



EUROPEAN SCIENCE FOUNDATION
STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE
HUMANITIES
ESF EXPLORATORY WORKSHOPS UNIT



UNIVERSITE DE RENNES 1

EQUIPE D'ACCUEIL 1270
"PHILOSOPHIE DES
NORMES"
INSTITUT DE PHILOSOPHIE

LEIBNIZ AND THE POWERS OF LANGUAGE

Exploratory workshop
Leibniz and the powers of language
March 6 – 9 2002

Scientific report by Dominique BERLIOZ

The workshop project

The purpose of the workshop was to gather Leibniz scholars from Europe and outside Europe in order to examine the advancement of the studies on Leibniz on Language.

This workshop was in continuity with other workshops or conferences, which regularly take place on leibnizian topics. In France for instance, since 1981, including the present workshop, five conferences of this kind took place, supported by the Leibniz Gesellschaft : two at Seillac by the Loire Valley directed by Professor André Robinet on "*Leibniz et la Renaissance*" and "*Leibniz et le meilleur des mondes*", one in the Centre Culturel International de Cerisy la Salle, directed by Dominique Berlioz and Professor Frédéric Nef on "*Actualité de Leibniz: les deux labyrinthes*", one in Aix en Provence on "*L'idée de Nature chez Leibniz*" directed by Professor Martine de Gaudemar. The proceedings of these workshops were published in Studia Leibniziana Sonderhefte or Supplementa.

The sponsoring of the present workshop by the ESF has been a great help on behalf of the organisation, giving the opportunity for the attendees to make the best of it.

The workshop project had been submitted to an international scientific committee composed of specialists of Leibniz philosophy, philosophy of language and linguistics and had been fully approved by the Leibniz Gesellschaft. One of the vice president of the Gesellschaft (**André Robinet**) attended the workshop, so did **Concha Roldán**, Presidenta de la Sociedad Leibniz Española and **Mark Kulstad** President-Elect of the Leibniz Society of North America. Four Leibniz scholars, two from Israel, one from Denmark and one from Germany asked to join the attendees as listeners, as did some advanced students of Rennes.

The organising and supporting structure was the “Equipe d’accueil 1270” devoted to the Philosophy of norms and the Institut de philosophie (UFR de philosophie) of the University of Rennes 1 which provided material and administrative support and facilities before, during and after the workshop.

The scientific content and organisation of the workshop.

The papers were read in French or English. Both languages were used for the discussion. The abstracts and most of the texts were at the attendee’s disposal so that the mutual understanding was no problem.

The program was scheduled in such a manner that the various aspects of the topic chosen would be treated. As a rule, three papers were read on each half-day session. A time was always dedicated to discussion after each paper, or group of papers. Two round tables were organised, one (moderator : **F. Nef**) gathering scholars of the university of Rennes 1, a mathematician (**M-F. Roy**), an historian of mathematics (**A. Herreman**) and a computer scientist (**O. Ridoux**) to discuss the possible impact and the relevance of Leibniz’s thought for specialists of formal languages as computer languages or mathematics. Another round table (moderator: **J. Lagrée**) dedicated to Leibniz context, was an opportunity to consider Leibniz’ philosophy of language in connection with various functions of language, especially the dialogical and contextual aspects of religious dissensions. Comparisons were made with Locke (**J-M.Vienne**) and La Ramée (**N. Robinet**). The analogy with Ibn Rosh (Averroes), another rationalist figure concerning another religious problem was presented by a tunisian Leibniz scholar (**T. Ben Guiza**).

Apart from these round tables, the main trends of Leibniz' thought on language and their implications on ontology, law, ethics and science were examined.

The aim of the whole workshop was to take into account Leibniz' treatment of language, focusing on topics which have recently been shown as important, concerning etymology, rhetoric, art of controversy, metaphor. The point was to give an image of a philosopher akin with the several aspects of language and not only, as was often the case at the beginning of the XXth. century, as a mere logician looking for and promoting a formal and rational languages.

Bertrand Fortin, first Vice-president of the University of Rennes 1 welcomed the attendees of such an international workshop. **Antonio Lamarra**, Senior Scientific Secretary to the Standing committee for the Humanities presented the ESF and the prospects of its policy, particularly the aims of exploratory workshops. **Dominique Berlioz** presented then the workshop, insisting on the double support of the ESF and of the University of Rennes 1 which made this meeting possible. She noted that the question of language - so important for Leibniz' studies - had been recently emphasized by new editions and translations of unpublished papers. Moreover, this problem is of the utmost significance in our European context.

The opening session was dedicated to a keen examination of Leibniz Lexicon on substance (**A. Robinet**) and on the problem of innovation and tradition in philosophical language as it is particularly pregnant in Leibniz *Monadology* (**R. Palaia**).

