the bottom of the page, thus dispensing the reader from the necessity of reading in two places at once. A list of abbreviations might have been handy; by an oversight those provided in the section of the bibliography devoted to Leibniz's works do not include *VE*, the *Vorausedition zur Reihe VI* of the *Akademie-Ausgabe*, which is constantly cited thoughout the first two chapters.

In concluding I should draw the reader's attention to Duchesneau's forthcoming *La dynamique de Leibniz* (Vrin, Paris), a work which, as he points out (11), was at the origin of the present one. It will no doubt represent an advance on Gueroult's landmark study as significant as is that of the present volume on Couturat's classic work.

Leibniz's Metaphysics: A Historical and Comparative Study, by Catherine Wilson. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989. 350 pp. + x.

Reviewed by J. A. Cover, Purdue University

By now widely read, Catherine Wilson's book on Leibniz's metaphysics needs no introduction to Leibniz scholars. This volume, like its companions in the 'Studies in Intellectual History and the History of Philosophy' series, succeeds in meeting high standards of historical and textual scholarship; of special note are Wilson's remarkable grasp of the contribution that relatively minor figures (by current reckoning) made to Leibniz's thought, and her familiarity with the European secondary literature. The book is, as a consequence, broader and historically richer than other books on Leibniz in English. Contributing to this historical flavor is also a more strategic feature of Wilson's project—namely its exploration of Leibniz's metaphysics "[not] as a collection of theses and principles, but developmentally and thematically" (2). The distinction seems to imply that while one *could* view Leibniz's metaphysics as a collection of principles and theses, exactly "*which* principles and theses?" threatens to get wrongly answered: the "governing assumption" of a developmental approach is that "what the words of a [long-dead philosopher] mean cannot be determined by an internal inspection of the texts" (2). Or anyway, not precisely determined, with a high confidence of Leibniz's intentions, and for some projects this may well matter. Surely it may well matter for someone inclined—as Wilson is not—to see the largest part of Leibniz's metaphysics as a relatively unified system of theses and principles: the governing assump-

tion, which beckons us to (i) read Leibniz against the backdrop of his ancient, medieval, and modern heritage, is consistent with (ii) exploring the internal coherence of the theses and principles making up his metaphysical system. If much of the older secondary literature was mistaken in doing (ii) almost to the exclusion of (i), Wilson's book can scarcely be charged with the same mistake. Were I asked to complain about Wilson's approach, I would only suggest that her eagerness and ability to do (i) has sometimes obscured the extent to which an internal inspection of the texts is needed in fairly doing (ii).

One might complain that in the early going, Wilson ignores her promise to examine Leibniz's philosophy developmentally—commencing only in chapter III (and continuing into V) with the question of how the metaphysics of the *Monadology* might develop out of the system (or systems, by Wilson's lights) of the *Discourse on Metaphysics*. The complaint doesn't run very deep. To speak of how views develop is to speak of their historical provenance, and of their silence, modification or emphasis in later thought. While Wilson says relatively little about how Leibniz's thought changed in the earlier years (before, say, the mid-1680s), chapters I and II—on the logic, language, natural philosophy and metaphysics preceding the *Discourse*—are brimming over with a discussion of themes that variously antici-pate and diverge from Leibniz's mature views, and of their historical ancestry. It is here that Wilson is masterful at setting the intellectual background to Leibniz's thought, in charting the connection of major and "minor" figures: Bisterfeld on the encyclopedia; Lull and Kircher on the combinatorial art; Hobbes and Locke on early and late (respectively) views of definition and real inner essences expressed by names.

If there is an early and late Leibniz, middle Leibniz is to be found in the *Discourse*. There, as in both the early 1677 Dialogue ("...on the Connection Between Language and the World") and the late *New Essays*, Leibniz aims in part to relate his view of language to the nature of what there is in the world. In Wilson's view, this aim is but one of a divergent three, the *Discourse* being "not a single system, but three separate schemes or semi-systems" (80): A, the account of individual substance as Leibniz connects it with his predicate-in-subject doctrine; B, the account of corporeal substances inspired by the scholastics and augmented by the *vis viva*; and C, the quasi-Malebranchian account of causation and harmoni-ous perceptions. These semi-systems cannot form a coherent whole: their incom-patibility is the source of Leibniz's notorious problem about relations, and of his inability to decide if 'perceives' is essentially a one-term or a two-term predicate. As he later occupied himself with empirical force concepts, the logical determinism

underwriting metaphysics A comes to be unnecessary and insufficiently broad (159-60; 187). Metaphysics B, developed out of Leibniz's attack on the Cartesian view of substance as extension, is eventually scrapped (181, 185), and bits of metaphysics C remain to be developed only in terms of perceiving monads (159; 190-95).

