

Desire, Good, and the Doctrine of Distinct and Confused Inclinations in Leibniz

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ABSTRACT: In this paper I argue that for Leibniz an epistemically adequate thought about what one should do provides sufficient, internal motivation. This judgment is reached after a critical examination of Ezio Vailati's reading, according to which for Leibniz even an epistemically adequate thought may not motivate an agent. Against this view, I argue that for Leibniz a thought coming from reason is always accompanied with a distinct inclination that has some influence upon a motivation, and that an epistemically adequate thought is always conjoined with an inclination which is strong enough to constitute a motivation. I also attempt to go beyond Vailati's discussion in focusing upon discussions of habit and motivation in the *New Essays*. I argue that a robust habit of following a judgment will bring some inclination that contributes to a motivation.

Introduction

An intensive discussion of the relationship between desire and perception is prominent in Locke's *Essay* and Leibniz's *New Essays*. In one of the most voluminous chapters in the *Essay*, Locke suggests that our perception of the good does not always fully motivate us, given that a will is sometimes weak and cannot thoroughly follow the guidance of the perception of good. He emphasizes that "the object of bare unactive speculation" does not always operate upon the will (*Essay* 2.21.37). Leibniz also claims in his *New Essays* that "in the struggle between flesh and spirit, spirit so often loses" (*NE* 2.21.35/ *RB* 186). In other words, Leibniz endorses the weakness of will and the view that even if an agent judges that she should do something, she may not be motivated accordingly.¹ Considering Leibniz's endorsement, Ezio Vailati takes Leibniz's position to be "a form of modest internalism."² According to Vailati, Leibniz holds that an agent is motivated by a judgment iff she is sensitive enough to it. So, if she is not sensitive, she may not be motivated by her judgment.

I think further analysis is needed to understand Leibniz's position. I argue that for Leibniz an agent is sensitive enough to the judgment when she either has an epistemically sufficient understanding of what she should do or when she has a robust habit of acting in accordance with her judgment. My discussion begins with Vailati's internalist account of Leibniz's moral psychology, as well as with his requirement of sensitivity for motivation. An examination of the *New Essays* shows that Vailati has good evidence to claim that according to Leibniz, without

sensitivity, an agent may not be motivated by her judgment. Following his interpretation, I argue in the second section of my paper that, on a more careful consideration, the relevant texts support the claim that an agent is motivated by her perception of good iff the inclination corresponding to the perception overcomes confused inclinations. I suggest that this claim is more comprehensive than Vailati's formulation and clearly shows the necessary and sufficient condition for motivation. In the third section, moreover, I analyze Vailati's formulation and propose a sufficient condition for being sensitive to the good. Against Vailati, I claim that an agent is sensitive to the good which her perception presents if her perception of good is sufficiently distinct, that is, epistemically adequate. The doctrine of distinct inclination shows that an inclination coming from a distinct perception of good is strong enough to overcome opposing inclinations, and thus motivates an agent. In the final section, I claim that an agent is also motivated by her perception of good when she has a robust habit of acting in accordance with her judgment. By having such a habit, she has some inclinations concurring with her distinct inclination coming from her perception of good. These inclinations cooperate and overcome opposing inclinations and thus motivate the agent.

1. Vailati's Interpretation and Sensitivity to Good

In his paper "Leibniz on Locke on Weakness of Will," Vailati argues that Leibniz agrees with Locke in accepting that the will of an agent is sometimes so weak that it does not follow her perception of good. He also argues that for Leibniz, a thought about what an agent should do is not sufficient for motivation, and she is motivated only if she is sensitive to the good presented by her thought. Indeed, Leibniz gives an explicit agreement to Locke's introduction of the weakness of will in the *New Essays*. Leibniz addresses a story of a well-known prelate and takes it to suggest that wills are sometimes so weak. The prelate is "eminent in both church and state" (NE 2.21.35/RB 187). Though he understood that he should avoid eating meat for the sake of his health, he was strongly tempted to eat it when he caught the smell of tasty meat, and he did. This example convinced Leibniz of the possibility of the weakness of will. As Michael Seidler has claimed, according to Leibniz, people are often "influenced by comparatively more vivid sense perceptions" and fail to follow their reason.³

So, Leibniz seriously considers Locke's denial of any necessary connection between understanding and motivation. For Locke, an individual may completely understand that alcoholic beverages will seriously spoil his health (Essay 2.21.35).

Nonetheless, he may be driven by "uneasiness" that he cannot explain well. More precisely, "the returns of uneasiness to miss his companions, the habitual thirst after his cups, at the usual time, drives him to the tavern, though he has in his view the loss of health and plenty" (Essay 2.21.35). Locke here introduces the concept of uneasiness to explain human motivation in general. It is a

psychological state that one cannot always be conscious of, and whose origin cannot be explained well. According to Locke, this example shows that there is no necessary connection between an agent's judgment about what she should do and her motivation. In other words, he is not a motive internalist who maintains that there is some necessary connection between judgment and motivation. For Locke, since an agent is often not moved by her judgment, even when she clearly understands that she is supposed to do something, she needs something else for forming her motivation. So Locke insists that motivation is always constituted by uneasiness that is a psychological state with causal power (Essay 2.21.31). This uneasiness is neither noticed nor understood. As John Coleman rightly points out for Locke "there is a difference between judging a thing to be desirable or worthwhile and actually desiring or wanting that thing."⁴ This of course is not to say that for Locke motivation always does not match a judgment. It is entirely possible that as a matter of fact, motivation is formed in accordance with a judgment. But even in that case, the motivation is constituted by uneasiness.

