**The Nineteenth Century Reception of Leibniz’s *Examination of the Christian Religion***[[1]](#footnote-1)

While many of Leibniz’s writings have prompted varying and sometimes conflicting interpretations from later commentators, few have done so to the extent of his *Examen religionis christianae* [Examination of the Christian Religion, hereafter: *Examination*], also known for a long time as his *Systema theologicum* [System of Theology]. Written sometime between April and October 1686, the *Examination* remained unpublished until the nineteenth century, whereupon it quickly became the focus of a heated and sometimes ill-tempered debate about Leibniz’s true religious commitments. This was perhaps inevitable: although a lifelong Lutheran who spurned many attempts to convert him to Catholicism, in the *Examination* Leibniz defends the Catholic position on a range of matters of controversy, from justification of the sinner to transubstantiation, from veneration of images to communion under both kinds. Moreover, Leibniz opened the text with a statement that the views contained therein were ones that he himself had found the most reasonable once he had taken the decision to approach the controversies in an impartial manner:

At long last, having invoked divine assistance and divested myself of partisanship as far as is humanly possible, I have turned to the controversies of religion as if I had come from a new world, a neophyte not yet attached to any party. Ultimately I have established, and after thorough review settled upon, the following conclusions, which Holy Scripture, pious antiquity, right reason itself, as well as the historical facts, appear to recommend to every unprejudiced man[[2]](#footnote-2).

As if to add to the mystery, Leibniz left the text not only without a title (both *Examination of the Christian Religion* and *System of Theology* were added to the manuscript by later editors), but also unfinished, breaking off mid-sentence during the discussion on purgatory. Why had he written the text? And why was it left unfinished? These were the most pressing questions for its earliest readers. For many, what was at stake was not simply the interpretation of a particular text but the very soul of Leibniz, that universal genius and ornament of Europe. Was he a crypto-Catholic, or at least someone with very deep Catholic sympathies? Or was he a committed Lutheran seeking to present Catholic doctrines in as favourable a light as possible in order to facilitate a future reunion between the two confessions?

 The aim of this paper is to chart the various ways in which the earliest readers of the *Examination* responded to the text and sought to understand it. Such a study will enable us not only to see the varying and quite contrasting interpretations of Leibniz’s motive for writing the *Examination* that have been put forward, some of which inform contemporary interpretations, but will also give us the opportunity to take a closer look at certain features of the text and the context in which it was written. This is a valuable aim in its own right, since the *Examination* remains relatively under-studied. Although the *Examination* was published for the first time in 1819, it was known to a handful of people in the eighteenth century, so we shall begin there.

**1. First thoughts**

The first recorded response to the *Examination* is that of Johann Daniel Gruber (1686–1748), who made a number of marginal comments, not on Leibniz’s original manuscript, but on an eighteenth-century copy thereof made by the copyist Daniel Eberhard Baring (1690–1753)[[3]](#footnote-3). Gruber was appointed electoral librarian and historiographer at the Royal Library in Hanover in 1729, which marks the *terminus post quem* for his comments[[4]](#footnote-4). Judging from his remarks, Gruber was mystified by the *Examination*, a reaction that would be shared by many Protestant readers in the nineteenth century. Gruber’s comments, which have not yet been published, are worthy of a paper in their own right, but I can only touch upon them briefly here. Three examples will suffice. Gruber’s first comment appears almost halfway through the *Examination*, in relation to Leibniz’s discussion of whether it is acceptable to venerate images. Leibniz concludes his discussion by saying “[...] in the veneration of images, such as the Fathers of Trent approve, I see nothing opposed to divine honour [...]”[[5]](#footnote-5). In the margin next to this passage, Gruber wrote “Leibniz thought the opposite afterwards, in Feller p172, no. 71”[[6]](#footnote-6). This refers to a short text fragment in a collection of Leibniz’s writings published by Joachim Friedrich Feller (1673–1726) in 1718, two years after Leibniz’s death. The text fragment in question is this:

*Images* fix the human mind on *Christ* so that it doesn’t think [of the deity]; they also lead the mind away from the true concept of God and – which follows from this – from the love of God. To look at images in time of prayer is dangerous, and contrary to reason, because they lead the mind away from more profound thoughts to corporeal images[[7]](#footnote-7).

Gruber clearly believed that this text fragment revealed that the *Examination* did not represent Leibniz’s settled view on the matter of image veneration, but the extent to which it does serve as counter-evidence is unclear, since the provenance of the text fragment is uncertain. The manuscript of the fragment is no longer extant, having been removed by Feller when he left Leibniz’s employ in the spring of 1698. There is thus no way to tell whether the fragment is part of a longer text, or whether Leibniz is recording his own view or that of someone else (e.g., as part of his reading notes). Nevertheless, Gruber’s tactic here of finding other passages from Leibniz’s writings that contradict the positions taken in the *Examination* would be employed by other Protestants in the nineteenth century, as we shall see.

 Gruber’s marginal comments on the *Examination* are sparse until the discussion turns to the Eucharist. His ire was particularly provoked by Leibniz’s attack on the Lutheran doctrine that Christ is present in the Eucharist only at the moment the bread and wine are received by the communicant rather than at the point of consecration. In the *Examination*, Leibniz had noted a number of difficulties with the Lutheran position; for example, “[...] whether this [conversion] first begins on the lips, or in the mouth, or in the throat, or in the stomach, or not even there if, on account of a stomach problem, the symbols are not consumed”[[8]](#footnote-8). To this Gruber indignantly responded “I feel ashamed of Leibniz’s profane stupidities!”[[9]](#footnote-9). A little later in the text, Leibniz turns to the disputed question of whether communion should be permitted under both kinds. Here he expresses the hope that this may in the future be permitted by the Pope, but ultimately leaves the decision in the Pope’s hands, declaring: “I have no doubt that those who rule can lay down the law in such matters, and that one should obey them rather than bring about a schism [...]”[[10]](#footnote-10). Gruber was so baffled by Leibniz’s concession to Rome that he even wondered whether Leibniz had been forced to make it, remarking: “With this posited, we would have been destined [to live] under heathenism. I would solemnly swear that Leibniz, a man not of dull mind, wrote these things against his inclination”[[11]](#footnote-11).

 Gruber did not record his judgement on the *Examination* as a whole or venture an opinion as to Leibniz’s motives for writing the text. Nevertheless, it is clear from this sample of the scattered comments he did make that he was dismayed and bemused by Leibniz’s willingness to endorse Catholic doctrines over those of his own Lutheran confession, even to the point of wondering whether Leibniz had acted on his own volition in making some of these endorsements.

**2. The path to publication**

The *Examination* remained unpublished for almost three quarters of a century after Gruber scrawled his comments. But word of the text’s existence began to circulate thirty years before the text was published. The first the wider world knew of the *Examination* was through a report by the Protestant journal editor and polymath Christoph Gottlieb von Murr (1733–1811). Writing on 12 March 1779 in the *Journal zur Kunstgeschichte und zur allgemeinen Litteratur* [Journal of Art History and General Literature], one of the journals under his editorship, von Murr claimed that, among the “[...] Leibnizian treasures [...]”[[12]](#footnote-12) still buried in the Royal Library in Hanover, there was:

His *Systema theologicum*, which, as I suspect, he wrote between the years 1671 and 1680 or not long afterwards, and about which nobody has yet known anything. The autograph, albeit without title page and preface, can be found in the Royal Library of Hanover. Mr. Jung, councillor and librarian, copied this curious work, which would garner more attention than all the remaining Leibnizian manuscripts, on 159 folio pages. Leibniz defends the Catholic religion so seriously therein, even those points on which the Protestants and Catholics have hitherto most quarrelled, that if Leibniz’s handwriting were not sufficiently recognizable on many thousands of pages, it would be difficult to take him for the author. It is full of noble simplicity, without verbiage and animosity, but especially full of sagacity[[13]](#footnote-13).

Six years later, a Protestant journal confirmed that Leibniz’s “[...] apology for the Catholic religion really does exist [...]”[[14]](#footnote-14). Such disclosures eventually attracted the attention of Catholic writers. In 1797, the ex-Jesuit François Xavier de Feller (1735–1802) added the following remark to the second edition of his *Dictionnaire historique* [Historical Dictionary] of famous men:

[...] the Protestant scholar Mr. von Murr, in the seventh part of his *Journal for Arts & Literature*, makes mention of a manuscript of Leibniz’s kept in the Electoral Library of Hanover, in which, he says, ‘the Catholic doctrine, in the points even to which the Protestants are most opposed, is defended with so much zeal that if one did not know Leibniz’s handwriting from many thousands of sheets written in his hand, one could not believe him to be the author of this work’[[15]](#footnote-15).

Protestants were no less curious. In 1815, the Lutheran theologian and philosopher Johann August Starck (1741–1816) repeated Feller’s second-hand report:

[...] in the written papers he [Leibniz] left behind, and which are preserved in the library in Hanover, he also defends the doctrines of the Catholic Church, and indeed most emphatically on those points from which the Protestants have deviated, and it is regrettable that these are not made known through printing[[16]](#footnote-16).

By this time, efforts to get the *Examination* in print were well advanced, due to the efforts of Jacques-André Émery (1732–1811), Superior General of the Society of Saint-Sulpice. Émery had long suspected Leibniz of leaning more towards Catholicism than Lutheranism. In 1772, he had published two volumes of extracts of Leibniz’s writings on religion and morality[[17]](#footnote-17), in the preface to which he claimed that “[...] Leibniz, whom we believe to be a very sincere Christian, was a very bad Lutheran”[[18]](#footnote-18). This assessment was based on Leibniz’s notoriously scanty church attendance and on his not partaking in the rituals of his confession, which in turn gave rise to the pun on his name – “Leibniz glaubenichts” (or “Leibniz glöwenix” in the Hannoverian dialect) = “Leibniz believes in nothing” – common in Hanover during the last years of his life[[19]](#footnote-19). This, coupled with the pro-Catholic sentiments found in a number of his writings, led Émery to claim that “Leibniz had made great steps towards the Roman Church; he seemed to be attached to it by his sentiments, even more than to Lutheranism”[[20]](#footnote-20).

 His interest piqued by reports of a full-blown apology for Catholicism in the Royal Library of Hanover, Émery sought to learn more about it. He initiated a correspondence with the head of the library, the philosopher Johann Georg Henrich Feder (1740–1821), who sent him items from Leibniz’s correspondence with Landgrave Ernst von Hessen-Rheinfels (1623–1693), for whom Feder presumed the *Examination* had been intended. When Hanover became part of the Kingdom of Westphalia under Jerôme Bonaparte in 1810, Émery formally requested the manuscript of the *Examination* be sent to Cardinal Joseph Fesch (1763–1839) in Paris, and the French government made the order on 17 September of the same year. As soon as the manuscript was in his hands, Émery had a copy made, though his other occupations prevented him from checking this copy against the original manuscript; had he been able to do so, he would no doubt have realized the carelessness of the copyist, who had made numerous transcription errors and omitted many words, clauses, and sentences, and even an entire paragraph. Following Émery’s death on 28 April 1811, his papers passed to a fellow Sulpician, Antoine Garnier (1762–1845), at whose request a French translation of the *Examination* was prepared by Charles-Louis Mollevaut (1776–1844), and further (uncredited) editorial work was undertaken by the Catholic theologian Antoine Eugène Genoud (1792–1849)[[21]](#footnote-21). Genoud was, at the time, one of the journalists writing for the short-lived French periodical *Le spectateur religieux et politique* [The religious and political spectator][[22]](#footnote-22), which enabled him to provide the periodical with a scoop about the forthcoming publication of the *Examination*. In a short article entitled “Des dernières opinions de Leibnitz, relativement à l’Eglise catholique” [On the last opinions of Leibniz in relation to the Catholic Church], which appeared in its first volume of 1818, Genoud stated:

There exists an extremely important manuscript of Leibniz’s, originally deposited in the library at Göttingen, which contains a kind of religious testament of this great man: these are his last thoughts on the questions of controversy which separate Catholics from Protestants. This work, to which Mr. Emery, late superior of the seminary of Saint-Sulpice, attached the highest value, will be printed [...] [W]e have the manuscript in our hands. It is of considerable interest: it will be printed in Latin and in French[[23]](#footnote-23).

In 1819, the *Examination* was finally published under the title *Exposition de la doctrine de Leibnitz sur la religion* [Exposition of Leibniz’s doctrine on religion], credited to Émery[[24]](#footnote-24).

The basis for the edition was the (error-strewn) copy of the manuscript made at Émery’s request, along with Mollevaut’s French translation. In his short – and possibly unfinished – preface, Émery said nothing at all about the *Examination*, focusing instead on a potted account of Leibniz’s involvement in church reunion discussions with Molanus, Bossuet, and Pellisson. Genoud, the uncredited editor who had completed the book, added an “Avertissement” [Notice] of his own, in which he recounted Émery’s efforts to obtain the manuscript of the *Examination* from Hanover. Also included were six undated extracts from Leibniz’s correspondence with Landgrave Ernst von Hessen-Rheinfels, for whom Feder suspected the *Examination* had been intended. These extracts, averred the editor, could throw some light on Leibniz’s intentions in composing the work. (Genoud had in fact published the very same extracts a year earlier in *Le spectateur religieux et politique*, albeit bundled together there to make it look as though they formed a single letter[[25]](#footnote-25).) The extracts are these:

I can assure Your Serene Highness that the doubts of philosophy of which I spoke in my previous letter are not contrary to the mysteries of Christianity, such as the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Eucharist, and the resurrection of bodies. I conceive these as possible things, and since God has revealed them I hold them to be true. One day I want to write an essay on some points of controversy between Catholics and Protestants, and if it is approved by judicious and moderate people, I will get much joy, but it must not be known in any way that the author is not in the Roman Communion. This prejudice alone makes the best things suspect[[26]](#footnote-26). [from the first half of March 1684]

[...] [i]n the letter I wrote to Mr. Alberti, professor of theology at Leipzig, [...] I put in express terms my belief that if the evils and abuses which afflict the Church could be remedied by recognizing the primacy of the Pope, it would be wrong not to do so[[27]](#footnote-27). [from the first half of March 1684]

The majority of the objections which can be made against Rome are against the practice of people rather than against dogmas, and were this practice to be disavowed publicly, these objections will cease[[28]](#footnote-28). [23 October / 3 November (?) 1682]

With regard to dogmas, the main difficulty in my opinion is with transubstantiation. [...] [With regard to the real presence,] I have found certain demonstrations based on mathematics and the nature of motion, which give me great satisfaction... However, I would like to know, if the way I explain it could be received in the Roman Church [...][[29]](#footnote-29). [23 October / 3 November (?) 1682]

[...] [t]he visible Catholic Church is infallible in all the points of belief necessary for salvation, by a special assistance of the Holy Spirit which was promised her[[30]](#footnote-30). [from 1/11 January 1684]

I have thought about it many times and for several years, but I have not yet found a solution. Your Serene Highness thereby sees I am revealing the depths of my heart to him; and as I am making profession of sincerity, I hope I will have written this for him alone, because I want to justify myself in his mind. What made me explain myself so freely is that it occurred to me that perhaps Your Serene Highness could, more than anyone, help me to get out of this uncertainty. Because I confess to him very willingly that I would like to be in the communion of the Church of Rome, at whatever cost I could, provided I could do so with a real peace of mind and that peace of conscience I enjoy at present, knowing full well that I have left nothing undone on my part to enjoy such a desirable union. If I knew that Your Serene Highness took the matter to heart, I would explain myself more clearly about the way out of the uncertainty, for which I could be indebted to his kindness. I am sending the rest of the piece he knows, and I am with devotion[[31]](#footnote-31). [from 1/11 January 1684]

The decision to include these extracts in Emery’s edition would shape the way that readers approached and understood the *Examination* itself, with many readers appealing to one or more of the extracts when interpreting Leibniz’s motives for writing the *Examination*. And interpret they did: the publication of the *Examination* sparked heated debates in the first half of the nineteenth century, with Catholic and Protestant readers viewing the text in very different ways, at least initially. It would not be untruthful to say that Catholics tended to construe the *Examination* as Leibniz’s heartfelt religious testimony, while Protestants did not, but this would risk oversimplifying what was at times quite a sophisticated debate with many important nuances.

