists, there were two closely related questions: how can creatures be in the transcendent God? and, moreover, how can the transcendent God be in its creatures? For inspiration, early Christians like Augustine turned to Plotinus and Philo, who themselves of course were thoroughly indebted to Plato, or at least their version of Plato. Although I can only sketch an answer to these questions here, let me do that. Concerning the first question, namely, how the creatures can be *in* the transcendent God, theists endorsed a distinction between the supreme Being as wholly independent and as that on which all else depends. Whereas the divinity is self-sufficient and exists independently of all its creatures, the creatures depend fully and constantly on it. In this sense, a creature can be said to exist in God just in case the whole being and nature of the creature depends continually on the divine. To use the language of these philosophers, a creature "exists in" God because the being and nature of the creature "flows from" the divine. The classic analogy is to the sun whose rays depend entirely on it while it depends on nothing.

As to our second question, namely, how the transcendent God is supposed to be *in* its creatures, the same problem occurs in the great Plotinus himself. According to him, the One or Supreme Being is "alone by itself" and simple, while it is also "everywhere" and "fills all things."<sup>24</sup> Before I present the Platonist answer to our second question, it is important to remember that for Philo, Augustine, and many theists, the Platonic Forms or Ideas were taken to be Ideas in the mind of God.<sup>25</sup> Many Renaissance and early modern Platonists considered these Ideas to be the attributes of God, where the basic point was that these attributes were the eternal simple essences which the divine mind conceives and then uses as models for the things of the world. Platonists like Augustine and Philo employed this account of the divine intellect to explain how the transcendent God can be said to be *in* creatures. The explanation depends on the Plotinian notion of emanative causation.<sup>26</sup> Oversimplifying somewhat, the basic assumption is that any product of God contains the divine essence but in an inferior way. If the perfect God has an attribute *f*, then God can emanate *f*-ness to a lower being or creature. In the emanative relation, God loses nothing while the creature comes to instantiate *f*-ness. God remains transcendent and pure, while the creature becomes an imperfect manifestation of the perfect *f*. The emanative process is assumed to be continual so that the creature will have *f* just in case God emanates *f*-ness to it. The point here may be summarized as follows: the *Theory of Emanative*

*Caesation* claims that, for a being A that is more perfect than a being B, A can emanate its attribute *finess* to B in such a way that neither A nor A's *finess* is depleted in any way, while B has *finess*, though in a manner inferior to the way it exists in A. The emanate process is continual so that B will instantiate *finess* if and only if A emanates *finess* to it.

We are now prepared to explain how it is that the divine transcends its products and yet is in them. The perfection and transcendence of God remains unchanged while it continually emanates its attributes to its products, which then have those attributes in an imperfect and hence distinctive manner. Plotinus distinguishes neatly between the transcendent One and its products when he explains that the former "is like the things, which have come to be" except that they are "on their level" and "if [the One] is better" (*Enneads*, VI.8.14.33-34). To put it in non-Plotinian language, the Supreme Being is *in* the creatures in the sense that it emanates its attributes to them; it remains transcendent from them because it neither loses anything in the emanative process nor gives them any part of itself. In the *Congressors*, Augustine suggests that it was Platonists like Plotinus who helped him see the solution to the problem. As he confesses:

I considered all the other things that are of a lower order than yourself, and I saw that they have not absolute being in themselves, nor are they entirely without being. They are real in so far as they have their being from you, but unreal in the sense that they are not what you are. For it is only that which remains in being without change that truly is. . . . [God] himself [remains] ever unchanged, all things [are made constantly] new. (VII, x-xi)

Here the 'exists in' relation is to be understood in terms of emanation where the basic idea is that attributes or Ideas of the divine emanate to its products and, in that sense, exist in them. The crucial point to understand however is that the attributes exist in the products in a manner *inferior* to the way in which they exist in the Divine. God has *f* perfectly; creature has it imperfectly. The *finess* of God is not equivalent to the *finess* of the creature. The *finess* of the creature is in Augustine's words "of a lower order." However undivine we may feel, each of us is an emanation of the divine attributes. It might be helpful to summarize the point in the following way: the *Creatively Inferiority Complex* asserts that every product of the supreme being contains all the attributes that constitute the divine essence through the product instantiates each of those attributes in a manner inferior to the way in which they exist in the supreme being.<sup>25</sup>

Against this background of Platonist theism, we can offer a response to the assumption that pantheism consists in the denial of ontological externality. Unless we are prepared to attribute pantheism to the great theologians of the medieval and Renaissance eras, something is wrong with this account of pantheism. In brief, the moral that I want us to draw from this theistic tale is as follows: although it was a standard belief among Jewish and Christian thinkers that creatures very much existed *in* God (and that God existed *in* creatures), such thinkers nonetheless were able to distinguish between God and creatures. The distinction did not have to do with externality, but rather with inferiority: the creatures were less good in every conceivable way than God.

### 3. Substance-Mode Relation, Divine and Non-divine

The history of the substance-mode relation in Renaissance and early modern philosophy has not been thoroughly studied. Although much more research needs to be done before the details of this story are in place, here are the facts most relevant to our present concerns.

Fact One. The *divine substance-mode relation* does not exist before the Renaissance.<sup>26</sup> Neither medieval Platonists like Augustine nor scholastic philosophers like Scotus, Aquinas and Ockham seem to apply the substance-mode terminology to the divinity and its products. While scholastic discussions embrace the view that everything depends on God and that the world is "a perfect likeness" of the divinity,<sup>27</sup> the schoolmen used the full battery of Aristotelian ammunition to distinguish between God and creatures.