Likewise, Leibniz holds that motivation requires inclinations of which one is not conscious. Leibniz talks about inclinations or appetites of minds that have some causal powers to produce new mental states. Leibniz uses the expression "inclinations or appetitions" (G IV, 550), which suggests that 'inclination' and 'appetition' are synonyms.⁵ As is well known, all simple substances or monads (not only human minds) have perceptions and appetitions, and these appetitions are tendencies to produce their new states for them. This is a general statement about monads, and any monad needs an appetition or inclination to realize a new state. Thus, Leibniz insists that an agent would not do something in accordance with her judgment without a corresponding inclination:

Various perceptions and inclinations combine to produce a complete volition: it is the result of the conflict amongst them. There are some, imperceptible in themselves, which add up to a disquiet which impels us without our seeing why. (NE 2.21.39/ RB 192)

Since the final result is determined by how things weigh against one another, I should think it could happen that the most pressing disquiet did not prevail; for even if it prevailed over each of the contrary endeavours taken singly, it may be outweighed by all of them taken together. The mind can even avail itself of the trick of 'dichotomies', to make first one prevail and then another; just as in a meeting one can ensure that one faction prevails by getting a majority of votes, through the order in which one puts the questions to the vote. The mind should make provision for this from a distance, for once battle has been engaged there is no time left to make use of such artifices: everything which then impinges on us weighs in the balance and contributes to determining a resultant direction, almost as in mechanics; so that without some prompt diversion we will be unable to stop it. (NE 2.21.40/ RB 193)

Leibniz also supports the view that reason alone is ineffective for motivation. According to Leibniz, reason does not have any direct power to move the mind. When an agent is motivated by reason, there must be some desire that corresponds to the judgment of reason.

…[M]ind has no complete and direct power to block its desires at any time; if it did, it would never be settled, whatever investigation it might make and whatever good reasons or effective sentiments it might have, and would remain forever irresolute, fluctuating endlessly between fear and hope. So it must eventually be settled, and thus it must be able to oppose its desires only indirectly, by preparing weapons in advance with which to combat them when necessary, as I have just explained. (NE 2.21.48/ RB 197)

Thus, Leibniz notes that a perception of good cannot move an agent by itself, and therefore it needs a correspondent desire to motivate her, as Locke already suggests. For Locke, an agent may not have a desire to do an action even when she perceives the good of that action, and she is not motivated to do so. So Locke holds that a desire is necessary for motivation. Likewise, Leibniz insists that the mind can “itself oppose only indirectly its desires,” in other words, by the mediation of other desires (NE 2.21.48/ RB 197).

However, as Vailati notes, all of these do not establish that Leibniz was not a motive internalist in any sense. It is possible that Leibniz held some connection between perceptions of good and motivation. According to Vailati, Leibniz’s view is “internalist because it maintains the existence of an essential connection between evaluation and motivation, but it is moderate because such connection is conditional upon the presence of an adequate amount of sensitivity to relevant evaluative judgment.”⁶ Thus, Leibniz’s view should not be characterized as an extreme externalism that denies any essential connection between evaluation and motivation.⁷ It is clear that Vailati suggests an adequate amount of sensitivity to evaluation is necessary for motivation, which is not introduced in Locke’s *Essay*. After all, Locke is agnostic about an essential connection between evaluation and motivation. For Locke, desire is necessary for motivation, but we cannot exactly tell what kind of desire we will have by having a perception of good or evil. Locke argues that “the greater good, though apprehended and acknowledged to be so, does not determine the will, until our desire, raised proportionably to it, makes us uneasy in the want of it” (Essay 2.21.35). In the *New Essays*, Leibniz not only accepts the requirement of desire for motivation, but he also suggests some connection between evaluation and motivation.⁸ Indeed, Leibniz separates himself from Locke in committing an essential connection between evaluation and motivation. As Vailati notes, Leibniz certainly uses the term ‘sensible’ when he discusses motivation, by writing that “the finest moral precepts and the best prudential rules in the world have weight only in a soul which is as sensitive to them as to what opposes them — if not directly sensitive (which is not always

possible), then at least indirectly sensitive, as I shall explain shortly” (NE 2.21.35/ RB 186). Moreover, Leibniz uses the expression ‘sensible’ in relation to how one can be motivated by the good which one perceives:

There is merit and substance in these thoughts. However, I would not want them to encourage people to believe they should give up the old axioms that the will pursues the greatest good, and flees the greatest evil, of which it is sensible [*qu’elle sent*]. (NE 2.21.35/ RB 185)

Mind senses the greatest good and evil, and to that extent it is sensitive to a good or evil. Leibniz here wants to hold a kind of connection between perception and motivation, by saying that insofar as the good is sensible for an agent, she is motivated by her perception of good.

So far we have seen Vailati has good evidence for claiming that according to Leibniz, without sensitivity an agent may not be motivated by her judgment. But the problem of Vailati’s reading is that an agent may not be sensitive to an epistemically sufficient perception of good. In contrast, we will see that in fact for Leibniz, an agent is motivated by her perception of good if the perception is sufficiently distinct. It seems that Leibniz introduces two *sufficient* conditions for motivation: First, an agent is motivated if she has a distinct perception of good. In other words, if she has an epistemically sufficient perception of good, she will be motivated accordingly. Second, an agent is motivated when she has a good habit of following her evaluation, and as a result she is sensitive enough to the good which her evaluation presents. To sum up these conditions, I will first introduce the most general principle of motivation in Leibniz. For Leibniz, an agent is motivated by her perception of good iff the sum of inclinations following it are stronger than that of opposing ones.

2. The General Condition of Motivation in Leibniz

To be sure, it may be tempting to say that Leibniz is committed to a motive externalism according to which there is no essential connection between judgment and motivation. Indeed, Leibniz writes some statements which make us interpret him to be an externalist. For instance, he states that “[reason] must be able to oppose its desires only indirectly” (NE 2.21.48/ RB 197). So, reason cannot stop irrational desires, and only other desires have power to stop them. One may have an impression that any perception of good would not be relevant to motivations and actions at all.

However, unlike Locke, Leibniz suggests that reason brings about some inclination which at least contributes to a motivation. He states that “there are distinct inclinations which reason gives us” (NE 2.21.41/ RB 194). So, whenever reason gives some judgment that one should do something, reason also gives some inclination, and an agent will be at least inclined to do so. Some

may find Leibniz's introduction of distinct inclination to be ad hoc. Indeed, it may not be entirely clear that Leibniz doesn't merely want to follow the traditional views of Socrates, the Stoics, and other philosophers who held that reason motivates agents.⁹ They may also suggest that Leibniz shouldn't have introduced his doctrine of distinct inclination without sufficient justifications. But Leibniz at least has some explanations about why perceptions of good result in some inclinations. To see these explanations, we need to understand Leibniz's theory of perception and inclination.

