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THE PRINCIPLE OF REASON ACCORDING TO LEIBNIZ: THE ORIGINS, MAIN ASSUMPTIONS AND FORMS

INTRODUCTION

Human cognition and knowledge of the world is based on certain essential structures, i.e. principles (Greek ἀρχαί [*archai*], Latin *principia*) being determinants of the world as well as our understanding of the world. No wonder they were being largely reflected upon throughout the history of philosophy. There were two great thinkers especially devoted to developing philosophical theories of the nature and status of main principles—one of them was, of course, Aristotle, whose definitions and theses from the first part of the fifth book of the *Metaphysics* have been influencing philosophy until today. Two thousand years later, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz explained the theory of principles once again, rooted in new epistemological and metaphysical grounds. His presentation of principles was especially characterized by the introduction of the principle of reason to the set of main principles. Its most common formula is "Nothing is without a reason (*Nihil sine ratione*)." Leibniz considered this principle the main principle (*principium grande*) expressing the rationality of the world and being the base of our cognition of the world. From the second half of the 17th century on, until the late 18th century, it was not only a primary principle of rationalistic philosophy, but also a subject of countless monographs. Strangely enough, although the principle is present in the majority of Leibniz's works, he never presented it systematically. One may find numerous and quite acute formulas (although they may vary) of the principle instead—that is going to be the subject of the second part of this article. Another paradox can be found in that Leibniz is often

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called the "theoretician of principles," offering different ways to express principles, but nevertheless nowhere in his works can we find the definition of a principle as such. The status of the principle being discussed in this paper becomes even more complicated by the fact that Leibniz himself is not always careful enough in discerning it clearly from the principle of causality and as a result it is mistaken with this principle.

Contemporary reception of Leibniz's principle of reason is strongly influenced by Martin Heidegger's interpretation. According to his understanding of the Leibnizian principle, the thesis of nothingness as the foundation of existence and ontological difference, the former entirely contradictory to Leibniz's rationalism, must be accepted.[1] Nevertheless, there are still not many monographs discussing the principle of reason. Numerous articles are *pars pro toto* limited to the presentation of certain aspects of the principle. The goal of this article is therefore to present the most important forms of the principle and its main ontological, epistemological and theological premises, with original Leibniz's texts as the basis.

I. THE NOTION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF REASON

Ambiguities concerning the principle of reason mentioned above call for an explanation of the principle and its basic elements. The expression "the principle of reason" is a combination of two words: "principle" and "reason."[2] The doctrine developed by Leibniz can be called the philosophy of principles as it focuses on principles and was created in accordance with principles. Later on—under the influence of Kant—this type of philosophy is going to be called dogmatism.[3] Although the mere word "principle" can be

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[1] See Martin HEIDEGGER, *Der Satz vom Grund* (Stuttgart: Verlag Günther Neske, 1997); IDEM, "Vom Wesen des Grundes," in IDEM, *Wegmarken* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2004), 123–175; IDEM, *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2007). At the 7th Congress of the Philosophy of Leibniz in Berlin titled "Nihil sine ratione," most of lectures referred to Heidegger's interpretation of the principle of reason.

[2] See Bogusław PAŹ, "Principium" (headword), in *Powszechna Encyklopedia filozofii* [*Universal Encyclopedia of Philosophy*], ed. Andrzej Maryniarczyk, vol. VII (Lublin: Polskie Towarzystwo Tomasza z Akwinu, 2007), 482–487; IDEM, "Ratio / Racja" (headword), in *Powszechna Encyklopedia filozofii* [*Universal Encyclopedia of Philosophy*], ed. Andrzej Maryniarczyk, vol. VIII (Lublin: Polskie Towarzystwo Tomasza z Akwinu, 2007), 647–651; IDEM, *Naczelna zasada racjonalizmu. Od Kartezjusza do wczesnego Kanta* [*The Supreme Principle of Rationalism. From Descartes to Early Kant*] (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Aureus, 2007), 28–42.

[3] "[…] Dogmatism d.h. der Anmaßung, mit einer reinen Erkenntnis aus Begriffen (der philosophischen), nach Prinzipien, so wie sie die Vernunft längst im Gebrauche hat, ohne Erkundigung

found in the titles of the main works of contemporary philosophers like Descartes, Newton etc., it would be very hard to find its definition on their pages. The same can be said about the word "reason" (*ratio*). Therefore, to present the exact meaning of the principle of reason, one must examine the semantics of both terms.

1. PRINCIPLE (*principium*)

The notion of principle comes from the Latin *principium*. It denotes everything that is *initially* (*prin-*) "caught" (*capio*) by human cognition, being or praxis. Principle understood as such means something that is first in a certain sphere and at the same time, that creates the beginning of certain phenomena, e.g. political power (cf. *principatus*). Saint Augustine discerned *principium* as the beginning from *initium*. The former was an absolute beginning-principle, the latter—the beginning as a point in time. Although baroque philosophy is known as "the philosophy of principles," one could hardly find any general definition of a principle in the works of 17th century thinkers, especially the ones who would be discernible from an Aristotelian interpretation of principle from the fifth book of the *Metaphysics*.[4] Leibniz did not offer any general definition that would apply both to the ontological and epistemological (logical) order.[5] The most common way of understanding the notion of principle by Leibniz is identifying it with an "axiom," i.e. such a claim that (a) it is considered *obvious* by all („Axiomata sunt, quae *ab omnibus pro manifestis habentur*, et attente considerata ex terminis constant," C. 32) and (b) its being a part of a logical proof is not provable itself. It was Christian Wolff who made a breakthrough in defining principle in general. His definition was as follows: "Principle is what contains in itself the reason of something else." [6] This category was defined with "reason" as something

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logically former to principle. It will turn out to be unsuccessful when being applied to defining the principle of reason as this creates *circulosus in definiendo*. As long as principle is defined by the category of reason, the principle of reason will have to be defined as the "reason of reason."[7]

2. THE MEANING OF "REASON" (*ratio*)

2.1. Terminology and concepts

The term "reason" from the phrase "principle of reason" corresponds to the word *ratio* which can also be understood as a much broader term. The word originates from the Latin verb *reor* (*reri*, *ratus sum*), meaning "I reckon" and "I calculate." In available dictionaries[8] more than ten meanings of *ratio* in classical Latin can be found. The most important are: (1) calculation, account; (2) proportion or relation; (3) *ratio* along with *reddere* sends to the context of explaining certain problem (or event) or bringing something hidden to light. (4) *Ratio* can also mean (4a) an abstract basis (*ratio obiectiva*) as opposed to (4b) specific causes: *Sunt causae, quae plures habent rationes* (Cicero) which translates as "There are causes conditioned by many types of bases." In Leibnizian ontology, the dimension of causes consisted of actual reality only and *rationes* were placed in another dimension, the dimension of possible beings (*possibilia*), which were related to actual beings in that the latter were their actualizations. That is why Leibniz used the notion of reason to define cause as the real reason (*Nihil aliud enim causa est, quam realis ratio.*).[9] Last but not least, *ratio* is (5) the terminological equivalent of reason or intellect (*ratio subiectiva*). In the rationalistic discourse of the 17th

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ciples in Wolff's philosophy: Grzegorz GÓLSKI, Christiana Wolffa nauka o przyczynach w *Philosophia prima sive ontologia*," *Studia Gdańskie* 12 (1999): 79–121, esp. 81–88. See also: Bogusław PAŹ, "Christian Wolff als Philosoph der Prinzipien," in *Aktualität der Aufklärung*, ed. Ryszard Różanowski (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2000), 107–124; IDEM, *Epistemologiczne założenia ontologii Christiana Wolffa* [*The Epistemological Assumptions of Christian Wolff's ontology*] (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2002), esp. 163–214.

[7] See M. HEIDEGGER, *Der Satz vom Grund*, 31. All of the most significant Wolff's students use this definition of the principle or its slightly modified version. Here is definition by Baumeister: "Principium, in sensu generalissimo sumtum, nihil aliud est, quam omne id, unde aliquid quocunque modo dependet." Friedrich Christian BAUMEISTER, *Institutiones metaphysicae. Ontologiam, cosmologiam, psychologiam, theologiam denique naturalem complexae. Methodo Wolffi adornatae* (Wittenberg und Zerbst: Zimmermann, 1736) [further quoted as IM], § 339.

[8] See e.g. in *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, ed. Peter G.W. Glare (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).

[9] *Die philosophischen Schriften von Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz*, Bd. VII, ed. Claus I. Gerhardt (Hildesheim: Olms Verlag, 1978) [further quoted as GP], 289.

and 18th centuries, the last two meanings were most commonly identified with "reason."[10] In the case of Leibniz's reflections, one could also think of reason as a certain kind of teleological (6) sense (German *Sinn*)[11] that determines all things in view of the ultimate Good (*optimum*).