**3. A Catholic Leibniz?**

For a work that was to cause such a storm, the initial reaction to the publication of the *Examination* was muted to say the least. In the years immediately following publication, Émery’s edition was not reviewed at all in the journals of Europe, and the only one that even mentioned it was the same journal which had already announced its forthcoming publication, namely *Le spectateur religieux et politique*. In a short article entitled “De Leibnitz” [On Leibniz], an unnamed journalist – probably Genoud – looked forward to the publication of Émery’s book, “which is being printed at the moment”[[32]](#footnote-32), insisting rather optimistically that “This work will be the final blow to the Reformation”[[33]](#footnote-33). Eventually, in 1831, Émery’s edition received its one and only review, in *The Catholic Magazine*, the anonymous reviewer averring that“[...] the book before us confirms our belief, *that Leibnitz was substantially convinced of the truth of the Catholic Religion*”[[34]](#footnote-34).

 Most claims about Leibniz’s Catholic leanings grew out of responses not to Émery’s edition of the *Examination* but to the German edition that appeared in July 1820, translated by Andreas Räß and Nikolaus von Weis, and boasting a lengthy introductory preface by former Jesuit Lorenz Doller (1750–1820)[[35]](#footnote-35). Rather than using the preface to offer a detailed analysis of the *Examination*, which is scarcely mentioned, Doller instead looked to Leibniz’s other writings to argue that he was “[...] very likely [...] a Catholic at heart, and a Roman Catholic Catholic at that”[[36]](#footnote-36). Doller first deduced this by ruling out alternative hypotheses – e.g., that Leibniz’s views coincided with those of a Socinian, Calvinist, or Lutheran – before building a more positive case that involved quoting virtually every pro-Catholic remark to be found in the works of Leibniz available at the time. Parts of Doller’s argument are a little strained; for example, treating as solid evidence of Leibniz’s Catholic leanings the fact that he read and esteemed pro-Catholic books[[37]](#footnote-37), and refrained from calling the Pope the Antichrist[[38]](#footnote-38). Ultimately, Doller conceded that Leibniz was Catholic only in heart and did not formally convert to Catholicism, supposing that an explanation for his failure to convert would be found in items of his correspondence that Feder had deliberately opted not to publish[[39]](#footnote-39). Nevertheless, Doller concluded his foreword by speculating that Leibniz had intended to convert but, “out of love for his court”, had postponed doing so until his master Georg Ludwig had acceded to the British throne, by which point Leibniz was close to death and could not carry out his desire[[40]](#footnote-40).

The initial verdicts of Doller’s suggestion of a Catholically-minded Leibniz were not positive. In a review published in *Neue Nationalchronik der Teutschen. Eine politische Zeitschrift* [New National Chronicle of the Germans. A Political Magazine] on 29 July 1820, the anonymous author (possibly Johann Gottfried Pahl, the periodical’s editor) focused his ire mostly on Doller, claiming that he had none of the irenic spirit that flowed through Leibniz, and that his preface was so obviously polemical that “[...] it is evident throughout that the result was already determined before the investigation”[[41]](#footnote-41). Curiously, the reviewer made no attempt to explain why Leibniz might have written the *Examination*, even suggesting that Leibniz’s independent genius was such that it could not be confined to any particular confession:

Incidentally, that Leibniz explained, excused, or approved some of the orders and teachings of the Catholic Church in a way in which he could not claim the fame of an orthodox Lutheran, is undeniable, but no church can arrogate him for that, since in general, an independent-minded spirit of his power cannot possibly conform to the forms of a dull confession, but grasps the truth independently and seeks it wherever it is to be found[[42]](#footnote-42).

(This claim was swiftly contested the following year when the acronymous A. B. retorted in April 1821: “Anyone who reads Leibniz’s *Systema* will see that he expresses himself entirely Catholically therein; thus the Catholic Church can arrogate him with full rights”[[43]](#footnote-43).)

 Another reviewer, a writer identified only by the initials M. P., while clearly sympathetic to Doller’s conclusion about Leibniz’s Catholicity, criticized Doller’s decision not to provide a detailed scrutiny of the *Examination* in order to ascertain why Leibniz had written it. M. P. proceeded to offer just such a scrutiny over 2 issues (5 and 7 September 1820) of the *Litteraturzeitung für katholische Religionslehrer* [Literary newspaper for Catholic Teachers of Religion], concluding that the *Examination* could be explained by the first of the six extracts to Landgrave Ernst published in Émery’s edition (the one in which Leibniz expresses his wish to write a paper about points of controversy between Catholics and Protestants and submit it to “judicious and moderate people” for their approval). Hence, according to M. P., “[...] the aim [of the *Examination*] is actually to explain those points in which Catholicism and Protestantism diverge: this harmonizes with the earlier promise made to the Landgrave of Hesse-Rheinfels”[[44]](#footnote-44).

 For some Protestants, resisting suggestions of Leibniz’s Catholicity was a matter of defending Leibniz’s honour. In an essay entitled “Leibnitz, kein Römling” [Leibniz, no Papist], a writer signing himself only as Neumann argued that just as it was a sacred duty to robustly counter slander against the living in their absence, so one should seek to combat unjust accusations against the honoured dead[[45]](#footnote-45), which he did in Leibniz’s case by presenting various passages from Leibniz’s writings that pointed away from the Catholic Church, most notably one in which Leibniz explains to Thomas Burnett how he had resisted attempts to convert him to Catholicism[[46]](#footnote-46). In their own attempts to defend Leibniz’s honour, some reviewers even cast doubt on the authenticity of the *Examination*. On 31 March 1821, a reviewer for a scholarly and scientific journal in Göttingen, probably the Protestant theologian Karl Friedrich Stäudlin (1761–1826)[[47]](#footnote-47), expressed his wish that Doller had devoted more time to analyzing the *Examination* itself and its authenticity[[48]](#footnote-48). The review concludes with a note of concern that Émery’s edition (the source of the German translation) was based on a copy that he had had made of the manuscript rather than on the manuscript itself. To alleviate doubts whether Émery’s edition was faithful to the original, “It would at least be desirable that a comparison could be made to Hanover”[[49]](#footnote-49). Not all reviewers thought that was needed. Writing on 6 February 1823 in *Allgemeiner anzeiger und nationalzeitung der Deutschen* [General Gazette and National Newspaper of the Germans], a reviewer who signed himself only as Landmann insisted that the *Examination* could not be a genuine work of Leibniz’s at all, but was rather a Catholic forgery:

[...] certainly he could not write such a system as before us here under his name. Have not the days gone by when people wanted to promote the honour of the Church through pious fraud, and in fact harmed her? How heavy the shame weighs on the Church that spurious works have always been published under the name of great men or that genuine works have been interpolated (falsified). What should one think of a church which presumably approves of the deception? To the honour of the Roman Church, we want to say that it does not need such deceptions[[50]](#footnote-50).

Landmann’s assertion has often been thought to mark the low point in Protestant reactions to the *Examination*. Such a verdict is often reached on the basis of his accusation of fraud alone, not his reasons for making it, of which there are two. The first reason deserves no comment; the *Examination*, according to Landmann, contains “[...] no shadow of L’s style and spirit. L’s style is so bumpy and inelegant, and the one in the *System* for the most part so smooth and so easy, that one recognizes in it a skilled sophist, and not a profound philosopher”[[51]](#footnote-51). Landmann’s second reason for supposing a forgery is less easy to ignore:

Since L’s spirit was obscured by Greek sophists and scholastics, he did not see the spirit of Christianity, but only the shell. The Greek mythology of a so-called Christianity always floated before his eyes and he only sought and found the spirit of Christianity in a few doctrines which he considered to be in agreement with his reason; and he only saw the doctrines which have been prescribed as articles of faith in the Christian churches as the epitome of Christian faith[[52]](#footnote-52).

While Landmann’s allegation of fraud proved to be baseless, his suspicion that Leibniz’s was a religion of reason has survived to this day. Among the various verdicts of Leibniz’s religiosity offered by contemporary commentators are that he was “[...] essentially a pagan metaphysician [...]”[[53]](#footnote-53), that he “[...] shows a tendency to deism [...]”[[54]](#footnote-54), and that he was “[...] essentially a deist [...]” such that “[...] his version of Christianity is not easily distinguished, in theological terms, from deism [...]”[[55]](#footnote-55). Such assessments are based on the contents of some of Leibniz’s well-known writings such as “On the ultimate origination of things”[[56]](#footnote-56), “Monadology”[[57]](#footnote-57), and “Principles of nature and grace”[[58]](#footnote-58), which are heavy on metaphysics but light on theology. Leibniz certainly thought that one could make a lot of headway in theology using reason alone[[59]](#footnote-59).

 Despite these early criticisms, the idea of Leibniz as a Catholic at heart found many adherents. In 1824, the Catholic theologian Mathieu Mathurin Tabaraud (1744–1832), claimed that the *Examination* showedthat Leibniz “[...] inclined towards Catholicism”[[60]](#footnote-60). In 1839, an anonymous writer in *The Dublin Review* cited the *Examination* to secure the claim that while Leibniz “from the force of circumstances, lived and died in the outward profession of the Lutheran faith, still his writings prove him, in his inmost conviction, to have been eminently Catholic”[[61]](#footnote-61). Leibniz’s crypto-Catholicism was also asserted in two new editions of the *Examination* that appeared in the mid-nineteenth century. In 1845, the Catholic priest Pierre-Paul Lacroix (1791–1869) published a new transcription of the original Latin, claiming in the preface that a better title for Leibniz’s text would be “[...] A personal statement of his faith [...]”[[62]](#footnote-62). A year later, Lacroix’s edition was published in a French translation by Albert de Broglie (1821–1901), who described the text as Leibniz’s “[...] sincere and intimate confession of faith [...]”[[63]](#footnote-63). In a review of Broglie’s edition, Joseph-Théophile Foisset (1800–1873) agreed with this assessment, describing the *Examination* as “[...] a profession of faith [...]” and “[...] the religious testament of Leibniz”[[64]](#footnote-64). The claim that the *Examination* was Leibniz’s religious testament was made at least as late as 1865[[65]](#footnote-65), but perhaps the most effusive statement of Leibniz’s Catholic leanings was made by Charles William Russell in an article, “Protestant evidence of Catholicity”, that appeared in *The Dublin Review* in 1841. Russell was dazzled by the *Examination*; he called it “Leibnitz’s testimony in favour of the Catholic religion”[[66]](#footnote-66), noted that Leibniz’s opinions therein “*are all, without exception, strictly Catholic*”[[67]](#footnote-67), and referred to “the perfectly Catholic character of the *Systema Theologicum*”[[68]](#footnote-68), and Leibniz’s “*perfectly Catholic spirit*”[[69]](#footnote-69). That Leibniz had opted not to publish the *Examination* suggested to Russell that it was composed during those quiet moments when Leibniz felt able to open himself up to God.

 Needless to say, those who saw the *Examination* as evidence of Leibniz’s Catholicity took the text at face value, as a statement of faith, but some went further, supposing that the *Examination* was Leibniz’s *final* statement of faith. The idea that Leibniz had come to Catholicism late in life was, no doubt, more attractive to Catholic readers than the thought that he had flirted with Catholicism in youth or middle age before veering back to Lutheranism, the confession in which he died. The source of this narrative trope was undoubtedly Genoud’s statements in 1818 that the *Examination* contained “the last opinions of Leibniz in relation to the Catholic Church” and “his last thoughts on the questions of controversy”[[70]](#footnote-70). In the years that followed, the trope became increasingly elaborate. As we have seen, in 1820, Doller supposed that Leibniz had probably intended to convert to Catholicism late in life but died before he got the chance[[71]](#footnote-71). In the preface to his 1846 French translation of the *Examination*, Broglie took the idea further, speculating that an elderly and infirm Leibniz may have become so absorbed in writing his “sincere and intimate confession of faith” that it may have hastened his death[[72]](#footnote-72), which would explain why the *Examination* remained unfinished. Hence Broglie’s suggestion that perhaps the *Examination* was Leibniz’s final work,

[...] composed with so much ardour that he neglected to treat a slight pain in his leg, which got worse and carried him away in a few days; perhaps death surprised him this way, on the threshold of the Church and his heart full of that sincere desire which supplements (faith teaches us) all the external formalities[[73]](#footnote-73).

Not to be outdone, in his lengthy review of Broglie’s translation of the *Examination*, Foisset went even further, supposing that Leibniz may have died, pen in hand, while composing his deathbed confession of faith (Foisset notes that “[...] the last sentence ends with a comma, as if death had cut off the author in the middle of his discourse [...]”)[[74]](#footnote-74). Such dramatic narratives no doubt added to the charm and mystique of the *Examination*, at least for some Catholic readers, but could be spun only by ignoring clear internal evidence in the text that proves it was written in the seventeenth century, decades before Leibniz’s death[[75]](#footnote-75).

**4. A contribution to reunion efforts**

While Catholic writers were crafting (and expanding) their narrative about the *Examination*, Protestants were doing likewise. Many of their initial responses to the *Examination* – e.g., denying that the text contains Leibniz’s real views and/or questioning or denying the text’s authenticity – were flat-footed and undermotivated, provoking nothing but scorn from their Catholic opponents. But gradually a new narrative emerged that sought to contextualize the *Examination* as emerging from and contributing to Leibniz’s efforts towards uniting the Lutheran and Catholic churches. Today, this interpretation enjoys considerable support among commentators[[76]](#footnote-76), though it is doubtful that they would want to endorse it in any of the forms in which it was entertained in the nineteenth century.

 Initially, such an interpretation rested heavily on one of the extracts from Leibniz’s correspondence with Landgrave Ernst that Émery had published in his edition of the *Examination* of 1819, namely that in which Leibniz expresses the desire to write a paper on the controversies in order to get the approval of “judicious and moderate people”, without it being known that the author is not Catholic. Quoting this passage in his review of Doller’s edition of the *Examination* that spanned three issues of a literary journal in 1822, a writer identifying himself only as H. K. L. saw in this passage Leibniz’s motive for writing the *Examination*:

The writing that L announces here, we believe, is that which was subsequently given the title *Systema theologicum*. L’s intention was not to set up his religious convictions in it, even less to provide a theological edifice, but to present the points in dispute between the two churches [...] [Thus] he starts from the Catholic point of view, lets the Catholics speak, but gives them the most reasonable and fairest views of the dogmas of their church, in order to allow its most respected members to determine similar views, or to try to see the extent to which they would find acceptance, and at the same time to induce the Protestants to respond to the thus-modified teaching of the Catholic Church and to obliterate their qualms, doubts, and objections against it[[77]](#footnote-77).

