

Review of: "A Priori Arguments for Determinism/Universal Necessity – and the Leibnizian Theodicy"

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The paper aims at demonstrating Leibnizian idea that everything that exists is necessarily exists. The author examines very well Leibniz's argument in favor of this claim and tries to defend the claim against main objections. One of the interesting points of the paper for me was the introducing the notion of moral necessity in contrast to metaphysical, logical and nomological necessities which are more familiar notions in contemporary metaphysics. The author claims that Leibniz's Master argument goes as follows: "According to Leibniz, given the existence of God – that is, the existence of the absolutely perfect being: all-powerful, all-knowing, all-good, and, last but not least, *all-rational* – it is, (a), *morally necessary* that the actual world is the best possible world. It is, (b), metaphysically necessary, hence *morally necessary*, that the best possible world is no other world than w_0 . It is, therefore [by (a), (b), and the transitivity of necessary identity], *morally necessary* that the actual world is w_0 ."

I agree with the author that the Master argument is valid. But I have problem with one of the premises of the argument. Before that let us see the Master argument in detail:

Master Argument has some presuppositions for premise a and b according the paper (quoted from the paper) as follows:

- (I) a possible world is actual if, *and only if*, it is created – made actual – by God;
 - (II) God creates a possible world if, *and only if*, it is a best possible world and there is no other best possible world beside it.
 - (III) if w_0 is a best possible world and there is no other best possible word beside it, *then* this excellence – the excellence described in the antecedent of this conditional – is true of w_0 with metaphysical necessity.
- So, since metaphysical necessity entails moral necessity, therefore, morally necessary that the best possible world is w_0 .
- (IV) it is morally necessary that God creates (makes *actual*) a possible world.
 - (V) it is metaphysically, hence morally, necessary that at most one possible world is actual.

My two concerns are about the premise II among the mentioned premises. First, I doubt that there would be any best possible world at all. As the author himself is aware many contemporary philosophers of religion deny the existence of the best possible world since the best possible world is a conception like the greatest natural number. Every good possible

world you imagine you can add one another good state of affairs in that world to the extent that there be another better possible world. For example, if you give a beggar a help in one PW you can help her more by giving her your smile for example and then that PW has another good state which makes it better, given that all the states of the two possible worlds are the same. So, it would be enough for God's perfect goodness to actualize a possible world which is good enough among the possible worlds. Therefore, premise II that expect from divine perfection to actualize the best possible world is not tenable.

My Second concern is due to Leibnizian conception of God's creation of the best possible world. Consider a man who is in jail of an oppressor under torture. Does he accept that it would be morally necessary for him to be under hard suffering because God necessities this state of affairs for him and He is the most beneficent and merciful creator of the world? Several human beings are engaging and enduring suffering that caused by oppressors and totalitarian systems or under very hard pressures from their social or natural states. How can one rationalize the claim that this actual world is the best possible world ever because and exactly because the creator of the world is the most perfect divinity. The suffering which happens in the world mostly are due to human free actions which could be done otherwise in more morally better possible world. During the history of mankind by trying to pay more attention to human and woman rights we actualize better world in our actual world. The lives of many people change due to human free actions towards establishment of more democratic states. I think that we ought not put the pressure of actualizing the best possible world totally on God's shoulders. God creates us as free agents in a normal and really good possible world. He has sent His messenger and His soul to us to guide us. He accepts our prayers. He is active in our world but we ourselves have to build and then actualize the better possible world. If there would be any best possible world it can be actualized not only by God's eternal will but God decides that we human beings try to construct our world in a better way and among possible world which could be actualized try to actualize one of them which contains more smile and happiness.

So I appreciate Leibnitz for his clear thoughts and the author who in a very nuanced manner introduces Leibnitz's arguments. But I disagree with them that God actualizes the best possible world. I think God actualizes a world good enough for human beings to try to construct freely the best possible world.