2.2. Aspects of reason

Apart from the terminological, conceptual and historical aspects of *ratio*, one may discern also a purely systematic aspect. This aspect includes meanings that were ascribed to reason by rationalistic philosophy as an element of the principle of reason in its different forms. Concerning the different formulas of this principle in the works of Leibniz, Wolff and many representatives of his philosophical school, one may discern three main categories of *ratio*: firstly, *sufficientia*, that is sufficiency. This aspect of ratio appears in the classical formula of the principle of sufficient reason (*principium rationis sufficientis*). It points to the sufficiency of reason for something to come into existence, be seen[12] or be fulfilled as an act. The meaning of reason here encompasses purposefulness and, at the same time, the end.

Secondly, *determination*, that is determination.[13] The category of determination was defined by Baumeister as follows: "To determine originally means no other thing but to give certain thing its limit and to separate it from all other things."[14] The principle of reason, which assumes this aspect of reason, is a principle of determining reason (*principium rationis determinantis*).

Thirdly, *ratio* in Leibniz's works corresponds to an aspect of *redditio* that is rather hard to define precisely. *Redditio* may come in two meanings: revealing something that was hidden before (*si ratio redditur falsa*) as well as reaching the logical basis of a logical proposition (*rationem propositionis reddere*) during the

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[10] In German-Latin dictionaries to Wolff's papers, German words *Grund* and *Vernunft*.

[11] See Heinz HEIMSOETH, "Leibniz' Weltanschauung als Ursprung seiner Gedankenwelt. Zum 200. Todestage des Denkers am 14. November 1916," *Kant-Studien. Philosophische Zeitschrift der Kant-Gesellschaft* 21 (1917): 365–395, esp. 376.

[12] See also: "…quantum scilicet sufficit ad hoc cognoscendum, atque etiam ad cognoscendum existentiam necessariam ad eandem Dei naturam pertinere." *Œuvres de Descartes*, ed. Charles Adam and Paul Tannery, vol. VII (Paris: Léopold Cerf, 1904) [further quoted as AT], 152.

[13] See also: "Determinare vi usus & originis significat terminos limitesque rei dare, eamque ab omni alia distnguere." Jacob CARPOVIUS, *De rationis sufficientis principio* (Recusae: ????, 1725), § 9.

[14] "Determinare, ui originis, nihil aliud significat, quam terminos limitesque rei dare, eamque ab omni alia re distinquere." IM § 127. See also Georg Wilhelm Friedrich HEGEL, *Wissenschaft der Logik*, ed. Georg Lasson, Bd. I (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1975) [quoted as WL], 110–116.

process of argumentation (*probare*, *demonstrare*). This aspect of *ratio* is expressed in the principle of rendering reason (*principium rationis reddendae*).

II. THE TWOFOLD ORIGINS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF REASON

The problem of the origins of the principle of reason may be reflected upon from two distinct perspectives: one is historical, or another is subjective and epistemological. The first one embraces a specific date or epoch when the principle of reason, called by this name, appears in a certain philosopher's works. The epistemological perspective is the individual and empirical formation of the principle in a subject's consciousness. As for this aspect, it may be defined as being ahistorical. The relationship between these two is defined in the historism movement such that the principle of reason, which is the first and main principle of thinking, is, at the same time, historically the first principle initiating philosophical thinking (Hegel),[15] although it may not be clearly articulated as the principle of reason.

1. THE HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF REASON

It is usually assumed that the principle of reason defined as "Everything has a reason (*Omne ens habet rationem*)," was Leibniz's discovery. And this view is right, of course, since it was not anywhere else but in his works where it was called—in its many forms—"principium rationis" and, at the same time, only in Leibniz's papers it is clearly separated from the principle of causality. The latter makes the Leibnizian expressions of the principle of reason distinctive among seemingly similar formulas that can be found in his predecessors' works, e.g. at Descartes who wrote in his *Replies to Second Objections*: "Concerning every existing thing it is impossible to ask what is the cause of its existence. The question may even be asked concerning God, not because he needs any cause in order to exist, but because the immensity of his nature is the cause or reason why he needs no cause in order to exist."[16] Descartes uses the term "cause" (Latin *causa*) which gives the

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[15] "Was das Erste in der Wissenschaft ist, hat sich müssen geschichtlich als das Erste zeigen." G.W.F. HEGEL, WL, Bd. I, 74. Cf. Martin HEIDEGGER, *Einführung in die Metaphysik* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1983), 4–8.

[16] *Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, transl. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoc, vol. II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 116. ("Nulla res existit de qua non possit quaeri quaenam sit causa cur existat. Hoc enim de ipso Deo quaeri potest, non

principle a metaphysical meaning, i.e. it refers to reality considered in the aspect of its actual existence. It can be reasserted by the fact that it points out to the cause of what *exists* (*causa cur* [scil. *aliquid*] *existat*) and not to the cause for which something *is* in general.[17] The claim that this principle occurred before Leibniz in Spinoza's works, is clearly a misunderstanding[18] because the author of the *Ethics* never went beyond the traditional interpretation of the principle of causality. Nevertheless, from the methodological point of view, it is correct to assume an interpretation of Spinozian metaphysics, which will be described again on the basis of the Leibnizian principle of reason (Michael della Rocca). Still, it does not have much to do with the historical and philosophical presentations of the *actual* metaphysical system of Spinoza.

It is worth pointing out that Wolff, Leibniz's student, sought its historical origins in the spirit (*animus*) of the ancient Greek architects. He explained that they would not decorate a building with some architectural detail if this element could make an impression of being accidentally added (*consuetudo arbitra*).[19] What is more, he cites Vitruvius' *De architectura*: "what may not exist in reality, cannot be pictured in imagination."[20] This Roman thinker pointed to significant parallels between architecture and philosophy that would later give the inspiration to create a transcendental philosophy (Lambert, Kant). Philosophy, as Vitruvius puts it, is about the nature of things (in Greek φυσιολογία [*physiologia*]) and an architect should see it as well. If he learns about the nature of things (*principia rerum naturae noverit*),[21] he may avoid mistakes. This claim is important when one considers the origins of

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quod indigeat ulla causa ut existat, sed quia ipsa ejus naturae immensitas est causa sive ratio, propter quam nulla causa indiget ad existendum." AT VII, 164–165). On the prefiguration of the principle of reason in Descartes, see B. PAŹ, *Naczelna zasada racjonalizmu*, esp. 43–57.

[17] The verb *to exist* (*existere*) and the noun *existence* (*existentia*) were, in the scholastic tradition, used only to designate objects that exist in the real world. The scholastics discerned the order of being (*ordo essendi*), also including things that are only possible (*possibilia*) and *exist* in the Divine intellect, from the order of existing (*ordo existendi*) which has a much more modest scope.

[18] See Yitzhak Y. MELAMED and Martin LIN, "Principle of Sufficient Reason." Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy Archive. Accessed 15.02.2017, https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2017/entries/sufficient-reason/. See Michael DELLA ROCCA, *Spinoza* (London, New York: Routlege, 2008).

[19] "Principium rationis sufficientis tam altas in animo Architectorum Graecorum egerat radices,ut absque ea nec in ornatu quidpiam admitterent, quem confuntendo arbitraria introduxisse videbatur [...]." Ch. WOLFF, *Ontologia*, § 74.

[20] "[…] quod non potest in veritate fieri, id […] in imaginibus factu non posse certam rationem habere," *Vitruvii De Architectura libri decem*. VITRUV, *Zehn Bücher über die Architektur*, edidit et annotovit Curt Fensterbusch (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag,1964), IV, 2.

[21] *Vitruvii De Architectura*, I,1.6.

the principle of reason as it places it in the context of an intellectual insight into the internal structure of reality (Latin *natura*). As for the *animus architectorum* mentioned by Wolff as the source of the principle of reason, it consists of two elements: (1) thinking (*cogitatio*) as a certain form of focused attention and vigilance, and (2) inventiveness (*inventio*) as clarification of obscure problems as well as inventing the rules (*ratio*) concerning new things.[22] And the same, as it seems, can be said about the ahistorical origins of the principle of reason, which is realized from the beginning in every epoch and by every individual subject. This origin is constituted by focused attention; by that power, one may *discover* an internal principle of the organization of reality, being expressed in language as the formula of the principle of reason.

2. THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL ORIGINS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF REASON

The principle of reason has its historical origins in a specific linguistic expression. At the same time, though, it goes beyond historical time, being a permanent and necessary element of our intellect, determining our way of seeing the world and the way we think about it. In this sense, it has been present since the dawn of philosophy and philosophical thinking, as its assumption *implicite*. In Leibniz's times, the problem of the origins of the principles and notions was the subject of a heated discussion between empiricism, denying any forms of innate knowledge (notions, principles), and nativism, assuming a certain range of innate knowledge, wide or narrow depending on the accepted assumptions. Leibniz himself represented radical nativism and claimed that the whole of knowledge was innate, which means that notions as well as principles were innate. In both cases, knowledge of them was from the knowledge of nature, which he understood as the nature of the mind.[23] As for the knowledge of nature itself, this is what he wrote: "[it] is nothing but the knowledge of the nature of our mind and of these innate ideas, and there is no need to look for them outside oneself."[24]

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[22] "Hae nascuntur ex cognitione et inventione. Cogitatio est cura studii plaena et industriae vigilantiae effectus propositi cum voluptate. Inventio autem est quaestionum obscurarum explicatio ratioque novae rei vigire mobili reperta." *Vitruvii De architectura*, I,2.2.

