

剑桥政治思想史原著系列（影印本）

CAMBRIDGE TEXTS IN THE HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT

莱布尼茨政治著作选

Leibniz

Political

Writings

Edited by

PATRICK

RILEY

中国政法大学出版社

LEIBNIZ

莱布尼茨政治著作选
Political Writings

TRANSLATED AND EDITED
WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY
PATRICK RILEY

*Michael Oakeshott Professor of Political
Philosophy, University of Wisconsin, Madison*

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CAMBRIDGE TEXTS IN THE
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The Times Literary Supplement, July 1972

剑桥政治思想史原著系列

丛书编辑

Raymond Geuss

剑桥大学哲学高级讲师

Quentin Skinner

剑桥大学近代史讲座教授

在政治理论领域，“剑桥政治思想史原著系列”作为主要的学生教科丛书，如今已牢固确立了其地位。本丛书旨在使学生能够获得从古希腊到 20 世纪初期西方政治思想史方面所有最为重要的原著。它囊括了所有著名的经典原著，但与此同时，它又扩展了传统的评价尺度，以便能够纳入范围广泛、不那么出名的作品。而在此之前，这些作品中有许多从未有过现代英文版本可资利用。只要可能，所选原著都会以完整而不删节的形式出版，其中的译作则是专门为本丛书的目的而安排。每一本书都有一个评论性的导言，加上历史年表、生平梗概、进一步阅读指南，以及必要的词汇表和原文注解。本丛书的最终目的是，为西方政治思想的整个发展脉络提供一个清晰的轮廓。

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For
MICHAEL OAKESHOTT

Preface to the Second Edition

In a letter to the Jesuit Father des Bosses, Leibniz had occasion to complain that 'two things usually make publishers hesitate – one is their desire to profit; the other is ignorance. Thus they do not know what they should select. They do not trust scholars enough, because they believe that scholars have a better understanding of what is scholarly than of what will sell.' If Leibniz were alive today, he would be gratified to know that the Cambridge University Press, in consenting to publish an edition of his political writings, showed itself admirably free of all these faults. From the outset the Press trusted my judgment in the selection and translation of the pieces to appear in this volume, but also saw to it that I was provided with a searching critique of some of the more obscure points in the 'editor's introduction'. For this trust, for this willingness to revive interesting and unaccountably neglected political writings of a great contemporary of Hobbes, Spinoza and Locke, I am much in their debt. While it is true that no one can pretend that Leibniz' political writings are equal to those of such contemporaries, or even to his own writings on logic, metaphysics and theology, they are at least intriguing and worthy of some attention.

Anyone who reads the introduction will notice that it draws on a wide range of books, letters, manuscripts etc., and that Leibniz' 'political system' has been assembled out of these materials. I think that there really is a system in these writings – though, since Leibniz never wrote a large-scale, comprehensive treatise on politics, the system which I have explained may look rather artificial. A composite it is, indeed; but not an invention.

In preparing the original edition (1972) of *The Political Writings of Leibniz* I incurred many debts. Dr John Gleason, formerly of the Harvard Classics Department, supplied me some years ago with a translation of chapters 9 and 10 of Leibniz' *Caesarinus Fürstenerius*, and I retained most of his work in the present version. Mr James Zetzel, of the same Department, was kind enough to read over the translation from the Latin, and to suggest important changes. Professor Leroy Loemker, then of Emory University, cleared up several difficult points in a letter from which I profited. The present version of the *Meditation of the Common Concept of Justice* was strengthened because I was able to read the actual manuscript, preserved in the Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek in Hanover, Germany; for the funds which made that trip possible I remain grateful to the Harvard Government Department, and for generous assistance at the Landes-

bibliothek I owe a debt of gratitude (stretching down to the present moment) to Dr Gerda Utermöhlen. Finally I want to re-acknowledge a grant from the Canada Humanities Fund at Harvard, which made it possible to put the finishing touches on the original edition, and the patient assistance and advice of Mrs Patricia Williams, then of the Cambridge University Press. In 1972, as in 1987, my wife's unflinching help and encouragement (and proof-reading) have made all of my scholarly efforts possible.

I have taken advantage of the re-issuing of *Leibniz* by adding three 'new' pieces – unpublished manuscripts from the period 1695 to 1714 – which flesh out our view of Leibniz' political and moral thought. (For permission to publish these manuscripts I am grateful to the Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek, Hanover – and more particularly to Drs Gerda Utermöhlen and Albert Heinekamp.) Practical considerations necessitated placing these 'new' items at the end of the book; and since they are unknown I have written a substantial introduction to each. Different as the three new pieces are, they are linked by Leibniz' consistent hostility to Hobbes, and by his consistent effort to fuse Platonic rationalism and Christian charity in a 'universal jurisprudence' valid for all 'minds'. (I have also taken advantage of this new edition by enlarging and revising the 'critical bibliography', carrying it down to 1986).