Let us begin by reminding ourselves of the most fundamental metaphysical framework of Leibniz, for this will prove helpful in understanding the ontological status of desire in a mind. According to Leibniz, strictly speaking, "there is nothing in the world except simple substances and, in them, perception and appetite" (G II, 270/ L 537). Perceptions are representational states of simple substances, while appetites are tendencies toward newer perceptions or representational states:

The passing state which enfolds and represents a multitude in unity or in the simple substance is merely what is called *perception*. (M 14/ L 644)

The action of the internal principle which brings about change or the passage from one perception to another can be called *appetition*. It is true that appetite need not always fully attain the whole perception to which it tends, but it always attains some of it and reaches new perceptions. (M 15/ L 644)

A cardinal model of simple substance is a human mind. So, any simple substance has a representational state as a human mind has, and this representational state is generally called "perception." For Leibniz, perception does not have to be conscious. There are an infinite number of simple substances or monads in the world, and most of them only have unconscious perceptions without memory and reflection.¹⁰ But human minds are among a special kind of simple substances, and they have conscious and rational perceptions. In other words, human minds are among this kind of simple substances or monads and thus have perceptions and appetites. Here perceptions are taken as mental states of human minds, whereas appetitions are their tendencies to have future mental states. Thus, since desires can be understood as tendencies to have that which one wants, desires are appetites of souls, especially human minds.

Also, since a monad or simple substance is essentially immaterial, it only has mental properties and lacks physical properties. Even if a simple substance is not a human mind, still it is analogous to a human mind since it has perceptions and appetitions. Because a simple substance does not have any physical properties, its change cannot be explained in terms of mechanical causation. As Leibniz expresses the point in the *Monadology*, "perception and what depends on it are *inexplicable by mechanical reasons*, that is, by figures and motions" (M 17/ L 644). A simple

substance cannot be pushed by another substance and start to move to some direction after that. Rather, all change of a simple substance is explained through teleological causation.¹¹ Whenever a simple substance has a perception of good, it has desire or appetite to pursue it. By having an appetite or inclination to pursue some good, a simple substance realizes another new state. For this reason, appetite or inclination is considered as a tendency to realize a new state for a simple substance.

But can a perception of good always motivate an agent? As we have seen, the answer is no. Leibniz accepts the weakness of will, and he commits to the view that a perception does not always motivate an agent. In fact, Leibniz holds that a simple substance has many inclinations at the same time. What follows is a sketch of his view that a final volition is a result of composition of all inclinations. Following Catherine Wilson's reading of Leibniz, we can account human action as "resulting from the summation of various conflicting and reinforcing inclinations."¹²

We need to have a close look at Leibniz's discussion of a composition of inclinations. Leibniz argues that "[v]arious perceptions and inclinations combine to produce a complete volition" (NE 2.21.39/ RB 192). So Leibniz suggests that any final decision is a result of cooperations and conflicts among many different inclinations. As a consequence, Leibniz denies that our volition is a simple result of our conscious and transparent deliberation. Our conscious deliberation must result in some inclination that is characterized as a distinct inclination. However, there are many other inclinations in a mind, which may be working to motivate it in such a way that the mind does not follow its deliberation. Leibniz contrasts confused inclinations with distinct inclinations:

So there are insensible inclinations of which we are not aware. There are sensible ones: we are acquainted with their existence and their objects, but have no sense of how they are constituted; these are confused inclinations which we attribute to our bodies although there is always something corresponding to them in the mind. Finally there are distinct inclinations which reason gives us: we have a sense both of their strength and of their constitution. (NE 2.21.41/ RB 194)

Whenever we have distinct inclinations, we know what drives us, and the reason why we are driven in that way.¹³ When I have a plan of writing an article and try to sit down to work, my action is driven by a clear purpose and I understand why I am doing so. But when we have confused inclinations, we do not know why we feel like doing one thing rather than another. When I get tired of working and take a break, I may feel like drinking a coke rather than orange juice. But I don't have a good reason to explain why I prefer coke to orange juice.

Not only are distinct and confused inclinations different, they often conflict. For instance, my reason tells that I should work more, while I have a confused desire to stop working and take a rest.

In this case, I have distinct and confused inclinations that obviously conflict with each other. In the following passage, Leibniz further introduces a conflict between distinct and confused inclinations:

Since neither that nor anything like it is the case, it is not surprising that, in the struggle between flesh and spirit, spirit so often loses, because it fails to make good use of its advantages. This struggle is nothing but the conflict between different endeavours—those that come from confused thoughts and those that come from distinct ones. (NE 2.21.35/ RB 186)

It is not difficult to imagine how distinct and confused inclinations conflict. A consideration about health inclines an agent to avoid eating too much meat or drinking too much wine, whereas she still has a strong desire to have them.¹⁴ In some cases, an agent is motivated in accordance with her rational judgment, while she is not in other cases. Right after having talked to her doctor, she recognized that maintaining a diet and avoiding eating high-calorie foods are so crucial for her health. Some months later, she goes to a party and enjoys the atmosphere. Since her friends cheerfully consume a lot of wines, she is strongly inclined to join them, and she drinks many glasses of wine despite being conscious of her medical doctor's admonishment.

How does Leibniz explain these different results? Leibniz claims that a motivation of a mind is considered to be the final result of weighing inclinations or desires that conflict with each other. Results depend upon whether some inclinations are stronger than others, so if these inclinations get stronger or weaker, results will be different:

Since the final result is determined by how things weigh against one another, I should think it could happen that the most pressing disquiet did not prevail; for even if it prevailed over each of the contrary endeavours taken singly, it may be outweighed by all of them taken together. The mind can even avail itself of the trick of 'dichotomies', to make first one prevail and then another; just as in a meeting one can ensure that one faction prevails by getting a majority of votes, through the order in which one puts the questions to the vote. The mind should make provision for this from a distance, for once battle has been engaged there is no time left to make use of such artifices: everything which then impinges on us weighs in the balance and contributes to determining a resultant direction, almost as in mechanics; so that without some prompt diversion we will be unable to stop it. (NE 2.21.40/ RB 193)

So, it is a basic principle for him that a motivation consists in a composition of inclinations, just as how a body moves is determined by the mechanistic law.¹⁵ When one inclination is stronger than opposing ones, there is a sufficient reason for an agent to be motivated by the stronger inclinations. In fact, in any given case two groups of inclinations cannot be equally strong in such a way that no

volition results from them. For Leibniz, this kind of equilibrium is a mere fiction.¹⁶ There is, for instance, Leibniz's comment in the fifth letter to Clarke that a balance "does not act when it is equally pulled on both sides" (G VII, 392/ L 698), which implies that if there were only equally strong conflicting inclinations in the mind, it would not be motivated to do anything at all. But in fact, the mind is motivated in some particular way, since it is always the case that some group of inclinations is stronger than the opposing group of inclinations. A composite of inclinations is called a complete volition, which can always be analyzed into many inclinations that compose it. If we want to make a decision and act reasonably, we need to have strong inclinations to support a reasonable volition.

