

Summaries

Leibniz and the Monadology

GÁBOR BOROS

I reconstruct the background of Monadology in Leibniz's latest years, and summarize its main argument. Further, I outline the place of both the Monadology and Leibniz's philosophy in general within the main developments of philosophy in the 17-18 centuries; I point out how Leibniz brings to completion the idealistic tendency in Descartes' and Spinoza's philosophy, which renders him the most radical opponent of any philosophies based on sense experience and imagination like the philosophy of Hobbes, Locke, Hume and most of the 18th century French *philosophes*. The idea of the best possible world is also touched upon: Voltaire's *Candide* makes its well-known point from the point of view of the sensualistic-imaginative philosophy, whereas the respective transcendental philosophies of Kant and Schelling attempt to make a new sense to reason playing a decisive role within practical philosophy viz. philosophy of history.

The Perception of the Infinite in Leibniz's *Monadologie* and *Nouveaux Essais*

TAMÁS PAVLOVITS

In order to interpret how the perception of the infinite is accounted for in Leibniz's late writings, we have to reconcile the following theses with each other: (1) the true infinite precedes all composition, (2) the idea of the infinite is issued from the absolute, (3) all perceptions contain the whole reality, (4) reality and its perception are divided into actually infinite parts, (5) the concept of the infinite whole is contradictory. This paper is an attempt to reconcile these tenets which characterise the account of the perception of the infinite in the *Monadologie*, on the basis of chapter II.17 of the *Nouveaux Essais*. In the first part I compare three arguments, notably of Locke, Descartes and Leibniz, concerning the increase of finite quantities to the infinite; in the second part, I give an interpretation of the perception of infinite in the *Monadologie* from the perspective of these three arguments.

Contingent Propositions about Individual Substances: Leibniz and his Commentators

MÁRTA UJVÁRI

The paper considers various accounts of singular contingent propositions in Leibniz's system. The notion of the complete concept of individuals and the predicate-in-the-subject principle as a truth criterion provide the guiding principles for assessing the coherence of each of the suggested accounts with Leibniz's system. Some of these are more or less original accounts of Leibniz while others are the results of charitable interpretations by the commentators. The author argues that the existence-based explanation of singular contingency fares well compared to its rivals against the desiderata of the above principles. Also, this explanation does justice to the Kantian as well as the modern logical insight about the special status of the existence predicate as a second-order predicate. To admit, the preferred account yields only weak contingency since it cannot provide for free will which would be of fundamental importance, according to many commentators.

Possible Worlds and Deontic Modality: Against One Direction of the Leibnizian Biconditional Analysis

ZSÓFIA ZVOLENSZKY

Kratzer's benchmark modal semantics builds on the biconditional analysis: 'It must be that p ' is true iff in all of a certain set of possible worlds, p is true. A leitmotif of this paper: the *only-if* direction is overwhelmingly plausible, securing a one-way entailment from modal sentences to possible worlds. By contrast, I will argue that the *if* direction is not worth its keep when it comes to accounting for deontic modality (about laws and obligations). In the context of Kratzer's original analysis a fundamental Problem arises: any instance of the schema 'if p , then it must be that p ' is a logical truth. I will explore subsequent double-modalization-based strategies (including Kratzer's recent proposal) to handling the Problem, showing their application to Problem cases to be *ad hoc* and too narrow. In the light of a related problem affecting non-conditional sentences also, I will build a case against the biconditional analysis of deontic modality (by casting doubt on the *if* direction).

Leibniz's Image of China

ANDRÁS VÁRNAI

A significant number of scholars dealing with Leibniz's China image, including particularly eminent sinologists, believe that fundamental ideas such as the *characteristica universalis*, the *universal calculus* or the *praestabilita harmonia* are results of an in-depth occupation with Chinese philosophy, and his interpretations on the notions of *practica philosophia* and *theologia naturalis* are as well effected by his thorough acquaintance with the Chinese world. The supposition that neo-Confucian ideologies (known to Leibniz through translations and interpretations by Jesuits) would have had a fundamental im-

pact on his thinking, seems somewhat exaggerated to us. In fact Leibniz integrates his knowledge of Chinese philosophy (which is actually the Jesuit view of neo-Confucian ideas) in his own theory by a specific kind of reinterpretation.

Leibniz believes that there are a number of parallels between his theory of *praestabilita harmonia* and basic Confucian works read by him at the time. In his own theory, the neo-Confucian writer and commentator of classic works, Zhu Xi expands the interpretation of the archaic concept of *li* and regards it as “the order” that contributes to the functioning of “the world”. In Jesuit translations and interpretations, and as a result in European philosophy and sinology the term *li* is perceived as a principle. Leibniz was looking for the paragon of “natural theology” in China, and in his effort of doing so, he conceives the term *li* as the given, yet at the same time pre-arranged order that brings forth the harmony of *monades* (units).

Leibniz wanted to show that in the world of “pre-arranged harmony” the “descriptions” of such harmony in different cultures must refer to one another. This way he matches the binary arithmetic system with that of the *Yijing bagua*, and the Monadology, as the theory demonstrating the order of the universe with the teaching of Chinese philosophy revealing the “Great Harmony”. Resulting from the pre-arranged nature of things, it is necessary and obvious that even though these ideas arose in different points of the globe at different times, yet they are compatible with each other – this is Leibniz’s point.