Fact Two. With the grand rediscovery and reinterpretation of Platonism in Renaissance Italy, philosophers like Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola began to Platonize Christian metaphysics more thoroughly than had the scholastics.<sup>28</sup> Neither Ficino nor Pico uses the divine substance-mode relation in anything like a technical sense. But in their texts we find the following three claims: (1) God is a substance, (2) there are grades of reality with God at the top, and (3) each grade is (somehow) a mode of the divinity. In Ficino's *Platonic Theology* or *the Immortality of the Soul*, composed between 1469 and 1474, he displays a hierarchy of being and calls each level a mode.<sup>29</sup> In his *Heptaplus* of 1489 Pico offers an analysis of Genesis and, as part of his account of creation, asserts that there are "five modes in which one thing can be related to another" and in terms of which the relation between God and each grade (*gradus*) of creation can be explained.<sup>30</sup> Although created things can be more or less perfectly related to God,

Pico insists that the divinity is "diffused through everything" and that "everything participates" in God.<sup>31</sup>

Fact Three. By the mid-seventeenth century there had come to be two distinct ways of thinking of the substance-mode relation. Although both assume that the mode exists in the substance and is a determination or modification of the substantial essence, they understand the limitation in different ways. The first, which was applied to the relation between God and creatures, which I have been calling *the divine substance-mode relation*, and which most philosophers believed to be Platonist, assumed that the mode was a limitation of the substantial essence in the sense that it was an inferior manifestation or instantiation of the essence. In this case, the mode is morally and metaphysically inferior to the substance. The second use of the relation, which was applied to created substances, assumed (roughly) that the mode was a determination of the substance in the sense that it was a specific variation or modification of the substantial essence. In the case of the *non-divine substance-mode relation*, the mode is not morally and metaphysically inferior to the substance; rather, it was just a determination or modification of it. Although scholastics like Francisco Suárez discussed the modes of substance, the central place that Descartes gave the relation in his metaphysics was especially influential.<sup>32</sup> For example, in the *Principles of Philosophy*, part 1, art. 64, he writes, "thought and extension may be taken as modes of a substance, in that one and the same mind is capable of having many different thoughts, and one and the same body, with its quantity unchanged, may be extended in many different modes" (AT VIII 31).

A survey of what the standard seventeenth-century philosophical lexicons have to say about *modus* provides a nice history of the substance-mode relation in the century. In the *Lexicon Philosophicum* of 1613, for example, Goclenius approaches his topic from the perspective of Renaissance Platonism. He begins his account of *modus* in the following way: "In the universe, so there might be Perfection, there are diverse grades and modes of things, distributed to them by God. . . . A mode however of a thing is a certain limitation. A mode is the limitation of the divine efficient potential [*divinae potentiae efficientis*]."<sup>33</sup> Goclenius suggests that he is following Plato, Paul, and Augustine in understanding the relation between God and creatures in the way that he does. Among other things, Goclenius claims that God contains "all things. . . . eminently," that is, in the best and most excellent way while everything else exists in a "composite" and inferior manner (p. 697). Moreover, although "creatures are not the being [esse] of God himself, nonetheless they are in him. . . . [W]hatever is in creatures proceeds from God." According to Goclenius, God is "everything in all things.

. . . [and] is said to be in the things of the universe, that is, in all things and in each thing." We can "understand God through creatures. . . . Indeed, God thinks [*cognoscat*] creatures through his nature; we think God through creatures" (p. 704). Goclenius composed his *Lexicon* prior to Descartes's philosophical writings; it is significant that he does not emphasize the second use of the substance-mode relation. Although he notes that created things have modes and discusses the way in which a mode is a "determination" of the essence of the thing, the primary sense of *modus* in this lexicon concerns its use in describing God's creation of the world.

Now consider Micraelius' *Lexicon Philosophicum* of 1653. In his brief account, he begins by writing,

A *mode* is the determination of a thing, by which a thing in one way or another obtains essence, e.g., actually or potentially. Therefore, a *mode* does not compose a thing, but distinguishes and determines it. . . . [I]here can be many modes of a single thing. . . . so things that differ in modes are not diverse in essence.<sup>34</sup>

For Micraelius, the substance-mode terminology seems to apply both to created and divine substance. Assuming that creatures are modes of God, then it follows that they are "determinations" of the divine essence. They can be different from one another and nonetheless share the same essence. Micraelius goes on to explain that he is following Plato in offering "five modes of created things."<sup>35</sup> He writes: "The five modes, says Plato, are composed out of of the *infinite* and the *terminus*" where the former is "the passive potential" of the created world and the latter is "the Platonic God. . . . that is, pure act" (p. 667).

By the end of the century, the non-divine substance-mode relation had replaced the divine one in importance. Consider Stephan Chauvin's multi-volume *Lexicon Philosophicum* of 1713. Unlike his predecessors, Chauvin gives prominence to the non-divine substance-mode relation. He begins with an account of a mode as "determination toward fixed being" and then discusses the views of "the Cartesians" and other "recent philosophers." Eventually, Chauvin turns to the relation between God and creatures. After explaining that God "is most simple and perfect" and contains the attributes of "all things," he notes that created substances are subject to imperfection, variation, and change.<sup>36</sup>

Fact Four. Encouraged by their Renaissance Platonist predecessors, many early modern philosophers took themselves to be following the "divine Plato" in applying the substance-mode relation to that of God and creatures. It was common for seventeenth-century thinkers to con-

ceive the relation between God and creatures as that between substance and mode where the assumption was that creatures exist in the divine essence and manifest that nature in an inferior way.

Consider two examples. Anne Conway distinguished clearly between God and creatures and yet happily proclaimed that "God is present in all things and immediately fills all things."<sup>37</sup> Or turn to a less well known figure, Johann Adam Scherzer, who was professor of Hebrew and theology at the university in Leipzig at exactly the time when Leibniz studied there. In the textbooks by Scherzer, we find a thorough discussion of kabbalism and Renaissance Platonism. He refers to Plato, Plotinus, Philo, Proclus, Augustine, and the Christian kabbalist Johann Reuchlin. In his *Vade mecum*, Scherzer makes several points that are especially relevant to our present discussion. He says that he is following Plato in the second book of the *Republic* when he defines God as what "remains simple" while being "most beautiful . . . and most good." Embracing the causal doctrine of emanation, Scherzer claims that the supreme being is the principle of all things and their constant source: "In acting . . . [God] is neither changed nor depleted" and yet "is that through which things live." He claims to follow Marsilio Ficino and other Platonists by conceiving of God as "the light itself . . . , the reason of reasons, the fount and maker of all things, the uniform and omniform form . . . , the unity in the multitude." According to Scherzer, the supreme being contains all things while remaining fundamentally simple, and acts constantly to conserve creatures while "nothing in him is changed, nor is it depleted."<sup>38</sup> Scherzer distinguishes between the archetypal world and the created world, where the former is the Idea of all possible things as they exist in the mind of God and the latter is the coordinated aggregate of created things. Scherzer's conception of the divine and its relation to the created world is clear. The mind of God contains the Platonic Ideas or archetypes; the creatures of the world are manifestations of these Ideas. The former are perfect, the latter are not; yet the perfection of God is evident in the composition and harmony of created things.<sup>39</sup> In sum, Scherzer accepts the Theory of Emanative Causation and the Creaturely Inferiority Complex.