The afternoon session on March 6th concerned the so called cratylan problem and the wide range questions concerning the origin of language, between nature and convention. This question was actually one of the main problems treated all along the workshop through a variety of viewpoints. Leibniz subtle answers were treated at first through a comparison with Locke's conception of nomination on the one hand (**M. Kulstad**) and the hypothesis of an adamic language as mentioned in Jacob Boehme influential mystical philosophy on the other hand (**V. Riant-Pektas**). The whole range of the dialectical powers of language were then sketched in a stimulating and prospective paper, emphasising dialogical and controversy solving aspects, so important on behalf of peace seeking (**M. Dascal**).

The second day was dedicated to Leibniz' conception of relations between language and logic, ontology and reality, question tightly linked with the combinatory function of language as well with the analysis one (**E. Yakira**). The difficult question of the naming of the singular and the status of the individual accident was acutely examined (**F. Nef**). So was the problem of conceptual inherence in existing beings (**J-B. Rauzy**) and the puzzling solutions that emerge from a theory of language as calculus considered in a nominalistic prospect (**F. Drapeau-Vieira-Contim**).

During the afternoon session, three papers were read concerning respectively the metaphysical status of relations (**C. Schneider**), the problem concerning the rational language between mere speculation and experience (**M. Picon**) and the analogy between body, corporal manifestations and language as expression (**A. Cardoso**).

The fifth session on Friday morning was dedicated to Leibniz' conception of expressiveness of language, compared with Wittgenstein's (**F. Gil**) and also considered as the power of notation and written signs, not only as a transcription for words but also for music (**C. Gaudin**). The metaphorical and literary impact of language was then presented, pointing out the philosophical importance and significance of literary characters and narratives in Leibniz' works and their implications on the conception of the person as individual substance (**M. de Gaudemar**). This leibnizian conviction of the power and expressiveness of language was then examined as promoted in the German tradition of the very first Leibniz' followers (**C. Mercer**).

The sixth session turned on language and its implication in Ethics (**C. Roldán**) and Law. On this last topic, two papers were read, one on alethic en deontic logic (**W. Lenzen**) the other, on problems concerning paradoxes and perplex cases and the tentative solutions proposed by Leibniz in order to solve them. This study of the implications between law and language, a quite innovating topic in Leibnizian studies, is linked with the translation and edition of fairly unknown texts by the young Leibniz (**P. Boucher**).

The last session on Saturday morning presented Leibniz conception of language between tradition and modernity, examining the implications of mereology from various viewpoints (**H. Burkhardt**) and the problem of reference with the enlightening comparison with Frege's revolution in logic (**H. Ishiguro**). The last two papers strengthened the philosophical importance of metaphors. The image of labyrinth was studied as a very tantalising instance (**C. Marras**). As a matter of fact metaphors appear to be efficient philosophical tools when nicely built so as to mirror the structure of things and worlds (**D. Rutherford**).

Although some papers were not read because some professors were impeded to attend the workshop for strong personal or political reasons, and apologise for it in due time, one can say that the attention and debates of the attendees was excellent from beginning to end of the workshop.

Proceedings

Contacts with publishers (Steiner, Vrin) are under process for the proceedings.

Forthcoming projects

Some problems emerge as questions which would be worth studying, especially concerning **Individualism and the status of the individual**, a topic liable of a large range of treatments. As matter of fact, the numerous studies under process concern principally the history of political thought (especially Hobbes, Rousseau and Hegel) and much less metaphysical and ontological points of view. Therefore it seems worthwhile to focus on the possible links and implications between theoretical questions concerning the emergence of individuals in metaphysics, ontology and logic, for instance the question of parts and whole, the question of political universals, and there practical import and application in Law and Ethics.

Such a project would concern a wide historical period, for instance from the Renaissance and Late Scholastics to the Enlightenment. It should concern teams in various parts of Europe and could be roughly sketched as follows : Portugal for the late scholastics, the Centre de la Renaissance in Tours, the TU Berlin concerning Ethics, Roma, for the Lessico Intelletuale Europeo, Munchen for mereology and relations, Rennes for the logical, legal and metaphysical aspects of this question in modern philosophy, and also the Spanish CSIC , this list is not exhaustive, but nevertheless arbitrary but is the direct product of actual links and affinities between attendees of the workshop. Moreover the collaboration for such a project of historians of Law and specialists of politics and applied ethics is warmly welcomed.