Leibniz's theory can explain both rational and irrational motivations of human mind. If a distinct inclination is strong enough to overcome confused inclinations, an agent is motivated in accordance with her judgment that brings the distinct inclination. Or if a complete volition coincides with an agent's judgment, then she is motivated in accordance with her judgment.

But if a distinct inclination is not strong enough to overcome confused inclinations, an agent may not be motivated accordingly. After all, a distinct inclination is merely one of several inclinations that are active within a mind at any given time. One confused inclination may be remarkably strong and thus overcome a distinct inclination. Or, though any one of the confused inclinations may be weak and tenuous, they still can cooperate and eventually overcome a distinct inclination.

To see in what case an agent is fully motivated in accordance with her judgment, first, I want to examine Vailati's interpretation of Leibniz's theory of motivation critically. Though he does an exemplary job in explaining a sufficient condition of motivation for Leibniz, there are some texts which suggest that his reading is not completely sound. Against Vailati, I will argue that an epistemically sufficient perception of good is always tied to a distinct inclination that is robust enough to motivate an agent.

3. The Distinct Inclination as Sufficient

Considering Leibniz's view that reason alone cannot motivate an agent, Vailati argues that for Leibniz an agent is motivated by her perception of good if she is sensitive to the good.¹⁷ Leibniz states that "the will pursues the greatest good, and flees the greatest evil, of which it is sensible" (NE 2.21.35/ RB 185). One of its implications is that an agent is not motivated by her thought if she is not sensitive to the good presented by her thought. To explain this implication, Vailati suggests that, for Leibniz, beliefs have two dimensions.¹⁸ The first dimension is epistemological and constituted by the content of the agent's belief. The second dimension is psychological and constituted by the capacity of the belief to render us sensitive to it. By introducing this framework,

Vailati tries to explain the weakness of will. According to Vailati's reading of Leibniz, an agent may have a thought about what she should do, a thought that is epistemologically adequate and of which all the contents are understood, and yet she may not be moved by this thought, because it is not lively enough.¹⁹ When a thought is not lively, the good presented by the thought may not be sensible for an agent, and thus she may not be motivated by the thought.

However, Vailati ignores how a clear and distinct thought can eventually move an agent in Leibniz's view. In other words, he seems to ignore how the epistemological dimension is enough to motivate. Vailati suggests that however adequate the epistemological dimension is, it is possible that an agent may remain unmotivated. Thus even a clear and distinct thought about what an agent should do may fail to motivate her. The following passage is used to justify Vailati's interpretation:

This struggle is nothing but the conflict between different endeavours—those that come from confused thoughts and those that come from distinct ones. Confused thoughts often make themselves vividly [*clairement*] sensed, whereas distinct ones are usually only potentially vivid [*claire*].... (NE 2.21.35/ RB 186-7)

Considering this passage, Vailati argues that even a distinct thought may not motivate an agent if it is not "vividly" present to her. To be sure, the passage suggests that if a thought is distinct and vivid [*claire*], it will motivate an agent. Thus, if an epistemically adequate thought is distinct and vivid, it will always move an agent. But according to Vailati, the given passage does not support the view that an epistemic dimension is sufficient for motivation since, as Vailati notes, the term '*clairement*' shows how lively a thought is presented to an agent. In other words, this term is relevant to the psychological dimension, but it is not relevant to the epistemic dimension. And indeed, what Leibniz was talking about in the *New Essays* seems substantially different from his discussions of clarity in other important works. First, see the *Discourse of Metaphysics*:

When I can recognize one thing among others without being able to say what its differences or properties consist in, my knowledge is *confused*. In this way we sometimes know *clearly*, without being in any way in doubt, whether a poem or a painting is good or bad, because there is a certain *je ne sais quoi* which pleases or is *distinct*. An assayer's knowledge is like this; he can distinguish true from false gold by means of certain tests or marks which make up the definition of gold. (DM 24/ WF 76)

It seems that there are two kinds of clear knowledge: One is clear but confused, and for this reason the holder of this knowledge cannot distinguish the components of the knowledge. The other is clear and distinct, and its holder can differentiate some components of the knowledge from

others. Also, it seems that any distinct knowledge must be clear, and thus distinctness is sufficient for clarity. Now let us compare the discussions in the *New Essays* with this. According to the discussions in the *New Essays*, a distinct thought can be unclear. This implies that distinctness is not sufficient for clarity. Thus there seems to be a contradiction between implications of these different texts.

Another problematic passage can be found in the *Meditations on Knowledge, Truth and Ideas* from 1684 (?). Again, Leibniz claims that clear knowledge is either confused or distinct, which seems to suggest that distinct knowledge is always clear:

Knowledge is either obscure or clear. . . .A concept is obscure which does not suffice for recognizing the thing represented, as when I merely remember some flower or animal which I have once seen but not well enough to recognize it when it is placed before me and to distinguish it from similar ones. . . .Knowledge is clear, therefore, when it makes it possible for me to recognize the thing represented. Clear knowledge, in turn, is either confused or distinct. It is confused when I cannot enumerate one by one the marks which are sufficient to distinguish the thing from others, even though the thing may in truth have such marks and constituents into which its concept can be resolved. (G IV, 422/ L 291)

A holder of distinct knowledge can show the “marks” to distinguish a thing from others.²⁰ She seems to be able to recognize and figure it out from others. Since it seems that one has clear knowledge of an object iff she can figure it out from others, she seems to have clear knowledge of the thing, too.

Now, if Leibniz suggests that a distinct thought is not always clear in the *New Essays*, his concept of “clarity” is different from what he was talking about in the *Discourse of Metaphysics* and *Meditations on Knowledge, Truth and Ideas*. So, Vailati, as well as Bennett and Remnant, have a reason to translate ‘clairement’ as ‘vividly’ rather than ‘clearly.’ They seem to recognize that what Leibniz uses here is not the concept of clarity,²¹ which is a necessary condition for distinct knowledge.