Fact Five. Many seventeenth-century authors consider the cosmology of the Stoics to be the paradigm case of an unorthodox account of nature. Although I have not found uses of the word 'pantheism', the point is clear: the Stoics are those philosophers who do not distinguish sufficiently between natural things and their source. The very Renaissance and early modern Platonists who happily use the divine substance-mode terminology insist that they are not like the Stoics in that they (the Platonists) do distinguish sufficiently between God and nature.

In this context, consider Leibniz's *Doktrivater* in Leipzig, Jakob Thomasius. Although the standard accounts of seventeenth-century German philosophy describe Thomasius as a relatively conservative scholastic and although he was well known among his contemporaries as a defender of the Aristotelian philosophy, he was thoroughly conversant with the details of Platonism and had an impressive grasp of the other great ancient systems.<sup>40</sup> For example, his *Exercitatio* is an extended comparison of the philosophies of the Stoics, the Aristotelians, and the Platonists on a long list of philosophical and theological topics.<sup>41</sup> In his text, Thomasius refers to the whole range of pagan and Christian Platonic philosophers. One of his general conclusions is that Platonism is on the whole much less heretical than Stoicism, although he insists that all ancient pagan philosophers must be approached with caution. He agrees with Scherzer that God, who is thoroughly perfect and simple, is the source of all things.<sup>42</sup> Thomasius claims that the supreme being is "the fountain of features which flow into creatures" and he is happy to accept Augustine's conclusion that "God contains all things in himself," but he insists that this flowing or emanation be understood in the right way. For Thomasius, it is enormously important to understand that the flowing is controlled by God's will<sup>43</sup> and that the divine is properly transcendent. In short, Thomasius accepts the general features of the account of God and the relation between God and creatures offered by Scherzer, although he often goes into many more details than the latter does.

Thomasius's *Exercitatio* is an important work for our purposes. As an extended comparison between the philosophies of the Stoics, the Aristotelians, and the Platonists, it contains a careful explication of the relation between God and creatures. Explicitly drawing on the ideas of Plato, Plotinus, and later Platonists, Thomasius offers a fascinating variation on the Platonist theme of an hierarchy of dependence. Thomasius is concerned to explain in a thoroughly orthodox manner exactly how God is related to creatures and how creatures are related to one another and to God. In his discussion of these difficult topics he is keen to turn the Stoic notion of a World Soul, which he considers heretical, into something both theologically correct and metaphysically useful. Concerning the relation among creatures and their relation to God, Thomasius cites a number of authors who claim that the "essence of God permeates" the world so that there is an "effusion of vital spirit." He points out that some philosophers have wanted to identify "the Agent Intellect of Aristotle with the Platonic Soul of the World" and have claimed that "the Agent Intellect participates in divinity." Thomasius agrees with the basic assumptions here that the World Soul permeates all creatures and connects them all together and moreover



that there is a close relation among creatures in that they all exist within "the living spirit" and "light of God."<sup>44</sup>

But Thomasius also insists that such claims smack of heresy and incoherence unless we clarify the notion of a World Soul and avoid the mistakes of the Stoics. Thomasius agrees with those philosophers who claim that "everything is God and God is everything," but he demands that we understand exactly the relation between God and nature. According to Thomasius, it is important to grasp that everything "is wholly part of the divine" and yet that God himself is not *in* nature. In other words, Thomasius also accepts the Theory of Emanative Hierarchy and the Creatively Inferiority Complex, and he wants to distinguish clearly between creatures and God. He writes,

Things are in God as in a fount and first cause, i.e., most eminently; secondly, they are in Mind as Ideas and form; thirdly, they are in Soul as reasons [rationes] placed in its essence; fourthly, they are in Nature as seeds, for nature is the seminal power effused in universal matter by the soul of the World. Fifth, they are in Matter, although as a shadow, through imitation and participation.<sup>45</sup>

The details of Thomasius's proposals are both fascinating and difficult. What is particularly worth our attention is the fact that the hierarchy here is such that what is more complicated and divisible is supposed to depend on and be explained by what is more simple and unified. He writes: "As Mind depends on God, [and] Soul on Mind, so Nature depends on Soul."<sup>46</sup> It is important to grasp the exact nature of this dependence relation. Thomasius says that the higher stratum is the principle of the lower and contains "eminently" what the lower stratum "participates in" or has "formally." Thomasius summarizes his point: "As mind receives Ideas from God, Soul receives reasons [rationes] from mind; so nature receives seeds from soul."<sup>47</sup> The dependence relation here assumes the Theory of Emanative Causation: each higher level in the hierarchy causes the next lower stratum and has more perfectly what the lower has in a less perfect way. Moreover, each higher stratum remains transcendent while also being immanent in the lower. In the same way that the Plotinian One contains everything perfectly, so does Thomasius's God; in the same way that each level in the Plotinian hierarchy contains less perfectly what the higher level contains more perfectly, so does each stratum in Thomasius's system.

