

BOOK REVIEWS

G. W. Leibniz's MONADODOLOGY: An Edition for Students, by Nicholas Rescher. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991. 323 pp. \$39.95 cloth, 17.95 paper. Reviewed by J. A. Cover, Purdue University.

Precipitated largely by publication of the *Theodicy* in 1706, requests for a systematic exposition of Leibniz's philosophy led to his self-described *Éclaircissement sur les monades*, begun in the summer of 1714 at the request of Remond. Unlike the treatise on philosophical theology, Leibniz's *Monadology* is at once broadly systematic but sketchy and compressed: so it is useful, but then not so useful, as an introduction to his philosophy. Leibniz later decompressed it somewhat by adding references to the *Theodicy*, where certain issues received fuller treatment. Rescher's new book goes several steps further, still reckoning Leibniz as his own best commentator: in addition to those passages from the *Theodicy*, other passages from the Leibniz corpus are brought alongside each section of the *Monadology*, letting them pretty much speak for themselves about the ideas of that section, with a minimum of added commentary. This is a swell idea, and I think Rescher succeeds in executing it. The result is a useful work for students, who in a single edition get Leibniz's original effort at carving his system at its joints—the *principles* of philosophy, he called them—and enough additional text to flesh out a full-bodied picture of his mature philosophy.

In addition to the main chapter of text and commentary, Rescher's book contains four preliminary chapters. The first, introductory chapter offers a short biography of Leibniz, a brief discussion of the place of the *Monadology* in Leibniz's writings, and several usefully short

lists of textual sources, commentaries, and notational apparatus for the volume. Chapter two is Rescher's own translation of the *Monadology*, based on Robinet's French edition (Paris:1954). There are no surprises in the translation, which I think reads well: the occasions where I paused were few and of little consequence. (Example: when Leibniz says in section 7 that there is no way of explaining how a monad can be altered or changed internally (*alterée ou changée dans son intérieur*) by some other creature, and likewise in section 11 that no external cause can influence it internally (*puisque'une cause externe ne sauroit influencer dans son interieur*), Rescher has Leibniz denying an external source of alteration or influence on "the inner make-up" of the monad, which has the wrong feel to me in a context emphasizing the simple, partless nature of monads.) In chapter three appears a helpful thematic outline of the *Monadology*. This should be especially helpful for purposes of teaching Leibniz. Chapter four contains an inventory of analogies in the *Monadology* and a statement of important Leibnizian principles.

Rescher has gone to the trouble of also compiling three indexes, of key terms and ideas, French terms, and references to Leibniz texts. In conjunction with the earlier bibliographical apparatus introduced in chapter one and employed throughout, these indexes contribute toward making the volume a really useful tool: the first index, for example, adds page references to the *Leibniz Lexicon* (R. Finster *et. al.*; Hildesheim, 1988), assisting those wishing to follow particular concepts into their wider Leibnizian context.

Chapter five is organized by section of the *Monadology*, thus: following (i) each section in translation is (ii) the original French, (iii) passages from the *Theodicy* cited by Leibniz,

(iv) other relevant passages, (v) a short commentary on the section, and (vi) a list of key words. Rescher follows Robinet in taking the final version of secretarial copy B as the definitive copy of the text, but he includes in (i) and (ii) material (set in brackets) from earlier copies subsequently deleted by Leibniz. Between them, (iii) and (iv) give the student quite a lot of text outside the *Monadology*: (iv) subsumes the entirety of *Principles of Nature and of Grace*, with judicious but liberal selections added from the *Discourse*, *Correspondence with Arnauld*, *New System*, the *New Essays* and elsewhere. All selections are accompanied by reference to sources (typically to Gerhardt, Grua, or Couturat and to Loemker, Ariew and Garber, etc.). Rescher's short commentaries explain and elaborate on Leibniz's words, and—what I found especially helpful—orient Leibniz's thought in historical context. Students will encounter more than passing reference to classical, medieval, and Renaissance thinkers, and to Leibniz's contemporaries as well. (Rescher's commentary deserves treatment all of its own, which can't be given in such a short review. I'll just mention one item: the additional passages brought alongside the *Monadology* stretch from 1685 to 1716, but it is somewhat unclear to me whether a single view of substance emerges from these texts and Rescher's commentary on them.)

Rescher's new volume is closer to the book Leibniz never wrote than is the *Monadology*. Rescher is to be congratulated for giving us a splendid text, ideal for use in the classroom.

***Leibniz and Strawson: A New Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics*, by Clifford Brown. München: Philosophia, 1990. 120 pp. \$33.00 cloth. Reviewed by Glenn A. Hartz, Ohio State University, Mansfield.**

For those interested in issues raised in P. F. Strawson's *Individuals* (Methuen, 1959), Brown's book is a welcome sign. Despite the subtitle, it does not address the topic of revisionary vs. descriptive metaphysics. But it does break new ground on the question of how the historical Leibniz compares with Strawson's by taking a careful look at the relevant texts. Strawson says he's only *calling* his target "Leibniz." Brown rightly contends that this "possible philosopher" is enough like the actual one to make Strawson's frontal assault of interest to the Leibniz scholar, and that it "does set the issues with uncommon clarity" (13-14).

Among other things, Brown claims that Strawson is *wrong* to suggest (i) that all the relations of Leibniz's substances are reducible to non-relational qualities (Ch. 4); (ii) that Leibniz should make the identity of indiscernibles a contingent truth (Ch. 6); and (iii) that Leibniz's "complete concepts" for individuals contain only "purely universal, or general terms" (Strawson, 120) and hence can be multiply instantiated. Brown argues persuasively against (iii) by noting Leibniz's distinction between "full concepts" like *king* and "complete concepts" like that of Caesar. Only full concepts contain purely general terms. "Particular terms" (40) referring to particular events (e.g., crossing the Rubicon) must be included in the complete concepts, which do the individuating (36-40; 88-89). Finally Strawson suggests that (iv) Leibniz's monads have no bodies and aren't in a world of spatio-temporal objects. I'm only able to discuss (iv) in detail.