My work on this new edition has been greatly facilitated by happy events here in England. For the Hilary and Trinity terms of 1987 I have been the guest of Jesus College, Oxford, which generously provided an ideal work atmosphere and learned, congenial colleagues; all of this I owe to Dr John Gray, who kindly brought me to the College. I am grateful to the British Museum for providing photocopies of rare editions of Leibniz which I needed for this enlarged edition, and to the Bodleian Library, Oxford, for furnishing every Leibniz text I needed with cheerful dispatch. I am most particularly grateful to Mrs Gillian Beeston of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, for her generous assistance in connection with the translation of the Latin text of Leibniz' 1714 lecture on the Greeks as founders of rational theology – the third and last 'new' item in this edition. And I am grateful to Jeremy Mynott of Cambridge University Press for proposing this new edition, and to the Editors for incorporating my book in their new series.

My last word will be for Michael Oakshott, to whom I dedicate this book. It was he who pulled me into the field of political and moral philosophy nearly thirty years ago, who left an indelible imprint as my tutor at the London School of Economics, and who represents everything I most admire in English civilization and academic life. I owe him more than any mere dedication can ever hope to express.

Jesus College, Oxford
June 1987

Abbreviations

- Acad. Ed. = G. W. Leibniz, *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe*, edition of the German (formerly Prussian) Academy of Sciences at Berlin, Darmstadt and Leipzig, 1923- .
- Baruzi = Jean Baruzi, *Leibniz et l'Organisation Religieuse de la Terre*, Felix Alcan, Paris, 1907.
- Duncan = G. M. Duncan (trans.), *The Philosophical Works of Leibniz*, 2nd ed., New Haven, 1908.
- Dutens = Louis Dutens, *God. Guil. Leibnitii . . . Opera Omnia*, de Tournes, Geneva, 1768.
- F de C = A. Foucher de Careil, *Œuvres de Leibniz*, Didot Frères, Paris, 1859-75.
- Ger. = C. I. Gerhardt, *Die Philosophischen Schriften von G. W. Leibniz*, Weidmann, Berlin, 1875-90.
- Ger. Math. = C. I. Gerhardt, *Die Mathematische Schriften von G. W. Leibniz*, Berlin and Halle, 1849-55.
- Klopp = Onno Klopp, *Die Werke von Leibniz*, Klindworth Verlag, Hanover, 1864-84.
- Latta = Robert Latta, *The Monadology and Other Philosophical Writings*, Oxford University Press, 1898.
- Loemker = Leroy Loemker, *Leibniz: Philosophical Papers and Letters*, University of Chicago Press, 1956 (republished at Dordrecht, 1969; cited as Loemker 2nd ed.).
- Mollat = G. Mollat, *Rechtsphilosophisches aus Leibnizens Ungedruckten Schriften*, Verlag Robolsky, Leipzig, 1885.
- Monadology* (cited by propositions, e.g., 'prop. 56').
- New Essays on Human Understanding* (cited by book, chapter and part, e.g., 'NE IV, iii, pt. 1').
- Principles of Nature and Grace* (cited by propositions, e.g., 'prop. 2').
- Rommel = C. von Rommel, *Leibniz und Landgraf Ernst von Hessen-Rheinfels*, Frankfurt, 1847.
- Ruck = E. Ruck, *Die Leibniz'sche Staatsidee*, Verlag J. C. B. Mohr, Tübingen, 1909.
- Russell = Bertrand Russell, *A Critical Exposition of the Philosophy of Leibniz*, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1900.
- Textes Inédits* = G. Grua (ed.), *Textes Inédits*, Presses Universitaires de France, 1948.
- Theodicy* (cited by books and propositions, e.g., 'Theodicy III, pt. 337').