[23] The nature of mind as the source of principle was discussed by Christian Wolff. See *Ontologia*, § 27, 74.

[24] Gottfried Wilhelm LEIBNIZ, *New Essays on Human Understanding*, trans. and ed. Peter Remnant and Jonathan Bennett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), I, I, § 21. I use the French original text: *Nouveux essais sur l'entendement humain*, in *God[efridi] Guil[ielmi] Leib-*

Apperception, understood as a form of an accompanying pre-reflexive awareness ("conscience ou la reflexion, qui accompagne l'action interne," *Nouveux essais* II,27,13), was an epistemological basis for this kind of knowledge. Its structurally developed form is the reflection, which is "simply to attend to what is within us" (NE, Preface). Knowledge of the nature of the mind, along with knowledge of the principle of reason, is achieved *in actu exercito*; that means "simultaneously with particular cognitive acts" which are intentionally directed towards objects that are transcendent to the mind. As mentioned before, Leibniz in his explanation of the way in which principles are seen, referred to the scholastic concept of accompanying awareness, which creates a sort of horizon for our knowledge. And out of it, ideas, being simple cognitive structures, emerge, and then principles, as structures composed of these ideas. In his letter to Hansch, Leibniz wrote: "There are grains (*semina*) of what we learning us, i.e. ideas which become eternal truths when they grow up. No wonder that among them, we discover in ourselves being, one, substance, acting and so on and we are aware that ideas of it are inside us."[25]

Looking at this and Leibniz's other claims which refer to the origins of notions and principles, one may find himself perplexed especially about the claim of the discovery of the main concepts by individuals—concepts and, particularly, principles whose power should go beyond (transcend) this individual. The claim to the universal validity of such known principles was explained by Leibniz with the thesis of the uniformity of the nature of all beings (*uniformitas entis*). In his letter to de Volder, he wrote: "[…] since the nature of things is uniform, hence our substance cannot infinitely differ from the substances the Universe consists of."[26] Having discovered the principle of reason in one's mind as a certain sort of sense or eidetic content of conscience, one may assume that it is in force not only for the individuals who have discovered it, but also for the universe of beings. And although the

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nitii Opera philosophica quae exstant latina, gallica, germanica omnia. Edita recognovit e temporum rationibus disposita pluribus ineditis auxit, introductione critica atque indicibus instruxit Joannes Eduardus Erdmann (Berolini: Sum[p]tibus G. Eichleri, 1840) [further quoted as E], 192–418.

[25] "Sunt tamen in nobis semina eorum, quae discimus, idae nempe, et quae inde nascuntur, aeternae veritates: nec mirum, quum ens, unum, substantiam, actionem et similia inveniamus in nobis, et nostri conscii scimus, ideas in nobis esse." E 446. On innateness of the principle of reason and genetic, structural and epistemological relations between notions and main ideas, see B. Paź, *Naczelna zasada racjonalizmu*, 62–75.

[26] "… cum rerum natura sit uniformis nec ab aliis substantiis simplicibus ex quibus totum consistit Universum, nostra infinite differrere possit." GP Bd. II, 270.

origin of the principle of reason is individual and is stimulated by expe-
rience, its extent is transcendental which means that it is in force for every
subject and every form of entity—both actually existing (*existentia*) and
purely possible (possible worlds).

III. THE PRINCIPLE OF REASON AGAINST THE BACKGROUND
OF THE ARCHITECTONICS OF PRINCIPLES

The basic outline of the status of the principle of reason requires not only
describing its genealogical aspect, but also presenting its epistemological po-
sition among other principles, especially the principle of contradiction.

1. THE DIVISION OF TRUTHS (*verités*).

Leibniz offered quite a systematic presentation of this problem in his
Monadology as well as in his Latin manuscripts where he presented the
status of the principle of reason against the background of two kinds of
"truths'—i.e. true logical propositions. The latter were divided into truths of
reason (*verités de raisonnement*; *veritates rationis*) and truths of fact (*verités
de fait*; *veritates facti*), which were later described as respectively analytic
and synthetic judgments in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. Truths of
reason, as it is stated in the *Monadology*,[27] are "necessary, and their
opposition is impossible." As far as they are concerned, the principle of
contradiction is the primary principle (M. § 33). The truth of the necessary
truths of "S is p" kind, Leibniz insisted, is to be proved by the very analysis
of the complex concept P to its simplest elements:[28] "When a truth is
necessary, its reason can be found by analysis, resolving it into simpler ideas
and simpler truths until we reach the primitives."[29] The pattern for this
analysis, according to Leibniz, was to be the procedures performed by
mathematicians when reducing theorems and practical laws to definitions
(M. § 34–35). The truths of fact, in turn, "are contingent, and their opposite
is possible" (M. § 33). The principle of reason applies to them. These truths

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[27] Gottfried Wilhelm LEIBNIZ, *La Monadologie* (further quoted as M), in E. 705–712.

[28] Systematic explanation of 'truths' as logical propositions in C. 16–24.

[29] Gottfried Wilhelm LEIBNIZ, *The Principles of Philosophy, or, the Monadology* [in:] *Philo-
sophical Essays*, Edited and translated by Roger Ariew and Daniel Garber (Indianapolis and Cam-
bridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1989) (further quoted as M.), 217.

(for example: "Napoleon lost the battle of Leipzig") seem to be accidental and as such they cannot be asserted with a simple analysis of the notion of the subject P as this analysis—by the complexity of the subject—heads toward infinity.

Three issues from this description of truths are worthy of closer attention: firstly, whenever Leibniz mentions them, he always treats them as logical propositions. Secondly, their description is of an epistemological and of a logical kind. And finally, a dichotomous division of these truths seems to be evident for its validity, but at the same time not exactly defined in its basis. Even for Leibniz, this division of truths was relative as it was compulsory in view of the contingent (human) mind, and for the contingent subject. Knowledge of this subject is always aspectual (*point de vue*), which can be seen in the famous metaphor of cities being watched from different perspectives (M. § 57). This knowledge is also only partially indirect (representationalism) and is never fully adequate with the object. The division becomes useless if the subject is an absolute subject that is described in the scholastic term *Scientia Dei*. A description of such a type of knowledge can be found in *Causa Dei asserta per justitiam ejus* […].[30] Knowledge of such a subject is indirect, intuitive, realized at the same time (*uno actu*), clear and adequate, which means it encompasses the whole *universum* of actual beings as well as the purely possible ones. As a result, in the absolute subject's (God's) view, all propositions produced by Him are truths of reason, that is: analytic judgements (in Kant's terminology). Does it mean, then, that from God's perspective, the principle of reason as the principle of accidental truths is unnecessary since all the truths seem to be necessary for Him and as such subjected to the principle of contradiction? Before I make an attempt to answer the question, I shall give an epistemological description of the principle of reason.

2. THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL STATUS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF REASON AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF THE OTHER PRINCIPLES

The problem we are tackling when we refer to the main principles such as the principle of contradiction, the principle of reason, of identity, and of causality, is that each of them claims to be "the first" (*primum principium*). This is, hence, still a question without answer: which principle is the first or

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[30] In *Causa Dei asserta per justitiam ejus cum caeteris ejus perfectionibus cunctisque actionibus conciliatam*, E. 653–665.

"anterior" to the others—and if it is, by which aspect is it so? Leibniz never spoke in a systematic manner of the architectonics of the main principles of knowledge and thinking. However, on the basis of his other opinions, one could reconstruct such architectonics. In one of his papers, Leibniz explains the distinction between different forms of what is first by origin (*prius*): "What is anterior by nature and not chronologically, is this what can be clearly thought ahead of something else, and that something else cannot be thought ahead of that. Respectively, chronologically anterior is this what can be perceived ahead of something else, and that something else cannot be perceived ahead of this. By nature, essence is anterior; chronologically—existence. Essence is measured by thought, existence—by impression."[31] In Christian Wolff's school, this moment was carefully reflected upon. Wolff accepted a sort of demonstration (Latin *probatio*) of the principle of reason. It had more in common with rhetorical argumentation—persuasion (Greek πίστις [*pistis*]) than with logical proof.[32] And since the "proof" was based on the principle of contradiction as the main axiom, Wolff" student, Friedrich Christian Baumeister (1709-1785), wrote in his *Institutiones metaphysicae*[33] that because the principle of reason could be deduced (*ex quo fluit*) from the principle of contradiction, the latter is an absolute while the former is a relative principle (IM §36). Moreover, the principle of reason is provable, general, absolutely necessary (IM §37) and intelligible (*conceptibile*) or, so to speak, it makes intelligible all its subjects (IM §38). Not dealing with the question whether any principle could be provable („Nulla scientia probat sua principia"), it is enough to say that Leibniz tends to present such an interpretation of architectonics of principles in which these principles created a close splice or were raddled into a sort of chain (Greek συμπλοκή [*symploke*], Latin *nexus*) of reciprocal relations. And they are not only essentially related, but it can be also said that the sense of one presupposes the sense of the others, e.g. the sense of the principle of reason presupposes the sense of the principle of non-contradiction.

