

# FORUM DESCARTES

## 2ND EDITION, UTRECHT, 16-18 JANUARY 2025



---

### Organisers:



Utrecht University

Descartes Centre

### Co-sponsors:

**Radboud University**



**PRINCETON  
UNIVERSITY**

**OZSW**

Nederlandse  
Onderzoeksschool  
Wijsbegeerte

# PROGRAMME

## **DAY 1: THURSDAY, 16 JANUARY**

**Address: Johanna Hudig Building; Kromme Nieuwegracht 47E, Utrecht**

### **Welcome & introduction**

9:00h Coffee and tea  
9:15h Christoph Lüthy, Paul Ziche & team: Welcome!

### **Morning Session. Chair: Carla Rita Palmerino**

#### **Session 1: Spinoza**

9:30h Basile Malandain (ENS, Lyon): "Ends, Good and Will in the Young Spinoza"  
*Commentary:* Audrey Miller (Johns Hopkins University)  
10:15h Lila Graham (University of Michigan): "Spinoza on Essence"  
*Commentary:* Mélanie Zappulla (Université de Paris 1)  
11:00h Coffee

#### **Session 2: Leibniz**

11:30h Helena Bensimon: (ENS, Lyon): "'Leibniz and Tikkun Olam"  
*Commentary:* Ethan Millar-Virkutis (Princeton)  
12:15h Daniel Klugman (Princeton): "Leibniz on Faith and Reason"  
*Commentary:* Robin Riemersma (RU Nijmegen)  
13:00h Lunch in Academiegebouw, Domplein 29.

### **Afternoon Sessions. Chair: Steven Nadler**

#### **Session 4: Attention and the Self**

14:15h Haley Brennan (New York University): "What is the 'Self' for Cavendish?"  
*Commentary:* Eveline Groot (Erasmus University Rotterdam)  
15:00h Giulio Conidi (Universities of Salento, Cologne & Louvain): "The Problem of Attention and Its Scholastic Background between Descartes and Malebranche"  
*Commentary:* Eric Sheng (ENS, Paris & University of Oxford)  
15:45h Coffee

#### **Session 4: Descartes**

16:15h Yuanzhe Cao (ENS, Paris): "A Fable or a Treatise of the World: Commentary on a Cartesian Title"  
*Commentary:* Aurora Yu (North Carolina & Princeton)  
17:00h Ovidiu Babes (Vrije Universiteit Brussels): "Descartes on Liquid Bodies"  
*Commentary:* Omar Hraoui (Ca' Foscari, Venice & RU Nijmegen)  
17:45h End of Day 1

## **DAY 2: FRIDAY, 17 JANUARY**

**Address: Johanna Hudig Building; Kromme Nieuwegracht 47E**

9:00h Coffee and tea

### **Morning Session: Author Meets Critic. Chair: Christoph Lüthy**

09.30h Discussion of:

René Descartes, *Œuvres complètes*, II-1 *Le Monde ou Traité de la lumière*, et II-2, *L'Homme. La Description du corps humain et autres écrits anatomiques et biologiques*, sous la direction de Denis Kambouchner (Gallimard, 2023).

9:30h Commentary by Steven Nadler

9:45h Commentary by Tad Schmaltz

10:00h Response by Denis Kambouchner & Annie Bitbol-Hespériès

10:30h Public discussion

11.00h Coffee

11.30h Discussion of:

Tarek Dika, *Descartes's Method: The Formation of the Subject of Science* (OUP, 2023).

11:30h Commentary by Tad Schmaltz

11:50h Commentary by Elodie Cassan

12:10h Response by Tarek Dika

12:30h Public discussion

13.00h Lunch. Johanna Hudig Building, ground floor

### **Afternoon Session. Chair: Daniel Garber**

#### **Session 5: Spinoza once more**

14.15h Jacob Zellmer (UC San Diego): "Spinoza on Canonization and Reason's Agreement with Scripture"

*Commentary:* João Marques Carvalho (Princeton University)

15.00h Vincent Navarro (University of Wisconsin): "Spinoza on Necessitarianism, Freedom, and the Affects"

*Commentary:* Sean Costello (University of Michigan)

15:45h Coffee

#### **Session 6: Gassendi, Descartes, Pascal**

16:15h Simone Bresci (Ca' Foscari, Venice): "Pierre Gassendi on the Animal-Human Divide."

*Commentary:* Alexandru Liciu (University of Bucharest)

17:00h Aurélien Chukurian (University of Louvain): "Principles in Dispute: The Ambiguous Critique of Descartes by Pascal"

*Commentary:* Alireza Fatollahi (Bilkent University)

17.45h End of academic session

18:30h Festive Dinner: **Restaurant Djakarta; Lucasbolwerk 19; Utrecht**

## **DAY 3: SATURDAY, 18 JANUARY**

**Address: University Museum; Lange Nieuwstraat 106; 3512 PN Utrecht**

9:00h Coffee and tea

### **Morning Sessions. Chair: Jean-Pascal Anfray**

#### **Session 7: Leibniz once again**

- 9:30h Louis Pijaudier-Cabot (ENS, Paris): "Compton Carleton and Arriaga on Spatial Parts"  
*Commentary:* Hao Dong (Princeton University)
- 10:15h Alessia Salierno (University of Milan): "The Evolution of *Characteristica Geometrica*: A Comparison between the Texts *Characteristi geometrica* (1677) and *Characteristica geometrica* (1679)"  
*Commentary:* Mattia Mantovani (KU Leuven)
- 11.00h Coffee

#### **Session 8: Cartesians**

- 11.30h Ted van Aanholt (RU Nijmegen/Roma 3): "*Hypothesis de mundo sine mixtione*: Censored Corpuscularianism in Etienne Noël's *Physica vetus et nova*"  
*Commentary:* Maxime Ilou (ENS, Lyon)
- 12:15h Apaoan Ramos Machado (UCLouvain): "*Nec assistens, nec informans*: Heereboord's Early Version of Cartesian Dualism?"  
*Commentary:* Fanhao Meng (University of Princeton)
- 13:00h Lunch, University Museum

### **Afternoon Session. Chair: Antonella Del Prete**

#### **Session 9: Occasionalists and other Cartesians**

- 14.15h Sümer Sen (RU Nijmegen): "Mirrors of Thought: Exploring Parallels and Transformations of the Knowledge Argument in Occasionalist Thought"  
*Commentary:* Andrea Leonardi (ENS, Lyon)
- 15.00h Christian Henkel (Dublin): "Political Theory among Cartesians: Cordemoy and Le Grand"  
*Commentary:* Tomer Cherki (Johns Hopkins University)
- 15.45h Coffee

#### **Session 10: Elasticity, Force, Axioms and Proofs**

- 16.15h Giuseppe Pignatelli (University of Turin): "Axioms, Proofs, and Self-evidence in Port-Royal Logic and Geometry"  
*Commentary:* Ivan Malara (University of Milan)
- 17.00h Niccolò Fioravanti (University of Salento/Cologne): "Elasticity and Distribution of Force: On the Material Structure of Corporeal Substances in Leibniz"  
*Commentary:* Osvaldo Ottaviani (RU Nijmegen)
- 17:45: Christoph Lüthy & Antonella del Prete: Good-bye remarks and announcement of next year's *Forum Descartes*