Such a reading doesn’t seem plausible at first sight, not least because, in the *Examination*, Leibniz doesn’t so much seek to modify the teaching of the Catholic Church as provide justifications for siding with it on each point. Nevertheless, H. K. L.’s suggestion convinced a British writer identifying himself only by the initial K., who in 1827 published a short article entitled “On a recently-discovered work of Leibnitz, alleged to prove his adherence to the Roman Catholic Church”. By his own admission, all K. knew of the *Examination* was what he had read about it in H. K. L.’s review in 1822, although this did not stop him from construing the text as not just a contribution to religious reconciliation but a *formal* (or semi-formal) contribution, inasmuch as he supposed that Leibniz intended to speak for all Lutherans. In this, K. suspected, lay the *Examination*’s flaw, for he doubted whether “the great body of the Lutherans even in that age could have been brought to sanction the concessions which the courtly philosopher was willing to make on their behalf”[[78]](#footnote-78). Had K. read the *Examination* itself, he might have realized that Leibniz makes no attempt in it to speak for anyone other than himself.

 This, though, raised an awkward question: to what extent are the opinions in the *Examination* ones that Leibniz actually endorsed? In 1827, the philosopher Gottlob Ernst Schulze (1761–1833) addressed this question head-on in his pamphlet*Ueber die Entdeckung, dass Leibnitz ein Katholik gewesen sey* [On the Discovery that Leibniz was a Catholic]. Schulze believed that, if one consulted Leibniz’s other writings, one would find opinions that conflicted with those defended in the *Examination*. This is indeed the case, though Schulze’s examples were not always as *apropos* as he believed. On the matter of images, for example, he produced two text fragments condemning image veneration, one of which is the same as that cited by Gruber in his marginal comments on the *Examination* (discussed above in section 1)[[79]](#footnote-79). The second text fragment adduced by Schulze is this:

Many idolatries have been revived among Christians: sacrifices, frankincense and incense, lights, images, lustrations, festivals, songs, sacred pilgrimages, fasting, celibacy, vestments, divinations, magic, omens, prognostication, incantations, cult of the dead, canonizations or deifications of new mediators between God and men, good and evil spirits, guardian angels and other powers of either sex to whom temples are dedicated, feast days honoured, particular cults devoted in which, with each one assigned its own province, there is healing of sicknesses and the dispensation of things that aid or injure men. Thus anti-Christianity has prevailed in place of Christ, whose institutes, clear to the understanding and very easy to keep, have degenerated into absurd dogmas, unintelligible words, inexplicable mysteries, and ridiculous practices[[80]](#footnote-80).

This short piece had first appeared in 1823 in the periodical *Hannoversches Magazin*, placed there by G. F. Koch (1770–1827), the periodical’s editor as well as Library-Secretary in Hanover. Both Koch and Schulze believed the harsh condemnation of image-worship therein represented Leibniz’s real view on the matter, as opposed to the much milder position endorsed in the *Examination.* But what neither Koch nor Schulze knew is that this short text, although written in Leibniz’s hand, is a near-verbatim copy (in Latin) of §§16, 17, and 22 of a paper entitled “Parallele entre la raison originale ou la loy de la nature, le Paganisme, ou la corruption de la loy de la nature”[[81]](#footnote-81), now known to be Leibniz’s French translation of a work originally written in English by the Irish philosopher John Toland (1670–1722) during a visit to Hanover in 1701[[82]](#footnote-82); moreover, the material in question was subsequently published, in English, in Toland’s *Letters to Serena* of 1704[[83]](#footnote-83). The short Latin text in Leibniz’s hand is therefore nothing more than Leibniz’s own summary of some material written by Toland, though why he chose to make a summary of Toland’s claims about rampant idolatry among Christians is unclear.

 To return now to Schulze: believing that his choice of passages undermined the case for thinking the *Examination* contained Leibniz’s real opinions, he then turned to Leibniz’s efforts to unite the churches, concluding that the *Examination* must have been a product of that. Leibniz’s ability to see truth where others saw falsehood, gold where others saw mud, was the key. According to Schulze:

He therefore did not see as much wrong and bad in the dogmas and customs of the Catholic Church as most Protestants of his time, and believed that a better representation of these dogmas and customs would make Protestants more inclined to unite with the Catholic Church. And it is highly probable that he wrote the *Systema theologicum* in accordance with this presupposition[[84]](#footnote-84).

Virtually the same suggestion was made in 1832 by Johann Karl Fürchtegott Schlegel (1758–1831), a consistorial councillor in Hanover. Explicitly drawing his inspiration from Schulze, he argued, first, that those who had accused Leibniz of being Catholic in all but name had acted prematurely by overlooking the fact that suspicions of Leibniz’s Catholicity could be dispelled by reading his wider work, and second, that in writing the *Examination*, Leibniz had merely tried to present the Catholic system in its most pleasing form, and this as part of his widely-known ecumenical activities[[85]](#footnote-85). Six years later, in a posthumous work on the primacy of the Pope, Johann Friedrich Ludwig Rothensee (1739–1835) gestured at a similar idea when he claimed that, whatever Leibniz’s motives were for writing the *Examination*, “his irenic efforts and his correspondence with Bossuet and others aimed at unification with the Catholic Church are well known”[[86]](#footnote-86).

 If these claims sound rather woolly, it is no doubt because there was, at the time, so little direct evidence available to connect the *Examination* with Leibniz’s irenic activities that one could do little more than assume or suggest a connection. However, claims that the *Examination* was intended as a contribution to reunion efforts were strengthened in 1840 with the publication of two further extracts from Leibniz’s correspondence with Landgrave Ernst, both extracts appearing in an essay appended to the second volume of Gottschalk EduardGuhrauer’s collection of Leibniz’s German-language writings, *Leibnitz’s Deutsche Schriften*[[87]](#footnote-87)*.* The first of the extracts is from Leibniz’s own fair copy of his letter to the Landgrave of 14/24 March 1683:

However, what Your Highness replies in his letter, to what I have written concerning transubstantiation, makes me aware of how difficult it is to satisfy even the fairest and most enlightened people, when one does not enter their feelings and thoughts in quite the right way. Often very good plans have been thwarted because well-intentioned people, who had the same goal, frustrated each other, in that they did not agree on the means to be used, although these means were actually all good and mutually compatible. The same thing happens here concerning the point about the peace of the Church. Your Highness having applied himself to establishing it on antiquity, and on the compendious method of the authority of a visible Church, does not seem to approve entering into the details of controversies, and reproaches me for thereby departing from true principles. For me, I can say I have studied antiquity and infinitely esteem a tradition of the Catholic Church; nonetheless, I thought it would be important, not indeed for everyone but for those who seem suitable for it, to add to that a precise discussion of matters, in order that there be no grounds for criticism, and to act with all the sincerity and precision possible without disguise and without dissimulation[[88]](#footnote-88).

“The salient point here”, Guhrauer noted, “is the peace of the Church, so nothing purely personal”[[89]](#footnote-89). Instead, Leibniz is displaying the philosopher’s desire to have a thorough discussion to get to the bottom of things, rather than grounding the peace of the Church on appeals to antiquity.

In the second extract published by Guhrauer, Leibniz goes into the above idea in more detail. Unbeknownst to Guhrauer, this extract is from Leibniz’s first draft of the same letter to Landgrave Ernst of 14/24 March 1683. It is worth presenting at some length because it has not been published since the middle of the nineteenth century[[90]](#footnote-90):

I have had the honour of being familiarly acquainted with this Mr. Arnauld when I was in Paris. He was also good enough to have some regard for me; and when I left Paris to come to Hanover, he gave me a letter for a Capuchin from here, who had asked him something concerning the belief of the Greeks regarding Transubstantiation, in which he included expressions praising me that would have prevented me from conveying the letters had I known of them; but it was only in Hanover and from the mouth of the late Prince that I learned Mr. Arnauld had written that I lacked only the true religion to be truly one of the great men of this century. But as I have never hankered after a great reputation, and as I have rather endeavoured to conceal my name when I have published anything (like when the book *Caesarinus Furstenerius* was printed by order of the late prince),[[91]](#footnote-91) it was never my fault if I have not been upon the side of truth. And what had turned me away the most from the opinions of the Church of Rome (for I am not now speaking about practice) were mainly the difficulties found in Transubstantiation and the demonstrations I believe I have on matters like that of grace; I have always tried to satisfy myself, and have almost completely succeeded in doing so. But as these matters require careful meditations on the most profound part of metaphysics, the easiness of making a mistake before one has arranged one’s reasonings in a rigorous manner like a calculation prevents me from forming a definitive judgment. Mr. Arnauld, who has a thorough understanding of modern philosophy, and who appears to be a Cartesian, has never dared to mention that, or to respond to the almost insurmountable difficulties which seem opposed to Transubstantiation, perhaps because he thought his explanation would be condemned should it be made public. So here is what I think needs to be done to proceed securely in these matters: namely, a meditative man, who is not opposed to reunion, would have to compose an Exposition of the Faith, a little more detailed than that of the Bishop of Condom [*sc.* Bossuet], in which he should endeavour to explain himself on the disputed articles with the utmost precision and sincerity, avoiding ambiguities and the terms of scholastic chicanery, and using only natural expressions. And he should submit this Explanation to the judgement of some learned, more moderate bishops,[[92]](#footnote-92) concealing both his own name and his party. And, in order to enable them to judge more favourably, he should endeavour to support his exposition by authorities from some learned men of the church of Rome. But in asking for their judgement, he would not ask whether they are of his opinion, but only whether they hold his opinion to be tolerable in their Church. Your Serene Highness will tell me that there is no need for so much fuss, and one can belong to the communion of Rome without going into this detail. I answer by drawing a distinction: a person who has not gone deeply into these matters, and has no intention of going deeper into them, is easy to satisfy, but one who has meditated on things should proceed sincerely, and if he suspects that some of his opinions could be condemned, he must explain himself in a timely manner. Otherwise he could expose himself to unfortunate circumstances, if one day he was made to confess things he could not approve. This happened to Galileo, who was forced to recant the [doctrine of] the earth’s motion. No one could so easily obtain an approval of this nature than Your Serene Highness. And to better compile such an Exposition, it would have to be agreed with Your Highness himself. But whether it succeeds or not, one who does his part to not be in schism is, in effect, in the Church, at least, *in foro interno*,[[93]](#footnote-93) according to the excellent expression of Your Highness. However, I believe the approval of bishops would be sufficient, and that that of Rome would not be so necessary. Yet perhaps this could be hoped for, if it was done right, and I know there are people in Rome who could be of use for this. But something of this nature could not be properly put together without great application [...][[94]](#footnote-94).

Guhrauer saw in this extract a blueprint for the *Examination*, claiming that through the extract “the external and internal history of Leibniz’s so-called *Systema Theologicum* is given to us [...]; this will put an end to any argument about it”[[95]](#footnote-95). His prediction has, of course, turned out to be incorrect. As it happens, this was not the only thing Guhrauer got wrong. While he correctly recognized that the two extracts were from different versions of the same letter, he mistakenly believed the letter was written in 1686 for Leibniz’s employer at the time, Duke Ernst August (1629–1698)[[96]](#footnote-96). Curiously enough, he got the date of the *Examination* right (through watermark evidence, we now know it was written between April and October 1686), but only because he got the recipient of the letter wrong. Having painstakingly tracked both Leibniz’s and the Duke’s movements in 1686, Guhrauer concluded that, when Leibniz returned to Hanover in the autumn of 1686, he had been horrified to find waiting for him some letters the Duke had sent him during his absence, which prompted him hastily to respond and to begin work on the *Examination*[[97]](#footnote-97)*.* Given the recipient and date of Leibniz’s letter (to Landgrave Ernst in March 1683, not Duke Ernst August in the autumn 1686), this cannot be what happened. (Note that the correct recipient and date of Leibniz’s letter only became known in 1938, when the fair copy of the letter was published in the Academy edition[[98]](#footnote-98).) Nevertheless, Guhrauer fleshed out his narrative still further, speculating that Leibniz had left the *Examination* unfinished because of an unfavourable response from Duke Ernst August: “[...] we conclude from the nature of the manuscript that the Duke of Hanover rejected Leibniz’s idea”[[99]](#footnote-99). Unfortunately Guhrauer’s error made the *Examination* appear to be much more of an officially-sanctioned contribution to church reunion negotiations than it could possibly have been.

 Guhrauer’s decision to link the *Examination* with the two extracts from Leibniz’s letter to Landgrave Ernst, and so to treat the *Examination* as a contribution to church reunion efforts, quickly became very influential, and the idea was often repeated in the years that followed, as were his error that the extracts were from a letter to Duke Ernst August and the erroneous impression created thereby, that the *Examination* was intended as an official contribution. Hence, citing Guhrauer as his authority, Johannes von Kuhn (1806–1887) claimed in 1848 that the *Examination* was written to represent the views of the Protestant side of the negotiating parties, designed to be passed on to (and hopefully approved by) the Catholic side[[100]](#footnote-100). Exactly the same claim was later made by Carl Haas in his preface to a new German translation of the *Examination* that appeared in 1860[[101]](#footnote-101).

**5. Heterodoxy**

There is another feature of Guhrauer’s interpretation of the *Examination* which deserves further comment, namely the central place he gives to Leibniz’s stated desire to write up his interpretations of some matters of controversy and submit them to Rome for approval. If we suppose, as Guhrauer did, that the *Examination* was designed for just such a role, it is worth noting that it was a complete success, because the *Examination* did indeed get Rome’s approval in the form of the *nihil obstat*; that is, the official Catholic declaration that a book contains nothing contrary to the faith. Unfortunately for Leibniz, this occurred not during his own lifetime but more than a hundred years after his death, in 1845, when Lacroix submitted his edition of the *Examination* to the official censor of the Roman Church.

The *nihil obstat* was provided by the Jesuit Giovanni Perrone (1794–1876), professor of dogmatic theology at the Roman College (now Pontifical Gregorian University). In his brief statement of approval, Perrone asserted that while the *Examination* exhibits “[...] the shining testimony of truth against the calumnies and errors of the Protestants [...]”, it is also not a little inconsistent with true Catholic doctrine, “[...] which could scarcely not happen with a heterodox man [...]”[[102]](#footnote-102). Perrone said nothing further about Leibniz’s deviations from Catholic orthodoxy, which were clearly not enough to persuade him to withhold his approval for publication. Nor, indeed, did they dissuade him from citing with approval parts of the *Examination* in his own dogmatic and pedagogical treatises, which he had been doing some years before granting the *nihil obstat* to Lacroix’s edition. In the 1842 edition of his *Praelectiones theologicae* [Lectures on Theology], for example, Perrone had praised Leibniz’s meticulous treatment of reason and faith in the *Examination*, which he attributed to Leibniz’s Catholic sympathies:

Leibniz, by the very fact that he strongly approved of the Catholic faith, and appeared greatly inclined to it, as is proven from his excellent *System of Theology* which we have often cited, was able to speak more carefully about that subject [faith and reason] compared with other Protestants[[103]](#footnote-103).

Although Perrone cited the *Examination* in a number of his own works[[104]](#footnote-104), none of his citations offer any insight into where Leibniz’s work fell short of Catholic orthodoxy. One might suppose, given Perrone’s prominent advocacy of ultramontanism, that he might have taken a dim view of Leibniz’s silence on the matter of papal infallibility, though since that became official Catholic dogma only in 1870, in Vatican I, Perrone’s concerns likely lay elsewhere.

While it is common to see the *Examination* described as a “Catholic document”[[105]](#footnote-105), it is important to stress that many of those Catholics who took it as evidence of Leibniz’s Catholicity nevertheless judged it to be somewhat heterodox, as Perrone did. Even Lacroix, in the preface to his 1845 edition of the *Examination* to which Perrone had granted the *nihil obstat*, felt the need to caution readers “[...] not to be offended by some false or imprudent doctrines which have come out of the pen of a non-Catholic writer [...]”[[106]](#footnote-106), though like Perrone he did not indicate what these were. Nor did an Italian reviewer of Lacroix’s edition of the *Examination*, who virtually echoed Perrone’s judgement that, while the text should be valued for defending Catholic teaching against the errors of Protestants, it nevertheless “[...] contains some erroneous doctrines, which clearly show the author heterodox [...]”[[107]](#footnote-107).