That is a courageous, refreshing and insightful reading. We need more of its kind, not because it is new, but because it is well defended and controversial enough to promote a sort of disagreement that—like Wilson's own account—helps to deepen our understanding of Leibniz.

So let me disagree, or rather briefly indicate where one might.

(1) Can one resist what Wilson sees as consequences of Leibniz's incompatible triad—namely the alleged problem about relations, and his putative inability to decide if 'perceives' is essentially a one-term or a two-term predicate? To resist here is to deny that Leibniz confronts a real problem and a real inability. "Leibniz appears on the one hand to believe that every object is related to every other; ...at the same time he asserts that substances have 'no purely extrinsic denominations which have no basis at all in the subject itself'..." (108). So? So "the problem is that the relations of a thing to other things appear to be prime examples of 'external' denominations which cannot be reduced to 'internal' qualities of the subject itself" (108). Well, appearances may be only appearances: an argument is needed for why Leibniz cannot consistently allow that inter-substantival relational truths reduce to intrinsic states of the relata while yet claiming that each substance expresses every other. Leibniz is fond of saying that relations obtain merely as "results" of states of things or their changes (G,II,226; C,9), that relational propositions "arise" from individual states (LH,VI,vii C98); this, in conjunction with the Leibnizian sentiment that God could not have actualized a world intrinsically (monadically) exactly like ours yet extrinsically (relationally) different, suggests that relational truths about substances supervene on monadic, non-relational ones. Why not? Reduction of this sort fits handily alongside Leibniz's claim (LH,IV,vii C17r) that 'A is similar to B' reduces to 'A is red and B is red,' and his claim that a relation "results without any change made in the subjects but supervenes (*supervenit*) from them" (LH,IV,vii C74r). And what about perception, which Wilson thinks cannot square at once with Leibniz's predicate-in-subject doctrine and the considered view that relations are merely mental (109-10)? There seem to be three distinct but related issues here, run together in Wilson's discussion. (a) The semantic doctrine entails neither that there are no relational truths, nor that what relational facts there are must be contained in an individual concept as the intrinsic, monadic ones are: Leibniz can reject

relational facts as irreducible, fundamental ways substances are at the groundfloor of this metaphysic, locating only 'basic' monadic properties in complete concepts as the subvenient base for the derived relational truths. (If claims about fragility or heat reduce to facts about microstructure or molecular kinematics, 'fragile' and 'hot' still have their role in expressing truths about the world, even if not on the deep level of theory.) Does this give too much reality to relations, or too little? Wilson has good reasons for answering "both" (109-10), but they seem to me not good enough. Leibniz may be seen to answer "neither," thus. (b) "You say this gives too much reality to relations because elsewhere I claim they are ideal, not real. By this I mean that there are no relational accidents—nothing in substances answering to so-called one-place relational predicates. There are individual substances and their monadic perceptual states, but there are no accidents with one leg in x and another in y (for distinct x and y). How is it that x has paternity only if some particular individual—y, but not z—exists? By virtue of quite distinctive relational facts supervening on the states of x and y that do not supervene on states of x and z." (c) "You say that this gives too little reality to relations because, while perceptual states are monadic, elsewhere I claim that every substance expresses every other. Well, there is nothing intrinsic to the state of a substance that brings its environment with it: when I say that 'one thing expresses another to the extent that it has properties corresponding to the properties of the thing expressed'—as a plane diagram might express a three-dimensional structure, better or worse—I mean the relational element of 'perceives' to be a consequence of the pre-established harmony. That the internal content of a state can be understood as representational is no consequence of its intrinsic nature: there might have been no correspondence, no harmony of perceptions, indeed no *relata* at all, as if only God and it existed in the world. Does his widower-property W depend upon her death? No and yes: no, because every state of a substance is a causal consequence of previous inner states, determined by its law of the series; yes, because there is no world where he takes on W where she does not exist or does not die."

