

Q. What are Monads according to Leibniz?
Explain some of the salient features
of Leibniz monadology?

ans:- According to Leibniz the world consists
of an infinite plurality of substances
which he called monad, each of which
is like the ego in ourselves. There are
infinite monads but each of them is
as real as the single substance of
Spinoza. The Monads are eternal and
can be destroyed only by miracle on
the part of God. No Monad has any
part and is truly indivisible, self
content and exclusive of everything else.
Being a real unit, each monad contains
the whole infinity of existence. It is
the whole universe itself potentially.

Leibniz states that the
monads were organised in a hierarchy

with God as the dominant monad. Each monad has its own line of development due to which Leibniz called it appetition, which is responsible for changes in the monad. Each monad reflects the world from its point of view but it has no effect upon, and is not affected by any other monad. The monad has no window through which anything might come in or go.

The salient features of Leibniz monadology are as follows -

- ① According to Leibniz monads are spiritual or metaphysical atoms. They are not physical points or mathematical points. Only metaphysical points are true and real. Without metaphysical point there would be nothing real, because without units there would be no manifoldness.

② The multiplicity of tangible - Concrete things all around us and the unity of the clear, general idea are brought together in the monad concept because the monad is not just a thing among other things outwardly visible, but is interiority itself. It is a point of concentration for the multiplicity of phenomenon around us.

③ Leibnitz stated that every monad is self enclosed. He called it the windowlessness of monads. That means no influence can enter into a monad or no influence can go out of a monad. But though monads are considered to be windowless yet every monad is a mirror of the universe. Each monad generates the

images of other monads by its own activity without receiving anything from outside.

④ Monads being spiritual has 2 important characteristics of perception and appetition.

By virtue of its perception each monad mirrors the whole infinity of existence.

The more developed monads in the series has clear perception and the less

developed monads has ~~changed~~ confused

perception. Depending on their infinite

series of perception the monads can be arranged in a hierarchy with God as the highest God Monad or the Monad of

Monads.

God represents the universe with perfect clarity and distinctness.

Even in the same monad, according to its stages of development there are

different degrees of perception. The course of each monad's development leads towards the ideal (that is to say the idea of attaining clear perception).

This tendency in monad is called by Leibniz appetition. Each monad contains within itself the principle of self-development which is called by Leibniz immanent teleology.

⑤ Leibniz argued that there is a pre-established harmony among the various monads. This harmony has been imparted by God to the monads by God. Monads are arranged by God in such a way that they are bound to function harmoniously.

Criticism — The theory of monads of Leibniz contains a number of inconsistencies.

Leibniz stated that Monads are substances. The basic characteristic of a substance is that it is self-caused but Leibniz quite inconsistently drew the distinction between created monad and the creator Monad. Leibniz stated that Monads are eternal and can be destroyed by only by miracle on the part of God - but if they are created then they can be destroyed then they cease to be eternal and self-content units.