However, I do not think that we need to conclude that for Leibniz an epistemically adequate thought will not always motivate an agent. Leibniz notes in the *New Essays* that an agent is motivated when she has an epistemically adequate thought. A key is his discussion of “blind thought.” Leibniz suggests that if a person is not moved by his thought, it is “largely” due to the fact that her thought is blind:

I would not want them to encourage people to believe they should give up the old axioms that the will pursues the greatest good, and flees the greatest evil, of which it is sensible. The

neglect of things that are truly good arises largely [en bonne partie] from the fact that, on topics and in circumstances where our senses are not much engaged, our thoughts are for the most part what we might call ‘blind’—in Latin I call them *cogitationes caecae*. (NE 2.21.35/ RB 185)

We need to figure out what Leibniz tries to say with the expression of “en bonne partie.” After reading the given passage, one might suppose that a thought is often blind when an agent is not moved by it. It implies that a thought is *not always* blind, and there may be another cause of the weakness of will. But the original expression of “en bonne partie” suggests that a main cause of the weakness of will is (always) the fact that a thought is blind, and that this blindness is the very cause of the weakness of will. In other words, insofar as a thought is not blind, the agent will be motivated by the thought.

Next, we need to see what a “blind thought” is. Vailati may take it as a thought without vividness. For Vailati, even if a thought is epistemically adequate and thus distinct, it still can be blind since it is not sensible for a mind and thus does not have power to move a mind. To be sure, Leibniz suggests that “our senses are not much engaged” when we are not motivated by judgments (NE 2.21.35/ RB 185). It implies that a blind thought lacks sensibility. It is not sensed by a mind, and thus blindness is related to the psychological dimension rather than the epistemological. But many other passages imply that one who has a blind thought does not notice some of the contents, and for this reason her thought is not epistemically adequate:

I mean that they are empty of perception and sensibility, and consist in the wholly unaided use of symbols, as happens with those who calculate algebraically with only intermittent attention to the geometrical figures which are being dealt with. (NE 2.21.35/ RB 185-6)

But when we do not have them actively in mind, our thoughts and reasonings which oppose our sentiments are a kind of parroting which adds nothing to the mind’s present contents... (NE 2.21.35/ RB 186)

It can be said, then, that if someone does not know the foundation of a relation, his thoughts about it are partly of the kind I call blind, and are also insufficient, even though they may suffice in some respects and in some situations. (NE 2.28.19/ RB 254)

The first passage suggests that when an agent has a blind thought, she is aware of the symbols that represent the thought, but she does not have a conscious grasp of the content or what the symbols represent. When $x^4 + 8x^2 + 18$ is expressed as $y^2 + 2y + 3$ under the assumption that $y = x^2 + 3$, we can deal with $y^2 + 2y + 3$ without being conscious of the original equation and what ‘y’ represents. Here we may have a blind thought of the original equation. The second passage also

suggests that a holder of thought does not grasp the content when the thought is blind. She can repeat the statement that represents her thought, but she states it without paying attention to the content, just as a parrot can speak a human statement without understanding it. In the last passage, Leibniz explicitly states that one *does not know* something when his thought is blind. He has some thought, but he does not know how it is justified or founded completely. In other words, his cognition is not complete in an epistemic aspect or dimension. Leibniz also suggests that a blind thought is not fully analyzed. That is to say, the content of the thought is grasped only superficially, but not completely.

Since we cannot always analyse the notions of true good and true evil to the point where we can see the pleasures and pains which they involve, so as to be influenced by them, we must make this rule for ourselves once and for all. (NE 2.21.35/ RB 187-8)

The given passage implies that if we fully analyze the notion of good so that we are influenced by it, we will certainly be motivated it. Indeed, earlier in the *New Essays* Leibniz endorses the view that we “speak and reason without explicit ideas” since “they do not take the trouble to carry the analysis through” (NE 2.21.35/ RB 186). Also, though it is a statement of Philalete, an interlocutor who defends Locke in the *New Essays*, the following passage shows that a holder of blind thought does not have complete definitions:

Once created, however, it also enables man to reason to himself, both because words provide the means for remembering abstract thoughts and because of the usefulness of symbols and blind thoughts in reasoning, since it would take too long to lay everything out and always replace terms by definitions. (NE 3.1.2/ RB 275)

This shows that when a thought ceases to be blind, its holder grasps the complete definition and comprehends the content thoroughly. Indeed, the holder has a disposition or capacity to grasp the content if he reflects on his thought (NE 3.2.2/ RB 286). But since reflections are not always done completely, our thoughts are often blind and not fully grasped. Leibniz further indicates that “[w]e often reason in words, with the object itself virtually absent from our mind” (NE 2.21.35/ RB 186). Since analyses are not completed, the complete contents are not presented to us, and are therefore absent.

In brief, the discussion above shows that an epistemically adequate thought will motivate an agent with a mediation of a distinct inclination that is strong enough to move her mind.

4. Habit and Volition

Leibniz holds that an agent is motivated when an inclination overcomes the opposing inclinations. A motivation consists in a composition of inclinations (NE 2.21.40/ RB 193). When one inclination is stronger than opposing ones, an agent is motivated by this stronger inclination. So, if the opposing inclinations weaken, then the inclination can motivate an agent. Suppose that an agent has two opposing inclinations, and they are equally strong.²² In that case, we can think about two different ways of motivating her. First, as we have seen in the previous section, if one inclination gets stronger, it can overcome the opposing one, and thus motivate the agent. Second, however, if one inclination gets weaker, it will be overcome by the opposing one, and the opposing one motivates the agent. In the previous section, I exclusively considered the first case. But it is worthwhile to see how the second case works and how Leibniz discusses it in the *New Essays*.

Indeed, Leibniz provides an explanation of how we can control inclinations that do not follow our perception of good.²³ Leibniz suggests that in some cases we have strong desires that oppose our rational decisions. In this case, we need to reinforce a rational desire. We can think about two possible ways to increase the strength of an inclination. First, we can make the inclination that corresponds to the perception of good stronger. Second, we can add another inclination that cooperates with the inclination that corresponds to the perception of good.

Leibniz clearly and explicitly suggests that a plurality of inclinations can cooperate to motivate an agent. Even if two inclinations are tied to different perceptions, they can both cooperate to overcome the opposing inclination. In other words, even if the inclination coming from the rational decision itself is too weak to overcome the opposing inclination, it still can overcome the opposing inclination with the aid of another inclination. If we have had a habit of following a previous rational decision, then we have another inclination, which is different from the inclination that comes from the rational decision itself, but cooperates with it.²⁴

Thus it seems that there are two cases in which an agent is motivated. One strong distinct inclination may fully motivate her. Besides, even if the distinct inclination is not strong enough, it may eventually motivate her with other inclinations. In this case, it is true that she does not have an epistemically adequate perception of good, and her distinct inclination is not strong enough. It can't motivate an agent alone, but with an aid of other inclinations it may. The following passage explicitly presents two ways of achieving suitable motivation.

