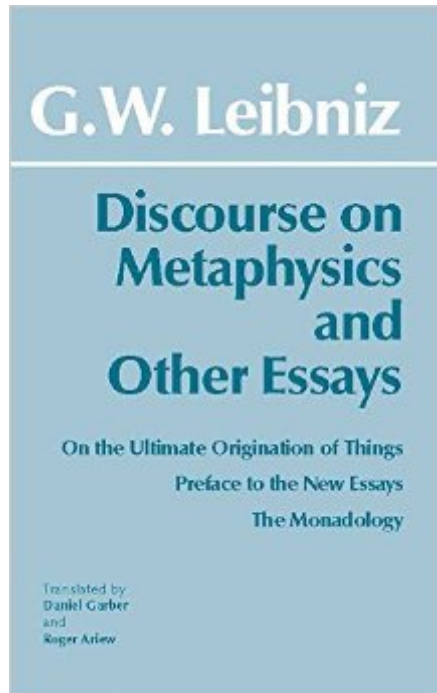


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Discourse On Metaphysics And Other Essays (Hackett Classics)



Synopsis

Discourse on Metaphysics and Other Essays contains complete translations of the two essays that constitute the best introductions to Leibniz's complex thought: Discourse on Metaphysics of 1686 and Monadology of 1714. These are supplemented with two essays of special interest to the student of modern philosophy, On the Ultimate Origination of Things of 1697 and the Preface to his New Essays of 1703-1705.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Both Dan Garber and Roger Ariew are excellent early modern scholars, especially on Descartes and Leibniz. This edition contains Leibniz's 'Discourse on Metaphysics', 'On the Ultimate Origination of Things', the Preface to his 'New Essays', and the 'Monadology'. All of these texts are essential to any serious study of Leibniz's thought. However, as Dan Garber carefully explains in his recent book, there is a great prejudice to read too seriously the later Leibniz and interpret very important aspects of his early thought teleologically in light of the later Leibniz of monads. This Hackett edition is sufficient for anyone wanting the most recent scholarly English translations of Leibniz's famous short works that I mentioned. But for a few dollars more, and if you're really interested in Leibniz that money won't be an issue, definitely buy the 366 page Hackett edition of the same translators (rather than this miniscule 84 page edition) to have a variety of short writings of Leibniz written between 1675-1716. The edition linked here: [Philosophical Essays](#) contains everything in the smaller Hackett edition, plus numerous other short writings by Leibniz, as well as his writings on some of his

contemporaries and some of the very famous letters he wrote to Clarke, Huygens, Wolff, Bernoulli, Arnauld, etc. Leibniz was an extremely extensive writer. I have read that there are over 75,000 different pieces of writing that are left over for editors to put out (which are still far from being published in anything near a definitive edition). However, if one is serious about studying Leibniz, it is best not to just go right at the *Monadology* and the *Discourse*. Much of Leibniz's earlier thought is just as important to read. It's hard to get your hands on a good English copy of Leibniz's work, but you can start with what Hackett gives you, and the Bennett translation of Leibniz's 'New Essays' and the *Theodicy* can also be found here on , along with some full volumes of some of his correspondence.

Leibniz monadology was considered inferior Newton's mechanical universe. However, 350 years later we find that Leibniz's criticisms of Newtonian physics were in fact correct. We find that Leibniz was much closer to the truth than Newton was.

Leibniz works his brilliance here, The LCA and its Principle of Sufficient Reason has gained some momentum here in the 21st century as Alexander Pruss has revived the argument. It is important to have this in one's library as Leibniz speaks heavily on what he refers to as monads. In his Preface to the *New Essays* section of this book you will see that Leibniz makes a critique on John Locke's "Essay Concerning Human Understanding". This piece alone is worth the price of the book. Leibniz mentions Descartes quite often in this piece, while both of them were rationalists they had their disagreements on God's perfection. This quote comes to mind on pg 74. "Thus God alone (or the necessary being) has this privilege, that he must exist if he is possible. And since nothing can prevent the possibility of what is without limits, without negation, and consequently without contradiction, this by itself is sufficient for us to know the exist of God a priori. We have also proved this by the reality of the eternal truths. But we have also just proved it a posteriori since there are contingent beings, which can only have their final or sufficient reason in the necessary being, a being that has the reason of its existence in itself." This is of my favorite quotes from any philosopher in the history of the Western world, in which I agree with completely. A must read!!

Can't wait to read it. It should help me put Spinoza's works in a better perspective too.

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