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Introduction

THE LIFE AND WORK OF LEIBNIZ

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, the son of a Leipzig University professor, was born in 1646, two years before the end of the Thirty Years' War. He was thoroughly educated – partly through his own efforts – in scholastic philosophy and in jurisprudence, including the Roman law (which was later to be important to his theory of justice). At an early age he attempted a correspondence with Hobbes, whom he was already beginning to see as his principal philosophical antagonist; but Hobbes never replied, in part, perhaps, because of Leibniz' left-handed compliments ('certain men are . . . wrong in ascribing license and impiety to your hypotheses'). Following a brief period of service to the Elector of Mainz, Leibniz resided in Paris for a few years; here he first observed Louis XIV's expansionist policies, which he was afterwards to combat as a writer and as a diplomatist. In Paris, too, he expanded his interests to take in logic and mathematics, and made a number of important permanent friendships. Unable to secure the diplomatic post he wanted, Leibniz finally attached himself to the house of Brunswick-Lüneburg, rulers of the (soon-to-be) Electorate of Hanover, and became official apologist for and historian of this principality.

At Hanover Leibniz, in addition to his official duties and philosophical efforts, carried on a wide range of political activities and correspondences. He entered into an exchange of letters with Bossuet concerning the reunification of 'Christendom'; this became his lifelong passion, as it had been that of his favorite modern political theorist, Grotius. Though a Protestant, Leibniz became the defender of a reformed and truly universal Papacy; at the same time he vigorously defended the Conciliar movement of the fifteenth century, believing that if it had succeeded, the Reformation would have been unnecessary and the 'universal' authorities (Pope and Holy Roman Emperor) would still be viable. To produce the desired reconciliation, Leibniz recommended toleration and compromise; and this, of course, made all parties suspicious of him. Though he was the last thinker of great stature to defend the Empire as something more than a vestigial oddity, he was also a frequent apologist for the rights of Imperial electors and princes, and tried to strike a balance between the

majestas of the Empire and the sovereignty of the princes. Sovereignty, for him, meant simply internal control and 'influence' in European affairs, but did not exclude ultimate allegiance to universal authority. His efforts to recast sovereignty led to a broad attack on Hobbes and Pufendorf, and, ultimately, to a more general critique of legal positivism.

In later years, while keeping up his interest in the re-unification of the *Respublica Christiana* and in the refutation of Hobbes, Leibniz devoted considerable time to justifying the Hanoverian succession to the British throne, arguing that a Stuart restoration would make France the absolute arbiter of Europe. On behalf of the Empire, he wrote tracts attacking French seizure of Imperial territories; against Louis XIV's devastations, he urged that charity and benevolence were the proper course for a true prince, and was instrumental in trying to set up academies of arts and sciences, as well as economic and educational councils, in Germany and – at the behest of Peter the Great – in Russia.

At the end of his life, Leibniz gave up a little on his plans for reviving a Republic of Christendom, but still insisted that his schemes *would* be better than a system of independent states and religious fragmentation; the tone of his last political letters is resigned and often ironic. And when he died in 1716, famous in an astounding variety of subjects, the rationalized medieval system which he tried to sustain had largely disappeared.

POLITICAL WRITINGS

It was characteristic of Leibniz to try to reconcile apparently conflicting ideas, to take from each kind of thought that which was soundest and to synthesize it with the seemingly incommensurable truths of other systems; thus he struggled throughout his life to fuse Platonism, Cartesianism, Christian voluntarism, scholasticism, Hobbesian mechanism and a number of other doctrines into a plausible whole¹ whose apex would be a *rational* theology (Leibniz used God with a relatively sparing hand, and was contemptuous of philosophers who drew him in at the first sign of intellectual difficulty). Given this desire for reconciliation, for harmony, for synthesis – which he applied to political philosophy as much as to any other philosophical question – it should come as no surprise that Leibniz wanted to establish, or rather discover, a 'universal jurisprudence', a system of law and justice common to God and man (and generally to any rational substances); both God and man existed in a 'society or universal republic of spirits' which was the 'noblest part of the universe', a moral realm within (and at the summit of) physical nature, a realm in which 'universal right is the same for God and for men'.²

The totality of all spirits must compose the City of God, that is to say, the most perfect state that is possible, under the most perfect of Monarchs.

This City of God, this truly universal monarchy, is a moral world in the natural world, and is the most exalted among the works of God.³

For Leibniz, the difference between divine and human justice was one of degree, not in kind; God's justice was simply infinitely more perfect than men's, and 'to say . . . that God's justice is different from men's is like saying that the arithmetic or the geometry of men is false in heaven.⁴ Justice had, moreover, as Leibniz observed in a commentary on Hobbes, nothing to do with the command or the power of authorities; it 'does not depend on the arbitrary laws of superiors, but on the eternal rules of wisdom and goodness, in men as well as in God'.⁵ Perhaps the fullest mature statement of this view is contained in Leibniz' *Opinion on the Principles of Pufendorf*:

