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L'Empreinte cartésienne: L'interaction psychophysique, débats classiques et contemporains by Sandrine Roux
(review)

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Journal of the History of Philosophy, Volume 58, Number 1, January 2020,
pp. 175-177 (Review)

Published by Johns Hopkins University Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/hph.2020.0014>



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2009) extensively documented textual evidence, and developed arguments against any inescapable, overriding concern for bodily self-preservation, in favor of understanding the natural desire for self-preservation as merely morally blameless. Abizadeh reproduces much of this. David Johnston, in *The Rhetoric of Leviathan* (Princeton, 1986), recognized that people often do not prioritize self-preservation, and hypothesized that Hobbes sought to debunk all religion as superstition so that governments could retrain humans to become the self-preservation-centered rational egoists needed for a state's threat of capital punishment reliably to compel their obedience. Famously, Bernard Gert ("Hobbes on Reason," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 82 [2001]: 243–57, and elsewhere), argued that Hobbes offered an objective morality whereby reason *requires* that we pursue our preservation and broader prudential good regardless of our desires. Abizadeh adopts Gert's position. A serious difficulty is that Hobbes nowhere states any normative requirement to desire and pursue one's own good or preservation.

On Abizadeh's account, the laws of nature become precepts for securing self-preservation *and* felicity (137, 188). Felicity may include pleasures from anticipatorily imagining satisfaction of a desire to preserve honor at the cost of capital punishment, or for suicidal relief from misery. This incoherently renders laws of nature prudential precepts for both self-preservation and voluntary self-destruction. Problematically, pursuit of felicity can, depending on desires, license vicious actions forbidden by natural law. Abizadeh cannot establish that natural laws bind only those whose felicity does not require violating them, because Hobbes insists they bind *everyone* with reason enough for self-government. Abizadeh needs the strategies for self-preservation and felicity never to diverge, so he stipulates it: "felicity can be realized only by directly desiring and pursuing the conditions of *survival*" (162). Ta-Da! The Christian's transcendent interest in *obtaining* salvation magically transforms into desire to *currently enjoy imagining* salvation; experiencing such pleasure *requires not being dead*, therefore one must desire and pursue temporal bodily survival. Ditto honor. Abizadeh's version of Gert's prudential account denies rather than addresses politically problematic transcendent interests, and, crucially, *disables* Hobbes's moral philosophy—laws of nature—from providing any means to do so.

More plausibly, Hobbes derives natural laws as theorems *of right* from an axiom of rationality requiring consistency, not just in beliefs, but also in the individual's reactive attitudes toward an act under a fixed description, and her ensuing action. *If* she faults others' refusal to seek peace, submit to government, or keep covenants, then she must also fault and refrain from such behaviors in her own case. She *must*, qua rational *agent*, fault others' such behaviors because those create an environment in which she cannot reasonably hope to effect her own ends, whatever they be. Duties unrelated to the conditions for effective agency may vary with individual attitudes. Abizadeh's assumption that "modern" moralities will require full impartiality or accountability to others (219) precludes his appreciating the distinctive modernity of Hobbes's natural law morality (223). Hobbes pioneers a constructivist and perspectival account of the *content* of practical reasons, and a constitutivist account of the *authority* of practical reason. One's good figures *indirectly* in both natural law's requirements of right, and the right-based covenanting practice natural law constrains, but not as a requirement of reason or inescapable desire. Morality is not two-faced. Rightness rules. *That* marks Hobbes's "watershed" break from eudaimonism.

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Sandrine Roux. *L'Empreinte cartésienne: L'interaction psychophysique, débats classiques et contemporains*. Preface by Steven Nadler. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2018. Pp. 438. Paper, €48,00.