Still, despite all these individual differences, it remains true that everyone acts only according to his present perceptions: when the future affects someone, it does so either through his image of it or else through his having made a policy and practice of being guided by the mere natural sign of it. The latter case depends on the fact that one cannot go against a policy one

has firmly adopted—still less against one’s established practice—without a certain disquiet and sometimes a certain feeling of distress. (NE 2.21.64/ RB 204)

First, Leibniz suggests a representation of how the future affects a mind. The representation or perception may be clear and distinct and thus bring about a strong distinct inclination. Second, even if the representation of the future is tenuous, a mind can still be motivated when it has an “established practice.” When an agent has a good practice of following her representation of good, she doesn’t have to have an epistemically adequate representation of good to act rationally. Insofar as she understands what she should to do somewhat distinctly, she will be motivated accordingly, since she has a habit to do so.²⁵ Two cases of motivation are also suggested here:

So it is all a matter of ‘Think about it carefully’ and ‘Remember’— by the first to make, laws, and by the second to follow them even when we do not remember the reasons from which they sprang. (NE 2.21.36/ RB 189)

First, when you think about it carefully, you can make your perceptions more distinct. Since distinct perceptions will motivate you, you will be motivated. Second, when you remember that you should follow your previous rational decisions, then you will be motivated by these even if you don’t have distinct perceptions. If you are willing to follow your previous decision even when you are not fully aware of how you reached the decision, your motivation will be strong enough. The following passage also suggests that in some cases an agent is motivated by her judgment even when she does not have a distinct perception of good:²⁶

Since we cannot always analyse the notions of true good and true evil to the point where we can see the pleasures and pains which they involve, so as to be influenced by them, we must make this rule for ourselves once and for all: wait till you have the findings of reason and from then on follow them, even if they are ordinarily retained only as ‘blind thoughts’ devoid of sensible charms. We need this rule so as finally to gain control both of our passions and of our insensible inclinations, or disquiets, by acquiring that custom of acting in conformity with reason which makes virtue a pleasure and second nature to us. But it is not my purpose here to offer and instill moral precepts, or spiritual procedures and skills for the practice of true piety. (NE 2.21.35/ RB 187–8)

In this case, the agent clearly lacks a distinct notion of good, and as a result the good is not presented to her vividly. But even blind thoughts eventually motivate an agent here, “by acquiring custom.” When an agent has an appropriate custom to act in accordance with her judgment, she has

inclinations which are cooperating with her distinct inclination when she has a judgment about what she should do. In addition, I find the suggestion that human being has two different ways to act following rational conclusions:

Finally, we need to be firmly and steadily resolved to act on our conclusions; and we need skills, methods, rules of thumb, and well-entrenched habits to make us true to our resolve later on, when the considerations which led us to it are no longer present to our minds. (NE 2.21.67/ RB 207)

Here Leibniz suggests that firm resolutions will help us to act in accordance with conclusions. Probably these firm resolutions are accompanied by good reasons, and when they are made we have a good understanding of why we should do something, and thus we are motivated accordingly. But Leibniz also suggests that habits will help us to be motivated by the conclusion, even when the conclusion itself is not present to our minds. Leibniz also insists that a habit causes an inclination to motivate an agent:

And I believe that virtue would have infinitely more effect, accompanied as it is by so many substantial benefits, if some happy transformation in human kind brought it at last into favour—made it fashionable, so to speak. It is quite certain that young people could be made accustomed to getting their greatest pleasure from the exercise of virtue. And even grown men could make laws for themselves and make a practice of following them, so that they would be powerfully disposed to them, and as prone to disquiet when deflected from them as a drunkard is when prevented from going to the tavern. (NE 2.21.38/ RB 191)

According to Leibniz, if one has a habit to follow some rule, then the habit will produce some “disquiet” that makes her uncomfortable when she violates the rule. This disquiet is an inclination to motivate her in accordance with the rule.

One may suppose that Leibniz arbitrarily introduces a doctrine of habit here. Aristotle and scholastic philosophers often discuss habits and how they can be functional. Leibniz learned a lot from ancient and medieval philosophers, which we can know from his discussion of substance, substantial form, and other concepts.²⁷ It seems to be likely that he tried to utilize the concept of habit articulated by influential ancient and medieval philosophers. If Leibniz merely follows this traditional doctrine without theoretical justifications, it would make his doctrine less interesting. But I think Leibniz had some theoretical justifications of the doctrine. We need to see how Leibniz justified that a habit brings about an inclination. To be sure, Leibniz emphasizes that choices are dependent upon perceptions, and thus any choice must have some reasons. This may seem to imply

that a habit, which is not accompanied with a conscious thought, cannot bring about an inclination:

...[C]hoice is always determined by their perception. So we do not will what we wish to, but what pleases us; though the will can contribute indirectly, as though from a distance, to make something pleasing to us or the reverse, as I have noted. (NE 2.21.25/ RB 182)

More generally, any inclination is determined by some perception.²⁸ However, we don't have to suppose that any inclination needs a conscious perception, since some inclination is determined by unconscious perceptions, while others are determined by conscious ones. So, both conscious and unconscious perceptions will bring about some inclinations. In some cases they coordinate and cooperate together.

As I have shown in the preceding chapter, this disquiet is not always a displeasure, just as one's state of ease is not always a satisfaction or a pleasure. Often it is an insensible perception which we can neither discern nor single out, and which makes us lean one way rather than the other without being able to say why. (NE 2.21.29/ RB 183)

So, even if an agent is only conscious of her perception of good, she may have many other insensible perceptions of previous experiences. When she has a good habit of following her perception of good, these insensible perceptions are tied to some inclinations that are strong enough to motivate her with the distinct inclination, and eventually she has a complete volition to do something following her habit.

I think that an agent has at least an unconscious perception of good when she has a habit of following her judgment. This perception of good makes her feel that she lacks something when she does not do what she should do. For this reason, habits are accompanied by actual pleasure or suffering, and considered as carrying impulses or disquiets. Then habits are considered to accompany perceptions, and these perceptions are either new sensations or the lingering images of past sensations. They are likelier to be the lingering images of the past.