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[31] "*Natura prius est* licet non tempore, qvicqvid ante alterum clare cogitari potest, non alterum ante ipsum. Qvemadmodum Tempore prius est qvicqvid ante alterum sentri potest, non alterum ante ipsum. Natura prius est essentia, tempore existentia. Cogitatione essentiam, sensu existentiam metimur." Gottfried Wilhelm LEIBNIZ, *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe*, Reihe VI, Bd. 1 (Akademie der Wissenschaften: Berlin, 2006) [quoted as AA], 483.

[32] See B. PAŹ, *Naczelna zasada*, 286–304, esp. 286–292.

[33] See also Bogusław PAŹ, "Zasada racji jako naczelna zasada bytu i poznania w wykładni F.Ch. Baumeistra." *Przegląd Filozoficzny. Nowa Seria* 16 (2007), 1 (61): 189–204.

3. THE METAPHYSICS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF REASON

The question of whether in the face of the Divine act of seeing (*obtutus*) in which all the truth are necessary, the principle of reason as the principle concerning only accidental truths, is no longer needed or not, *goes beyond* epistemology as such. Leibniz provides us with the answer in his ontology and metaphysics (especially natural theology) since these were the fields in which he made the most essential assumptions, which were later transferred to epistemology and logic. As for ontology (as Wolff understood it) whose subject is a possible being considered *in se*, i.e. in abstraction from actual existence, Leibniz assumes that for anything to be claimed real, its non-contradiction of itself is not enough. Also internal order is required, which satisfies the conditions made by the principle of reason. And that is why the principle of reason is not and cannot be unnecessary neither in the contingent subject's seeing nor in the Divine seeing—because as an object of knowledge the real thing is just what makes the principle satisfied. As for natural theology, in its description of a totally intuitive seeing of the *universum* of being the difference between the sphere of essences governed by the principle of contradiction and the sphere of existence governed by the principle of reason is abolished.

As a result, the subject being seen presents itself as an infinite chain of objects related to one another.[34] Intuitive insight into the internal structure of these relations (*catena rationum*) is an objective source of the principle of reason.

IV. THE MAIN FORMS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF REASON, ITS FUNCTIONS AND SUBJECT FIELDS

Throughout the literature concerning the principle of reason, one may observe a reduction of the principle of reason to one of its forms, e.g. to the principle of sufficient reason (Wolff), but also to one of its subject fields, e.g. logic (Kant, Russell, Couturat). The suchlike opinions, as far as they concern Leibniz's heritage, are totally unjustified, what is going to be demonstrated in the subsequent part of this article.

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[34] "[…] ut coordinatus in integros Mundos possibiles infinitos, quorum quilibet Deo est perfecte cognitus." E. 653–654.

1. SUBJECT FIELDS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF REASON

When asked about whether the principle of reason is the principle of metaphysics or logic, one must remember that the principle is general and it encompasses a transcendental range, which includes all of the dimensions of reality—metaphysics (being), logic (thinking), epistemology (knowledge), ethics and law (action), aesthetics (beauty) etc. The principle of reason as a metaphysical one affirms the rational order of the world and its intelligibility. It is the intellectual instrument of explaining specific beings and phenomena in the real world. When it comes to natural theology as understood as a part of metaphysics, the principle is a necessary element of proofs for God's existence, which was emphasized by Leibniz.

In its logical version, the principle stresses the nature of logical truth. In this form, it is the original foundation (*Kernsatz*) of Leibnizian theory of the universal analyticity of propositions. As an epistemological principle, it defines the conditions for our knowledge. In the area of action (ethics and law) it defines the basis of its rationality, i.e. its goal, but also the conditions of its effectiveness. In rationalistic aesthetics, strongly influenced by Pythagoreanism and Platonism, it defines the conditions of beauty and verifies works of art in the context of these conditions.

It is often said that the principle of reason acts as a "vehicle" which allows for the transition (transcending) from the area of mathematics to physics and then from physics to metaphysics.[35] Thanks to the principle, or —to be more precise—its derivative as the principle of identity (*principium identitatis indiscerniblium*), Leibniz could effectively defend his metaphysical thesis that two identical individuals do not exist.

Yet the question, in which aspect does the principle of reason have heuristic and logical primacy over other principles, and thereby, which of the mentioned formulas is anterior to the others—is not answered. The most essential thing is the sense of reason being presupposed by the principle of reason in its various formulas. The principle itself claims that reason is omnipresent, but at the same time it does not claim anything about it (Heidegger), but rather it is a claim about reality that is governed by the principle. The nature of reason from the principle of reason is originally presupposed in specific metaphysical theses, which can be found in nume-

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[35] Getrud KAHL-FUHRTMANN, "Der Satz vom zureichenden Grunde. Von Leibniz bis Kant," *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung* 30 (1976): 107–122, esp. 108–109.

rous papers written by Leibniz. It needs to be brought to light. And that is why the detailed presentation of the respective forms of the principle of reason requires calling these claims and relating them to original and simple intuitions articulated by the principle.

2. THE PRINCIPLE OF SUFFICIENT REASON (*principium rationis sufficientis*)

The best known formula of the principle of sufficient reason comes from § 32 of the *Monadology*. It is universal as it applies to metaphysics as well as to logic. As it states, "none of the facts may turn out to be real i.e. existing, and none of the claims may turn out to be true unless it is related to its sufficient reason, which makes it is as it is." [36] The reason that lets us know why certain thing exists and why certain judgment is true is the sufficient reason. Leibniz drew a clear distinction between the principle of reason in its ontological and in its logical sense.

The first type of reason, i.e. an ontological sufficient reason, is at the same time—according to Leibniz—the ultimate reason for a certain thing ("la dernière raison des choses," M. § 37–38). It is the necessary substance identified with God. He is the sufficient and ultimate reason and as such, he transcends the dimension of accidental beings. Being the ultimate explanation of the chain or series of accidental beings related to one another which taken together constitute the world, he is, at the same time, *beyond* them ("[…] soit hors de la suite ou series de ce datail des contingentes." M. § 37). This sufficient and ultimate reason as the necessary being is called "Existentificans," which is the being that provides actual existence to all accidental beings. As the real reason, i.e. the cause, it is an answer to the question: "Why is there something rather than nothing?." To answer, one has to point to this absolutely ontologically original fact of the supremacy of existence over non-existence[37] and being over nothing. It is given in the original intellectual insight into reality and because of this Leibniz claims that the ultimate reason of this supremacy is assumed simultaneously with every act of knowledge of being.[38] It can be found in being itself ("Ratio est in Natura,

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[36] "[…] nous considérons qu'aucun fait ne saurait se trouver vrai ou existant, aucune énonciation véritable, sans qu'il y ait une raison suffisante, pourquoi il en soit ainsi et non pas autrement." E. 707.

[37] "Est ergo causa cur Existentia praevaleat non-Existentiae, seu Ens necessarium est Existentificans." GP VII, 288.

[38] "[…] ita posito semel ens praevalere non-enti, seu rationem esse cur aliuid potius existerit quam nihil […]." GP VII, 304.

cur aliquid potius existat quam nihil." GP VII, 289) and the principle of
reason is its expression. This supremacy is the deepest basis of the ratio-
nality of reality, of our knowledge and thinking of reality. This rationality
presupposes the principle of non-contradiction, which claims that being is
not non-being.

Hence I believe that Heidegger was wrong in his nihilist explanation of
this Leibnizian principle that he provided in his series of lectures *Satz vom
Grund*. In this interpretation, the reason (*Grund*) for particular being (*ens,
Seiende*) is an undetermined form of Being (*esse, Sein*), which is, in Hegel's
spirit[39]–identical with the nothingness (*Nichts*). That is, such an explanation
for the principle of reason, according to which nothingness is the sufficient
and ultimate reason. Nevertheless, it contradicts not only the abovemen-
tioned statements of Leibniz, but in fact it abolishes rationality as affirmed
by Leibniz. Also Heidegger's claims, that this alleged "reason" of being,
which would be nothingness, is what is present in its latent form and needs
to be revealed (*enthüllen*) in a different variant of the principle of reason,
namely the *principium rationis reddendae*, are irrelevant. In one of his texts,
Leibniz unambiguously points out what is that hidden reason for the exi-
stence of the world that needs revealing: "Therefore, the reasons for the
world lie hidden in something extramundane, different from the chain of
states, or from the series of things, the collection of which constitutes the
world." [40] Since the reason for something existing must also exist ("ratio exi-
stentis non est nisi ab existente." GP VII, 303), then the ultimate root of the
accidental world (*ultima radix*) is "some one entity of metaphysical neces-
sity" (ibidem), namely God. The Divine entity, which is pure existence (*esse
purum*), cannot be identified with *Sein* as described by Heidegger, even if it
was terminologically identified with *esse*. Being is described by the German
phenomenologist as being totally accidental and temporal. Whereas God's
Being—on the contrary—is necessary and eternal.

