



Ca' Foscari
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Gottfried Leibniz in the world of AI

Audrey Borowski

Chair: Matteo Pasquinelli, Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage, Ca' Foscari University of Venice

From his attempt at building a calculating machine to his binary system, the German philosopher Gottfried Leibniz appears as a precursor to computing and artificial intelligence. He conceived of God as a calculator and of each living body as a "kind of automaton", not merely in its totality "but also in its smallest distinguishable parts". Leibniz places in focus the particular order governing the world: one that lies between organism and mechanism, machine and life, as well as between predetermination on the one hand, and spontaneity, virtuality, and possibility, on the other. Finally, he reminds us of the limits of computability and attempts at building a *mathesis universalis* which would help behold everything that existed in trying to make sense of an infinite universe.

Audrey Borowski is a research fellow at Cambridge University and Bonn University, Center for Science and Thought. She has recently published *Leibniz in His World: The Making of a Savant* (Princeton University Press, 2024).

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