I believe that fundamentally pleasure is a sense of perception, and pain a sense of imperfection, each being notable enough for one to become aware of it. (NE 2.21.41/ RB 194)

In Leibniz's terms, then, pain which one feels when she does not follow her habit is a sense of imperfection. This suggests that she is driven by some inclination that is tied to this sense of imperfection. One may identify this inclination with uneasiness. Or a sense of imperfection may bring about some kind of perception of perfection or good. By having a sense of imperfection, one

may realize that she lacks some perfection, and thus has a perception of good or perfection. This perception will be tied to an inclination to pursue this good or perfection. By thinking that way, we can understand how a habit brings about an inclination to cooperate with a distinct inclination coming from a judgment.

Likewise, there is Leibniz's claim that when an agent has a habit of following reason, she can oppose her irrational desire indirectly. Leibniz suggests that reason affects us directly or indirectly, which may in fact mean that reason affects us only indirectly:

So it must eventually be settled, and thus it must be able to oppose its desires only indirectly, by preparing weapons in advance with which to combat them when necessary, as I have just explained. (NE 2.21.48/ RB 197)

Though Leibniz does not use the term 'habit,' it can be considered as a "weapon" in this context. When an agent is well prepared for acting in accordance with reason, she has a habit of following reason and some inclination to motivate her accordingly. It may seem that if an agent makes a habit more robust, she will have even stronger inclinations to motivate her following her judgment.

In another passage, Leibniz suggests that if one has not been fully determined, she would not have any effective choice:

...[I]f we were only weakly determined in every sort of situation, and more or less insensitive to reasons drawn from perceptions of good or bad, we would be without effective choice. (NE 2.21.48/ RB 198)

But in fact, one is always determined to do something, and has an effective choice. In Leibniz's letter to Arnauld, we find an insistence on the fact that "[a] perfect indifference is a deceptive or incomplete assumption" (G II, 56/ L 337). We are always inclined to one thing over others. This implies that we actually have some perceptions of good or bad, and inclinations coming from them to be determined. These perceptions are not always noticed. So, even if an agent does not notice, still she is determined by some perceptions of good or bad, and that is what is happening when she is motivated partly by her habit.²⁹

Still, despite all these individual differences, it remains true that everyone acts only according to his present perceptions: when the future affects someone, it does so either through his image of it or else name or some other arbitrary symbol of the future without any image or natural sign of it. (NE. 2.21.64/ RB 204)

So, strictly speaking, only present perceptions are relevant to an action. Only inclinations coming from present perceptions are effective. If one's habit is effective for motivation, it must be something to do with present perceptions. When one has such a habit, it seems that she has some present perception of good in an unconscious level, and is driven by an inclination coming from that present perception.

At any rate, I think that I have shown that there is evidence in Leibniz's writings that with an aid of habit an agent can be motivated by her thought when it is epistemically adequate.

Conclusion

So, I agree with Vailati's view that an agent is motivated iff she is sensitive to the good, for the sensitivity makes her inclination strong enough to overcome opposing inclinations. Following this line of thought, I introduced a general claim that an agent is motivated by her perception of good iff the aggregate of inclinations following the perception is stronger than the aggregate of opposing inclinations. But in contrary to Vailati, I think an epistemically adequate perception of good is sufficient to motivate an agent. Even if an agent is not motivated by the good presented by her perception, it merely shows that her perception is not adequate. Besides, while Leibniz argues that a perception of good always involves a tendency or inclination to motivate an agent, there can be some other inclinations which concur with this inclination. If the agent has a robust habit of following what her perception of good exhorts, she will have a concurring inclination that motivates her together with the inclination coming from the perception of good.

Abbreviations of Primary Texts and Translations

A: *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe*. Darmstadt and Berlin: Berlin Academy, 1923-. Cited by series, volume, and page.

DM: *Discours de Métaphysique*. Cited by section number from G IV, 427–63. English translation in WF.

Essay: John Locke. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Ed. by Peter H. Nidditch. Oxford: Clarendon Press. Cited by book, chapter, and section.

G: *Die philosophischen Schriften von Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz*. Edited by C. I. Gerhardt. Berlin: Weidman, 1874–90. Reprint, Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1978. Cited by volume and page.

Grua: *Text inédits d'après des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque provinciale d'Hanovre*. Edited by Gaston Grua. Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1948. Reprint, New York: Garland, 1985.

L: *Philosophical Papers and Letters*. Edited and translated by Leroy Loemker. Second edition,

Dordrecht: Reidel, 1969.

NE: *Nouveaux Essais sur l'entendement humain*. Cited by book, chapter and section.

RB: *New Essays on Human Understanding*. Translated by Peter Remnant and Johathan Bennett, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

WF: *Leibniz's "New System" and Associated Contemporary Texts*. Edited and translated by Roger Woolhouse and Richard Francks. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997.

¹ G. H. R. Parkinson seems to go too far when he says that in Leibniz's view, "a belief or judgement about good or bad is the efficient cause of a striving to act (i.e., a volition), and the volition, if there is no hindrance, is the efficient cause of an act" (*Leibniz on Human Freedom* [Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1970], 33). Leibniz doesn't identify judgments with the appetitions or inclinations in which a volition consists. See also Marc Bobro's suggestion that "for Leibniz, perceptions (and perceptual states) are causally inefficacious" ("Leibniz on Concurrence and Efficient Causation," *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 46 [2008]: 317–338, at 329). As Yvon Belaval has noted, appetitions are principles of change in human minds, and these appetitions are distinguished from perceptions (*Études leibniziennes* [Paris: Gallimard, 1976], 156).

² Vailati, "Leibniz on Locke on Weakness of Will," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 28 (1990): 213–28, at 221. See Vailati's claim that "[a]lthough Leibniz holds that we have it in our power to will as we would like to, he clearly denies that we have it in our *immediate* power" (226). So, as Vailati puts the point, Leibniz does neither hold that we have a power to will whatever we want (as Descartes does), nor hold that we have a power to will what whatever reason tells.

³ See Michael J. Seidler "Freedom and Moral Therapy in Leibniz," *Studia Leibnitiana* 17-1 (1985): 15–35, at 29.

⁴ See John Coleman, *John Locke's Moral Philosophy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1983), 229.