The absolute being of God constitutes the metaphysical principle of suffi-
cient reason for all true propositions: the propositions of identity and the ana-
lytical propositions as well as "contingent truths, truths of facts" (M. §36).
As it was stated before, in Leibniz's interpretation this division of pro-
positions is relative and is only based on the perspective of contingent
subject—that is "for us." Nevertheless, it is abolished for the perfect intel-

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[39] See G.W.F. HEGEL, WL, Bd. I, 66–75.

[40] G.W. LEIBNIZ, *Philosophical Essays*, 150. "Rationes mundi latent in aliquo extramundano,
differente a catena statuum seu serie rerum, quarum aggregatum mundum constituit." GP VII, 303.

lect. This is because of the rule that "the mode of predication follows the modes of being." [41] With the help of sufficient reason such understood, every proposition of the sort "S is P," if it is true (i.e. respects the principles of contradiction and of reason), never stops being true—even if it cannot be proven true—because it is always true *sub specie aeternitatis*, i.e. it is true in God and for him. Sufficiency (*sufficientia*) of a thusly understood metaphysical reason of propositions means that God meets the necessary condition of possessing the attribute of knowledge *and* that knowledge is perfect-direct, intuitive and adequate.

It is also necessary to reflect upon the accusation that the aspect of sufficiency is redundant in the Leibnizian principle of reason. Authors as G.W.F. Hegel, A. Schopenhauer and N. Hartman[42] claimed that the notion of "the principle of sufficient reason" is pleonastic and "the principle of reason" would be enough.

3. THE PRINCIPLE OF DETERMINING REASON (*principium rationis determinantis*)

Besides the sufficiency of the principle of reason in one of its variants, Leibniz points to two different aspects of reason: determination and rendering or justification (*redditio*). Leibniz included determination to the formula of the principle of reason, which he called the principle of determining reason (*principe de la raison déterminante*).[43] In the *Theodycee* it reads as follows: "nothing ever comes to pass without there being a cause or at least a reason determining [une raison déterminante] it, that is, something to give an *a priori* reason why it is existent rather than non-existent, and in this wise rather than in any other."[44]

Although in the original text, Leibniz uses these very words like "determination" and "the principle of *determining* reason, it was either frequently omitted in translations from French and Latin, or substituted with "suf-

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[41] Christian WOLFF, *Philosophia rationalis sive Logica, methodo scientifica pertractata et ad usum scientiarum atque vitae aptata* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1983), § 219, nota.

[42] G.W.F. HEGEL, WL, Bd. II, 66–111; Nikolai HARTMANN, *Möglichkeit und Wirklichkeit* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1938), 26, 204-206, esp. 205.

[43] On the principle of determining reason in Leibniz's work see Otto SAAME, *Der Satz vom Grund bei Leibniz* (Mainz: Hans Krach, 1961), esp. 27–30; B. PAŹ, *Naczelna zasada racjonalizmu*, 115–155.

[44] Gottfried Wilhelm LEIBNIZ, *Theodicy. Essays on the Goodness of God, the Freedom of Man and the Origin of Evil*, ed. with an Introduction by Austin Farrer, trans. Eveleen M. Huggard (Oxford: Biblio Bazaar, 2007) [further quoted as ThD], 151, 154. See also: "Tout est *déterminé* ou par des *raisons* comme *géométrique* de la nécessité, ou par des raisons comme *morales* de la plus grande perfection." GP I, 354.

ficiency."[45] In some cases, the sense of reason as such was reduced to determination with omitting sufficiency (Crusius, Kant etc.).[46] It is hard to explain this phenomenon and point to any other reasons other than a poor understanding of the main assumptions of Leibnizian metaphysics. The principle of reason was commonly identified with only one of its aspects, namely the principle of sufficient reason, as Christian Wolff and Jacob Carpovius did.[47] So the principle of determining reason was omitted not only in translations, but also in dissertations referring to the principle of reason's problem.[48]

The thinker of Hanover clearly distinguished specific aspects of *ratio*, different respective forms of the principle of reason, and he attached distinct meaning to each of them. In this formula, Leibniz shows the omnipresence of the determining reason, which is the ontological basis that enables us to answer (without reference to empirical evidence) the most important metaphysical question: *why* is there anything and why is it in such a way and not in any other way? The category of determination is the element that constitutes the nature of reality and it lays the apriorical foundations of the knowledge of it. Determination in radically essential Leibnizian ontology constitutes the basis (*ratio*), which defines primary aspects of reality—these aspects that are asked about by "why" (*cur*): why does something exist rather than not exist (*ratio cur potius aliud sit quam non*), why does this exist rather than anything else (*hoc potius quam aliud*) and why in this way and not in any other way (*ratio cur potius sic sit quam aliter*).

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[45] That happens in the case of some translations, e.g. into Polish. In the Polish translation of the *Theodycée, une raison déterminante* was referred to as the one which is, in fact, identical with the term *the principle of sufficient reason* in Gottfried Wilhelm LEIBNIZ, *Teodycea. O dobroci Boga, wolności człowieka i pochodzeniu zła*, trans. Małgorzata Frankiewicz (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2001), 145, n. 2. That happens also in the German translation. The examples are provided G. KAHL-FURTHMANN, "Der Satz vom zureichenden Grunde"; O. SAAME, *Der Satz vom Grund bei Leibniz*, 27–28 and 27, n. 110.

[46] Christian August CRUSIUS, *Dissertatio philosophica de usu et limitibus principii rationis determinantis, vulgo sufficientis* (Leipzig: Officina Langenhemiana, 1743); Immanuel KANT, *Principiorum primorum cognitionis metaphysicae nova dilucidatio*, in *Immanuel Kants Werke*, edited by Ernst Cassirer (Berlin: Bruno Cassierer, 1922), 389–426.

[47] Ch. WOLFF, *Ontologia*, §71; J. CARPOVIUS, *De rationis sufficientis principio*.

[48] See e.g. Josef GEYSER, *Das Prinzip vom zureichenden Grunde. Eine logisch-ontologische Untersuchung* (Regensburg: Josef Habbel, 1930), or Rudolf LAUN, *Der Satz vom Grunde. Ein System der Erkenntnistheorie* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1956[2]). In the latter, the principle of the determining reason is presented implicitly only while explaining ideas of Ch.A. Crusius and I. Kant, see ibidem, 77–86.

3.1. Primacy of determination

Determination is characterized by, on one side, a specific conceptual primality as with the help of determination (qualitative or quantitative) everything can be explained and defined in Leibnizian totally essentialist metaphysics; on the other side, it is characterized by remarkable complexity of varied senses and levels on which this determination is revealed. It all makes its nature difficult to articulate. In phenomenological language it could be interpreted in the category of sense (German *Sinn*), and to be more precise—an ontological sense, discovered by the awareness of the contingent subject, or ontic, if it is constituted by absolute subject.[49] The order (*ordo*) seen by us in the world as pre-established harmony is the ontic sense if it is being considered as discovered, found and independent from us. If it is, in turn, taken as a hypothesis assumed by the contingent subject (Leibniz would say: "a necessary hypothesis," i.e. something constituted by contingent awareness), it is an ontological sort. In both cases we talk about a specific form of determination in the Leibnizian interpretation, which is antecedent to both kinds of sense.

To explain the meaning of the principle of determining reason, one must explain first what is determination and the determining reason in Leibniz's philosophy. In one of the basic meanings, Leibnizian determination is no other thing than the state that is contrary to any lack of difference ("Intelligo determinationem quae indifferentiae obstat." C. 22). That is the reason why, in Leibniz's essentialist metaphysics, the universal validity of the principle of the determining reason, if it is accompanied with determination such understood, is a basis for the radically individualistic thesis of incommunicability (*incommunicabilitas*) of every specific monadic individual. As we learn in § 8 and 9 of the *Monadology*, qualitatively understood determination does not only constitute entity, but also provides ontological basis that differentiates specific individuals to one another. And so one can read in this work that not only specific individuals actually differ from each other, but "It is also necessary that each monad be different from each other" (M. §9).