Sandrine Roux's *L'Empreinte cartésienne* addresses what she describes as one of the "persistent problems" in philosophy, namely, the mind-body problem raised by Descartes's substance dualism (17). Her book carefully lays out the various puzzles, both real and perceived, raised

by Descartes's theory of humans as a mind-body union. She distinguishes clearly between the way these problems are understood by Descartes, and the way they were seen by some of his seventeenth-century followers, especially the occasionalists, Louis de La Forge, Géraud de Cordemoy, and Malebranche. And she tries to orient the Cartesian mind-body problem with respect to theories in contemporary philosophy of mind.

The first two parts are primarily historical in focus (though they also make use of contemporary analytic philosophy to clarify the issues and arguments discussed). In the first part, Roux presents Descartes's views regarding mind-body interaction and the mind-body union, and uses Jaegwon Kim's "pairing problem" objection to Cartesian dualism to clarify the issues raised by Descartes's position. Roux goes on to contrast Descartes's response to these issues with the perspective of the Cartesian occasionalists, La Forge and Cordemoy. Roux's analysis of their arguments does well to highlight the importance of the claim, found in both authors, that causal interaction between two bodies is no more conceivable than causal interaction between a mind and a body.

The second part focuses on problems for Descartes having to do with our knowledge or experience of the mind-body union. Roux presents an objection put to Descartes by Arnauld, based on the observation that we do not have knowledge of the physiological processes inside our body when we engage in voluntary motion. Following Delphine Kolesnik-Antoine, Roux labels this the "defect of knowledge" problem (159). Roux links this problem with the "*Quod nescis*" argument for occasionalism, found in Cordemoy and Malebranche. Roux analyzes Malebranche's version of this argument in terms of a distinction—developed in papers from the 1960s by Arthur Danto, and in Alvin Goldman's *A Theory of Human Action* (1970)—between "basic" and "non-basic" actions. She then draws on Danto, Goldman, and Donald Davidson to consider possible responses to Malebranche's reasoning. This leads to an especially interesting discussion of what Roux takes to be a crucial difference between Malebranche's conception of the mind-body union and that of Descartes: While Malebranche and other Cartesians think the mind-body union is grounded in causal relations between the mind and body, Roux argues that Descartes takes the mind-body union to be metaphysically primitive.

Roux's interpretation is (I think) plausible as a reading of Descartes. It is also of particular interest with reference to Kim's pairing problem. Roux turns to this problem in the third part, which concerns contemporary philosophy of mind. (In addition to responding to Kim, Roux discusses, among others, David Chalmers, Daniel Dennett, Jerry Fodor, Frank Jackson, Joseph Levine, and Robert Stalnaker.) She develops a "Cartesian response" to Kim's argument that Cartesian souls cannot act in the physical world (290). Building on Descartes's account of the primitive notion of the mind-body union and his analogy of a sailor in a ship, Roux argues that a Cartesian mind can be paired with a body on the basis of sensation. Roux makes a compelling case that (on her interpretation) Descartes has the resources to reply to Kim's argument.

One way we might take this is to say that Kim's criticisms of the position he labels "Cartesian dualism" miss their mark. Kim presents the pairing problem as a clarification of the historical mind-body problem in Descartes. But if Roux is correct, then the position that Kim attacks is not Descartes's view, but rather a view found in later Cartesians (who themselves reject mind-body causal interaction). However, this seems to undermine the idea that there is a "mind-body problem" that persists from Descartes's time to the present day. Roux argues that the puzzles raised by Descartes's dualism reemerge in contemporary philosophy of mind. For example, in her final chapter she compares the obscurity of our idea of the mind-body union (for Descartes) to the problem of *qualia* (for Kim). But more work is needed to show that the problems facing contemporary theories of the mind are genuine descendants of the problems that emerge from Descartes's philosophy.

Roux presents her work as "a trans-historic confrontation" that can shed light both on Cartesianism dualism, and on the arguments of contemporary physicalists (29). Readers might wonder what exactly the lessons of this study are with respect to contemporary

philosophy. However, I recommend it to anyone interested in a thorough and well-informed treatment of the mind-body problem in Descartes, and the responses of La Forge, Cordemoy, Arnauld, and Malebranche to Descartes's views about mind-body interaction and the mind-body union.