(2) I have been speaking rather as if views of the *Monadology* can be smoothly spliced onto those of the *Discourse*, without misrepresenting Leibniz. While I agree with Wilson that different features of Metaphysics A, B, and C seem variously dropped, underplayed, or modified between the mid-1680s and the *Monadology*, I confess to seeing Leibniz's theory as less fragmented than she does. A very brief example or two (depending upon how one counts), in closing. Wilson suggests that the "conceptual determinism" of metaphysics A is not retained in the later view of substances as dynamic loci of force or power. But Leibniz's account (in Section 8,

say, of the *Discourse*) of the complete concept is primarily understood as what in the Divine understanding corresponds to, but isn't, the form or essence of an individual substance. I spoke earlier of Leibniz's non-conventionalist semantics in connecting definition and names with the world—with essence or form: the form is for Leibniz a real, causally active feature of enduring substances, and this Aristotelian, C-metaphysic view of substance[1] is consistent with the idea of a logical subject (as Aristotle himself would remind us) in metaphysics A. For just as every individual has a complete concept containing in it everything past-to-future that will happen to it, so each individual contains within it that lawful, causally robust primitive power by virtue of which it endures and undergoes its changes: neither the concept nor the inner nature of a substance requires one to look outside it in order to explain the states of a substance. Moreover, it seems to me that the monadological picture of a simple, active, soul-like substance is very much at home in the middle-year account of substantial forms. Exactly how Leibniz understood matter and corporeal substance in the middle years is a vexed issue. Surely nothing in the *Monadology* is inconsistent with the idea that a phenomenal aggregate is secondary matter, and that in corporeal substance there is, in the end, only a hierarchy of substantial forms. (That such forms were not called monads scarcely shows that they were not monads.) As for the primitive passive force which is primary matter, identify it with the passive feature of confused perception in monads. If the middle texts are not so explicit about this, we cannot yet conclude that a middle-late metaphysics is incoherent: once again, an argument is needed—this time for why the intrinsic, non-relational character of perception in metaphysics C is not precisely what is at work in Leibniz's anti-Cartesian treatment of matter (as Wilson rightly characterizes it) in metaphysics B. Extension isn't the essence of body: at bottom we need some logically prior quality in the nature of things that is diffused, repeated, spread out; why shouldn't Leibniz have in mind—if perhaps dimly, in middle years—just that perceptual property, and its passive aspects, intrinic to every individual substance? If we are invited to give a fragmented, "thematic" reading of Leibniz's metaphysics because he said too much, what he does say is sufficiently complex to permit and repay efforts at reading him otherwise. (I think that Wilson could agree with this.)

There are many other topics (space and motion, the *New Essays*, the *Theodicy*, reading Leibniz after Kant) in Wilson's book that, like the book as a whole, deserve

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[1] "Aristotelian" is my characterization of metaphysics C, not Wilson's: see below, and (say) *Monadology* §18 set alongside *Theodicy* §87.

more careful and detailed attention than one can offer in the space of a review. This is an intelligent, first-rate piece of historical scholarship and interpretation, whose methods and claims will influence work on Leibniz much for the better.

G.W. Leibniz, De l'Horizon de la Doctrine Humaine (1693); La Restitution Universelle (1715). Textes inédits, traduits et annotés par Michel Fichant, suivis d'une Postface *Plus Ultra*. Paris: J. Vrin, 1991.

Reviewed by Michael Latzer, St. Anselm College

This fascinating and expertly edited little volume brings to light some hitherto neglected works, illustrating Leibniz's lifelong interest in the calculus of combinations, and in the problem of the progress of human culture. In fact both interests are united in these works in a characteristically Leibnizian way.

Leibniz's project in *De l'Horizon de la Doctrine Humaine* is well expressed in its lengthy subtitle: "Meditation on the number of all possible truths and falsities, enunciable by humanity such as we know it to be; and on the number of feasible books. Wherein it is demonstrated that these numbers are finite, and that it is possible to write, and easy to conceive, a much greater number. To show the limits of the human spirit [*l'esprit humain*], and to know the extent of these limits" (p. 39; my translations). Following in the tradition of the mathematical curiosities of Clavius, Mersenne, and Guldin, Leibniz offers a formula for the calculation of the number of possible words, significant or nonsignificant, pronounceable or unpronounceable, which can be generated from an alphabet of 23 letters. Even though the product of this calculation is prodigiously great, it is finite, and given a sufficiently lengthy lifespan of the species all truths would very likely be exhausted, and novelty give way to repetition. This observation yields the notion of a "horizon of human doctrine", an extrinsic limit to the number of truths statable in language, and confirms the "vulgar expression that 'nothing is said which has not been said already'"(p. 52).

Some of the implications of this notion are spelled out in the opuscules which follow in the book, and principally in Leibniz's two treatments of the theme of apokatastasis, or universal restitution. For instance, since "facts supply the matter for discourse" (p. 57), it would seem that events themselves must eventually exhaust all possibilities, and a recurrence of historical epochs (as in the "great Platonic year" of antiquity) could be expected. In his learned and richly documented *Postface*, "Plus Ultra", Fichant shows that although the term 'apokatastasis' carries with it Origenist