Dominique Berlioz
5 April 2002



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IREM, Campus of Beaulieu, Block 32a, room 12

Final Programme

Wednesday 6th March, morning

- 10:00 Registration of the attendees
- 10:30 Welcome by Bertrand FORTIN, Vice-President of the University of Rennes 1
Opening by Professor Antonio LAMARRA, Senior Scientific Secretary to the Standing Committee for the Humanities, Head of the Humanities unit of the European Science Foundation
- 11:00 Dominique BERLIOZ (Université de Rennes 1)
Introduction to the workshop
- Chairwoman : Concha ROLDÁN
- 11:15 André ROBINET (Vice President of the Leibniz Gesellschaft)
Structure et tendance du lexique de la substance chez Leibniz.
- 12:00 Roberto PALAIA (University, La Sapienza, Rome)
Tradition et innovation dans le langage de la Monadologie.
- 13:00 Luncheon

Wednesday 6th March, afternoon

Language between nature and convention

Chairman : André ROBINET

- 14:30 Mark KULSTAD (The Rice University, Houston)
Leibniz Locke and Gold
- 15:15 Virginie RIANI (Rennes and Bochum)
Leibniz et la Natursprache de Jacob Boehme
- 16:00 Coffee break
- Chairman : Roberto PALAIA
- 16:15 Marcelo DASCAL (Tel-Aviv University)
La puissance dialectique du langage chez Leibniz.
- 18:30 Welcoming Reception by the Député Maire de Rennes
- 20:00 Dinner at "La petite ferme"

Thursday 7th March, morning

Logic and Ontology

Chairman : Donald RUTHERFORD

- 09:00 Frédéric NEF (Rennes 1, Institut Jean-Nicod, CNRS Paris)
La nomination du singulier : le statut de l'accident individuel.
- 09:45 Elhanan YAKIRA (The Hebrew University, Jerusalem)
Combinatoire et Analyse.
- 10:30 Coffee break

Chairman : Elhanan YAKIRA

- 11:00 Jean-Baptiste RAUZY (CNRS Paris)
L'inhérence conceptuelle, la raison suffisante et David Wiggins.
- 11:45 Filipe DRAPEAU-CONTIM (Rennes I University)
L'analyse logique de la langue : le rapport entre nominalisme et calcul logique chez Leibniz.
- 13:00 Luncheon

Thursday 7th March, afternoon

Language and Reality

Chairman : Marcelo DASCAL

- 14:30 Christina SCHNEIDER (Munich University)
Leibniz' Metaphysics and Relations
- 15:15 Adelino CARDOSO (University of Lisbon)
L'analogie entre corps et langage chez Leibniz
- 16:00 Marine PICON (Paris IV University)
Spéculation et expérience : sur l'idée d'une langue rationnelle.
- 16:45 Coffee-break
- 17–18:30 Round Table 1 : Leibniz and formal languages (Moderator: Frédéric NEF)
Alain HERREMAN (Rennes1), historian of mathematics ; Olivier RIDOUX (Rennes1),
informatician ; Marie-Françoise ROY (Rennes1), mathematician.
- 20:00 Social event : dinner at Lecoq Gadby

Friday 8th March, morning

Expressivness of sign

Chairman : Christia MERCER

- 09:00 Martine De GAUDEMAR (Strasbourg University)
Personnages et récits dans l'œuvre de Leibniz.
- 09:45 Claude GAUDIN (Lyon III University)
Puissances des symboles ; écriture des pensées.
- 10:30 Coffee break

Chairman : Wolfgang LENZEN

- 11:00 Fernando GIL (Paris, EHESS)
Problèmes de l'expression de Leibniz à Wittgenstein.
- 11:45 Christia MERCER (Columbia University)
Leibniz and the German Tradition of the Power of Language
- 13:00 Luncheon

Friday 8th March, afternoon

Ethics and Law

Chairman : Hans BURKHARDT

- 14:30 Concha ROLDÁN (CSIC Madrid)
Langue naturelle et éthique rationnelle
- 15:15 Pol BOUCHER (Rennes)
Paradoxes, antinomies et cas perplexes : les raisons du droit positif
- 16:00 Wolfgang LENZEN (Osnabrück University)
Alethic and deontic modal logic
- 16:45 Coffee break
- 17:15-18:45 Round Table 2 : Leibniz and his context (moderator : Jacqueline LAGREE)
Tahar Ben Guiza (Tunis) : Leibniz et Ibn Roshn ; Nelly BRUYERE (Nantes) : Leibniz et La Ramée ; Jean-Michel VIENNE (Nantes) : Leibniz et Locke
- Free evening

Saturday 9th March, morning

Between Tradition and Modernity

Chairman : Mark KULSTAD

- 09:00 Hans BURKHARDT (Munche n)
Leibniz' Metaphysics : New concepts via old terms
- 09:45 Hidé ISHIGURO (Keio University, Japan)
Leibniz et la distinction fré géenne entre 'sens' et 'ré férence'
- 10:30 Coffee break

The metaphorical power of language

Chairman : Adelino CARDOSO

- 11:00 Cristina MARRAS (University of Tel-Aviv)
Leibniz' and his metaphorical labyrinths
- 11:45 Donald. RUTHERFORD (University of California)
Metaphor and the Language of Philosophy.
- 12:30 Conclusion by Dominique BERLIOZ
- 13: 00 Luncheon.

Saturday 9th March, afternoon

- 15:30-17:00 Guided visit of the Parliament of Brittany.



ESF/SCH Exploratory Workshop on:

Leibniz and the Powers of Language

Rennes, France, 6-9 March 2002

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