

# Leibniz's law and the doctrine of internality

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We saw that McTaggart gave an argument for the view that the essence of every thing is dependent on every property of every other thing. For illustration, let's take the example of Bush winning the 2000 election. We can argue as follows that this property of Bush is part of my essence:

1. It is a necessary truth that if Bush did not win the 2000 election, then nothing would have had the quality of being alive while Bush won the 2000 election.
  2. It is a necessary truth that if I have the quality of being alive while Bush won the 2000 election, then, if  $x$  does not have this quality, then  $x \neq$  me. (instance of Leibniz's Law)
  3. I have the quality of being alive while Bush won the 2000 election.
  4. It is a necessary truth that if  $x$  does not have the quality of being alive while Bush won the 2000 election, then  $x \neq$  me. (2,3)
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- C. It is a necessary truth that if Bush had not won the 2000 election, I would not have existed (i.e., nothing would have been me). (1,4)

Conclusion: Any difference in the qualities of one object implies a difference in the nature of every other object; nothing could have existed had not everything else been exactly as it is. This points to the conclusion that, in some important sense, seemingly distinct things form a unity.

What problem does Moore see with this kind of argument?

Consider the following two interpretations of premise 2:

- (2a) Necessarily [I have the quality of being alive while Bush won the 2000 election  $\rightarrow$  ( $x$  does not have this quality  $\rightarrow x \neq$  me)]
- (2b) I have the quality of being alive while Bush won the 2000 election  $\rightarrow$  [Necessarily ( $x$  does not have this quality  $\rightarrow x \neq$  me)]

One of these is clearly true (and is really an instance of Leibniz's Law). Which is it?

One of these makes the argument valid. Which is it?

Does either of these imply the other?