More forthcoming about Leibniz’s heterodoxy was Broglie, who translated Lacroix’s edition of the *Examination* into French in 1846. In the preface to his translation, Broglie made the familiar claim that the *Examination* was Leibniz’s “sincere and intimate confession of faith”[[108]](#footnote-108), before issuing a warning to the reader:

Undoubtedly, all his [*sc.* Leibniz’s] words, all his ideas themselves, are not of a Catholic: more than once we feel this vagueness, this incorrectness of terms, inevitable in a man who had created his faith by himself instead of drawing it from the divine source from childhood[[109]](#footnote-109).

More specific charges are to be found in Broglie’s notes at the end of the book. There he accuses Leibniz of vagueness and incorrectness of some (unspecified) terms in his discussion of original sin[[110]](#footnote-110), and that the church would not affirm Leibniz’s speculation that original sin enters into each soul, pure beforehand, only by its contact with external objects[[111]](#footnote-111). More seriously, Broglie takes issue with Leibniz’s suggestion in the *Examination* that the Pope ought to consider permitting the Chinese to continue practising polygamy in order to ensure the success of its missions in China[[112]](#footnote-112). This, Broglie notes, directly conflicts with the Gospel, such that the Church

[...] certainly would not accept the power that Leibniz so generously attributes to her to allow polygamy and divorce in cases of absolute necessity. The Catholic Church, on the contrary, is honoured to have restored, from the earliest times which followed the coming of Jesus Christ, and defended through the centuries, against all sophisms and all the passions conjured up, the purity and indissolubility of the conjugal bond[[113]](#footnote-113).

Much the same point had been made by the acronymous reviewer, M. P., of Doller’s 1820 German edition of the *Examination*. While M. P. had gloried in Leibniz’s apparent embrace of Catholicism, quoting long passages from the *Examination* simply to bask in their Catholic glow, he did also occasionally note parts of the text in which Leibniz deviated from Catholic teaching, in particular his ceding to the Pope the decision as to whether to permit polygamy in nations which have long practised it, in order to improve the success of missions. In this, M. P. complained that Leibniz may have conceded too much to the Church by allowing it to dispense with divine law[[114]](#footnote-114). On the back of such lapses, M. P. noted that “The content [of the *Examination*] sufficiently reveals that the author was not officially a theologian [...]”[[115]](#footnote-115).

That Leibniz’s suggestion about polygamy conflicts with Catholic doctrine is clear enough, being ruled out by canon 2 of session XXIV (held 11 November 1563) of the Council of Trent: “If anyone says that it is lawful for Christians to have several wives at the same time and that this is not forbidden by any divine law, let him be anathema”[[116]](#footnote-116). But whether Leibniz was aware at the time of writing that his suggestion was contrary to Catholic teaching is less clear. While the *Examination* contains many appeals to the decrees of the Council of Trent, which are even quoted verbatim at times, there are other passages that appear to have been based on what Leibniz remembered of the Council’s decrees rather than on having them in front of him as he wrote (hence on the issue of ministers of the Church, Leibniz says vaguely that “[...] the Council of Trent also somewhere distinguishes an ordinary minister from another one”)[[117]](#footnote-117). In any case, in the years after writing the *Examination*, Leibniz was happy to make the same suggestion about allowing polygamy in China to selected Catholic correspondents, namely Landgrave Ernst in 1690 and Simon de la Loubère in 1691[[118]](#footnote-118), though notably not to any of the various Jesuit missionaries with whom he was in correspondence from 1689 until his death[[119]](#footnote-119).

**6. What’s in a word?**

Thus far we have seen several methods used by nineteenth-century readers to ascertain Leibniz’s motivation for writing the *Examination* and the extent to which the views stated therein were his own. One was to look for passages in his other writings which confirm or disconfirm the claims of the *Examination*. But it became increasingly clear to many nineteenth century commentators that one could not adequately figure out Leibniz’s motive for writing the *Examination*, or indeed his religiosity, simply by picking out pro- or anti-Catholic statements from his other writings, in which an abundance of both can be found. The second method we have seen was to try to locate the *Examination* within a broader context and assign it a role in a particular project with which Leibniz was engaged, namely church reunion. We shall see further examples of this method in due course. Another method at the critic’s disposal is to interrogate the text via a detailed critical reading, to see what light that may throw on its composition and the motivations of its author. With the *Examination*, that became easier in 1845 with the publication of Lacroix’s edition. On the title page Lacroix claimed that the *Examination* was being published there “for the first time in accordance with the actual autograph of the author [...]”[[120]](#footnote-120), a rather inflated claim, given Émery’s edition of 1819 was likewise based on the original manuscript (or his own copy thereof, at any rate), but Lacroix’s edition did at least mark an advance: not only was it much more accurate than Émery’s, but it also recorded some of the deletions Leibniz had made when composing the text. But it was far from perfect, as Carl Ludwig Grotefend (1807–1874), working at the time on an edition of Leibniz’s correspondence with Antoine Arnauld[[121]](#footnote-121), was quick to point out. And its imperfections, he believed, were significant for a proper understanding of the *Examination*.

 In a penetrating and often brutal review published on 2 May 1846, Grotefend compared Lacroix’s 1845 edition and Émery’s 1819 edition against the original manuscript. He discerned that Lacroix’s transcription, although sometimes more accurate than Émery’s, was in fact based on Émery’s, since it repeated many of the same transcription errors Émery had made. However, Grotefend found that Lacroix had made many new transcription errors of his own, and proceeded to catalogue Lacroix’s numerous deviations from the manuscript in cringing detail. In addition to not following the capitalization and punctuation in the manuscript, Lacroix had consistently misspelled or misidentified certain words, apparently out of unfamiliarity with Leibniz’s peculiar orthography, and sometimes put them in the wrong order.

In addition to identifying Lacroix’s lapses as editor of the *Examination* by recording the dizzying litany of errors in his edition, Grotefend also noted Lacroix’s lapse as interpreter of the text. As noted above, Lacroix had taken the *Examination* at face value, declaring it to be “a personal statement of faith”, a thesis Grotefend thought could be undermined simply by giving proper attention to a single deleted word of the text. In a passage discussing the abuses of the Catholic Church, Leibniz had initially written “Nor, however, are the protestations of our [people] useless [...]”[[122]](#footnote-122), which if left unchanged would have indicated to the reader that the author was a Protestant. However, Leibniz immediately deleted the word “nostrorum” [of our [people]], so that the finished sentence began “Nor, however, are protestations useless [...]”, thus removing any explicit trace of Protestant authorship. To Grotefend’s surprise, while Lacroix had recorded another deletion within the same sentence, he had overlooked the telling deletion of the word “nostrorum”. This was no minor oversight either, for according to Grotefend, “this one word [nostrorum] ... shows us that Leibniz wrote the *Systema theologicum*, which Mr. Lacroix ... still considers to be a personal statement of his faith, as a Protestant, but that he did not want to appear as such in it, precisely in order not to offend”[[123]](#footnote-123).

Having established that Leibniz had still self-identified as a Protestant when writing the *Examination*, Grotefend proceeded to identify what he took to be a further editorial lapse on the part of Émery and Lacroix, one which he believed had inspired a number of earlier reviewers of the *Examination* to suppose that Leibniz had gone so far in hiding his creed that he even allowed himself to disparage Protestantism and the Reformation. The issue turns on this sentence, when Leibniz outlines resistance to the practice of worshipping images: “Superiore quoque seculo, reformationis venditatores magnam coeptis suis speciem in hac ipsa materia invenere”[[124]](#footnote-124). ( = Likewise, in the last century the advocates of the Reformation found a great pretext for their undertakings in this very matter.) The first to notice that something may be amiss with this sentence was the acronymous H. K. L. in his review of Doller’s 1820 edition of the *Examination*, published across three issues of a literary journal in 1822. H. K. L. claimed that the words “reformationis venditatores” “could seem insulting to the Protestants”[[125]](#footnote-125); five years later, Gottlob Schulze singled out the same phrase as degrading to Protestants in his *Ueber die Entdeckung, dass Leibnitz ein Katholik gewesen sey* of 1827[[126]](#footnote-126). Both evidently took “venditatores” to mean “boasters”, “braggarts”, or “vaunters”, or suchlike[[127]](#footnote-127), which to Protestant readers of the *Examination* simply added insult to injury: not only had the Protestant Leibniz endorsed a swathe of Catholic doctrines in the *Examination*, he had also gone out of his way to depreciate Protestants as a way of concealing his true confessional leaning!

 According to Grotefend, however, Leibniz had done no such thing. After consulting the manuscript of the *Examination*, he reported that the word both Émery and Lacroix had read as “venditatores” was in fact “vendicatores”, that is, “claimers” or “claimants”. Grotefend’s correction (or incorrection, as it turned out) was speedily endorsed by Georg Heinrich Pertz (1795–1876) in an article on Leibniz’s ecclesiastical creed, published on 1 July 1846:

For a passage in which hitherto a depreciation of Protestantism has with good reason been found, ‘superiore quoque saeculo reformationis venditatores magnam coeptis suis speciem in hac ipsa materia invenere’, Leibniz cannot henceforth be reproached; he did not write, as Émery and Lacroix have it, reformationis *venditatores*, but rather reformationis *vendicatores* [...][[128]](#footnote-128).

As it happens, both Grotefend and Pertz were wrong: Leibniz *had* written “venditatores”. Does this mean he was taking a swipe at his fellow Protestants, describing them in a disparaging way? Not necessarily. Even the acronymous H. K. L., who first raised the issue about Leibniz’s questionable choice of word, was not convinced Leibniz was attacking all Protestants. Fully aware of the context in which the word was used, in a sentence about Protestant resistance to the worship of images, H. K. L. denied that the word “venditatores” was insulting to Protestants, because “obviously [Andreas] *Karlstadt* and the like are meant”[[129]](#footnote-129); that is, Protestant *iconoclasts* rather than Protestants in general. Others sought to take the sting out the word “venditatores” in a different way. For example, in a short response to both Grotefend and Pertz, the philologist Franz Wolfgang Ullrich (1795–1880) refused to get worked up over Leibniz’s choice of word, claiming that if Leibniz had intended “venditatores” as an insult, it was quite a mild one. In any case, he continued, it was equally possible that Leibniz had in fact used the word in a more neutral sense, as meaning “praisers”, “promoters”, or such like[[130]](#footnote-130). (Without prejudice to H. K. L.’s interpretation, as the reader will already have spotted I have translated “venditatores” as “advocates”, in the spirit of Ullrich’s suggestion.)

**7. Seeking an end to controversies**

Before long, Grotefend’s detailed analysis was to be repurposed to support a new interpretation of the *Examination*. This followed the appearance in 1859 of a previously unpublished Leibniz text entitled “Des controverses” [On controversies][[131]](#footnote-131). In this piece (now known to have been written in 1680), Leibniz recalls a discussion he had had with his late employer, Duke Johann Friedrich (1625–1679), about a method he had devised for resolving controversies in any sphere of life, one which would guarantee the moderation of the disputants and restrict their options for disputing, as if their arms were tied. The key to this method, Leibniz explains, is “[...] to write down controversies in such a way that the reader cannot judge which party the author has embraced”[[132]](#footnote-132). At a stroke, he insists, this would remove the sort of problems that usually beset disputes, where the antagonists routinely rearrange their opponents’ arguments to the point of making them unrecognizable, or unintentionally present these arguments in weakened form. In the heat of disputes, antagonists also commonly overlook or too hastily dismiss the responses of their opponents, and engage in digression, all of which contributes to ensuring that disputes expand across so many volumes that one cannot keep up with everything that has been said on either side unless one devotes oneself exclusively to that task.

 On the last page of “On controversies” Leibniz boils down his method to six key points or steps. The first is to apply the method to the Church first of all, as a test case. The second indicates that “[...] he who uses this method will be neither judge, nor client, nor reconciler, but rapporteur”, and the third that “[...] the fidelity of the rapporteur will be apparent in that one will be unable to guess which party he himself belongs to, which [...] can be taken as a palpable sign of moderation and even-handedness”[[133]](#footnote-133). So long as the rapporteur can maintain order in his exposition (point 4), and summarize efficiently and accurately (point 5), the usual difficulties that bedevil disputes (noted above) will be avoided and it will be easy for a person of good sense to make a judgement on the basis of the report the rapporteur has drawn up (point 6).

 Louis-Alexandre Foucher de Careil (1826–1891), the first to publish “On controversies”, saw in this text the key to deciphering the mystery of the *Examination* as well as Leibniz’s other irenic writings. Recalling Grotefend’s observation that when writing the *Examination* Leibniz had deliberately crossed out the word “nostrorum”, presumably to conceal his Protestant authorship, Foucher de Careil took this amendment as evidence that Leibniz was adhering to point 3 of his method for resolving controversies, namely that a reader should not be able to guess the author’s confession: “Leibniz has only one role in this affair, that of faithfully expounding the debate between the Catholics and Protestants”[[134]](#footnote-134). To secure the point, Foucher de Careil noted other writings Leibniz penned from a Catholic standpoint, evincing the same “[...] political spirit [...]”[[135]](#footnote-135).

 De Careil’s hypothesis was subsequently endorsed by a number of other scholars, such as John Metz[[136]](#footnote-136), and is occasionally still endorsed by contemporary commentators[[137]](#footnote-137). However, it is doubtful that Leibniz was following his method of ending controversies when writing the *Examination*. While he certainly takes on the role of unbiased newcomer to the controversies about Christian doctrines, and while he never openly declares himself to be in favour of Catholicism, Lutheranism, or Calvinism, the *Examination* departs from Leibniz’s method in “On controversies” in various ways. Most notably, in the *Examination*, Leibniz does not simply expound the controversies about each Christian doctrine, he consistently makes judgements about the acceptability of the various interpretations of these doctrines, going well beyond the role of impartial rapporteur that his method calls for. Moreover, on eight separate occasions in the *Examination* he cites with approval a decision of the Council of Trent, often endorsing the very words of some of the canons of Trent. Because of this, even if Leibniz had found a way to publish or circulate the *Examination* anonymously, readers would have quickly concluded that the anonymous author inclined heavily toward the Catholic position, regardless of his not explicitly declaring himself a Catholic. This means either that when writing the *Examination* Leibniz was not following his method of ending controversies, or that if he was, his execution was poor in that he routinely strayed from the method he himself had laid down. The former, I suspect, is more likely.