But what about the substance-mode relation? According to Thomasius, the divine mind contains the Platonic Ideas which are "mental modes" of God and "the exemplars and archetypes" of things.<sup>48</sup> The Ideas are in a sense the ingredients of all other things; each level in the

hierarchy is a mode of God, though each level is more inferior than the one just above it. So far, so good. But what exactly is "the World Soul"? According to Thomasius, "the reasons [rationes]" of the World Soul must contain the being of the Ideas though in a less perfect and less unified way. In other words, the Ideas must be transcendent from and yet immanent in the reasons in the World Soul. A fairly obvious way of making sense of this is to suppose that "the reasons [rationes]" are the complex essences or blueprints for the individuals in the created world. They are complex instantiations of the Ideas. In this case, the World Soul is the collection of such essences or blueprints; it is the fully articulated blueprint for the actual world. This interpretation of the World Soul successfully explains how it "depends on" Mind and how the seeds contain formally what the Ideas contained eminently. Moreover, this interpretation helps to explain Thomasius's account of nature. According to Thomasius, nature is "the power [virtutem] of the seeds infused into Matter by the World Soul."<sup>49</sup> The World Soul is God's plan for the actual world; nature is the instantiation of that plan in matter. Thomasius claims that there are great benefits to this account of the World Soul. In particular, he thinks that it helps to make sense of the relation between the Ideas of God and the world. According to Thomasius, he successfully explains how created things can be said to come from the supreme being and yet be distinct from it. He also avoids the problems which the theory of the Stoics faces because, unlike that account, his account does not conflate God and the World Soul. Rather, it makes it clear that the Ideas are not in matter, although the seminal powers are.<sup>50</sup> It is Thomasius's view that he successfully explains how created things can be said to depend on the supreme being and yet be distinct from it.<sup>51</sup> In fact, it is Thomasius's explanation of the difference between God and creatures that distinguishes him—and his precocious student Leibniz—from some other early modern Platonists. By telling a coherent story about how the Ideas or attributes of God are first manifested in a plan of the world which itself is then instantiated in the individual essences of the world, Thomasius makes sense of the claims that everything is contained in God and yet inferior to the divine nature.

Let's take stock of the facts of this section. As our story suggests, there were different ways to use the substance-mode terminology in the early modern period and moreover there were lots of Renaissance and early modern thinkers who made ample use of the divine substance-mode relation and yet drew a careful distinction between the divinity and its products. For our purposes here, it is especially important that many thinkers embraced the utter ontological dependence of creatures on God, described creatures as "modes" of God, and yet

would have staunchly denied that they were in any way contaminated by (what twentieth century scholars have called) *pantheism*. Therefore, the use of the substance-mode terminology of the Spinozistic sort (that is, the application of the substance-mode terminology to God and creatures) need not imply pantheism or anything else unorthodox. It follows that the conclusion about Leibniz is shown to be unwarranted: that is, by describing the relation between God and creatures as that between substance and mode, it by no means follows that Leibniz is a pantheist.

#### 4. Leibniz's Platonism

Well, if Leibniz wasn't a pantheist, then what *was* he and how exactly does he differ from Spinoza? Nearly from the beginning of his philosophical career, Leibniz accepted both the Theory of Emanative Causation and the Creaturally Inferior Complex. That is, as a young man, he believed that God continually emanates the divine essence to all creatures and he conceived of each creature as an inferior instantiation of that essence. Concerning the Theory of Emanative Causation, consider the following two very early texts. In the well-known *Dissertation on the Combinatorial Art* of 1666, Leibniz briefly turns to the topic of the relation between God and creatures. After the title page of the published text, Leibniz presents some "corollaries" which are supposed to follow from this combinatory art and which fall into four categories: logic, metaphysics, physics, and practical. One of the metaphysical corollaries is "God is substance; creature is accident."<sup>52</sup> Throughout the 1660s, Leibniz uses the Latin term (*accidens*) in a fairly standard scholastic way: an accident is a non-essential property that can be said "to flow" from the essence of the thing of which it is a property. Michaelis, for example, writes in his *Lexicon Philosophicum* that an accidental property "flows from the essential principles" although it is not "part of the essential constituents."<sup>53</sup> Leibniz's use of this term in describing the relation between God and creatures is important. It implies that creatures both flow from God's nature and reflect that nature, but do not do so necessarily. The text suggests that Leibniz had accepted the Platonic conception of God promulgated by his teachers. Or consider another early text, this time of 1668. For the very first time, Leibniz presents some of the details of the general relation between God and creatures. He proclaims his account to be similar to "Plato in the *Timaeus* about the world soul" and to "Aristotle in the *Metaphysics* and *Physics* about the agent intellect." Like these other philosophers, he maintains that God is "diffused through everything."<sup>54</sup>

According to the Theory of Emanative Causation, the attributes of God constitute the metaphysical elements out of which individuals are made. According to Leibniz in 1676, when these attributes are combined or related to one another, modifications of them arise. In one of the passages from April 1676 that was quoted in section 1 and that is offered as evidence of his Spinozistic pantheism, Leibniz writes: "from the conjunction of simple possible forms there result modifications, that is, ideas, as properties result from essence" (VI iii 521: Pk 81). The point is that, when simple forms are combined, modifications of the essence of God result "just as properties result from essence." In another essay of April 1676, entitled *On forms or the attributes of God*, Leibniz elaborates. Concerning the creator, he makes it clear that "the essence of God consists in the fact that he is the subject of all compatible attributes." Concerning the products of God, Leibniz claims that "any property or affection of God involves his whole essence." For Leibniz, when God produces something, regardless of how small, it "involves" the divine nature (VI iii 514: Pk 69-71). He writes in a related essay, "modifications [modifications] . . . are what result from all other forms taken together." They have an "infinite variety" which "can only result from an infinite cause" (VI iii 522: Pk 83). That is, modifications come about when divine attributes are combined; such combinations always contain all the divine attributes. Each modification is a product of the whole essence of God and therefore of all the divine attributes; it is in this sense that each modification of God will contain the whole divine essence.