Leibniz and the Book of Changes

SÁNDOR SOÓS

Due to the Jesuit missions of the mid-17th century more and more information reached Europe concerning the Chinese Empire. The Jesuits introduced the European philosophy and science in the Far East, and at the same time they began to translate the most important works of Chinese literature and philosophy. Among these were the *Book of Changes*, the importance of which was recognized early. This text sums up the system of the hidden mechanisms of the physical world, making visible the changes of the ‘qi’ which forms the physical world. Beyond the translation of the text, Chinese commentaries of it – a very important corpus – also came into focus.

One of the interpretations of the *Book of Changes* was given by the Song Dynasty philosopher Shao Yong (a Neo-Confucianist thinker in European terms) who created a circular arrangement of the hexagrams. Leibniz, who was in correspondence with the Jesuits working in China received this chart and interpreted it as a natural representation of binary arithmetics. From a young age, Leibniz was interested in and systematically extending his knowledge of China, hence this chart was of a special inspiration for him. As he created his works on binary arithmetic before being introduced to the chart of Shao Yong, the circular representation was only a reinforcement of his mathematical system, but his philosophy was inspired by the concept of perfection that is both manifest in the world and hidden behind it. According to the hypothesis of Needham, Neo-Confucian philosophy could have been the basis of the final version of *Monadology*. The works of Leibniz were introduced to the Chinese and Japanese thinkers interested in Western philosophy (among others Nishida Kitarō) in the 20th century. The most referenced author after Kant in Nishida’s works is Leibniz. An interesting outcome: the Japanese

thinker was inspired by a Western philosopher who was in turn inspired by Eastern philosophy.

Moreover, Leibniz's correspondence with the Jesuits and his writings on China show us that his key concepts of understanding a foreign culture, his views and methods of study are valid to this day.

The Leibnizian Criticism of the Newtonian Natural Philosophy at the Beginning of the 21th Century

LÁSZLÓ SZÉKELY

Leibniz's arguments against the Newtonian natural philosophy in his letters to Clarke are not only of historical importance but they also have vital heuristic power concerning the debates about the philosophical interpretations of the scientific theories of our days. His family tree analogy presented in the point 47 of his Fifth Letter to Clarke is effectively applicable against the so-called block universe interpretation of the theory of relativity, which considers the four dimensional space-time to be a real, independent entity and on this basis denies the qualitative difference between the temporal and spatial dimensions, and which, in contrast to Einstein, considers the geometrical explanation of the relativistic phenomena to be complete and final. Similarly, Leibniz's notion of an omnipotent and benevolent creator, on the basis of which he rejects the Newtonian natural theology, is also significant regarding the theory of the so-called "intelligent design", which erroneously suggests that the question of creation may be settled by scientific investigations and thus subsumes this basic theological concept under science. The references to the Leibnizian arguments in the context of these debates open the interpretational horizon which the concerned interpretations attempt to close in the name of the one-sided scientific truth and clearly indicate the priority of philosophy over the calculative-empirical scientific theories. Therefore, the topicality of the Leibnizian criticism of Newton's natural philosophy in our days definitely transcends the special scopes of the debates at issue and are of high cultural importance in our epoch, which, in the name of empirical sciences and the calculative-mathematical thought, believes that it can understand the world and manage itself in it without philosophy. In this way the criticism of the Newtonian natural philosophy by Leibniz is parallel to the criticism of the one-sided scientific world view by Heidegger in his famous "Zollikon Seminars".

Maximus The Confessor's Views and Their Significance on the Union of Divine and Human Nature in His Minor Works on Christology

MIKLÓS VASSÁNYI

In this paper I present and analyse some of Maximus the Confessor's (†662) most important Christological *Opuscles*. Especially in *Opuscle 14*, Maximus proposes clear-cut definitions relating to the union of the two wills in the person of Christ. Working with pairs of opposed concepts like *ousia-hypostasis*, *tautotēs-heterotēs*, and *henōsis-diaphora*, he fine-tunes the exact mode of this union, which in a final analysis safeguards the operation of the human will in Christ, and in a soteriological context, offers a model of the beatified human person as well.

Melancholy Haphazardness? Max Weber and Hanna Arendt on Causality

FERENC TAKÓ

The notion of causality plays an important role both in Max Weber's methodological views and Hannah Arendt's concept of historical occurrences – at first glance, in a deeply opposed sense. To sum up their explications we could say that, according to Weber, the main task of a historian is to find the *adequate causes* of historical processes, while Arendt maintains that *any* supposed causal relation as such is in itself denying the aim of historical surveys, namely to find the *unique* and *unpredictable* occurrences in the progress of time. In this study I will examine Weber's and Arendt's theses on causality. First, I will focus on Weber's views on *adequate* causation, especially on its difference from the idea of historical necessity. Second, I will examine Arendt's critique of causal analysis, and show that she meant rather *necessity* by the criticized notion of causation. Based on these points I will argue, finally, that the Weberian process of causal analysis, although not fitting with the views of Arendt, is far from being their opposite.