**8. The *Catholic Demonstrations***

Needless to say, even if Leibniz was not following the method outlined in “On controversies” when writing the *Examination*, this does not rule out the text being intended as a way of settling controversies or as a contribution to ecumenism more generally. And indeed, in the latter half of the nineteenth century it became increasingly common to see it that way, as part of a project entitled *Catholic Demonstrations*, conceived by Leibniz as a systematic apology for the Christian faith, built upon the framework of Catholicism[[138]](#footnote-138). The only evidence for this project available in the nineteenth century was a series of three letters Leibniz had written to Duke Johann Friedrich of Hanover in late 1679, shortly before the Duke’s death. In the first letter, Leibniz explains to the Duke that when he had discussed the controversies with a previous employer, Baron Christian von Boineburg (1622–1672), he had found “only three or four passages in the Council of Trent” that troubled him, and so he had proposed devising interpretations that conflicted neither with the words or the sense of the Church, at least as he understood them, nor with the opinions of Scholastics and monks. To that end, he explains to the Duke, he had “[...] desired, in order to be safe and to proceed with sincerity, that a declaration from Rome be procured, indicating that these interpretations at least contain nothing that is contrary to the faith”[[139]](#footnote-139). Leibniz carries on to explain that Boineburg’s death had led him to put his plan on hold, but that prior to that he had already worked out what he would do if Rome approved of his interpretations:

Now on the assumption that these declarations could be obtained, I had drawn up the plan of an important work under the title *Catholic Demonstrations*, consisting of three parts: the *first* would contain demonstrations about *God and the soul*, since indeed I have some startling ones. The *second* would contain proofs of *the Christian religion*, and of the possibility of our principal mysteries, particularly of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Eucharist and the resurrection of bodies. The *third* part is about *the Church* and its authority, about the divine right of the Church hierarchy, and about the limits of secular and ecclesiastical power [...][[140]](#footnote-140).

In addition to the three main parts, the *Catholic Demonstrations* would “[...] be preceded by the demonstrated elements of the true philosophy”, which would require the development of new tools of reasoning that enabled one to weigh up different probabilities and discern which of rival hypotheses or interpretations was the most plausible[[141]](#footnote-141). Having outlined what the final product would look like, and its potentially enormous benefits in bringing Christians together and as an aid to missionary efforts, Leibniz notes again that “[...] the declarations I desire on certain points of the Council [of Trent] are necessary first of all [...]”[[142]](#footnote-142); his hope was that the Catholic Duke might be able to obtain these declarations through his connections in Rome.

 In the second of the trio of letters to Duke Johann Friedrich, Leibniz developed his idea further:

After having carefully considered what would be the best way to obtain the desired declarations, I concluded that a document should be composed so as to appear to have been written by a Catholic to convert a Protestant, and that this Catholic explains everything in the most favourable and accommodating way he can, without wronging his own belief. In this way, Rome will always be more disposed to favour than to criticize such a discourse[[143]](#footnote-143).

The desired declarations were for the benefit of two interested parties: for the individual (presumably Leibniz himself) and for the sovereign or state. Among the desired declarations for the individual were those concerning “the object of the adoration in the Eucharist, the meaning of anathematisms, justification and penance, etc.”, these presumably being the issues on which Leibniz proposed to offer his interpretations of the Council of Trent. And the desired declarations for the sovereign or state were “communion under both kinds, the marriage of clergymen, and the secularization of the possessions of the Church”[[144]](#footnote-144). Leibniz envisaged all of these matters being treated in “the aforementioned paper written in the guise of a Catholic and addressed to a Protestant”[[145]](#footnote-145). The third letter to the Duke adds nothing further about the proposed paper for Rome, instead consisting of a list of things Leibniz felt he would need in order to work on it successfully; e.g., access to books in Mainz, necessitating his absence from Hanover for several weeks, a carriage, dispensation to be excused from his other official duties, etc.[[146]](#footnote-146).

 All three letters were first published by Onno Klopp (1822–1903) in 1865. The parallels between the *Examination* and the project Leibniz outlined in these letters were not lost on him: “The importance of this for the so-called *Systema theologicum*, which afterwards would be rightly called *Catholic Demonstrations* ... is obvious”, he wrote[[147]](#footnote-147). Others agreed. In 1870, the philosopher and theologian Edmund Pfleiderer (1842–1902) saw the key to the *Examination* in these letters to the Duke, specifically in the outline of the projected *Catholic Demonstrations*, Leibniz’s desire to get approval from Rome for his interpretations of the Council of Trent, and his idea of writing a paper as if from a Catholic[[148]](#footnote-148). Pfleiderer supposed all three were the key to understanding the *Examination*.

 Both Klopp and Pfleiderer base their case for interpreting the *Examination* in light of Leibniz’s plans for a *Catholic Demonstrations* on putting the *Examination* side by side with the proposals described in the letters to Duke Johann Friedrich, whereupon (they think) it would be obvious that the former was the final fruits of what Leibniz had proposed in the latter. But had they checked carefully, they would have noticed considerable divergences between what Leibniz had proposed doing in his letters to the Duke, and what he actually did in the *Examination*. For one thing, in the second of the three letters to the Duke, Leibniz had proposed writing a paper that appeared “to have been written by a Catholic to convert a Protestant”. This is not an obvious description of the *Examination*, where Leibniz writes in the guise not of a proselytizing Catholic but rather of an impartial arbiter who happens to find the grounds for Catholic interpretations of key doctrines more compelling than those of other confessions. And here is another discrepancy: of the six matters for which Leibniz had indicated to the Duke that he wanted a judgement from Rome, two are not discussed at all in the *Examination*, namely the meaning of anathematisms and the secularization of the possessions of the Church. And of the four that are, namely the object of the adoration in the Eucharist, justification and penance, communion under both kinds, and the marriage of clergymen, on the basis of what Leibniz says about them in the *Examination*, it is not clear that he offers the sort of interpretation for which he would want or need Rome’s approval, or indeed that he offers anything that can meaningfully be described as an interpretation at all. The question of clerical marriage, for example, is touched upon only briefly near the end of the *Examination*, and Leibniz simply sides with the Church’s decision not to allow the practice while expressing the hope that one day the decision may change[[149]](#footnote-149). His discussion of communion under both kinds is more extensive, not least because it records at some length the variations in and changes to Church practice over the years, but concludes that ultimately the decision lies with the Church as to whether communion under both kinds should be permitted, thus endorsing in full the position reached at Trent[[150]](#footnote-150). If Leibniz did have in mind potentially controversial interpretations of these matters when writing to the Duke in 1679, there is no evidence of it in the *Examination*.

 Klopp’s and Pfleiderer’s interpretation would eventually come under attack, albeit for entirely different reasons from those outlined above. Jean Baruzi (1881–1953) noted that chronology didn’t favour their interpretation, with the original *Catholic Demonstrations* project dating to Leibniz’s time in Mainz, 1669–1672[[151]](#footnote-151), long before the *Examination* was written in 1686. The second problem, according to Baruzi, was that the contents of the *Examination* did not match the summary of the *Catholic Demonstrations* Leibniz offered in his letter to the Duke[[152]](#footnote-152). Baruzi was certainly right that Leibniz had not conceived of a paper written in the guise of a Catholic as part of the *Catholic Demonstrations* proper. Instead, as is clear from the first of the three letters to the Duke, the paper written in the guise of a Catholic was intended merely to get approval from Rome for a number of interpretations contained therein, and once that approval was granted, then work would begin on the *Catholic Demonstrations* itself. Had all this gone to plan, it is quite possible that Leibniz would have weaved into the *Catholic Demonstrations* some material or at least some interpretations from the paper approved by Rome, but there is no doubt that he conceived the two documents as serving different purposes: the aim of the paper for Rome was simply to get the green light he needed to make a start on the *Catholic Demonstrations* itself. In any case, the Duke died on 18 December 1679, without ever having seen Leibniz’s last three letters, leading Leibniz to shelve the proposal for a second time. In the form originally envisaged, anyway.

What Baruzi and other commentators of his time could not have known was that, despite the death of the Duke, Leibniz kept alive during the 1680s some of the core ideas of the *Catholic Demonstrations* project, albeit in a different form. Most of the texts of this reshaped project were published for the first time only in the last thirty years or so, in A VI 4 and in volumes 3, 6, and 7 of A IV. Amongst others, they include a number of analyses of the Trinity[[153]](#footnote-153), an essay on the Incarnation[[154]](#footnote-154), and a defence of tradition and the Church[[155]](#footnote-155). Some of the ideas from these writings were later reused in the *Examination*, such as his analyses of the Trinity and the Incarnation, while many others were not. Amongst other examples, his discussion of the authenticity of the Vulgate Bible and canonicity of its books in “On scripture, the Church, and the Trinity” (1680–1684 (?)) has no counterpart in the *Examination*[[156]](#footnote-156)*,* likewise the philosophical defence he mounts of the concept of God in “Rationale of the Catholic Faith” (mid–1680s)[[157]](#footnote-157) and the analysis of the causes of division among the churches in “Apology for catholic truths” (1685 (?))[[158]](#footnote-158) and “On the unity of the church” (1685 (?))[[159]](#footnote-159). Moreover, in some of these shorter writings, Leibniz reaches a conclusion different from that found in the *Examination*; for example, in “Theological propositions” (autumn 1685–spring 1686 (?)), he insists that it would be right to permit the marriage of clerics[[160]](#footnote-160), whereas in the *Examination* he is content to leave the decision about clerical marriage to the Church[[161]](#footnote-161). Whether all these different writings were intended as studies for some grand overarching project is unclear, though in a couple of them Leibniz jots down what appears to be titles of a projected larger work, or even a larger project, namely “Apology for the Catholic faith in accordance with right reason” (1685)[[162]](#footnote-162), and “Specimen of Catholic Demonstrations, or, Apology for the faith through reason” (July 1683–March 1686 (?))[[163]](#footnote-163). Such titles would certainly be appropriate for many of the draft papers he worked up in the first half of the 1680s, which seek to defend or clarify key theological doctrines by means of reason. But the *Examination* would sit uncomfortably under either title, for while “right reason” is one of the tools Leibniz uses in the text, it is by no means the only one: “Holy Scripture, pious antiquity, ... [and] the historical facts” are the others[[164]](#footnote-164). Nevertheless, it is not uncommon today to find scholars construing the *Examination* as part of the aforementioned broader plan of the *Catholic Demonstrations*[[165]](#footnote-165), which Heinrich Schepers has even taken to be a lifelong ecumenical project rather than one that fizzled out in the second half of the 1680s[[166]](#footnote-166). Though, in light of Leibniz’s remarks to Duke Johann Friedrich and Landgrave Ernst, it might be more plausible to consider the *Examination* as a *preliminary* work for the *Catholic Demonstrations* (or the *Apology for the Catholic faith* that may have superseded it), rather than a true part of it.

**9. Conclusion**

From our twenty-first–century perspective, there are many morals we can draw from the various ways nineteenth-century readers grappled with the *Examination*: that a sectarian approach tells us more about the reader than the author; that the existence of numerous pro- and anti-Catholic sentiments in Leibniz’s broader oeuvre means that attempts to determine his religiosity from the *Examination* are unlikely to be successful; and that important clues as to Leibniz’s motivation for writing the text may still be found in his other writings, though care needs to be exercised in identifying which of these other writings provide the most illuminating clues. Accordingly, in many ways the work of nineteenth-century commentators has helped to demystify the *Examination*, at least to some extent. Although many of their interpretations are suspect, or misfire for other reasons, studying them does enable us to enhance our own understanding of the text and the context in which it was written. Situating it within the broader context of Leibniz’s ecumenical activities makes sense, albeit treating it as part of (or preliminary to) an unofficial irenic project designed to run alongside and complement official reunion negotiations. For it is surely telling that, in the years before writing the *Examination*, Leibniz entertained a variety of ways of authoring a paper on the controversies while hiding his own confession, either to get approval for his own interpretations of Catholic doctrines or to try to resolve controversies. Hence, as we have seen: in 1679, he proposed writing a paper from the perspective of a Catholic trying to convert a Protestant; in 1680, a paper in which an impartial rapporteur expounds both sides of a controversy as clearly and as accurately as possible without making a judgement himself; and in 1683, an exposition of faith in which he explains his position on disputed questions as accurately and sincerely as he can. Of these variations on a theme, the third is the closest to being a blueprint for the *Examination*, which is certainly a full-blown exposition of the Christian religion in which Leibniz comes to a very clear decision on a range of controversies. But it’s not a perfect blueprint, because it is questionable whether Leibniz was sincere about some of the opinions reached in the *Examination*[[167]](#footnote-167). So questions remain about the *Examination*, and we may have to accept that some of them may never be answered satisfactorily. If that is the case, we may take some solace from Leibniz himself, who recognized that in historical matters there could be positive value in mystery and unanswered questions: “And it must be admitted that, just as in the theater it would be unsuitable for stage machinery to be seen, so too history would sometimes lose part of its beauty, if one always observed its real causes [...]”[[168]](#footnote-168).

PROF. DR. LLOYD STRICKLAND

Department of History, Politics, and Philosophy, Manchester Metropolitan University, Rosamond Street West, Manchester, M15 6LL, UK, l.strickland@mmu.ac.uk