3.2. Determination and intentionality

Determination plays a fundamental role in Leibniz's philosophy. From an epistemological perspective, it is the foundation of the intentionality of hu-

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[49] See also Władysław STRÓŻEWSKI, "Płaszczyzny sensu." In IDEM. *Istnienie i sens* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 1994), 423–437, esp. 432–433.

man knowledge, as it constitutes our cognitive field that includes the back-ground (apperception) and the centre, which is the point of our attention (*acies mentis*) in acts of perception. As the Polish researcher of Leibniz, Bogumił Jasinowski (1883–1969) pointed out for the first time, the close relation between the principle of reason and knowledge (intentionality)[50] is revealed in the word "rather" (*potius*), which was used in the so-called "Leibniz's questions" (German *Leibniz-Frage*): (1) "why is there something rather than nothing?" („cur sit potius aliquid quam nihil") and (2) "why is there this rather than anything else?" („cur sit potius hoc quam aliud"). Its interpretation does not come without major problems. In regards to (1), the affirmation of the presence of something is the original moment initiating our knowledge in general. This original moment of focusing our mind on *something* is what we call intentionality. What our knowledge is focused on is the world, where our attention seeks some specific elements and certain individual objects, which is expressed in the question (2). Antoine Arnauld, a contemporary of Leibniz, wrote in his paper *Des vraies et des fausses idées* (1683): "thinking which is not the thinking of something is impossible."[51] We can only ask why we think of something rather than of something else.[52] And so, the answer to question (1) cannot refer to anything antecedent to the thing that was found as to its reason (*le pourquoi*), but it simply states *that* it occurs. In this special case, the specific answer to the original question "why" is the statement *that* it occurs. To be more precise: the answer to the question why there is something rather than nothing, is acknowledgement (*positio*) *that* something is. As it is the case for the rose from the *Cherubinic Wanderer*, a mystical poem by Angelus Silesius that was described by Hei-degger, it "blooms *because* it blooms and it does not ask why it does."[53] And

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[50] See Bogumił JASINOWSKI, *Die analytische Urteilslehre Leibnizens in ihrem Verhältnis zu seiner Metaphysik* (Wien: Verlag von Christoph Reisner's Söhne, 1918), 78–82; B. PAŹ, *Naczelna zasada racjonalizmu*, 130–137; IDEM, "Cogito i intencjonalność. Realistyczny wymiar episte-mologii i monadologicznej metafizyki Leibniza." *Przegląd Filozoficzny. Nowa Seria* 25 (2016), 4 (100): 69–92.

[51] "Comme donc il est clair que je pense, il est clair aussi que je pense à quelque chose, c'est-à-dire que je connais et que j'aperçois quelque chose; car la pensée est essentiellement cela." Antoine ARNAULD, "Des vraies et des fausses idées," in IDEM, *Œuvres philosophique D'Arnuld*, ed. Charles Jourdain (Paris: L. Hachette, 1843), 351.

[52] "Et ainsi, ne pouvant y avoir de pensée ou de connaissance sans objet connu, je ne puis non plus me demander à moi-même la raison pourquoi je pense à quelque chose, que pourquoi je pense, étant impossible de penser qu'on ne pense à quelque chose. Mais je puis bien me demander pour-quoi je pense à une chose plutôt qu'à une autre." A. ARNAULD, "Des vraies et des fausses idées," 351.

[53] M. HEIDEGGER, *Der Satz vom Grund*, esp. 69–80.

that is precisely why we may not find the sought reason (*ratio reddenda*) in reality, but spontaneously and unconditionally (freely) we suppose (*ponere*, *setzen*) it. In his treatise, Jasinowski calls this act the act of "free establishment" (*freie Setzung*). This is a sort of original assertion which lays the foundations for the subsequent order of explanation, based on already found series of reasons which are constituted by the elements of the world, ordered from less to more perfect, and where the latter explains the former.

3.3. Determination vs *ratio determinans*

The ontological structure of determination in the papers of the German philosopher directly refers to the classical theories, e.g. these of Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics. Its meaning hides in dichotomous division to two parallel areas—an absolute one, which is connected with activity and creativity, and the contingent one—passive and being a subject to external activity. The former is, in Leibniz's terminology, *ratio determinans* (in Greek τὸ ποιοῦν [*to poioun*]) whereas the sphere that is subjected to external action is *entia determinata* (in Greek τὸ πασχόν [*to paschon*]). *Ratio determinans* is being characterised by ontological fullness.[54] The principle of determining reason, hence, may be called "the principle of fullness." The elements constituting this fullness are so called "requisites" (*requisitia*), i.e. the necessary and simple components of a given thing. These requisites form not only the fullness of determination of a given thing, i.e. its individual determination, its internal ontological structure and the references to other individuals, but also the reason of its existence.[55] Since Leibniz refused the division into essential and accidental determinations, he used the term *requisitum* as a substitution of those two. The determining reason, as is articulated in the formula of the determining reason, is an absolute metaphysical structure. It is characterised by the aforementioned fullness (*plenum*) and by necessity—it may not be non-existing, since it *ex definitione* satisfies the conditions of being the reason of existence. Moreover, as a form of being, it is of an active nature, which provides both existence and entity. The opposite pole is the realm of accidental beings, which do not act, properly speaking, and do not provide existence, but they are subjected to external activity and are given

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[54] "Determinans est habens omnia requisita," Gottfried Wilhelm LEIBNIZ, *Textes inédits d'après les manuscrits de la Bibliothèque provinciale de Hanovre*, publiés et annotés par Gaston Grua (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1948) [further quoted as Grua], 538.

[55] "Requistum est id sine quo res esse non potest, aggregatum omnium requisitorum est causa plena rei. Nihil sine ratione. Quia nihil est sine aggregato omnium requistorum." Grua, 267.

existence.[56] Nevertheless, they are also provided with a certain range of ontic perfection, which allows activity, but not in a vertical perspective (relative to absolute being), but in a horizontal one—i.e. within ideal intermonadic interactions. These interactions influence the acts of perception: "The creature is said to *act* externally insofar as it is perfect, and *to be acted upon* [*patir*] by another, insofar as it is imperfect. Thus we attribute *action* to a monad insofar as it has distinct perceptions, and *passion,* insofar as it has confused perceptions." (M. §49). In that, Leibniz accepted the Greek philosophers" thought, according to which activity is a demonstration of a perfect being, and being subjected to an action is the sign of an imperfect one.

3.4. Determination vs freedom

One of the greatest accusations against the Leibnizian conception of the principle of determining reason was the accusation of determinism. According to its critics, the principle would abolish freedom and bring fatalism, as it did in Spinoza's system. Leibniz was categorically opposed to that, although at the same time he agreed with the claim that his concept of freedom was based on the category of determination. This category was, in his interpretation, the basis of the order of the world and—paradoxically—of the individual freedom of man. But the determining reason, present in the formula of the principle and having a transcendental scope, does not establish—in critics' opinion—but abolishes freedom. The important thing is that Leibniz—as opposed to the voluntarist who, as Descartes, claimed that freedom is built on the foundation of indeterminacy or indifference (*libertas indifferentiae*)—stated that freedom is based on determination (*libertas determinationis*). He set determination as the basis of freedom against necessity understood as impossibility of being otherwise. The accusation was the result of quite elementary and common misunderstanding of rudimentary notions of Leibnizian metaphysics. The German philosopher made assumption antithetic to Spinoza's metaphysical presuppositions; Leibnizian metaphysics included pluralism and dynamism (beings as compositions of act and potency), teleologism and gradualism of beings. What is more, he based his concept of freedom on them. He set determination against necessity. The latter can be as well called "connexion" (*de connexion ou de determination*) which is something intermediate between necessity and contingency. Deter-

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[56] "[...] respondendum est primam determinari a secunda sumta idealiter, seu ideam secundae deprehensam in intellectu divino determinare primam voluntatem. At secundam determinari a prima, seu omnem ab ea entitatem suam accipere." Grua, 386.

mination, on one hand, connects individual datum and makes them one; on the other hand, is what is in force and influences reality with its own power. It binds together many elements of the world and determines a specific chain of reasons and results, causes and consequences (*les consequences*). The chain is originally hidden to us, given only in a certain latent form. It concerns the accidental as well as the necessary. The main difference is in that: "*the kind of determining* that is involved isn't the same as when one thing follows from another in the realm of the necessary."[57]

The kind of determining, which is different in geometric (or metaphysical) necessity and different in contingency (moral necessity), influences the way it has impact on man: "Geometrical and metaphysical "followings" necessitate, but physical and moral ones incline without necessitating."[58] On the basis of this claim, one may see that the only kind of necessity present in the physical world is the kind that follows from the fact that the world is subjected to the principle of the best. The necessity present in the physical world[59] is this kind of determination which follows from the best model chosen by God, according to which the actual world is organized and is actualized. The Greatest Good is the reason why God chooses rather this series (Latin *series*) than any other (*hoc potius quam aliud*). Hence the statement: "God always chooses the best, and is determined to do so although he chooses freely."[60] The Divine freedom is freedom that flows directly from the basis (*ratio*)[61] which is the best option of all possible (*optimum*). This basis is He Himself. And so it may be stated that directing towards the Good, He is not determined, but self-determined.

