



Leibniz: Determinist, Theist, Idealist

By Robert Merrihew Adams

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Legendary since his own time as a universal genius, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) contributed significantly to almost every branch of learning, from mathematics to ecumenical theology. But the part of his work that is most studied today is probably his writings in metaphysics, which have been the focus of particularly lively philosophical discussion in the last twenty years or so.

Leibniz's writings in metaphysics contain one of the great classic systems of modern philosophy, but the system must be pieced together from a vast and miscellaneous array of manuscripts, letters, articles, and books, in a way that makes especially strenuous demands on scholarship. This book presents an in-depth interpretation of three important parts of Leibniz's metaphysics, thoroughly grounded in the texts as well as in philosophical analysis and critique. The three areas discussed are the metaphysical part of Leibniz's philosophy of logic, his essentially theological treatment of the central issues of ontology, and his theory of substance (the theory of monads).

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Editorial Review

Review

"A thorough and well-researched book that deserves to be placed in every library, next to Russell's classic Leibniz text."--*Choice*

"Professor Adams has produced a finely detailed and elaborately worked-out apology for the German metaphysician....This is an austere and often daunting work which makes few concessions to those who are not already closely interested in Leibniz's philosophy. Its range is impressive....On any showing, it must be counted a formidable scholarly achievement."--*The Times Literary Supplement*

"Leibniz could not have hoped for a more thoughtful and penetrating, more careful, sensitive, and positive, examination of his ideas than this....Given the evident 'love of truth' exhibited in Adam's book, he surely would have welcomed it."--*The Times Higher Education Supplement*

"...Adams has produced a work on Leibniz of outstanding significance. Adams deftly handles the massive historical resources now available to Leibniz scholars, producing a major philosophical work which is a joy to read."--*The Review of Metaphysics*

From the Back Cover

Legendary since his own time as a universal genius, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) contributed significantly to almost every branch of learning. One of the creators of modern mathematics, and probably the most sophisticated logician between the Middle Ages and Frege, as well as a pioneer of ecumenical theology, he also wrote extensively on such diverse subjects as history, geology, and physics. But the part of his work that is most studied today is his writings in metaphysics, which have been the focus of particularly lively philosophical discussion in the last twenty years or so. The writings contain one of the great classic systems of modern philosophy, but the system must be pieced together from a vast and miscellaneous array of manuscripts, letters, articles, and books, in a way that makes especially strenuous demands on scholarship. This book presents an in-depth interpretation of three important parts of Leibniz's metaphysics, thoroughly grounded in the texts as well as in philosophical analysis and critique. The three areas discussed are the metaphysical part of Leibniz's philosophy of logic, his essentially theological treatment of the central issues of ontology, and his theory of substance (the famous theory of monads).

About the Author

Robert Adams is at Yale University.

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