1. I would like to thank Daniel J. Cook, Ernesto Diaz, Sven Erdner, Christopher Johns, Owain Daniel Jones, and an anonymous referee for helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper, and Julia Weckend for her assistance in polishing some of my translations. Work on this paper was supported by a British Academy research grant (MD160040), “Leibniz’s *Examen religionis christianae*”. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “Cum diu multumque invocato divino auxilio sepositisque, quantum forte homini possibile est, partium studiis perinde ac si ex novo orbe neophytus nulli adhuc addictus venirem controversias de religione versaverim; haec tandem mecum ipse statui, atque expensis omnibus sequenda putavi, quae et Scriptura sacra, et pia antiquitas, et ipsa recta ratio et rerum gestarum fides homini affectuum vacuo, commendare videntur”. A VI 4, 2356–2357. All translations in the paper are my own unless otherwise indicated. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. LH I 2, 2a Bl. 1–67. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The motivation for Gruber’s comments is unknown. They appear to be unrelated to his plan to publish an edition of Leibniz’s correspondence, for details of which see M.-L. Babin and A. Fleck, “Johann Daniel Gruber und sein Projekt einer Leibniz-Edition”, in *Leibniz in Latenz: Überlieferungsbildung als Rezeption (1716–1740)*, eds. N. Gädeke and W. Li, Hannover 2017, pp. 163–183. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. “[...] cum videam nihil esse in imaginum veneratione, qualem Tridentini Patres probant, quod honori divino sit adversum [...]”. A VI 4, 2399. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. “Contrarium sensit postea Leibnitius apud Fellerum p172 n71”. LH I 2, 2a Bl. 29r. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. “*Imagines* infigunt menti humanitatem *Christi*, ut [Deitatem] non cogitet, abducuntque a vero Dei conceptu, et quod hinc sequitur, ejus amore. Intueri imagines inter precandum periculosum est, et a ratione alienum, quia abducunt mentem a profundioribus cogitatis ad corporales imagines”. *Otium Hanoverarum, sive Miscellanea ex ore & schedis illustris viri, piae memoriae, Godofr. Guilielmi Leibnitii*, ed. Joachim Friedrich Feller, Leipzig 1718, p. 172. The short text has now been published as “De imaginibus” in A IV 7, 663. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. “Ut taceam qui sic sentiunt in tricas incidere utrum in labiis, an in ore an in gula an in stomacho primum incipiat, an ne in hoc quidem, si vitio ejus symbola non consumantur”. A VI 4, 2421. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. “puduisse, Leibniti, profanarum stultiarum!” LH I 2, 2a Bl. 45v. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. “Nihil autem dubito de rebus hujusmodi statuere posse eos qui praesunt, iisque parendum potius quam schisma faciendum esse [...]”. A VI 4, 2428. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. “hoc posito, debuissemus manifeste in paganismo. Jovem lapidem iurem, praeter animi sententiam hac scripsisse leibnitium, virum mentis non obtusae”. LH I 2, 2a Bl. 50r. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. “[...] Leibnitzischen Schätze [...]”. C. G. von Murr, *Journal zur Kunst-geschichte und zur algemeinen Literatur*, Nuremberg 1779, p. 126. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. “Sein *Systema theologicum*, das er, wie ich vermuthe, zwischen den Jahren 1671 und 1680 oder doch nicht gar lange hernach, abgefasset, und wovon bisher noch niemand etwas mußte. Es findet sich das autographum, aber ohne Titelblatt und Vorrede, in der königl. Bibliothek zy Hannover. Herr Hofrath und Bibliothekar Jung hat dieses sonderbare Werk, das mehr Auffehens machen würde, als alle übrige Leibnitzische Handschriften, auf 159 Folioseiten abgeschrieben. Leibnitz vertheidiget in demselben die katholische Religion so ernsthaft, selbst diejenigen Punkte, worüber zwischen den Protestanten und Katholiken bisher am meisten gestritten wird, daß, wenn Leibnitzens Handschrift nicht auf viel tausend Blättern genugsam kennbar wäre, man schwerlich ihn für den Verfasser halten könnte. Es ist voll edler Simplicität, ohne Wortgepränge und animosité, insonderheit aber voll Scharffinns”. Ibid., p. 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. “[...] dessen Apologie der katholischen Religion wirklich existirt [...]”. *Acta historico-ecclesiastica nostri temporis. Eilfter Band*, Weimar 1785, p. 291. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. “[...] M. de Murr, savant protestant, dans son *Journal pour les Arts et Littér*., septième part., fait mention d’un manuscrit de Leibnitz, qu’on garde dans la bibliothèque électorale de Hanovre, ‘où, dit-il, la doctrine catholique, dans les points même auxquels les protestans sont les plus opposés, est défendue avec tant d’ardeur, que si on ne connaissait pas l’ecriture de Leibnitz, par mille et mille feuilles écrites de sa main, on ne pourrait le croire l’auteur de cet ouvrage.’” F. X. de Feller, *Dictionnaire historique, ou histoire abrégée des hommes qui se sont fait un nom par le génie, les talens, les vertus, les erreurs, depuis le commencement du monde jusqu’à nos jours*, 8 vols., Liege 1797, 2ed, V: p. 360. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. “[...] in seinen von ihm hinterlassenen schriftlichen Aufsätzen, die in der Bibliothek zu Hannover aufbewahrt werden, vertheidigt er auch die Lehren der katholischen Kirche, und zwar gerade in denjenigen Puncten aufs nachdrücklichste, in welchen die Protestanten von denselben abgehen, und es ist zu bedauern, daß man diese nicht durch den Druck bekannt macht”. J. A. Starck, *Theoduls Gastmahl oder über die Vereinigung der verschiedenen christlichen*, Frankfurt am Main 1815, 4ed., p. 212. The passage does not appear in the first three editions of the work. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. J.-A. Émery, *Esprit de Leibnitz, ou Recueil de pensées choisies, sur la religion, la morale, l’histoire, la philosophie, &c*., 2 vols., Lyon 1772. A second edition was published in 1783. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. “[...] Leibnitz que nous croyons un Chrétien fort sincere, étoit un très-mauvais Luthérien”. Émery, *Esprit de Leibnitz*, I: xxvii. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Émery, *Esprit de Leibnitz*, I: xxvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. “Leibnitz avoit fait de grands pas vers l’Eglise romaine: il sembloit y tenir par ses sentimens, encore plus qu’au Luthéranisme”. Émery, *Esprit de Leibnitz*, I: xxvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. See *Répertoire de la littérature ancienne et moderne. Tome dix-septième*, Paris 1825, p. 274. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. The other journalists were: Marie Stanislas Rattier (1793–1871), Pierre Sébastien Laurentie (1793–1876), Abbé Jean Jacques Fayet (1786–1849), Abbé Félicité de Lamennais (1782–1854), Claude Louis Bouchard de La Poterie (1744–1819). The first issue of *Le spectateur religieux et politique* appeared on 19 October 1818, with publication ceasing less than four months later, on 10 February 1819. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. “Il existe un manuscrit extrêmement important de Leibnitz, déposé d’abord dans la bibliothèque de Goettingue, qui contient une espèce de testament religieux de ce grand homme: ce sont ses dernières pensées sur les questions de controverse qui séparent les catholiques des protestans. Cet ouvrage, auquel M. Eymeri, le dernier supérieur du séminaire de Saint-Sulpice, attachoit le plus grand prix, va être imprimé [...] nous avons le manuscrit entre nos mains. Il est du plus haut intérêt: il sera imprimé en latin et en français.” [A. E. Genoud], “Des dernières opinions de Leibnitz, relativement à l’Eglise catholique”, *Le spectateur religieux et politique. Tome 1*, Paris 1818, pp. 23–24. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. J.-A. Émery, *Exposition de la doctrine de Leibnitz sur la religion*, Paris 1819. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. [A. E. Genoud], “Lettre de Leibnitz à S. A. S. le landgrave Ernest de Helsen-Rheinfelds”, *Le spectateur religieux et politique. Tome 1*, 24–25. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. “Je puis asseurer V.A.S. que les doutes de philosophie dont je parlois dans ma precedente n’ont rien de contraire aux Mysteres du Christianisme, sçavoir à la Trinité, l’incarnation, l’Eucharistie, et la resurrection des corps. Je conçois ces choses possibles, et puisque Dieu les a revelées je les tiens veritables. Je veux dresser un jour quelque ecrit sur quelques points de controverse entre les Catholiques et Protestans, et s’il est approuvé par des personnes judicieuses et moderées, je recevuray beaucoup de joye, mais il ne faut pas qu’on sçache en aucune façon, que l’auteur n’est pas dans la Communion Romaine. Cette seule prevention rend les meilleures choses suspectes”. Leibniz to Landgrave Ernst, first half of March 1684, A I 4, 325. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. “[...] dans le lettre que j’ay ecrite à Mons. Alberti professeur de Theologie à Leipzig, [...] J’y ay mis en termes exprès que je crois que si on pouvait remedier aux maux et abus qui affligent l’Eglise, en reconnoissant le Primat du Pape, qu’on auroit tort de ne le pas faire”. Leibniz to Landgrave Ernst, first half of March 1684, A I 4, 324. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. “La plus part des objections qu’on peut faire contre Rome sont plus tost contre la practiqve du peuple, que contre les dogmes, et cette practique estant desavouée publiquement, ces objections cesseront”. Leibniz to Landgrave Ernst, 23 October / 3 November (?) 1682, A I 3, 272. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. “A l’egard des dogmes la principale difficulté à mon avis, consiste dans la Transsubstantiation. [...] j’ay trouvé certaines demonstrations, dependantes des mathematiqves et de la nature du mouvement, qui me donnent une grande satisfaction sur ces matieres [...] Je voudrois pourtant sçavoir, si la maniere dont je l’explique, pourroit estre receue dans l’Eglise Romaine [...]”. Leibniz to Landgrave Ernst, 23 October / 3 November (?) 1682, A I 3, 272–273. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. “[...] l’Eglise Catholique visible est infallible dans tous les points de creance, qui sont necessaires au salut, par une assistance speciale du S. Esprit qui luy a esté promise”. Leibniz to Landgrave Ernst, 1/11 January 1684, A I 4, 320. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. “J’y ay songé bien souvent et depuis plusieurs années; mais je n’ay pas encor trouvé d’expedient. V.A.S. voit par là, que je luy decouvre le fonds de mon coeur, et comme je fais profession de sincerité j’espere que j’auray écrit cecy pour Elle seule. Car je souhaitte de me justifier dans son esprit. Ce qui m’a porté encor d’avantage, à m’expliquer si librement, c’est qu’il m’est venu dans l’esprit que peutestre V.A.S. me pourroit aider plus que personne à sortir de cette incertitude. Car je luy avoue tres volontiers, que je voudrois estre dans la communion de l’Eglise de Rome, à quelque prix que je pourrois, pourveu que je le puisse faire avec un vray repos d’esprit et cette paix de conscience dont je jouis apresent, sçachant bien que je n’omets rien de mon costé, pour jouir d’une union si souhaittable. Si je sçavois que V.A.S. prenoit l’affaire à coeur, je m’expliquerois plus distinctement sur la maniere de sortir de l’incertitude dont je pourrois estre redevable à sa bonté. J’envoye le reste de la piece, qu’Elle sçait, et je suis avec devotion”. Leibniz to Landgrave Ernst, 1/11 January 1684, A I 4, 321. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. “[...] qui s’imprime en ce moment [...]”. [Anon.], “De Leibnitz”, *Le spectateur religieux et politique. Tome 1*, Paris 1818, p. 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. “Cet ouvrage sera le dernier coup porté à la réforme”. [Anon.], “De Leibnitz”, p. 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. [Anon.], “Systema theologicum de Leibnitz. Paris 1819”, *The Catholic Magazine* 1/10 (1831), pp. 577–594, at p. 583. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. *Leibnitzens System der Theologie*, trans. A. Räß and N. von Weis, Mainz 1820. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. “[...] sie machen es höchst wahrscheinlich, daß er im Herzen ein Katholik, und zwar ein romischkatholischer Katholik war”. L. Doller, “Einleitende Vorrede zur Uebersetzung des Leibnizschen Systems der Theologie”, in *Leibnitzens System der Theologie*, pp. ix–cxvii, at p. lxvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Doller, “Einleitende Vorrede zur Uebersetzung des Leibnizschen Systems der Theologie”, pp. liv–lv. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Doller, “Einleitende Vorrede zur Uebersetzung des Leibnizschen Systems der Theologie”, p. lvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Doller, “Einleitende Vorrede zur Uebersetzung des Leibnizschen Systems der Theologie”, p. cxii. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. “[...] aus Liebe zu seinem Hofe [...]”. Doller, “Einleitende Vorrede zur Uebersetzung des Leibnizschen Systems der Theologie”, p. cxiii. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. “[...] überall ersichtlich wird, daß das Resultat schon vor der Untersuchung ausgemacht war”. [Anon.], “Leibnitzens System der Theologie”, in *Neue nationalchronik der Teutschen. Eine politische Zeitschrift*, ed. J. G. Pahl, Ellwangen and Gmünd 1820, pp. 490–491, at p. 491. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. “Daß übrigens Leibnitz manche Anordnungen und Lehren der katholischen Kirche in einer Art erklärte, entschuldigte oder auch gut hieß, bey der er auf den Ruhm eines orthodoxen Lutheraners keinen Anspruch machen konnte, ist unläugbar, aber um deswillen kann sich keine Kirche ihn arrogiren, wie denn überhaupt ein selbstdenkender Kopf, von seiner Kraft, sich unmöglich in die Formen einer duffern Confession fügen kann, sondern die Wahrheit selbstständig auffaßt, und sie überall sucht, wo sie zu finden ist”. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. “Wer Leibnitzens System liest, wird sehen, daß sich derselbe darin ganz katholisch ausspricht; also kann sich die katholische Kirche denselben mit vollem Rechte arrogiren”. A. B., “Leibnitzens *System der Theologie*”, *Litteraturzeitung für katholische Religionslehrer* 35 (24 April 1821), pp. 97–101, at p. 100. In a short preface added to the second printing of their German edition, the translators Räß and Weis made exactly the same point in response to the anonymous review in *Neue nationalchronik der Teutschen*; see A. Räß and N. von Weis, “Vorwort”, in *Leibnitzens System der Theologie*, Mainz 1820, 2ed, p. v. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. “[...] eigentlich eine Erläuterung jener Punkte bezweckt werde, in denen der Katholizismus und Prostestantismus divergiren: dieß harmonirt mit dem frühern Versprechen, das dem Landgrafen von Hessen Rheinfelds gemacht wurde”. M. P., “Leibnitzens System der Theologie”, *Litteraturzeitung für katholische Religionslehrer* 71 and 72 (5 and 7 September 1820), pp. 289–319, at p. 297. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Neumann, “Leibnitz, kein Römling”, in *Sophronizon, oder unparthenisch-freymüthige Beyträge zur neueren Geschichte, Gesetzgebung und Statistik der Staaten und Kirchen. Fünfter Jahrgang, oder Fünfter Band, Fünftes Heft*, ed. H. E. G. Paulus, Heidelberg 1823, pp. 50–61. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. See Leibniz to Thomas Burnett, 14 December 1705, Dutens VI, 271. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Identified as such in C. L. Grotefend, “Guillielmi Gottifredi Leibnitii opusculum adscitio titulo Systema theologicum inscriptum”, in *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen. Der erste Band auf das Jahr 1846*, Göttingen 1846, pp. 705–719, at p. 705. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. [K. F. Stäudlin (?)], “Leibnitzens System der Theologie”, *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen: unter Aufsicht der königl. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften. Der erste Band auf das Jahr 1821*, Göttingen 1821, pp. 505–520, at p. 507. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. “Es wäre wenigstens zu wünschen, daß man zu Hannover eine Vergleichung anstellen könnte”. [Stäudlin (?)], “Leibnitzens System der Theologie”, p. 520. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. “[...] gewiß konnte er ein solches System nicht schreiben, als hier unter seinem Namen vor uns liegt. Sind denn die Zeiten noch nicht vorbey, in welchen man durch piam fraudem die Ehre der Kirche befördern wollte, und sie in der That schäudete? Wie schwer lastet die Schande auf der Kirche, dass von jeher unter dem Namen großer Männer Spuria Opera herausgegeben oder echte Werke interpolirt (verfalscht) sind. Was soll man von einer Kirche denken, von der man sondern darf, den Betrug zu billigen? Zur Ehre der romischen Kirche wollen wir sagen, sie bedarf solcher Betrügereyen nicht”. Landmann, “Leibnitz’s System der Theologie”, *Allgemeiner anzeiger und nationalzeitung der Deutschen* 36 (6 February 1823), pp. 373–383, at pp. 382–383. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. “[...] kein Schatten von L’s Styl und Geist anzutreffen ist. L’s Styl ist so holpericht und schwerfällig, und der in dem System so geebnet meistentheils, und so leicht, daß man darin einen gewandten Sophisten erkennt, und keinen tieffinnigen Philosophen [...]”. Landmann, “Leibnitz’s System der Theologie”, p. 373. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. “Da L’s Geist von griechischen Sophisten und von Scholastikern umnebelt war, so sah er nicht den Geist des Christenthms, sonder nur die Schale. Ihm schwebte die griechische Mythologie eines so genannten Christenthums stets vor Augen und den Geist des Christenthums suchte und fand er bloß in einigen Lehren, die er für übereinstimmend mit seiner Vernunft hielt; und er sah bloß die Lehrsätze, welche man in den christlichen Kirchen als Glaubensartikel vorgeschrieben hat, für den Inbegriff des christlichen Glaubens an”. Landmann, “Leibnitz’s System der Theologie”, p. 380. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. G. M. Ross, “Leibniz and the origin of things”, in M. Dascal and E. Yakira (eds.), *Leibniz and Adam*, Tel Aviv 1993, p. 252. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. S. Brown, “The regularization of providence in post-Cartesian philosophy”, in R. Crocker (ed.), *Religion, Reason and Nature in Early Modern Europe*, Dordrecht 2001, p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. G. W. Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics and Other Writings*, ed. P. Loptson, London 2012, p. 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. GP VII, 302–308. English translation: G. W. Leibniz, *Shorter Leibniz Texts*, trans. by L. Strickland, London 2006, pp. 31–38. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. GP VI 607–623. English translation: L. Strickland, *Leibniz’s Monadology: A New Translation and Guide*, Edinburgh 2014, pp. 14–33. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. GP VI 598–606. English translation: Strickland, *Leibniz’s Monadology*, 270–277. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Indeed, this is evident from the opening pages of the *Examination*, where he claims that “almost all” of the following are “evident from the light of reason itself” (A VI 4, 2361): the existence of a perfect God, this deity’s creation and continual creation of the universe, the innate imperfection in every created thing from which springs human sinfulness, and even the reality of (and mechanism for) eternal punishment of the wicked, whereby those who die ill-disposed towards God continue on this path, condemning themselves to supreme misery. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. “[...] il inclinoit pour le catholiscime”. M. M. Tabaraud, *Histoire critique des projets formés depuis trois cents ans pour la réunion des Communions Chrétiennes*, Paris 1824, p. 157. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. [Anon.], “The Life and Writings of Görres”, *The Dublin Review* 6 (1839), pp. 31–74, at p. 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. “[...] *privatam fidei suae Expositionem* [...]”. P.-P. Lacroix, “Lectori optimo editor”, in *Guillielmi Gottifredi Leibnitii Opusculum adscititio titulo Systema theologicum inscriptum*, ed. P.-P. Lacroix, Paris 1845, pp. iii–viii, at p. vi. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. “[...] confession de foi sincère et intime [...]”. A. de Broglie, “Préface du traducteur”, in *Système religieux de Leibnitz publié d’après le manuscrit original par l’Abbé Lacroix*, trans. A. de Broglie, Paris 1846, pp. v–xl, at p. xxiv. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. “[...] une profession de foi [...]”, “[...] le testament religieux de Leibniz”. [J.-T.] Foisset, “Système religieux de Leibniz. Traduit par Albert de Broglie”, *Le correspondant: recueil périodique. Religion, philosophie, politique, sciences, litterature, beaux-arts. Tome seizième*, Paris 1846, pp. 337–363, at p. 345 and p. 346. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. See N. J. Laforet, *Une page d’histoire de la philosophie moderne. Leibniz*, Louvain 1865, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. C. W. Russell, “Protestant evidence of Catholicity”, *The Dublin Review* 10 (1841), pp. 394­­–429, at p. 397. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Russell, “Protestant evidence of Catholicity”, p. 406. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Russell, “Protestant evidence of Catholicity”, pp. 406–407. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Russell, “Protestant evidence of Catholicity”, p. 407. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. “Des dernières opinions de Leibnitz, relativement à l’Eglise catholique”, “[...] ses dernières pensées sur les questions de controverse [...]”. [Genoud], “Des dernières opinions de Leibnitz”, pp. 23–24. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Doller, “Einleitende Vorrede zur Uebersetzung des Leibnizschen Systems der Theologie”, p. cxiii. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. “[...] confession de foi sincère et intime [...]”. Broglie, “Préface du traducteur”, p. xxiv. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. “Peut-être était-ce là le dernier travail qu’il composait avec tant d’ardeur, qu’il négligea de soigner un léger mal de jambe qui s’envenima et l’emporta en quelques jours; peut-être la mort le surprit-elle ainsi sur le seuil de l’Eglise et le coeur plein de ce désir sincère qui supplée (la foi nous l’enseigne) à toutes les formalités extérieures”. Broglie, “Préface du traducteur”, p. xxvii. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. “[...] la dernière phrase se termine par une virgule, comme si la mort eût coupé la parole à l’auteur au milieu de son discours [...]”. Foisset, “Système religieux de Leibniz”, p. 349. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Such as Leibniz’s statement that the Reformation happened “in the last century”; A VI 4, 2390. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. See for example R. C. Sleigh Jr., *Leibniz and Arnauld: A Commentary on Their Correspondence*, New Haven 1990, p. 23; I. Dingel, “Leibniz und seine Überlegungen zu einer kirchlichen Reunion”, in *Leibniz in Mainz: Europäische Dimensionen der Mainzer Wirkungsperiode*, eds. I. Dingel, M. Kempe, and W. Li, Göttingen 2019, pp. 93–104, at p. 94. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. “Die Schrift, die L hier ankündigt, glauben wir, ist es, der man nachmals die Ausschrist *Systema theol*. gab. L’s Absicht war also nicht, darin seine religiösen Überzeugungen schlechthin aufzustellen, noch weniger ein theologisches Lehrgebaude zu liefern, sondern er will die zwischen beiden Kirchen streitigen Punkte [...]”, “Er geht dabey aber [...] von dem Gesichtspuncte des Katholiken aus, lässt den Katholiken reden, leiht diesem aber die vernünftigsten und billigsten Ansichten der Dogmen seiner Kirche, um etwa die angesehensten Mitglieder derselben zu ähnlichen Ansichten zu bestimmen, oder zu versuchen, wiefern sich hoffen liesse, dass sie Eingang fänden, und zugleich die Protestanten zu bewegen, auf die so modificirte Lehre der kath. K. einzugehen und ihre Zweifel, Bedenklichkeiten und Einwendungen dawider zu richten”. H. K. L., “Leibnitzens System der Theologie”, *Jenaische allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* 112 (1822), pp. 265–285, at p. 280. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. K., “On a recently-discovered work of Leibnitz, alleged to prove his adherence to the Roman Catholic Church”, in *The Monthly Repository and Review of Theology and General Literature*. *New Series, Vol. 1*, London 1827, pp. 233–236 at p. 235. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. G. E. Schulze, *Ueber die Entdeckung, dass Leibnitz ein Katholik gewesen sey*, Göttingen 1827, p. 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. “Pleraque idololatrica apud Christianos revixere: Sacrificia, thus et odores, luminaria, imagines, lustrationes, festa, cantus, sa[c]rae peregrinationes, jejunia, coelibatus, vestimenta, divinationes, magia, omina, praesagia, incantationes, cultus mortuorum, canonisationes vel apotheoses novorum inter Deum et homines mediatorum, boni malique daemones, genii tutelares, aliaeque potestates utriusque sexus quibus templa dedicata, Dies festi celebrati, peculiares destinati cultus, sua cuique assignata provincia, in quibus morborum cura, et rerum dispensatio quibus homines juvantur aut laeduntur. Ita Antichristianismus pro Christo obtinuit, cujus instituta clara intellectu et facillima servatu in dogmata absurda, sermones non intelligendos, mysteria inexplicabilia, praxes ridiculas, degenerarunt”. Schulze, *Ueber die Entdeckung*, pp. 16–17. I translate from A VI 4, 2284. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. See Grua I, 46–61. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. See T. Dagron, *Toland et Leibniz: l’invention du néo-spinozisme*, Paris 2009, pp. 59–97. Dagron plausibly suggests that the “Parallele” emerged from face-to-face discussions with Leibniz about Toland’s *Christianity not Mysterious*. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. J. Toland, *Letters to Serena*, London 1704, pp. 127–129. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. “Er fand daher in den Dogmen und Gebräuchen der katholischen Kirche nicht so viel Irriges und Schlimmes, wie die meisten Protestanten seiner Zeit, und glaubte, durch eine bessere Darstellung dieser Dogmen und Gebräuche würden die Protestanten zur Vereinigung mit der katholischen Kirche geneigter werden. Und höchst wahrscheinlich ist das theologische System dieser Voraussetzung gemäß von ihm geschrieben worden”. Schulze, *Ueber die Entdeckung*, pp. 43–44. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. J. K. F. Schlegel, *Kirchen- und Reformationsgeschichte von Norddeutschland und den hannoverschen Staaten*, 3 vols., Hannover 1828–1832, III: p. 319n96. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. “[...] bekannt genug sind seine irenischen Bemühungen und seine die Vereinigung mit der katholischen Kirche bezweckende Correspondenz mit Bossuet und Anderen”. J. F. L. Rothensee, *Der Primat des Papstes in allen christlichen Jahrhunderten. Dritte Band – Erste Abtheilung*, Mainz 1838, p. 413. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. G. E. Guhrauer, “Excurs über den „Monatlichen Auszug*“*”, in G. W. Leibniz, *Leibnitz’s Deutsche Schriften*, ed. G. E. Guhrauer, 2 vols., Berlin 1840, II: pp. 3–84, at pp. 66–69. Note that this essay has separate pagination from the rest of the book. Guhrauer subsequently translated parts of the passage into German in G. E. Guhrauer, *Gottfried Wilhelm Freiherr von Leibnitz. Eine Biographie*, 2 vols., Breslau 1846, II: pp. 30–32. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. “Cependant ce que V. A. replique dans sa lettre, à ce que j’avois écrit touchant la transsubstantiation, me fait connoistre, combien il est difficile de satisfaire même les personnes les plus equitables et les plus éclairées, quand on n’entre pas tout à fait à point nommé dans leur sentimens et pensées. Souvent de tres bons desseins ont esté empechés parceque des personnes bien intentionnées, et qui avoient un même but se sont contrariées, en ce qu’ils n’estoient pas d’accord sur les moyens dont il se falloit servir, quoyque ces moyens en effect fussent tous bons, et compatibles entre eux. La même chose arrive icy touchant le point de la paix d’Eglise. V. A. s’estant appliquée à l’établir sur l’antiqvité, et sur la methode compendieuse de l’autorité d’une Eglise visible, ne semble point approuver qu’on entre dans le détail des controverses, et me reproche, que je m’eloigne par là des vrais principes. Pour moy, je puis dire, d’avoir etudié l’antiquité et d’estimer infiniment une tradition de l’Eglise Catholique; j’ay crû neantmoins, qu’il seroit important non pas en effect pour tout le monde, mais pour ceux qvi y semblent propres, d’y joindre une discussion exacte des matieres pour n’avoir rien à se reprocher, et pour agir avec toute la sincerité et toute l’exactitude possible sans deguisement et sans dissimulation”. Guhrauer, “Excurs über den „Monatlichen Auszug*“*”, pp. 65–66; I translate from A I 3, 279. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. “Der hervorstechende Punkt ist hier: la paix de l’Eglise, also nichts blos Persönliches”. Guhrauer, “Excurs über den „Monatlichen Auszug*“*”, p. 66. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Guhrauer’s transcription of this extract was last reprinted in G. W. Leibniz, *A System of Theology*, trans. C. W. Russell, London 1850, pp. 221–224. It should be noted that Guhrauer’s transcription of this passage is littered with transcription errors and truncations. The translation below is therefore based on the manuscript (LBr F 20 Bl. 1781). [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Namely, [G. W. Leibniz], *Caesarini Fürstenerii De Jure Suprematus ac Legationis Principum Germaniae*, n.p. 1677. Partial English translation in G. W. Leibniz, *Political Writings*, trans. P. Riley, Cambridge 1998, 2ed, pp. 111–120. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. There is a marginal comment, not crossed out, which appears to fit here: “et les mieux intentionees pour la verite c’est de leur satisfaire par une exposition qui ne dissimile rien, qui entre dans le fonds de la matiere et qui sont si claire et nette qu’elle fasse evanouir d’elle meme les absurdities pretendues”; “And he should submit this Explanation to the judgement of some learned, more moderate bishops, most well-intentioned for the truth; this is to satisfy them by an exposition which conceals nothing, which enters into the heart of the matter, and which is so clear and plain that all by itself it makes the so-called absurdities vanish”. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Literally “in the internal forum”. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. “J’ay eu l’honneur de connoistre particulierement ce Mons. Arnaud quand j’éstois à Paris; il avoit aussi la bonté de faire quelque estat de moy, et quand je partis de Paris pour venir à Hanover, il me donna une lettre pour un Capucin d’icy, qui luy avoit demandé quelq chose touchant la creance des Grecs en matiere de Transsubstantiation, ou il avoit mis à mon louange des expressions qui m’auroient empeché de porter la [sic] lettres si je les avais sceues; mais je n’appris qu’à Hanover de la bouche du feu prince, que Mons. Arnaud avoit écrit qu’il ne me manquoit que la vraye religion, pour estre véritablement un des grands hommes de ce siècle. Mais comme je n’ay jamais affecté une grande réputation, et que j’ay plustot taché de couvrir mon nom quand j’ay publié quelq chose (comme lors que le livre de Cæsarinus Furstenerius fut imprimé par l**’**ordre du feu Prince), il n’a aussi jamais tenu à moy d’estre du costé de la vérité. Et ce qui m’avoit le plus detourné des sentimens de l’Eglise de Rome estoient (car apresent je ne parle pas de la practique) principalement les difficultés qui se trouvent dans la Transsubstantiation. Et les demonstrations que je croy d’avoir sur les matieres approchantes de celle de la grâce, j’ay toujours taché de me satisfaire, et peu s’en faut que je n’aye pas reussi entièrement. Mais ces matières demandant des meditations exactes sur la partie la plus profonde des Metaphysiques, la facilité, qu’il y a de se tromper là dessus, avant que d’avoir rangé ses raisonnemens d’une maniere rigoureuse a la façon d’un calcul, m’empeché de former un jugement definitif. Mons. Arnaud, qui entend parfaitement la philosophie moderne, et qui paroist Cartesien, n’a jamais osé toucher cette corde, ny répondre aux difficultés presqu’insurmontables qui semblent combattre la Transsubstantiation, peutestre parcequ’il croyoit que son explication seroit condamnée quand elle paroistroit. De sorte que voicy comme je croy qu’il faudroit faire pour aller seurement en ces matieres: sçavoir il faudroit qu’un homme meditatif, qui n’est pas éloigné de la reunion, composat une exposition de la foy un peu plus particularisée que celle de Monsieur de Condom, ou il tacheroit de s’expliquer le plus exactement et le plus sincerement qu’il pourroit, sur les articles disputés, evitant les equivoques et les termes de la chicane scolastiq, et ne parlant que par des expressions naturelles. Et il sousmettroit cette explication au jugement de quelques sçavans Eveques des plus modérés, dissimulant et son nom et son party. Et pour les faire juger d’autant plus favorablement, il tacheroit d’appuyer ses exposition par autorites de quelques sçavans hommes de l’eglise du party de Rome. Mais en demandant leur jugement, il ne demanderoit point s’ils sont de son sentiment, mais seulement s’ils tiennent son sentiment pour tolerable dans leur Eglise.V. A. S. me dira qu’il ne faut pas tant de façons, et on peut estre de la communion de Rome sans entrer dans ce detail. Je reponds distinguendo: une personne qui n’a pas approfondi ces matieres, et n’a pas dessein de les approfondir est aisée a satisfaire. Mais celuy qui a médité sur les choses doit aller sincerement, et s’il soupçonne que certains de ses sentimens pourroient estre condamnés, il se doit expliquer de bonne heure. Autrement il se pourroit exposer à des conjonctures facheuses, si quelqu jour on le vouloit faire avouer des choses qu’il ne sçauroit approuver. Ce qu arriva à Galilei, qu’on forca à abjurer le mouvement de la terre. Personne ne pourroit mieux faire obtenir sous mains une approbation de cette nature que V. A. S. Et pour le bien dresser une telle exposition, il faudroit la concilier avec V. A. même. Mais soit que cela reussisse ou non, celuy qui fait le sien pour n’estre point dans le schisme, est en effect dans l’Eglise, au moins in foro interno, suivant l’expression de V. A. que je trouve excellente. Je croy cependant que l’approbation des Evesques suffiroit, et que celle de Rome ne seroit point si necessaire. Peutestre pourtant qu’on le pourroit esperer, si on s’y prenoit comme il faut, et je sçay qu’il y a des personnes à Rome qui y pourroient servir. Mais on ne sçauroit bien dresser quelq chose de cette nature sans une grande application [...]”. LBr F 20 Bl. 1781. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. “[...] die äußere und innere Geschichte des berufenen Systema Theologicum von Leibnitz ist uns durch dieses Dokument gegeben; allem Streit darüber wird dadurch ein Ende gemacht”. Guhrauer, “Excurs über den „Monatlichen Auszug*“*”, p. 69. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Guhrauer, “Excurs über den „Monatlichen Auszug*“*”, p. 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Guhrauer, “Excurs über den „Monatlichen Auszug*“*”, p. 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. A I 3, 276–280. Hence even in 1927, G. J. Jordan attributes the recipient of the letters as Ernst August. See G. J. Jordan, *The Reunion of the Churches: A Study of G. W. Leibnitz and His Great Attempt*, London 1927, p. 98. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. “[...] so schließen wir aus der Beschaffenheit des Manuscripts, daß – der Herzog von Hannover die Idee Leibnitzens verworfen hat!” Guhrauer, “Excurs über den „Monatlichen Auszug*“*”, p. 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. [J. von] Kuhn, “Guilielmi Gottifredi Leibnitii Opusculum adscititio titulo Systema theologicum inscriptum”, *Theologische Quartalschrift. Dreizigster Jahrgang. Erstes Quartalheft*, Tübingen 1848, pp. 96–109, at p. 103. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. C. Haas, “Vorwort”, in G. W. Leibniz, *Wilhelm Gottfried Leibnitz’s theologisches System*, trans. and ed. C. Haas, Tübingen 1860, pp. iii–x, at pp. iv–vi. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. “[...] luculentum veritati testimonium exhiberi contra Protestantium calumnias et errores [...]”, “[...] id quod in viro heterodoxo vix non contingere poterat [...]”. G. Perrone, “Approbationes”, in *Guillielmi Gottifredi Leibnitii Opusculum adscititio titulo Systema theologicum inscriptum*, ed. P.-P. Lacroix, Paris 1845, n.p. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. “Quapropter Leibnitius, eo ipso quod fidei catholicae valde accesserit, in eamque propensus magnopere extiterit, ut liquet ex egregio ejus *systemate theologico* quod saepius allegavimus, prae protestantibus reliquis potuit accuratius hoc de argumento disserere”. G. Perrone, *Praelectiones theologicae quas in Collegio Romano societatis Jesu habebat J. Perrone e societate Jesu*, 2 vols., Paris 1842, 2ed., II: p. 1259n3. Citations of the *Examination* can be found in various parts of this work, e.g. II: p. 217n2, pp. 223–224, p. 233, p. 237n3, p. 269, p. 367, and p. 385. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. See also G. Perrone, *Protestantesimo e la regola di fede*, Torino 1854, p. 584n1. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. R. Adams, “Leibniz’s Examination Of The Christian Religion”, *Faith and Philosophy* 11/4 (1994), pp. 517–546, at 524. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. “[...] ac nihil offensus ob quaedam minus recte, vel caute forsan, e calamo scriptoris acatholici, in hoc opere suo, profecta [...]”. Lacroix, “Lectori optimo editor”, viii. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. “[...] vi si contengano talune dottrine erronee, le quali chiaro appalesano eterodosso l’autore [...]”. [Anon.], “*Guillielmi Gottifredi Leibnitii* opusculum adscititio titulo Systema Theologicum inscriptum”, *Annali delle scienze religiose compilati dal Prof. Giacomo Arrighi. Serie seconda. Vol. II*, Rome 1846, pp. 427–428, at p. 427. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. “[...] confession de foi sincère et intime [...]”. Broglie, “Préface du traducteur”, p. xxiv. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. “Sans doute tous ses mots, toutes ses idées mêmes ne sont pas d'un catholique: on sent plus d'une fois ce vague, cette incorrection des termes, inévitable chez un homme qui avait créé sa foi par lui-même au lieu de la puiser, dès l'enfance, à la source divine”. Broglie, “Préface du traducteur”, p. xxvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Broglie, “Notes du traducteur”, in *Système religieux de Leibnitz publié d’après le manuscrit original par l’Abbé Lacroix*, trans. A. de Broglie, Paris 1846, pp. 309–383, at p. 317. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Broglie, “Notes du traducteur”, p. 320. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. See A VI 4, 2445. Leibniz’s suggestion about permitting polygamy would now be considered an example of inculturation, which, while not unheard of in missions of his time, was by no means the norm. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. “[...] n’accepterait certainement pas le pouvoir que Leibnitz lui attribue si généreusement de permettre la polygamie et le divorce en cas de nécessité absolue. L’Eglise catholique tient à honneur, au contraire, d’avoir rétabli, dès les premiers temps qui ont suivi la venue de Jésus-Christ, et défendu à travers les siècles contre tous les sophismes et toutes les passions conjurées, la pureté et l’indissolubilité du lien conjugal”. Broglie, “Notes du traducteur”, p. 383. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. M. P., “Leibnitzens *System der Theologie*”, p. 306. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. “Der Inhalt verräth zur Genüge, daß der Verfasser nicht von Amtswegen Theolog [...]”. M. P., “Leibnitzens *System der Theologie*”, p. 318. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. From *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, ed. and trans. Rev. H. J. Schroeder, Rockford, IL 1978, p. 181. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. “[...] et Concilium Tridentinum alicubi ordinarium ministrum ab alio distinguit”. A VI 4, 2415. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. See Leibniz to Landgrave Ernst, 14 July 1690 (A I 5, 617), and Leibniz to Simon de la Loubère, 5 October 1691 (A I 7, 398). Leibniz’s choice of to whom to make this suggestion may be significant. In 1539, the great-grandfather of Landgrave Ernst, Philip I, Landgrave of Hesse (1504–1567), had received Martin Luther’s approval to take a second wife. And in his account of his time in Siam, Loubère reported the practice of polygamy without making any judgement on it. See S. de la Loubère, *De royaume de Siam*, 2 vols., Paris 1691, I: p. 198 [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Leibniz’s various exchanges with these missionaries are collected in G. W. Leibniz, *Der Briefwechsel mit den Jesuiten in China*, ed. Rita Widmaier, Hamburg 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. “Edente, nunc primum ex ipsissimo Auctoris Autographo [...]”. *Guillielmi Gottifredi Leibnitii Opusculum adscititio titulo Systema theologicum inscriptum*, title page. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. C. L. Grotefend, *Briefwechsel zwischen Leibniz, Arnauld und dem Landgrafen Ernst von Hessen-Rheinfels*, Hannover 1846. This book also marked the first publication of Leibniz’s seminal essay, “Discourse on metaphysics”. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. “Nec vero irritae sunt protestationes ~~nostrorum~~ [...]”. A VI 4, 2408. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. “[...] und doch ist dies eine Wörchen [...]; es zeigt uns, daß Leibniz das Systema theologicum, welches Hr Lacroix [...] noch für eine privatam fidei suae expositionem hält, als Protestant geschrieben hat, daß er aber, eben um nicht anzustotzen, als solcher in demselben durchaus nicht erscheinen wollte”. Grotefend, “Guillielmi Gottifredi Leibnitii opusculum adscitio titulo Systema theologicum inscriptum”, p. 709. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. A VI 4, 2390. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. “[...] könnten beleidigend gegen die Protestanten scheinen [...]”. H. K. L., “Leibnitzens System der Theologie”, p. 283. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. Schulze, *Ueber die Entdeckung, dass Leibnitz ein Katholik gewesen sey*, pp. 13–14. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. As presumably did Charles William Russell, who averred that “venditatores” was an “opprobrious name” for sixteenth-century reformers. C. W. Russell, “Preface”, in G. W. Leibniz, *A System of Theology*, pp. v–cliv, at p. cxlii. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. “Eine Stelle, worin man bisher mit Recht eine Herabsetzung des Protestantismus gefunden hatte: ‘superiore quoque saeculo reformationis venditatores magnam coeptis suis speciem in hac ipsa materia invenere’ kann Leibniz künftig nicht mehr zum Vorwurf gemacht werden; er schrieb nicht, wie Emery und Lacroix haben reformationis *venditatores*, sondern reformationis *vendicatores* [...]”. G. H. Pertz, “Ueber Leibnizens kirchliches Glaubensbekenntniss”, in *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Geschichte, Sechster Band*, ed. W. A. Schmdit, Berlin 1846, pp. 65–85 at pp. 68–69. An English translation of Pertz’s article appeared the same year; see G. H. Pertz, “The ecclesiastical creed of Leibnitz”, in *The Biblical Review, and Congregational Magazine. Vol. II. July to December, 1846*, London 1846, pp. 334–347. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. “[...] es sind aber offenbar *Carlstadt* u. dgl. gemeint”. H. K. L., “Leibnitzens System der Theologie”, 283. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. “[...] kann es füglich im Sinne von eifriger Anpreiser, Verbreiter, gesagt werden”. F. W. Ullrich, “Ueber eine Stelle in dem von Leibniz hinterlassenen, zuerst von Emery, 1819, sodann von Lacroix, 1845, durch den Druck bekannt gemachten theologischen Bruchstück”, in *Allgemeine Zeitschtift fur Geschichte. Sechster Band*, ed. W. Adolf Schmidt, Berlin 1846, pp. 382–383, at p. 382. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. G. W. Leibniz, *Œuvres de Leibniz. Tome premier*, ed. L.-A. Foucher de Careil, Paris 1859, pp. 459–468. I quote from A IV 3, 204–212. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. “[...] d’ecrire des controverses en sorte, que le lecteur ne puisse point juger quel party l’auteur peut avoir épousé”. A IV 3, 206 [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. “[...] celuy qui se servira de cette methode ne sera point juge ny partie, ny conciliateur mais