In the case of man, the opposite process takes place: "If we don't always notice the reason that determines us, or rather by which we determine ourselves, that's because we can't be aware of all the workings of our mind and of its usually confused and imperceptible thoughts [...]." (*New Essays*, II, XXI, 13).

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[57] G.W. LEIBNIZ, *New Essays*, II, XXI, 13. The French original reads as follows: "il y a de la différence dans la manière de determiner entre les consequences qui ont lieu en matière necessaire et celle qui ont lieu en matière contingente."

[58] Ibidem.

[59] Strictly speaking, this perspective does not require necessity as the material world as such is contingent. Necessity concerns metaphysics, logics (thinking) and mathematics.

[60] Ibidem.

[61] Bogumił Jasinowski uses the term *freedom of basis* (*Freiheit zum Grunde*). See B. JASI-NOWSKI, *Die analytische Urteilslehre Leibnizens*, esp. 79-85. See also Martin HEIDEGGER'S, lectures of 1928: *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang vom Leibniz* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klosermann, 1978), esp. 143, 277; IDEM, "Vom Wesen des Grundes", 165.

A man is externally determined, but also self-determined by his own goals. But every time, his freedom has its basis (*ratio*) as a sort of determination. Initially, this determination is—for us—something latent and obscure. This is rather a form of pre-determination which takes the form of a power directed (*intentio*) toward something[62] and present in the nature of any given being. This pre-determination may manifest itself in two forms: firstly, on the ontological level, where it means aiming to existence, which is characteristic of all that is in potency (*inclinatio ad existendum*). This is expressed in a famous quote: "Everything that is possible demands to exist (*Omne possibile exigit existere*)." GP VII, 194). It manifests itself also in the practical aspect, in which the good is an apriorical determinant of action (*inclinatio ad bonum*). Our freedom is founded on this determination and—as it is gradual—is proportional to the degree at which we are able to choose the greatest good (*optimum*).

4. THE PRINCIPLE OF RENDERING REASON (*principium reddendae rationis*)

Reason as the element of the principle of reason has its third dimension as the *redditio*, i.e. the claim to renewed (*re-*) providing (*dare*) or revealing of the basis (*ratio*) of what *is* in any way. This procedure of providing reason may be generally called explanation or justification.[63] The principle of rendering reason is far less known in comparison to the other forms of the principle and it is usually omitted in literature. The most significant analyses of this principle may be found in Heidegger's *Der Satz vom Grund*. In his interpretation, it was the main form of the principle of reason.

4.1. Definition

In one of his texts, Leibniz gave the following formula of his principle: "The original principle of every reasoning is that there is nothing and there happens nothing whose reason may not be provided *(reddi)*, at least by the omniscient—why it is rather than is not and why in this way and not any

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[62] Intentionality can be understood as the feature of mental acts, but also—in scholastic way—as heading of given accidental beings to the necessary being—see Adolf HEIMLER, *Die Bedeutung der Intentionalität im Bereich des Seins nach Thomas von Aquin (Versuch einer Synthese)* (Würzburg: Konrad Trilsch, 1962).

[63] More on justifying and explaining in the light of *ratio reddenda*, see B. PAŹ, *Naczelna zasada racjonalizmu*, 156–159. This form of the reason is sometimes mistaken with the sufficient reason: "It is necessary that we accept the demand of the sufficient reason (the principle of sufficient reason, the demand of criticism) which calls for accepting as true only explicable sentences." See Kazimierz AJDUKIEWICZ, "Zagadnienie uzasadniania," in IDEM, *Język i poznanie*, vol. II (Warszawa: PWN, 1985), 374–383.

other way. Briefly speaking: *For each thing the reason may be provided*."[64] In the case of the rationalistic Leibnizian doctrine, the example of a thing subjected to such an explanation may be the fact of the existence of something, a certain cognitive content or the formula of a given claim that is yet to be proven. However, there is a general claim (in the principle of rendering reason) to make the providing (*reddere*) reason something *a priori* to anything that *is* in any way: either an actual being, or the object of intellectual intuition (*intellectio pura*), or the purely possible essence of something—or even the logical copula of the proposition "S is P" written on a piece of paper.

4.2. The forms of *ratio reddenda*

As it is the case for the principle of reason, the principle of rendering reason is also universal. According to Heidegger's interpretation, the principle of rendering reason is mainly of an epistemological nature. Leibniz, though, gave it other meanings by discerning different forms of *reddenda*, which allow us to explain given actions, state of affairs or propositions. Firstly, he distinguished the inclining reason (*ratio reddenda inclinans*) concerning the power (*potentia activa*) present in particular things, which directs the activity of a subject towards a specific goal—that is towards the good. The reason understood in this way allows us to explain a given activity and constitutes the basis for our freedom. Secondly, Leibniz spoke of the necessitating reason (*ratio reddenda necessitans*) and it encompasses the dimension of necessary logical propositions. Its revelation takes place in the process of performing demonstrative procedures, to which Leibniz applied elements of logical calculus. It has both logical and epistemological senses. The philosopher wrote of explaining propositions in the dimensions of necessity and contingency as follows: "[…] the reason of proposition may always be provided; in case of necessary propositions the reason is necessary and in case of contingent ones the reason is the reason of inclination." [65]

And finally, the reason which provides actual existence (*ratio reddenda existificans*) concerns the one and only being whose existence is necessary. This being is the ontological basis maintaining actual beings as well as purely possible ones. Leibniz wrote of this being as follows: "[…] there is a reason

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[64] "Principium omnis ratiocinationis primarium est, nihil esse «aut» fieri, quin reddi ratio, saltem ab omniscio, cur sit quam non sit, aut cur sic quam aliter, pacis: *Omnium rationem reddi posse*." C. 25.

[65] "Commune omni veritati mea sententia est ut semper propositionis non identicae reddi possit ratio, in necessariis necessitans, in contingentibus contingens." Grua, 302.

why Existence prevails non-Existence, and the reason is an absolute Being who provides Existence." (GP VII, 289). This being is a metaphysical foundation to the principle of rendering reason since it constitutes *reddendum* that allows explaining every form of existence, including possible existence.

One should distinguish the objective element by means of which we explain something (*reddendum*), from the reason that enables us to see this element (*ratio subiectiva*). For Leibniz, reflection was the *ratio subiectiva*. This is a subjective (psychological) form of *redditio*, which helps us reveal reasons of specific cognitive content which come in latent form.

4.2. The epistemological and theological presuppositions

In the definition mentioned above, two characteristic elements that are typical of Leibnizian rationalism are worth commented on. The first one is the purely *a priori* nature of the principle of rendering reason (which is true for all forms of the principle of reason and all other principles); the second one is the theological (in a sense of the *theologia naturalis*) perspective.

Let us consider first its *a priori* nature. The principle is not articulated on the basis of successive experiences that would be then generalized, but it is antecedent to them. This is why Kant accused Leibniz of dogmatism, which was not justified. While describing that principle, Leibniz referred to experience, which however was not based on sensual testimony, but on the data of apperception and reflection. This is the sort of experience that is the foundation of his radical nativism. Leibnizian nativism was the claim of the innateness of all kind of knowledge (including sensual knowledge) and was the result of the premises that were assumed before, including the primate one—epistemological fundamentalism. Its meaning is best expressed in Leibniz's own words: "[…] since we are beings, being is innate in us—the knowledge of being is comprised in the knowledge that we have of ourselves."[66] This, in turn, led to the following metaphysical conclusion: "consideration of the nature of things is nothing but the knowledge of the nature of our mind and of these innate ideas, and there is no need to look for them outside oneself."[67] And so we a priori know everything that can be said of any specific object, provided that we reflect deeply in our minds and that our attention is focused on the content of the mind. The fundamental basis of Leibnizian apriorism is included in the nature of the relationship between a subject and an object of knowledge. Any object, considered from the per-

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[66] G.W. LEIBNIZ, *New Essays*, I, III, § 3.
[67] Ibidem, I, I, § 21

spective of the philosophy of subject initiated by Descartes (which link was Leibnizian philosophy), loses its status of something self-contained, unfamiliar and independent on us. In this new perspective, the object is understood as something that "is always a correlate" with individual awareness.[68] In other words, there is no such thing that is not the object of somebody's awareness—the awareness either of contingent or absolute subject.

"To be an object" in Leibnizian tradition is to be the object of somebody's awareness. In a manuscript, written in December of 1676, the philosopher writes: "Without [subjects] perceiving [things], there would be no existence at all."[69] From this perspective, each thing (*res*) is reduced to the mere content of representation or to what stands in front of the perceiving subject—i.e. an object (*objectum*).[70] Each object understood as such is constituted by subjective awareness in accordance with the principles and the nature of mind, which includes all elementary concepts (*alphabetum cogitationum humanarum*) and principles. The object of knowledge is a projection of this nature. For this reason, every potential object of our knowledge (or experience) is potentially known to us (apperception) before we experience it, provided that we analyze the nature of our mind first. When we experience specific phenomena or "objects," their reason may be *a priori* provided since the ontological reason of their presence "to us" is a specific subject. As for the reason that allows us to explain the content of our representations, their range "for us" is limited to "the truths of reason," i.e. logical tautologies being the results of the pure reason's activity, in which we prove—by means of finite demonstrative analysis—a nexus (*nexus*, *connexio*) between predicate and subject. For the contingent subject, though, an explanation of the reason of the truth of propositions based on the area of sensual perception, like for example "Andrzej Duda is the present president of Poland," goes beyond abilities of a contingent mind.

