



THE BLOOMSBURY DICTIONARY OF EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY GERMAN PHILOSOPHERS

Edited by Heiner F. Klemme and Manfred Kuehn

BLOOMSBURY ACADEMIC

An imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

B L O O M S B U R Y

LONDON • OXFORD • NEW YORK • NEW DELHI • SYDNEY

Bloomsbury Academic

An imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

50 Bedford Square	1385 Broadway
London	New York
WC1B 3DP	NY 10018
UK	USA

www.bloomsbury.com

BLOOMSBURY and the Diana logo are trademarks of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

First published in 3 volumes by Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010

This edition first published in paperback, 2016

© Heiner F. Klemme, Manfred Kuehn and Contributors, 2010, 2016

Heiner F. Klemme and Manfred Kuehn have asserted their right under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, to be identified as the Editors of this work.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publishers.

No responsibility for loss caused to any individual or organization acting on or refraining from action as a result of the material in this publication can be accepted by Bloomsbury or the editors.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN: PB: 978-1-4742-5597-4

ePDF: 978-1-4742-5598-1

ePub: 978-1-4742-5600-1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Klemme, Heiner, editor. | Kuehn, Manfred, editor.

Title: The Bloomsbury dictionary of eighteenth-century German philosophers / edited by Heiner F. Klemme and Manfred Kuehn.

Other titles: Dictionary of eighteenth-century German philosophers

Description: New York : Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2016. | Originally published under title: Dictionary of eighteenth-century German philosophers : London : Continuum, 2010. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2015040044 | ISBN 9781474255974 (pb) | ISBN 9781474256001 (epub) | ISBN 9781474255981 (epdf)

Subjects: LCSH: Philosophers—Germany—Dictionaries. | Philosophy, German—18th century—Dictionaries.

Classification: LCC B2615 .D53 2016 | DDC 193—dc23 LC record available at <http://lcn.loc.gov/2015040044>

Cover image © bpk / Nationalgalerie, SMB

Cover design Catherine Wood

Typeset by Deanta Global Publishing Services, Chennai, India

Printed and bound in India

Second, following Crusius's suggestions and KANT's statements in the *Untersuchung über die Deutlichkeit der Grundsätze der natürlichen Theologie* (1764), Träger rejects the identification of philosophical and mathematical methods. This tendency, which he traces back to the very beginning of the Western philosophical tradition (Thales and Pythagoras), ignores the essential difference between the two disciplines, and compels philosophy to imitate a method which doesn't suit its contents. Indeed the mathematical method cannot gather correctly the intrinsic dynamism of substance and its internal principium vitale that Träger describes in accordance with Kant's formulation in the *Gedanken von den wahren Schätzungen der lebendigen Kräfte* (1746). In Träger's view the dynamism of substance represents a turning point in the history of philosophy, and the starting-point of modernity. Even if Descartes and the Reformation already contributed to the liberation of philosophy from the yoke of medieval scholasticism through the introduction of the principle of evidence and a properly scientific method in philosophical investigations, it is only Leibniz who seems to inaugurate a completely new philosophical era with the introduction of a system of monads whose internal development is governed by the principle of sufficient reason. In Träger's view Wolff plays the role of a 'systematizer' of Leibniz's philosophy; but far from being a servile repeater of someone else's ideas, he is here presented as 'a genius in the proper meaning of the term', as the one who 'confined his great spirit' to the effort of organizing Leibniz's system in order to educate human understanding by means of a proper way of thinking (Denkungsart) and to prevent the generation of philosophical sects. In Träger's attempt to sketch a general history of philosophy, Wolff and Darjes, both of whom also promoted the birth of a German philosophical terminology, are the representatives of the 4th philosophical period – after the ancient, the medieval and the modern ones. They endorse a new way of understanding philosophy, according to which experience represents the 'axiom' of every scientific investigation. Träger therefore plays an important role in the development of post-Wolffian German philosophy: according to Kant's *Träume eines Geistersehers* metaphysics is no longer conceived as the science of what is possible, but as the science of the limits of human reason (*Metaphysik*, p. 28). Its method is not the deductive method of mathematics, but the analytic and inductive method of natural science: 'like physics, metaphysics is not unruly and wild; it only swings on a higher level and throws light on everything else; that's why it still remains beneath our horizon' (*Metaphysik*, p. 33s.). The central role of experience, the dynamic nature of substance, the replacement of the mathematical with the inductive

