

Leibniz Lecture 2  
*Monadology* 31-69

Human Situation

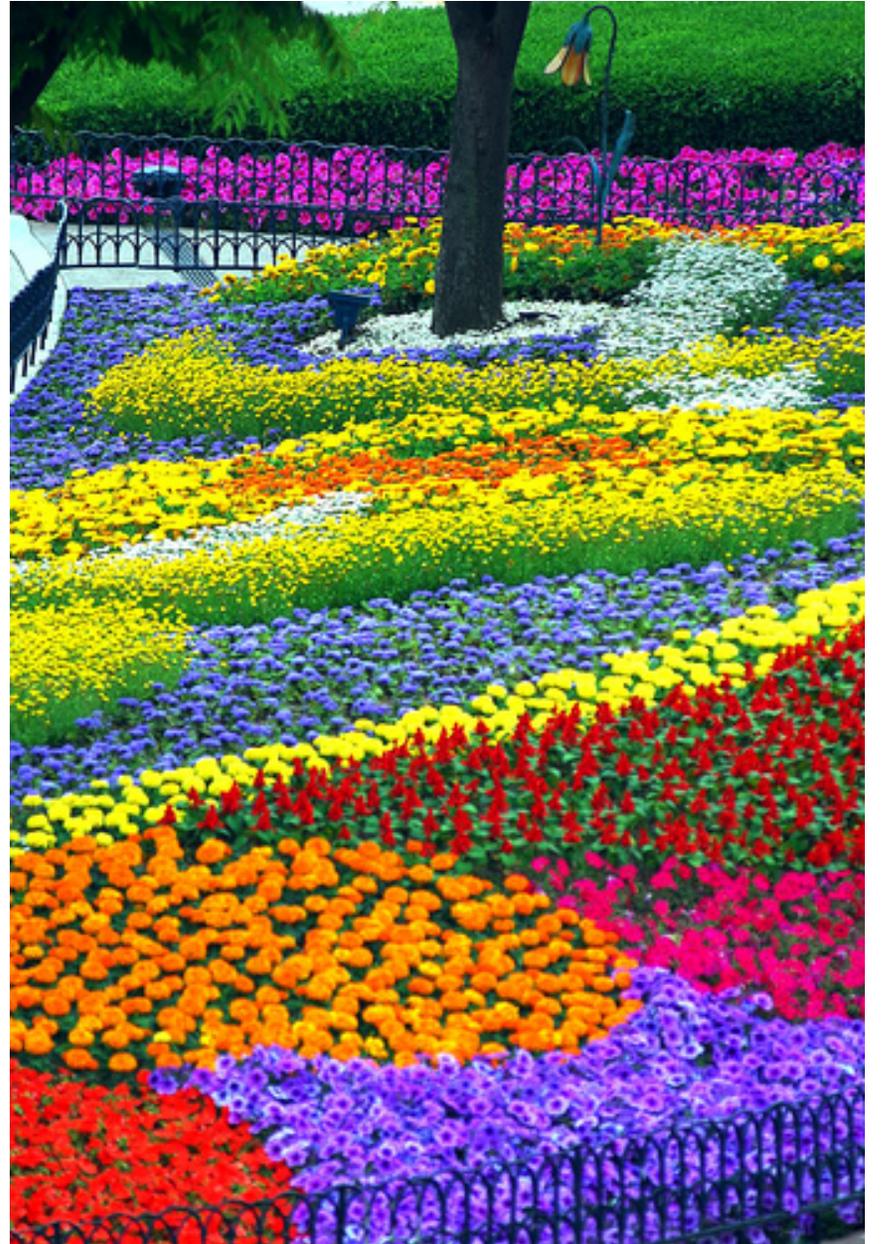
Team Omega

Spring 2010

# Outline

- **Humans' special knowledge**
- **The Nature of God: Power, Knowledge, Will**
- **Humans and created monads**
- **God's Creation**
- **The Beauty of Nature**





# Humans' Knowledge

- Knowledge of necessary truths and abstractions
- Two great principles:
  - Contradiction (31)
  - Sufficient Reason (32)
- Two kinds of truths: (33)
  - Truths of reasoning
  - Truths of fact
- Truths of fact could be known only through an infinite analysis (36-7); “Therefore the sufficient or ultimate reason must needs be outside of the sequence”
- This must be God (38)