When we piece together these and other clues, they yield a creation story that is very similar to Thomasius's account: the Platonic ideas or attributes of God are combined so as to form blueprints of individual things; each of these blueprints is a "product" or "modification" of God and in that sense contains the divine essence. As Leibniz puts it in *On forms or the attributes of God*, when the attributes or "forms" of God are "related to one another, modifications result; hence it comes about that the same essence of God is expressed as a whole in any kind of world and, therefore, that God manifests himself in infinite ways [modis]" (VI iii 524: Pk 71). Moreover, according to Leibniz, individual substances result when these modifications are instantiated in an active subject. He exclaims: "It is a wonderful thing that a subject is different from forms or attributes. . . . Thought is not duration, but what thinks is something that endures. And this is the difference between substance and forms" (VI iii 514: Pk 69). That is, because substances are active things, they are not only the sorts of things that can endure, they can also instantiate properties. As he writes: "The correct way of considering the matter is that forms are conceived through themselves;

subjects, and the fact that they are subjects, are conceived through forms." In brief, "particulars result" when attributes or forms "are combined with a subject" (VI iii 514: Pk 69–71). According to Leibniz, a subject is that which has a mind or principle of activity. Each subject or substance will be a modification of divine attributes; God produces modifications through the combinations of the divine attributes or forms and then instantiates these in subjects. As Leibniz summarizes the point in a related essay: "I cannot explain how things result from forms other than by analogy with the way in which numbers result from units—with this difference, that all units are homogeneous, but forms are different" (VI iii 523; Pk 85). Since each subject is an instantiated modification and each modification is a combination of all the divine attributes, each substance will be an instantiation of the divine essence. Leibniz embraces this consequence. In a passage that was offered in section 1 as support of his pantheism, he writes: "It seems to me that the origin of things from God is of the same kind as the origin of properties from an essence; just as  $6 = 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1$ , therefore  $6 = 3 + 3$ ,  $= 3 \times 2$ ,  $= 4 + 2$ , etc. Nor may one doubt that the one expression differs from the other. . . . So just as these properties differ from each other and from essence, so do things differ from each other and from God" (VI iii 518f; Pk 77). Each created substance is an expression of God's essence and in this sense each has the same essence.

An obvious question arises at this point. The Creaturer's Inferiority Complex insists that each creature contains the divine attributes but in a manner inferior to their divine source. What exactly does Leibniz have to say about this topic? Although there is evidence that Leibniz endorsed the view as early as 1671, he is most explicit about it in the spring of 1676, that is, at exactly the time when he uses what is supposed to be the treaded Spinozistic substance-mode terminology.<sup>56</sup> In 1676, he is clear about the fact that it is appropriate "to ascribe" the divine features to the things of the world. For example, he claims that a creature has the immeasurability of God if it can be said to be somewhere; it has the omniscience of God if it can be said to perceive. But he also insists that, strictly speaking, the absolute affirmative attributes of God are not *in* the world. For example, he writes in April that God "contains the absolute affirmative form that is ascribed in a limited way to other things." According to Leibniz, it is appropriate to ascribe the attributes of God to creatures, but it remains true that "God is not part of our mind" nor is the supreme being *in* any of the creatures which participate in the divine attributes.<sup>56</sup> In another essay of April, Leibniz writes, "all things are in a way contained in all things. But they are contained in a quite different way in God from that in which they are contained in things."<sup>57</sup>

### 5. Leibniz's Distinction between God and Creatures

Against the background set by Platonist theism in general and the history of the divine substance-mode relation in particular, the specter of Leibniz's Spinozistic pantheism dissolves. In fact, most Platonists in the history of philosophy would have found the demand for ontological externality bizarre. For them, there is *nothing* external to God and moreover the ontological dependence of creatures on God is theologically exactly right. In this context, we should remember that Leibniz's mentor, Jakob Thomassius, had written a long book in which he describes in detail the heresies of the Stoics and notes exactly how Platonist theism differs from it.<sup>58</sup> Leibniz was thoroughly acquainted with the dangers of Stoicism and fully aware of the significant differences between that philosophical option and the Platonist accounts of the relation between God and creatures. In short, to claim that these passages from Leibniz's Paris writings imply pantheism is to misunderstand a major tradition in the history of philosophy. Once we place Leibniz's comments within the Platonist tradition to which they belong, they prove to be no more pantheistic than similar passages in the texts of Augustine, Philo of Alexandria, Pico della Mirandola, Thomassius, Scherzer, and a hundred other philosophers who share Leibniz's Platonist leanings.

Furthermore, for every passage in Leibniz's writings that smacks of pantheism, there are several others (sometimes in the very same text) that suggest otherwise. An essay of March 1676, *Notes on Science and Metaphysics*, summarizes his position about the relation between God and creatures: "God does not form part of things; rather, he is their principle" (VI iii 392: Pk 45). For a more complicated example, let's return once more to a text that was offered in section 1 as support of Leibniz's pantheism and that was discussed in the preceding section. In *On Forms or the Attributes of God*, Leibniz writes, "any property or affection of God involves his whole essence. . . . When all the other attributes [of God] are related to any one of them, there result in it modifications, whence it happens that the same Essence of God is expressed as a whole in any kind of World, and so that God manifests himself in infinite modes" (VI iii 514: Pk 69). Adams has taken this passage as evidence of Leibniz's pantheistic tendencies. As he puts it: "What is striking here is that Leibniz is *not* moved to speak clearly of the world as an additional "result" *outside* the divine being."<sup>59</sup> But Leibniz could not have been so moved. Nor does *On Forms or the Attributes of God* leave the point unexplained. In the words that immediately follow the above quotation, Leibniz is explicit about exactly how

he understands the ontological dependency between the divine essence and its products. He writes,

Whatever is conceived per se, its cause cannot be understood. For an effect is conceived through its cause, from which it is evident that, if something exists through itself, and also if other things exist, then it exists. The correct way of considering the matter is that forms are conceived through themselves; subjects and the fact that they are subjects are conceived through the forms. But that whose modifications depend on the attributes of another, in which all its requisites are contained, is conceived through another. That is, it cannot be perfectly understood unless the other is understood. Those things are connected of which the one cannot be understood without the other. Requisites are those things which are connected with one another. (VI:iii, 514–15; Pk 71)

In this passage, Leibniz offers a precise statement of the relation between an emanative cause and its product: the latter depends on the former, is conceived through the former, and cannot be understood without it. He also indicates exactly why this kind of relation is theologically good: if a creature were fully independent of God, then an understanding of its nature would not lead to an understanding of its divine cause.<sup>69</sup> For theists like Leibniz, the ontological inclusion of creatures in the divine is a good thing. As Augustine exclaims to God in the first lines of the *Confessions*: "I would have no being if I were not in you." Or, in Scherzer's words, God "is that through which things live" and "the unity in the multitude."<sup>70</sup>

