

A question from Evan:

Why does Leibniz think he is entitled to conclude that there is a necessarily existing *substance*? Shouldn't he be concluding at most that there is a necessarily existing *reason*?

Answer: Leibniz is just assuming that a "reason" or "ground" for something can be found only in some substance(s). It is hardly surprising that he would think this, since substances and their modification are all that exists in his ontology.

What is a possible world?

A system of complete concepts, each of which is the concept of a monad whose existence is possible.

Remember that what distinguishes one monad from another is the series of "perceptions" in virtue of which a monad represents the whole system of monads. Given the pre-established harmony among monads, it follows that if one monad had been different all the monads would have been different too. In which case, a different possible world – a different system of complete concepts – would have been instantiated.

Could God have created more than one possible world?

In other words, could God have instantiated more than one system of complete concepts?

Not according to Leibniz. He thinks that this would be logically impossible, and that even God cannot do what is logically impossible.

In fairness to the question, however, Leibniz is not all that clear about what makes it logically impossible. Why couldn't a monad's perceptions be simply mistaken? If it could, then it's at least logically possible that a single monad be created without any other monad. And it's hard to see why God couldn't create all possible monads, or any subset of those possible monads.

However, it is clear that God could not both create *all* the monads *and* create only a subset of monads. By way of illustration, suppose that there are three possible monads – a, b, and c. God would in that case have to choose among the following (unordered) sets:

{ }	{ c }	{ bc }
{ a }	{ ab }	{ abc }
{ b }	{ ac }	

There are no other alternatives, and it is logically impossible to choose more than one of them.

Which alternative is best? Variety and harmony are both important. Variety would rule out worlds with too few monads or not enough different kinds of monads. Harmony would rule out “worlds” in which monads massively misrepresent the whole system.

Is the actual world necessary?

1. Necessarily God exists.
2. Necessarily, if God exists God creates the BPW. (Value is not contingent.)
3. Necessarily, *this* world is the BPW.
4. Therefore, necessarily, God creates this world.
5. Necessarily if God create this world then this world exists.
6. Therefore, necessarily this world exists.

All truths are analytic.

The contingent ones require an infinite analysis to dig the predicate out of the subject. Only God can do that.

Freedom

There is never an “equilibrium of indifference.”

There are degrees of freedom.

The maximum degree of freedom is this.

To choose the best option because you see that it is the best and because you prefer the best.

“God or a perfectly wise person will always choose the best that they know of, and if one side were not better than the other, they would choose neither the one nor the other.”