Rapporteur”, “[...] la fidelité du rapporteur paroistra en ce qu’on ne pourra point deviner quel party il tient luy même, ce qui [...] peut passer pour une marque palpable de moderation et d’egalité.” A IV 3, 212. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. “Leibniz n’a qu’un rôle en cette affaire, celui d’exposer fidèlement le débat engagé entre les catholiques et les protestants”. L.-A. Foucher de Careil, “Introduction”, in G. W. Leibniz, *Œuvres de Leibniz. Tome deuxième*, ed. L.-A. Foucher de Careil, Paris 1860, pp. i-cviii, at p. x. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. “[...] esprit politique [...]”. L.-A. Foucher de Careil, “Introduction”, p. xiv. Another text in which he does this is “Judicium doctoris catholici de tractatu reunionis cum quibusdam protestantibus nuper habito”. See A I 10, 156–169. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. See J. T. Metz, *Leibniz*, Edinburgh and London 1884, p. 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. See for example C. Frémont, “Leibniz vs. Bossuet: Which reasons for Irenicism?”, in *The Practice of Reason: Leibniz and his Controversies*, ed. M. Dascal, Amsterdam and Philadelphia 2010, pp. 321–345, at p. 335. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. For further details of the *Catholic Demonstrations* and its roots in the ecumenical court of Mainz, see Dingel, “Leibniz und seine Überlegungen zu einer kirchlichen Reunion”. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. “[...] desirois, pour estre seur, et pour aller avec sincerité, qu’on me procurât une declaration de Rome portant que ces interpretations ne contiennent aumoins rien qui soit contraire à la foy”. A II 1, 756. English translation from G. W. Leibniz, *Leibniz on God and Religion*, trans. by L. Strickland, London 2016, p. 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. “Or supposant ces declarations obtenues, j’avois dressé le plan d’un ouvrage important *sub titulo: demonstrationum catholicarum*, consistant en trois parties; la premiere devoit donner des demonstrations de Dieu et de l’ame, comme en effect j’en ay de surprenantes. La seconde devoit contenir les preuves de la religion Chrestienne, et de la possibilité de nos principaux mysteres, particulierement de la Trinité, de l’incarnation, de l’Eucaristie et de la resurrection des corps. La troisieme de l’Eglise et de son autorité, du droit divin de l’Hierarchie, et des limites de la puissance seculiere et ecclesiastique [...]”. A II 1, 756. English translation from Leibniz, *Leibniz on God and Religion*, p. 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. “[...] devoit estre precedé par les Elemens demonstrés de la vraye philosophie”. A II 1, 757. English translation from Leibniz, *Leibniz on God and Religion*, p. 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. “[...] les declarations que je souhaitte sur certains point[s] du Concile sont necessaires preallablement [...]”. A II 1, 758. English translation from Leibniz, *Leibniz on God and Religion*, p. 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. “Apres avoir bien considere quelle seroit la meilleure voye pour obtenir les declarations desirées, j’ay conclu qu’il faudroit forger un écrit , comme fait par un catholique pour convertir un protestant; et que ce catholique y explique tout de la maniere la plus favorable et la plus complaisante qu’il peut sans faire tort à sa creance. De cette maniere on sera tousjours plus disposé à Rome à favoriser qu’à critiquer un tel discours”, A I 2, 227. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. “[…] à l’égard de la communion en deux especes, du mariage des Ecclesiastiques, et de la secularisation des biens de l’Eglise”, A I 2, 228. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. “[…] l’écrit susdit fait sous la personne d’un catholique et adressé à un protestant”, A I 2, 228. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. See A I, 2, 228–229. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. “Die Wichtigkeit derselben für das sog. *Systema theologicum*, das man sowohl hiernach, [...] richtiger *demonstrationes catholicae* nennen würde, springt in die Augen”. Klopp IV, xlviii. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. E. Pfleiderer *Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz als Patriot, Staatsmann und Bildungsträger: Ein Lichtpunkt aus Deutschlands trübster Zeit*, Leipzig 1870, pp. 500–502. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. See A VI 4, 2449–2450. [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. See A VI 4, 2427–2428. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. J. Baruzi, *Leibniz et l’organisation religieuse de la terre*, Paris 1907, p. 242n3. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. “On the threefold God”, 1680–1684 (?), A VI 4, 2291–2294; English translation: Leibniz, *Leibniz on God and Religion*, pp. 196–199; “On the Trinity”, autumn 1685 (?), A VI 4, 2346; English translation: Leibniz, *Leibniz on God and Religion*, pp. 202–203. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. “On the person of Christ”, 1680–1684 (?), A VI 4, 2294–2297; English translation: Leibniz, *Leibniz on God and Religion*, pp. 199–202. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. “On God and the Church” (autumn 1685–spring 1686 (?)), A VI 4, 2347–2350; English translation: Leibniz, *Leibniz on God and Religion*, pp. 232–235. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. A VI 4, 2286–2291; English translation: Leibniz, *Leibniz on God and Religion*, pp. 227–232. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. A VI 4, 2313–23; English translation: Leibniz, *Leibniz on God and Religion*, pp. 70–79. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. A IV 6, 719–763. [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. A IV 7, 824–829. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. A VI 4, 2354–2355. From autumn 1685–spring 1686 (?). [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. See A VI 4, 2449–2450. [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. See the text with this title: A IV 3, 226–233. Also “Brief Preparatory Remarks in Relation to Apologetic Works”, 1685, A VI 4, 2298; English translation: <http://www.leibniz-translations.com/preparatory.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. A VI 4, 2323–2327; English translation: Leibniz, *Leibniz on God and Religion*, pp. 104–108. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. A VI 4, 2357. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. See for example M. R. Antognazza, *Leibniz: An Intellectual Biography*, Cambridge 2009, p. 259. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. See H. Schepers, “Demonstrationes Catholicae – Leibniz’ großer Plan Ein rationales Friedensprojekt für Europa”, in *Pluralität der Perspektiven und Einheit der Wahrheit im Werk von G. W. Leibniz. Beiträge zu seinem philosophischen, theologischen und politischen Denken*, eds. F. Beiderbeck and S. Waldhoff, Berlin 2011, pp. 3–14. [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. On this matter, see Adams, “Leibniz’s Examination Of The Christian Religion”, pp. 534–537. [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. “Et fatendum est, uti in scenico opere machinas apparere indecorum esset; ita Historiam aliquando nonnihil de pulchritudine amissuram, si causae verae semper cernerentur [...]”. A IV 5, 52; English translation from Leibniz, *Political Writings*, p. 168. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)