### 6. Leibniz and Spinoza on Substance and Mode

This brings us to the real difference between Leibniz and Spinoza on substance and mode. Unlike Leibniz, when Spinoza applied the substance-mode model to God and creatures, he was doing something radical: he was not applying the divine substance-mode relation; rather, he was applying the non-divine one. For Spinoza, each mode is a limitation or variation of the divine nature, but it is not ontologically inferior to the divine nature, at least not in the way that it was for Leibniz: nowhere in Spinoza's account of individual created things do we find evidence either of the Theory of Emanative Causation or the Creatively Inferiority Complex.<sup>71</sup> Leibniz, on the other hand, has in mind the divine substance-mode relation where God contains the divine attributes in an *entirely different manner* than do creatures. For Leibniz, there is a hierarchy of perfection, dependence, and explanation; for Spinoza, there is none of these things. When Spinoza took the non-divine sub-

stance-mode relation and applied it to the relation between God and the world, he was turning the Platonist tradition on its head. It is no wonder that his contemporaries were confused and upset. There is also little wonder that, after the publication of Spinoza's *Ethics*, the substance-mode terminology dropped out of common currency, even among Platonists. Philosophers like Leibniz, who accepted the divine substance-mode relation, wanted to distance themselves from the heretical views of this rash Dutchman. But, despite the fact that Leibniz changed his terminology, he did not change his views. As he wrote in the *Discourse on Metaphysics* of 1686: "Now, first of all it is very evident that created substances depend upon God, who preserves them and who even produces them continually by a kind of emanation, just as we produce our thoughts" (AG 46). And, at the end of his life, in his famous *Monadology*, he explains that "God alone is the primitive unity or the original simple substance: all created or derivative monads are products, and are generated so to speak by continual fulgurations of the divinity . . . limited by the receptivity of the creature, to which it is essential to be limited" (AG 219).<sup>72</sup>

Leibniz was not influenced by Spinoza in his use of the substance-mode relation, nor was he tainted by Spinozistic pantheism. Rather, Leibniz stood in a long line of illustrious Platonists in his conception of the relation between God and creatures. Spinoza, on the other hand, rejected that tradition and set out to do something very different.

### Notes

1. See his *Leibniz und Spinoza* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1890), chapter V.
2. Russell, *A Critical Exposition of the Philosophy of Leibniz*, 2nd ed. (Northampton: John Dickens, 1967), p. 5.
3. See Adams, *Leibniz Determinist, Theist, Idealist* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 128.
4. It would be interesting to do a more thorough study of the use of the term 'pantheism' in the early modern period in general and in reference to Spinoza in particular. On the basis of somewhat cursory research, the following two points seem true: neither Spinoza nor his contemporaries use the term to refer to Spinoza's metaphysics; it was probably not until the eighteenth century that his metaphysics was described as pantheistic. Moreover, Edwin Curley has persuasively argued that Spinoza himself is not a pantheist: if we take the term to refer to someone who identifies God with nature. In this context, I find it awkward to ask whether or not Leibniz was a 'Spinozistic pantheist'. However, because other scholars use this terminology, it seems unavoidable to employ it here. For the history of pantheism, see Michael Levine's *Pantheism*, p. 17; for Curley's views, see his *Behind the Geometrical Method: A Reading of Spinoza's*

*Ethics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988), passim. On this topic, also see Y. Yovel's forthcoming *God and Nature*.

5. A. Robinet has made the most convincing case for the view that 1679 was a pivotal year in the development of Leibniz's philosophy. According to Robinet, it was in the summer of that year that Leibniz decided to "rehabilitate the substantial forms." Therefore, Robinet concludes that 1679 marks the birthdate of Leibniz's mature philosophy. See his *Archéologique Distingue Automates Systématiques et Idéales Transcendantales dans L'oeuvre de G. W. Leibniz* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1986), sections 4.5; 5.9. Many subsequent scholars have accepted Robinet's conclusions. For example, Adams credits Robinet for the "pinpointing" of this "momentous decision." See Adams, *Leibniz*, 236, note 40. See also Paul Lodge, "When Did Leibniz Adopt Pre-established Harmony?" *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, forthcoming, sect. III. Kulsstad is one of the few scholars who has worked on Leibniz's philosophy of the 1670s and yet does not accept Robinet's conclusions. Kulsstad offers convincing alternative readings of the most important passages on which Robinet builds his point. See "Causation and Preestablished Harmony," in *Causation in Early Modern Philosophy*, ed. Steven Nadler (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), sections II-III.

6. I refer here to the Akademie der Wissenschaften edition of Leibniz's works whose full title is *G. W. Leibniz: Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe* (Berlin, 1923-). The essays relevant to Leibniz's relation to Spinoza's *Ethics* are in Series VI, vol. III. In the remainder of this paper, I refer to the Akademie edition frequently. I abbreviate my references as follows: large roman numerals = series number, small roman numerals = volume number, arabic numerals = page number. For example, VI ii 44 = series six, volume two, page four hundred forty-four.

7. Mark Kulsstad has written an interesting paper on the philosophical relations between Leibniz, Tschirnhaus, and Spinoza during this time. The paper, entitled "Leibniz, Spinoza, and Tschirnhaus: Philosophical Relations," was presented at the American Philosophical Association, December, 1998.

8. E.J. Alton, *Leibniz: A Biography* (Bristol: Adam Hilger, 1985), 55f.

9. Although I disagree with his conclusion, I find the argument offered by Kulsstad more subtle and convincing than the one put forward by Adams. See Kulsstad, "Did Leibniz Incline toward Monistic Pantheism in 1676?" International Leibniz-Kongress, 1994, pp. 424-28.

10. VI iii 518f. For a fine English translation of some of the *De summa rerum* essays, see G. H. R. Parkinson, *G.W. Leibniz: De summa rerum: Metaphysical Papers 1675-76* (Yale University Press, 1992), p. 77. Hereafter: PK.