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[68] In late 18th century this correlation will be called the principle of awareness (*Satz vom Bewusstsein*), see e.g. Karl Leonard Reinhold. According to it, awareness is not only original to any objects, but also to the subject himself: "Vor dem Bewußtsein gibt es keinen Begriff von Vorstellung, Objekt und Subjekt; und diese Begriffe sind ursprünglich nur durch das Bewußtsein möglich, in welchem, und durch welches Vorstellung, Objekt und Subjekt zuerst voneinander unterschieden und aufeinander bezogen werden." Karl Leonard REINHOLD, *Beiträge zur Berichtigung bisheriger Mißverständnisse der Philosophen* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2003), 113.

[69] "Sine sentientibus nihil existeret." Grua, 268.

[70] Distinction between cognitive acts, content and the object was commonly known in scholastic. In Descartes' philosophy, however, it was not always respected. It was reintroduced to epistemology in late 19th century by Kazimierz Twardowski in his work *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen* (Wien: Hölder, 1894).

That poses the question whether sensual perception and the truths of facts that follow from it set the limit for the principle of reason? I believe that it is not the case. In his metaphysics of the principle of reason, Leibniz refers to the scholastic doctrine of God's knowledge (*Scientia Dei*) which he treats as an ideal model and measure of human contingent knowledge. This doctrine from medieval and renaissance metaphysics (especially Francis Suárez) lays theological foundation to the principle of rendering reason. It can be found in its formula, when Leibniz first claims "there is nothing and there happens nothing whose reason could not be provided," and then he adds: "at least by the Omniscient." This "Omniscient" (*omniscius*) is the absolute subject of knowledge who "adequately *sees* all things at the same time (*omnia simul adaequate videt*)." E. 445). His intuitive, direct knowledge encompasses the whole universe of reality. Because it is atemporal, it is not divided into phases; it encompasses all things in one act of seeing (*uno obtutu*). He sees all things as commonly related to each other. This relation, which originally means an ontological nexus of things (*nexus rerum*), is later transferred to language and is expressed in a copula "is" in predicate—subject propositions (*nexus praedicati cum subjecto*). The order of explanation assumed by Leibniz is not only horizontal (representation of a thing—perceiver as *ratio reddenda* of representation)—as in British empiricists' (Berkeley and Hume) doctrines—but also vertical (representation of a thing—somebody that provides the representation's content). Leibniz passes from the horizontal to the vertical aspect, basing on the structures of reflection that creates the epistemological basis of his metaphysics. Therefore, when Leibniz claims that there would be nothing if there were no perceiver, he immediately adds: "Without the first Perceiver, i.e. the cause of things, there is no perception."[71]

4.3. Reductive reasoning vs *ratio reddenda*

The sense of the principle of rendering reason is clearly seen while applied to propositions. This is especially true about what Leibniz called the "truths of reason" and after Kant is called "analytic judgments." The principle of rendering reason has in Leibnizian interpretation the status of reductive reasoning,[72] i.e. such reasoning in which results (aftereffects) follow from reasons (causes). And since all things are connected with the chain of relations of dependency which explain their existence as well as their acti-

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[71] "Sine uno primo sentiente, quod idem et causa rerum est, nihil sentiretur." Grua, 268.

[72] See B. PAŹ, *Naczelna zasada racjonalizmu*, 177–192, esp. 183–185.

vity, then all true propositions—according to Leibniz—must reflect these relations and express them in predicate—subject propositions. Since the subject of these propositions represents real monadic subject, which is "a closed whorl (*complicatio*)" (Leibniz's term) of various determinations being actualized during the lifetime of this subject. The example of such content is the discovery of heliocentric model by Copernicus. This is why the sentence "Copernicus discovered heliocentric model of Universe" is true as a proposition whose basis is of *a posteriori* kind—in the library of Jagiellonian University the manuscript of six books of his *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (1543) still can be found—but the basis is also of *a priori* kind: in individual notion of Nicolaus Copernicus the fact of being a discoverer of the heliocentric model has always been included. In the case of the contingent human intellect the truth of the sentence can only be verified empirically, but for the Omniscient subject the relation between "Copernicus" and the predicate "is the discoverer of the heliocentric model" is a logical tautology, just as "The bachelor is unmarried." In the case of the latter, everyone can verify the sentence provided that he is able to analyze the concept of "being a bachelor"—in the process of analysis, he would find the determination of "being unmarried"; only Omniscient God sees *a priori* truth of a proposition that belongs to the truths of facts (synthetic judgments). However, the principle of rendering reason is always in force, although not for every subject it can be effectively applied as the principle of demonstration *a priori* to synthetic judgements. The basis of validity of this principle—as well as the other—is located in metaphysics, not in logic or epistemology.

V. CONCLUSION

The principle of reason, for it has many functions and for its position on the background of other principles, was rightly called *principium grande* by Leibniz. Its source is the seeing of reality which appears as completely ordered and intelligible. In the process of analysis of various forms of the principle, one may discover complex structures of reality itself that are expressed in language by this principle. At the same time, it serves as an instrument, which helps us to explain the existence of the world, its nature, and phenomena we experience. Leibniz attributed general extent to it and therefore the principle is in force in all the areas of reality: of being, of knowledge and of activities (praxis). Hence, there is no use asking if the principle applies to metaphysics or to logics as it is metaphysical principle

as well as the logical one, but it also applies to all other fields of our knowledge. One may still ask, though, in which of the fields the principle has its original form and which of its other formulas are derivative with regard to the former. Answering that question may not disregard philosophical and ideological context, which accompanied the German philosopher and was also stressed by him. The context and background of the philosophical considerations is in this case constituted by natural theology, being a part of generally understood metaphysics. As it was stated and, hopefully, proved in this article, Leibniz himself was aware of this and he directly referred to it. I believe that only if we take this context into account, the principle of reason may be presented and be properly understood, interpreted as the part of the whole Leibnizian philosophical system.

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ZASADA RACJI W INTERPRETACJI G.W. LEIBNIZA:
GENEZA, GŁÓWNE ZAŁOŻENIA I FORMY

S t r e s z c z e n i e

Przedmiotem niniejszego tekstu jest zasada racji w interpretacji G.W. Leibniza. Choć sam Leibniz nazywał ją *principium grande* swojej filozofii, to jednak nigdzie nie podał choćby zarysu jej systematycznego wykładu. Celem mojego tekstu jest taki skrótowy opis tej zasady. Tekst składa się z trzech zasadniczych części: w pierwszej podaję systematyczny wykład zasady racji ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem pojęciowej charakterystyki terminów „zasada" i „racja", w drugiej prezentuję zasadę racji od strony jej genezy, wreszcie w części trzeciej szczegółowo omawiam trzy postaci zasady racji: zasadę racji dostatecznej, zasadę racji determinującej oraz zasadę racji uzasadniającej. Przyjmuję dwie główne tezy interpretacyjne: po pierwsze, właściwa wykładnia zasady racji wymaga uwzględnienia całościowego kontekstu filozofii Leibniza, tj. nie wystarcza (powszechne w literaturze przedmiotu) do jej systematycznego wykładu ograniczenie się tylko do jednego obszaru, np. logiki. Po drugie, ostateczną metodologiczną i heurystyczną podstawą zasady racji jest Leibnizjańska metafizyka, w szczególności teologia naturalna.

THE PRINCIPLE OF REASON ACCORDING TO LEIBNIZ: THE ORIGINS, MAIN ASSUMPTIONS AND FORMS

S u m m a r y

The subject of this article is Leibnizian interpretation of the principle of reason. Although the German philosopher called it *principium grande* of his philosophy, we do not find its systematic exposition in Leibniz's works. The main aim of my paper is to present a short exposition of the principle. The article consists of three parts: in the first I present systematic exposition of the principle of reason with particular emphasis on explication of terms "principle" and "reason," in the second, I show the origins of the principle, finally, in the third part, I discuss in detail three forms of it: the principle of sufficient reason, the principle of determining reason and the principle of rendering reason. I accept two main theses: firstly, a proper interpretation of this principle requires taking into account the whole context of Leibnizian philosophy, i.e. one cannot limit oneself (as it is usually happens among researchers) to only one discipline, e.g. logic. Secondly, the ultimate methodological and heuristical foundation of the principle of reason is Leibnizian metaphysics, especially natural theology.

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