⁵ In another text, Leibniz defines inclination as "an faculty of acting [*facultas agendi*]" (Grua 513). But this does not mean that "appetition" and "inclination" are not synonyms, since both of them can be considered as faculties of acting.

⁶ See Vailati (1990), 222.

⁷ See Michael Bratman's claim that according to an extreme externalist an agent "finds no essential relation between desiring to do something and valuing doing it" ("Practical Reasoning and Weakness of the Will," *Noûs* 13 [1979]: 153–71, at 159). Bratman has argued that supposing that no practical reasoning is evaluative is "too high price to pay."

⁸ Vailati also claims that Leibniz is "an internalist who believed that volition is causally determined by our perception of the good" and for Leibniz "volition is essentially linked to evaluation" (*Leibniz and Clarke* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997], 97).

⁹ Concerning the relation between Socrates and Plato, Gary Watson carefully differentiates Socrates from Plato, and claims that though Socrates (and the early Plato in *Protagoras*) denies the possibility of the weakness of will, Plato accepted it by introducing three parts of the soul and suggesting that desires of the nonrational part can be predominant ("Skepticism about Weakness of Will," *Philosophical Review* 86-3 [1977]: 316–39, at 319–20).

- ¹⁰ In the *New Essays*, Leibniz advances his theory of “small perception [petite perception],” and even beside animal souls there are so many simple substances or monads and all of them express the whole universe in specific ways.
- ¹¹ In fact, some commentators try to explain the teleological causation of a human mind in Leibniz’s philosophy in terms of efficient cause. See Laurence Carlin, “Leibniz on Final Causes,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* (2006): 217–33.
- ¹² Catherine Wilson, *Leibniz’s Metaphysics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 254.
- ¹³ Jack Davidson argues that for Leibniz, insofar as one is driven by her reason, she is considered to be an image of God. See “Leibniz on Freedom,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 30-3 (1998): 387–412, at 396–7. Unlike human beings, God is able to give the full account of what he does, and this is without exception.
- ¹⁴ See also Seidler’s claim that when people are not fully motivated by distinct inclinations, they lack “moral incentives” in Kant’s term (“Freedom and Moral Therapy in Leibniz,” 29).
- ¹⁵ As Robert Merrihew Adams suggests, Leibniz also introduces “mechanical analogies of volition” in the *Theodicy* and a letter to Clarke (T 22; G VII, 304/ L 488; Adams, *Leibniz: Determinist, Theist, Idealist* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994], 35). Adams rightly claims that the motives “include all our perceptions, subconscious as well as conscious, according to Leibniz” (35).
- ¹⁶ For an introduction to Leibniz’s refusal of the case of “Buridan’s ass,” in which the ass stops in front of two haystacks, and how Leibniz associates it with the position of the Jesuits, see J. Davidson, “Untying the Knot: Leibniz on God’s Knowledge of Future Free Contingents” *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 13-1 (1996): 89–116, at 104–5.
- ¹⁷ See Vailati (1990), especially 219.
- ¹⁸ See Vailati (1990), 221.
- ¹⁹ See Vailati (1990), 220–222.
- ²⁰ Furthermore, Leibniz states that knowledge is adequate when its holder grasps all the contents in such a way that she does not need further analysis (G IV, 423/ L 292). In a letter to Malebranche, however, Leibniz does not use the term ‘adequate,’ but suggests that for Malebranche the idea of soul is “perfectly distinct” in the sense that it is simple and unanalyzable (G I, 352).
- ²¹ In some other passages Leibniz also uses the term ‘clear [*clair*]’ in an ambiguous way. For example, in a letter to Simon Foucher, Leibniz states that “a concept of extension is not as clear as one imagines” (G I, 384). Here Leibniz seems to imply that the concept of extension can be further analyzed, while Cartesians suppose that it is simple and unanalyzable. However, if we follow the discussions in the *Meditations on Knowledge, Truth and Ideas*, a concept is distinct rather than clear, when it is analyzed to the components.
- ²² In fact, this is an impossible supposition for Leibniz, since a perfect equilibrium will not take place in a mind. In other words, a mind is always determined to act in some way, though it does not always know the reason for the determination.
- ²³ Leibniz also suggests that when we are about to be driven by irrational desires, at least we can suspend our motivation and try to calm down (NE 2.21.47/ RB 196).
- ²⁴ Donald Davidson introduces an example of a gentleman who gets up from his bed, thinking that it may be better for him to stay in bed rather than brushing his teeth. Here he is motivated through his habit of brushing teeth rather than by his thought that it is better to stay. See D. Davidson, “How is Weakness of the Will Possible?” in *Moral Concepts*, ed. J. Feinberg (Oxford University Press, 1970), 93–113, at 102.

- ²⁵ André Robinet takes note of Leibniz's definition of virtue as "the habitude of acting following the reason" (NE 2.28.5; *Justice et terreur: Leibniz et la principe de raison* (Paris: Vrin, 2001), 117).
- ²⁶ A subsequent passage also suggests that even a blind thought can move a mind with something: Often nothing remains of it in the mind but the name, together with thoughts of a kind I have already mentioned—"blind" thoughts which cannot influence anyone unless he has made provision for them through being methodical and through practice. (NE 2.21.63/ RB 202)
- ²⁷ At some points in letters to Jacob Thomasius, Leibniz notes that though the scholastic philosophy is not consistent with the modern mechanistics, Aristotle's view can be reconciled with it (G I, 10, 15–6). Later on, Leibniz insists that there are some considerable merits in the scholastic philosophy, given that bodies have intrinsic principles of action (DM 10). These discussions suggest that Leibniz has some respects for other concepts coming from the ancient and medieval philosophers.
- ²⁸ In *Nova methodus discendae docendaeque jurisprudentiae* (1667), Leibniz claims that "[t]o will is nothing but the striving arising from thought, or to strive for something which our thinking recognizes as good" (A VI i, 284/ L 91). Gregory Brown, in referring to this passage, argues that for Leibniz "a deliberate act of will presupposes a judgment that something is good" ("Leibniz's moral philosophy" in *The Cambridge Companion to Leibniz*, ed. N. Jolley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995): 411–441, at 412).
- ²⁹ As Donald Rutherford claims, Leibniz considers desire as "arising not in response to objects themselves but to representations of objects as goods" ("Leibniz on Spontaneity" in *Leibniz: Nature and Freedom* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005]: 156–180, at 168). This is the case even when one is not consciously thinking about the goods of the objects.