11. Adams, *Leibniz*, p. 126.

12. VI iii 573; PK 93-95. About the essay, see VI iii 571 as well as the editors' introduction, p. xxx.

13. Adams, *Leibniz*, p. 129.

14. Kulsstad, "Did Leibniz Incline toward Monistic Pantheism in 1676?" p. 428.

15. For the complete argument to this conclusion, see my *Leibniz's Meta-*

*physics: Its Origins and Development* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), especially chapters 6-9.

16. VI iii 158. This text is translated in P.P. Wiener, *Leibniz: Selections* (New York: Scribner and Sons, 1951), pp. 64-65.

17. VI iii 510; PK 61. See also VI iii 393; PK 49.

18. VI iii 392; PK 45. Adams and Kulsstad both acknowledge that this and some other passages have a non-Spinozistic ring.

19. Adams, *Leibniz*, p. 128.

20. *Schri Anselm: Basic Writings*, ed. by S. N. Deane (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1982), pp. 60, 87.

21. *The Letters of Marsilio Ficino*, preface by P. O. Kristeller (Suffolk: Shephard-Walwyn, 1975), vol. I, p. 36.

22. Plotinus, *Enneads*, III 8.4. The standard English translation is by A.H. Armstrong (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990).

23. Plotinus's notion of the realm of Ideas is more complicated, and I will just ignore it here.

24. It is not at all clear that Plotinus himself employs an emanative theory of causation. For our purposes, however, it is sufficient that many Renaissance and early modern Platonists came to think of the causal relation between God and creatures as emanative and that many took Plotinus to have proposed such a theory.

25. There is a more thorough discussion of this and related topics in Mercer, *Leibniz's Metaphysics: Its Origins and Development*, chapter 5. My account here partly developed out of the very helpful discussions in Eileen O'Neill's "Myfluxus Physicus": *Causation in Early Modern Philosophy*, ed. Steven Nadler (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), pp. 27-55; and in Dominic J. O'Meara, "The Hierarchical Ordering of Reality in Plotinus," *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus*, ed. Lloyd Gerson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 66-81.

26. As noted at the end of sect. 1, the *divine substance-mode relation* is the substance-mode relation as it applies to the relation between God and creatures.

27. See *Summa contra Gentiles* II, 45 [2-3] where Aquinas is happy to admit that there is more than "one grade of being," and that "the presence of multiplicity and variety among created things was necessary so that the perfect likeness of God might be found in things according to their manner of being."

28. For a general introduction to the thought of Ficino and Pico and to the vast literature on these important Renaissance figures, see Charles Schmitt and Quentin Skinner, *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), passim; and see Charles Schmitt and Brian Copenhaver, *Renaissance Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), passim. While it is true that Platonism was rediscovered in the Renaissance, it is also true that there is a significant amount of medieval Platonism extant in the thought of our scholastic heroes.

29. See e.g. *Theologia Platonica*, Book II, chpt. XI.

30. *Hephaïstus*, VI, 2. The Latin of the quotation is: "quingue modos . . . ,

- quibus contingeri aliquid alicui potest." See *De hominis Dignitate, Hepiapius, De Ente et Uno, e scriptis Varii*, ed. Eugenio Garin (Florence, 1942), pp. 312–14. For an English translation, see *On the Dignity of Man, On Being and One, Hepiapius*, trans. by Charles G. Wallis, Paul J. W. Miller and Douglas Carmichael (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), pp. 141–42.
31. *Ibid.* VII, Proem; Garin, p. 328; Wallis, p. 148.
32. For some suggestive remarks about the difference between some scholastic accounts of mode and Descartes's conception, see Dennis Des Chene, *Physiologia: Natural Philosophy in Late Aristotelian and Cartesian Thought* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 131–33. For some of Suarez's more succinct accounts of mode, see *Disputationes metaphysicae* (1597), repr. by Georg Olms Verlag, 1965), Disp. 7, sect. 1, 18.
33. Rodolph Goedenus, *Lexicon Philosophicum* (Frankfurt, 1613; reprinted by Georg Olms Verlag, 1980), p. 694.
34. Johann Micraelius, *Lexicon Philosophicum terminorum Philosophis unitionum* (Gena, 1653), p. 666.
35. Although Pico describes them differently, it is striking that he also offers five modes of created things. See Garin, p. 312–14; for an English translation, see Wallis et al., pp. 141–42.
36. Stephan Chauvin, *Lexicon Philosophicum*, 2nd ed. (Leovardia, 1713; reprinted by Stern-Verlag Janssen & Co, 1967), pp. 412–13.
37. Anne Conway, *Principia Philosophiae Antiquissimae & Recentissimae* (Amsterdam, 1690), book V, sect. 4. For the best English translation, see *The Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy*, ed. A. Coudert and T. Coase (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 25.
38. Scherzer, *Vade mecum sive manuale philosophicum quadrupartium* (Leipzig, 1686), pp. 52–53. This textbook went through at least five editions; the one cited here is the fourth.
39. Scherzer, *Vade mecum*, p. 137. For a more complete discussion of Scherzer's views, see my "Humanist Eclecticism in Seventeenth-Century Germany," in *London Studies in the History of Philosophy*, ed. Jill Kaye and Martin Stone (London: Routledge, 1999), vol. 1.
40. I have not come across any accurate account of Thomaeus and his work in the secondary literature. For a more thorough account of his views and for citations to the little that has been written on him, see my *Leibniz's Metaphysics: Its Origins and Development*, passim.
41. We tend to think of Thomaeus as an Aristotelian because that is how Leibniz described his illustrious teacher. E.g., At VI ii 426, Leibniz claims that Thomaeus is the "most celebrated German Peripatetic." But Thomaeus was much more than that. He wrote a number of books explaining and then comparing ancient philosophies. He was obviously well-versed in Stoicism, Platonism, and other ancient ideas. Although he tends to agree with Aristotle, he takes Platonism very seriously. The full title of the book that I here discuss is *Exercitatio de Stoica mundi exustione: cui accesserunt argumenti varii sed imprimis ad historiam Stoicae philosophiae facientes, dissertationes XXI*, 1676.