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Raffaele Carbone. *La Vision politique de Malebranche*. Les Anciens et les Modernes. *Études de philosophie*, 34. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2018. Pp. 328. Paper, €39,00.

Le jugement qu'on portera sur ce livre dépendra en grande partie de la façon dont on évaluera son contenu en fonction des attentes créées par son titre. Si l'on espère une mise au jour—qui, de fait, serait novatrice—d'une pensée précise, développée et systématique de Malebranche sur les thèmes cardinaux de la philosophie politique classique (théorie du souverain, des types de gouvernement, contractualisme, jusnaturalisme, etc.), on sera déçu: ce livre ne contient rien de tel, sinon, dans une certaine mesure, en sa troisième partie. Si l'on compte lire une monographie informée offrant une synthèse sur des thèmes centraux du malebranchisme en relation avec la sphère du politique prise en un sens large (nature des rapports sociaux, rôle des passions dans la vie en collectivité, mécanismes imaginaires de domination et de hiérarchisation, fondements de la morale et par là du droit), on sera moins désappointé.

La construction tripartite de l'ouvrage est claire (même si le fait qu'il soit en grande partie composé d'un regroupement d'articles déjà parus induit certaines répétitions). Une première partie envisage "l'horizon socio-anthropologique" de la réflexion politique de Malebranche, pour montrer comment elle se fonde sur les principes essentiels de sa philosophie: la conception d'un "Ordre immuable" et d'une "Raison Universelle"; une théorie occasionaliste des rapports de l'esprit et du corps; le système de la double union de l'esprit à Dieu et aux corps définissant l'esprit humain tel qu'il est décrit dans la *Préface* de la *Recherche de la Vérité*. On voit ici comment la "science de l'homme" dont Malebranche prône la nécessité peut se prolonger en un examen critique et généalogique des rapports de pouvoir, dans le cadre d'une théorie des rapports intersubjectifs que l'auteur propose de nommer "occasionalisme politique." La deuxième partie est intitulée "Les sociétés humaines. Hiérarchie et rapports de force." Elle met en relief le poids de l'imagination, de la contagion imaginative et de la coutume dans les dynamiques d'autorité et de pouvoir, à différents niveaux: cadres familial, social, étatique, où le désir d'indépendance, l'estime et le mépris jouent, à des degrés divers, un rôle important. La troisième partie, "Société civile, pouvoir politique, justice," est celle où les thèmes à proprement parler politiques sont le plus directement abordés: limites du pouvoir politique et problème de l'obéissance, ou de la désobéissance légitime; notion de justice; relations entre puissances séculières et pouvoir religieux; grandeurs et limites des sociétés historiques marquées par les conséquences du péché et demeurant sous l'horizon régulateur de la "société des esprits" et de la Jérusalem céleste. L'ensemble est rythmé par des comparaisons plus (Suarez, Spinoza, Hobbes, Locke) ou moins (Foucault et le "biopouvoir," Marx et sa doctrine de l'idéologie, Charles Taylor) attendues entre Malebranche et de grands théoriciens du politique: ces rapprochements sont dans l'ensemble suggestifs mais soulignent aussi, comme en creux, que Malebranche en reste souvent au niveau de l'allusion, ou de l'esquisse, là où ces différents auteurs proposent des développements plus explicites et structurés. La conclusion est que "Malebranche ne recherche pas les principes susceptibles d'orienter un gouvernement pratique, comme le font les théoriciens de la raison d'État, mais esquisse le modèle du gouvernement rationnel selon lequel, grâce à la Sagesse de Dieu, le souverain doit guider le corps politique vers sa finalité, la paix et la charité, qui à leur tour créent les conditions pour le développement intellectuel et moral des citoyens" (234).