method are innovations which Träger introduces in his *Metaphysik*, all of which contribute to the diffusion of a new model of philosophy in the late phase of the German Enlightenment. Given his continuous reference to Kant's precritical writings Träger also contributes to their circulation in the milieu of the University of Halle, acting as a point of convergence of a group of supporters of the early Kantian philosophy among which one should mention at least Johann Christian FÖRSTER, Johann Christlieb Kemme (1738–1815) and especially the already cited Christian Gottfried SCHÜTZ, the leading proponent of the so-called 'Kantian Gospel' that he would proselytize in Jena following his departure from Halle.

Bibliography

- Dissertatio inauguralis philosophica de conscientia erronea* (Halle, 1767).
Disputatio philosophica de lege associationis cogitationum velut insigni lege interpretis N. T. (Halle, 1768).
Metaphysik (Halle, 1770).
Über das Nutzen des Examinierens auf Universitäten (Halle, 1771).

Further reading

- Schütz, Christian Gottfried, *Ueber verschiedene widrige Schicksale der deutschen Philosophie* (Halle, 1772).
 Schröpfer, Horst, *Ludwig Martin Träger – ein früher Anhänger Immanuel Kants, in Vernunftkritik und Aufklärung. Studien zur Philosophie Kants und seines Jahrhunderts*, ed. by M. Oberhausen (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 2001), pp. 295–315.
 Schröpfer, Horst, *Kants Weg in die Öffentlichkeit: Christian Gottfried Schütz als Wegbereiter der kritischen Philosophie* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 2003), pp. 34–51.

PR

TRALLES, Balthasar Ludwig (1708–97)

Balthasar Ludwig Tralles was born on 1 May 1708 in Breßlau, where he died on 7 September at the age of ninety-one, at the height of his extraordinary fame as a medical doctor and a *grand savant*. Already in the years of his education at the local Gymnasium, Tralles showed a very precocious and intense inclination towards natural sciences and any form of higher culture. Thus under the influence of a close relative, who was a successful physician in Breßlau, he abandoned the business career of his father in order to pursue his studies at the University of Leipzig. In 1727 he matriculated in the Theological Faculty, but after a short while he gave up his original plan and began

a proper medical *cursus studiorum*. After three years of intense study at the local Faculty of Medicine, and given the impossibility of studying with Hermann Boerhaave in Leiden, Tralles moved to Halle, where he attended classes by Friedrich HOFFMANN, who would play a very important role in Tralles's intellectual and personal life. In 1731, under the direction of this most prominent supporter of the iatromechanical model of medicine in what was then Prussia, he defended his dissertation *De vita animalis theoretice et practice considerata*. Once his studies were concluded, Tralles left Halle to return to Breßlau, where he began working as a medical doctor. During the following years his reputation grew significantly within and without the academic milieu: both Hoffmann and Albrecht von HALLER tried in vain, to obtain an academic position for him in Halle and in Göttingen respectively, whereas some relevant characters of the political scene sought to employ him – not always successfully – as their personal doctor. In 1734 Tralles was invited to follow the field marshal Earl of Wackerbart to Dresden as court doctor (*Hofmedicus*), a position he declined because of their confessional divergence. Similarly, he refused offers for the positions of assessor and dean of the first public institution for medical assistance in Breßlau, official doctor at the court of the King of Poland, Stanislaw August (1765), and official doctor of the Earl of Gotha (1767) and of the Earl of Oels (1771). The most relevant episode in his career undoubtedly concerns the meeting with FREDERICK II, who in 1757 called him to take care of his brother, Prince Ferdinand, who was suffering from pneumonia. Tralles's efficient and incisive therapy quickly solved Ferdinand's health problems, which won Frederick's gratitude and friendship towards him, as he himself described in detail in the *Aufrichtige Erzählung* (Breßlau, 1789), where he also reports his meetings and personal conversations with the Empress Maria Theresa of Austria and the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha Louise Dorothea (1789). In addition to his career as a medical doctor, Tralles also cultivated a deep interest in scientific research, publishing many writings on different topics (on the jugular vein, on bloodletting (1736), on the properties of opium (1757–1763; 1771), on vaccines (1760), a history of cholera with autobiographical notes (1753) etc.), all of which were enthusiastically received by the contemporary medical community.