**Question:**

**What belongs in the complete individual concept of a human being, say, Professor Estess?**

# The Nature of God: Power, Knowledge, Will (48)

- Power: Source of everything
- Knowledge: contains details of the ideas
- Will: changes or produces things in accordance with the principles of the greatest good
- The ultimate reason for things (38)
- The supreme substance (40)
- Unique, universal, necessary, with nothing independent outside of it (40)
- Contains as much reality as possible (40)

## God's Nature (cont'd)

- The source of existences and also of essences (43)
- God's knowledge is the source of reality in essences, possibilities, and eternal truths (44)
- For God alone, if he be possible, he must necessarily exist (an a priori proof of God's existence) 45
- Eternal truths are not dependent on God's will (as Descartes thinks); rather, they "depend solely upon his understanding and are the inner objects of it" (46)
- Contingent truths do depend on God's will—they "depend upon fitness or the choice of the greatest good" (46)

# Created Monads

- Humans and created monads: (Compare to God's attributes, 48)
  - Subject or basis
  - Perception
  - Appetition
- Action in a created monad: greater perfection = clear perceptions
- Passion/passivity = less distinct or confused perceptions (49)
- Greater perfection: One thing contains a priori the reason for something in the other thing (50)



# Created Monads (cont'd.)

- Created monads “interactions” are only ideal (51)
- Action and passion in monads are reciprocal through God (52)
- Every monad “is a perpetual living mirror of the universe” (56)
- Monads’ perceptions “in a confused way...reach out to infinity” but are limited and differentiated in the degree of their distinct perceptions” (60).
- All space is filled up, all bodies intercommunicate “so that he who saw all could read in each one what is happening everywhere, and even what has happened and what will happen.” (61)

# God's Creation

(See also *Discourse I-V*)

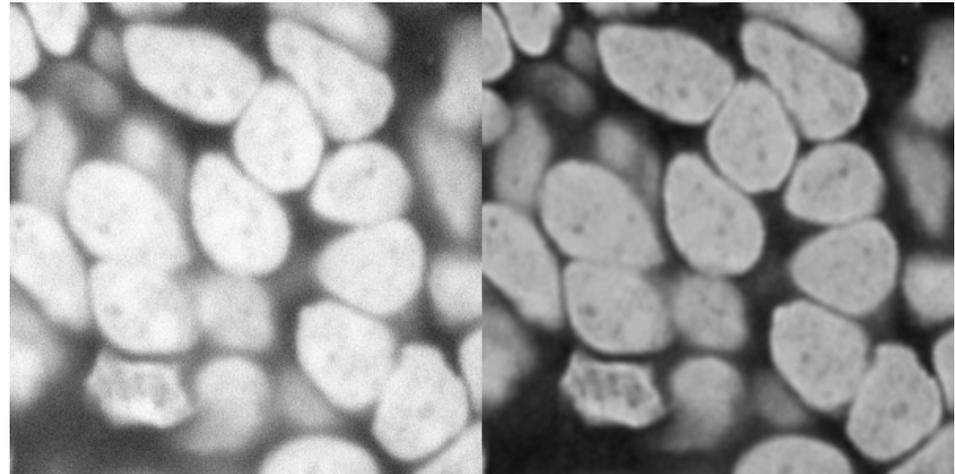
- God must have chosen to create the best from among an infinite number of possible universes (53)
- This choice is due to fitness or degree of perfection (54)
- “This is the cause for the existence of the greatest good; namely, that the wisdom of God permits him to know it, his goodness causes him to choose it, and his power enables him to produce it.”
- An infinite number of universes are actually the same universe seen from the perspective of each monad (57).
- Goodness of the universe: greatest possible variety together with greatest order (58).

# The Beauty of Nature

- Each body represents the entire universe; the soul monad represents more distinctly the body of which it is the entelechy, and also through this, the entire universe (62).
- Body + Soul = Living being, animal (63)
- “Every organic body of a living being is a kind of divine machine or natural automaton, infinitely surpassing all artificial automatons” (64)



- “There is a world of created things... in the minutest particle of matter” (65)
- “Every portion of matter may be conceived as like a garden full of plants and like a pond full of fish.” (66)
- “There is nothing uncultivated, or sterile or dead in the universe, no chaos, no confusion, save in appearance” (69).





**For next time:  
Mon. February 22**

- The relation between humans and God: The city of God
- *Monadology* 70-90
- *Discourse on Metaphysics* XXXV-XXXVII