42. Thomaeus, *Exercitatio*, p. 189.
43. Thomaeus, *Exercitatio*, pp. 249–53.
44. Thomaeus, *Exercitatio*, pp. 215–17.
45. Thomaeus, *Exercitatio*, p. 188.
46. Thomaeus, *Exercitatio*, p. 188.
47. Thomaeus, *Exercitatio*, p. 190.
48. Thomaeus, *Exercitatio*, p. 191.
49. Thomaeus, *Exercitatio*, p. 190.
50. Thomaeus, *Exercitatio*, pp. 190–91.
51. Thomaeus, *Exercitatio*, pp. 190–91.
52. VI i 229: I 75. Scherzer defines accidental emanation as what follows "naturally from a subject as a result of its properties or modes." See Scherzer, *Vade mecum*, p. 67.
53. For a brief account of the scholastic notion, see Gracia, *Introduction to the Problem of Individuation in the Early Middle Ages*, 176. For some of Leibniz's uses, see VI i 13–16, 91, 483, 503.
54. Although part of the remainder of this provocative text is illegible, the gist of Leibniz's proposals seem clear. The relevant text in the Academy edition reads as follows (with the illegible bits in the text marked with dots by the editors): "Ipse Plato in Timaeo animam mundi, Aristoteles in Metaphysica et physica Intellectum agentem per omnia diffusum, Stoici Substantiam Mundi Deum statuentes, Averroes Aristotelis Intellectum . . . propagans, Farasiorius et Fernelius Originem Formarum . . . in hoc consentiunt omnes: Substantiam, naturam, pithicium . . ." See VI i 511.
55. For the textual evidence that Leibniz was committed to the Creatively Inferiority Complex as early as 1671, see VI i 485; for a lengthy discussion of this and related points, see my *Leibniz's Metaphysics: Its Origins and Development*, chapter 9, sect. 2.
56. VI iii 520: PK 79f. For more details about the inferiority of creatures, see my *Leibniz's Metaphysics: Its Origins and Development*, chapter 10, sect. 3.
57. VI iii 523: PK 85. For a fuller account of Leibniz's conception of the relation between God and creatures, see my *Leibniz's Metaphysics: Its Origins and Development*, chapters 9–10.
58. Thomaeus, *Exercitatio de Stoica mundi exustione: cui accesserunt argumenti varii, sed imprimis ad historiam Stoicae philosophiae facientes, dissertationes XXI*, Leipzig, 1676.
59. See Adams, *Leibniz*, 128; Adams's emphasis.
60. The most significant evidence offered for the thesis that Leibniz briefly flirted with Spinozistic pantheism in 1676 is the following passage from a text of November 1676, part of which was quoted in section 1: "It can easily be demonstrated that all things are distinguished, not as substances (i.e., radically) but as modes. This can be demonstrated from the fact that, of those things which are radically distinct, one can be perfectly understood without the other; that is, all the requisites of the one can be understood without all the requisites of the other being understood. But in the case of things, this is not so; for since the ultimate reason of things is unique, and contains by itself the aggregate of

all requisites of all things, it is evident that the requisites of all things are the same. So also is their essence, given that an essence is the aggregate of all primary requisites. Therefore, the essence of all things is the same, and things differ only modally, just as a town seen from a high point differs from the town seen from a plain. If only those things which are separated are really different or which one can perfectly understand without the other, it follows that no thing really differs from another, but that all things are one, just as Plato argues in the *Parmenides*" (VI iii 573: Pk 93–95). While there seems little doubt that Leibniz here uses Spinozistic terminology, the point seems fundamentally the same as that in the passage just discussed: creatures are not radically different from one another because they depend on God; because the Unity itself is immanent in each creature and in the totality of creatures, it follows (as the Theory of Emanative Harmony claims) that all things are one. For a more thorough consideration of this and related passages, see my *Leibniz's Metaphysics: Its Origins and Development*, chapter 10.

62. Scherzer, *Vade mecum*, 52–53.

63. I do not mean to suggest that individual things are not inferior to God, according to Spinoza. For example, individual things are finite and God is infinite. However, the inferiority here is not that of the Platonists: it is not an inferiority rooted in metaphysical and moral difference. For Spinoza's views about the relation, see especially the *Ethics*, Book I, passim.

64. AG here refers to G. W. Leibniz: *Philosophical Essays*, ed. Roger Ariew and Daniel Garber (Hackett, 1989). Notice that, in this quotation from the *Monadology*, we find an idea that was suggested in Mircetlins's account of mode, namely, that it is the nature of created things to be inferior and that a creature will be more or less inferior depending on its "receptivity." For a discussion of this aspect of Leibniz's thought, see my *Leibniz's Metaphysics: Its Origins and Development*, chapter 9.

## 11

### Natures, Laws, and Miracles: The Roots of Leibniz's Critique of Occasionalism

Donald P. Ruberford

Leibniz regarded his theory of preestablished harmony as offering the only plausible explanation of the remarkable agreement of the soul and the body: the agreement whereby physical stimuli give rise to appropriate sensory perceptions and volitions of the will terminate in appropriate bodily motions. According to his account, there is no real communication between the soul and the body, for neither is capable of exerting a real causal influence on the other. Instead, the soul and the body are to be conceived on the analogy of two perfectly synchronized clocks: each is responsible for the production of all its own states, yet the two nevertheless manage to agree or "harmonize" as a consequence of the consummate skill of the watchmaker who first set them in motion.

Since its conception, the theory of preestablished harmony has confronted the charge that it is at bottom indistinguishable from the doctrine of occasionalism.<sup>1</sup> Like preestablished harmony, occasionalism denies any causal influence of one created substance on another. By its account the only real causal agent is God, who causes thoughts to arise in the soul on the occasion of the appropriate motions in the body, and movements of the body on the occasion of the appropriate volitions of the will? Now, fairly clearly, this is not a position to which Leibniz himself subscribes. Critics of preestablished harmony, however, are little moved by this fact. They allow that occasionalism may make a more direct appeal to divine action than does preestablished harmony; nevertheless, they contend that the two theories share the crucial fea-