Yet Tralles also played a very central role in one of the most vigorous cultural debates of the time as a relevant representative of the struggle of German philosophy against materialism. In particular Tralles was one of the most strenuous adversaries of Julien Offray de LA METTRIE, replying to the latter's provocative *L'Homme machine* (1747) with a stern refutation in latin, entitled *De machina et anima humana prorsus a se invicem distinctis* (Leipzig, Breßlau, 1749), and dedicated – like La Mettrie's

writing – to Haller. Tralles's intervention in this debate was clearly apologetic: he presented himself as the advocate of the honour of medicine and of the legitimacy of morals and religion against La Mettrie's attempt to convince the world that every physician must consequently be a materialist. In his objections, Tralles made use of some key ideas from Christian WOLFF's philosophy: to La Mettrie's empirical explanation of the correlation between physical and psychical phenomena he opposed the theory of the parallelism between mind and body and a broader idea of the harmonic relation of substances; to the fundamental homogeneity of animals and humans stated by *L'homme machine* he opposed the radical heterogeneity of their faculties and capacities; to the mechanical explanation of sensations and thinking he opposed the irreducibility of psychical phenomena to motions. La Mettrie's reaction was prompt and aggressive, and already in 1750 he publicly attacked his opponent with *Les animaux plus que machines*. In this polemical writing La Mettrie radicalized his former position: if humans and animals only differ on the ground of their capacities, that is of the different grades of their organization, it follows that what is valid for humans is also valid for animals – they are both machines. But if one holds, as Tralles did, that the immaterial soul makes humans more than machines, the same should apply to animals as well, who are now indeed *plus que machines*. In this polemical confrontation Tralles and La Mettrie embodied in some stereotypical way the main ideas of the philosophical sects that divided the medical environment of the time, that is, spiritualists and materialists; this opposition is exhaustively sketched in the anonymous *Critique d'un médecin du parti des spiritualistes, sur la pièce intitulée: les animaux plus que machines, dans laquelle l'auteur badin prend la peine de soutenir le contraire* (La Haye, 1751), which presents Tralles as the champion of morality and religion against their pernicious detractors. However, Tralles's struggle against materialism, and his strenuous defence of a dualistic metaphysical perspective, is not limited to the polemic with La Mettrie. In the mid-Seventies he returned to the topic with a very successful writing on the existence, immateriality and immortality of the soul dedicated to Maria Theresa of Austria, *De animae existentis immaterialitate et immortalitate cogitata* (Breßlau, 1774). The writing had a broad circulation, since it was first translated into German by Tralles himself under the title *Gedanken über das Daseyn, die Immaterialität und Unsterblichkeit der menschlichen Seele* (Göttingen, 1776), and then also into French as *Pensées de l'immatérialité et de l'existence de l'âme* (Vienna, 1775, also appeared as *Pensées sur l'existence et de l'immatérialité de l'âme*, Vienna, 1776). In the very same years Tralles engaged in a public debate with Johann Christian Kemme (1738–1815), professor of medicine in

Halle, regarding his *Beurtheilung eines Beweises vor die Immaterialität der Seele aus der Medizin* (1776), where he criticized the widespread tendency of physicians to demonstrate the heterogeneity of soul and body on the basis of the continuous mutations and replacements of the material parts of the latter. Beside REIMARUS and TRÄGER, Tralles was one of Kemme's main polemical targets. In his *Deutliche und überzeugende Vorstellung ...* (Breßlau, 1774) Tralles had argued that the hypothesis of a material soul contradicts any common experience of the persistence of our self since every material being has to follow the same destiny of corruption and mutations of the body. Rejecting this proof on the basis of Haller's consideration on the nature of the solid parts of the body and their nutrition, Kemme attacked Tralles's proof of the immateriality of the soul, disputing his contention that the brain itself – the 'organ' of the soul – is continuously changing and replacing its components. Kemme's writing opened a long and fatiguing polemic that would end with Tralles's *Einige Erinnerungen gegen die Zweifel und Erinnerungen Hrn. D. J. C. Kemme, wider die Lehre der Aerzte von der Ernährung der festen Theile* (Breßlau, 1779). This treatise also represented Tralles's last attempt to defend the authority of medicine in metaphysical questions.

Talles's polemical spirit also expressed itself in theological and literary disputes. With his *Gedanken von der Gegenwart Christi bey dem heiligen Abendmahl* (Breßlau, 1756) he disappointed a large part of the Lutheran theologians concerning the interpretation of that episode of the Holy Scripture. His later criticism of LESSING's drama *Nathan der Weise* was particularly aggressive: Tralles charged it with being, on the one hand, responsible for the progressive degradation of the literary taste and language of Germans, and, on the other hand, with supporting thinkers like VOLTAIRE who celebrated reason to the detriment of religion (*Zufälligen altdeutschen und christlichen Betrachtungen über Herrn Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's neue dramatisches Gedicht Nathan der Weise*, Breßlau, 1779). A few years later Tralles's courageous polemical spirit was directed against Frederick II's criticism of the state of German literature: in his *Schreiben von der deutschen Sprache und Litteratur bey Gelegenheit ...* (Breßlau, 1781) Tralles presented himself as the champion of German literary culture and language, which on account of its force and power of persuasion was to be placed above other European languages.

Bibliography

- Dissertatio inauguralis vitae animalis consideratio theoretico-practica* (Halle, 1731).
De machina et anima humana prorsus a se invicem distinctis commentatio, libello latere amantis auctoris Gallico, Homo

- machina, inscripto, opposita et ad illustriss. virum Alb. Hallerum exarata* (Leipzig, Breßlau, 1749).
Historia cholerae atrocissima (Breßlau and Leipzig, 1753).
Cogitatorum suorum de S. Eucharestia sinceræ fidei evangelicæ puritati omnino congruentium dilucidatio apologetica, eruditorum Theologorum Medicorumque omnium aequae inquisitioni submissa (Breßlau, 1753).
Gedanken von der Gegenwart Christi bey dem heiligen Abendmahl (Breßlau, 1756).
De animae existentis immaterialitatē et immortalitate cogitata (Breßlau, 1774; in German: *Gedanken über das Daseyn, die Immaterialität und Unsterblichkeit der menschlichen Seele*, Göttingen, 1776; in French: *Pensées de l'immatérialité et de l'existence de l'âme*, Vienne, 1775; *Pensées sur l'existence et de l'immatérialité de l'âme*, Vienne, 1776).
Deutliche und überzeugende Vorstellung, dass der für das Daseyn und die Immaterialität der menschlichen Seele aus der Medicin, von der Veränderlichkeit aller festen Theile des Körpers ohne Ausnahme, hergenommene Beweis höchst richtig und gültig sey (Breßlau, 1774).
Einige Erinnerungen gegen die Zweifel und Erinnerungen Hrn. D. J. C. Kemme, wider die Lehre der Aerzte von der Ernährung der festen Theile (Breßlau, 1779).
Zufälligen altdeutschen und christlichen Betrachtungen über Herrn Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's neue dramatisches Gedicht Nathan der Weise (Breßlau, 1779).
Schreiben von der deutschen Sprache und Litteratur bey Gelegenheit der zu Berlin im Jahr 1781 in französischer Sprache herausgekommenen vortrefflichen Schrift: über die deutsche Litteratur, über die Mängel und Ursachen derselben und über die Mittel, sie zu verbessern (Breßlau, 1781).
Aufrichtige Erzählung seiner mit dem König Friedrich dem Grossen, der grossen Kayserin Maria Theresia und der durchl. Hertzogin von Sachsen-Gotha Louise Dorothea, gehaltenen Unterredungen, als auch der Begebenheiten, welche sie veranlassen haben, nebst einigen Anmerkungen (Breßlau, 1789).

Further reading

- Lippe, Max, Tralles, Balthasar Ludwig, in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* (1894), URL: <http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd117421952.html>.
Kahlert, August, Balthasar Ludwig Tralles, in 'Schlesischen Provinzialblätter', 1844, vol. 119, pp. 639–46; vol. 120, pp. 7–14.
Kahlert, August, *Friedrich der Große und Tralles*, 'Deutsches Museum', IX (1859), pp. 265–74.
Hodann, Julius, *Friedrich der Große und der Breßlauer Arzt Dr. Tralles*, 'Abhandlungen der Schlesischen Gesellschaft für vaterländische Cultur. Philosophisch-Historische Abtheilung', 1868/1, pp. 50–74.
Thomson, Ann, *Les 'animaux plus que machines', 'Dix-huitième siècle'*, XLII, 2010/1, pp. 339–51.

PR