In the science of law . . . it is best to derive human justice, as from a spring, from the divine, in order to make it complete. Surely the idea of the just, no less than that of the true and the good, relates to God . . . And the rules which are common [to divine and human justice] certainly enter into the science [of natural law], and ought to be considered in universal jurisprudence.⁶

All of this suggests (what Leibniz actually believed), that God is not just a first cause or an 'imaginary metaphysical being, incapable of thought, will and action', but that he is 'a definite substance, a person, a mind'.⁷ In God 'there is power, which is the source of all, also knowledge, whose content is the variety of the ideas, and finally will, which makes changes or products according to the principle of the best'.⁸ God, then, like men, has knowledge, will and power, but Leibniz wanted to be certain that justice is not deduced out of the last two attributes alone; God will act, perfectly (as men will act, though imperfectly), in a way such that action is the issue of knowledge and volition combined. 'Wisdom', he urged in the *Meditation on the Common Concept of Justice*, 'is in the understanding, and goodness in the will. And justice as a result is in both. Power is another matter, but if it is added it transforms right into fact'.⁹

It is precisely because Leibniz usually conceived of moral activity, for both God and men, in terms of voluntary and rational *action*, that he could not reduce justice simply to a Platonic relation, or a fixed harmony; an action, rationally chosen, had to be involved. And this is why Leibniz usually defined justice as 'the charity of the wise'. 'The [proper] treatment of justice and that of charity cannot be separated', he urged in one of his earliest writings. 'Neither Moses, nor Christ, nor the Apostles nor the ancient Christians regulated justice otherwise than according to charity. . .

[and] I, too, after having tried countless definitions of justice, finally felt myself satisfied only by this one; it alone I have found universal and reciprocal.⁹ Charity is 'a universal benevolence, which the wise man carries into execution in conformity with the measures of reason, to the end of obtaining the greatest good'.¹⁰ Charity, a 'habit of loving' (with love defined as a 'feeling of perfection'¹¹ in others), necessitated voluntary action; it was to be regulated by wisdom, which would provide a knowledge of what men *deserved* through their 'perfections'. (In Leibniz' philosophy, perfection is both the *cause* of love and the *reason* which regulates that love.)

Leibniz' view of justice as charity tempered by a knowledge of what is deserved obviously suggests a more generous and benevolent idea of the just than that entertained by many philosophers; but since his full view of charity can be more happily taken up at a later point, it will perhaps be sufficient to say for the moment that he had at least three excellent reasons for conceiving justice as he did. First, in a 'universal jurisprudence' the same rules must apply to God and man. But the traditional definition of justice, resting on the idea that something is 'owed' or 'due', cannot be applied to God, who can owe no duties.¹² God can, however, love, and wisdom will show how much each rational being deserves to be loved. Since this idea can apply to men as well as to God, it is a perfect foundation for a universal jurisprudence. Second, if charity is the essence of justice, then mere power or mere command cannot be. Adopting such a universal solution is the best antidote to all legal-positivist views of justice, such as Hobbes'. And finally, charity presupposes not merely a *ius strictum* (forbearance from violence against others), and not merely rendering what is due, but an active benevolence; and Leibniz believed that if one tried to make the happiness of others his own, not only would ordinary life be happier, but disasters such as the disintegration of Christendom after the Reformation could be healed. True charity, he thought, could overcome doctrinal differences; 'charity must prevail over all other considerations in the world'.¹³

Despite the attractiveness of this view, Leibniz sometimes did try to define justice simply in terms of harmony, of proportion, of ratios as precise as any in mathematics. One of his more extreme statements in this vein (1696) urged that the

eternal truths are the fixed and immutable point on which everything turns. Such is the truth of numbers in arithmetic, and of figures in geometry. . . .

That postulated, it is well to consider that order and harmony are also something mathematical and which consist in certain proportions: and that justice being nothing else than the order which is observed with regard to the good and

evil of intelligent creatures, it follows that God, who is the sovereign substance, immutably maintains justice and the most perfect order which can be observed.¹⁴

Throughout his life Leibniz was tempted to assert that principles of justice, as 'eternal verities', had the same status as $A = A$ or $2 + 2 = 4$, and for an obvious reason: one of his great hopes was that of reducing all complex propositions to their simplest form, to primary and irreducible concepts whose predicates were clearly contained in their subjects, to a 'universal symbolistic' in which argument would be replaced by the use of a universal language.¹⁵ Certainly differences over the character of justice could be obviated if, as Leibniz hoped, 'justice follows certain rules of equality and of proportion which are no less founded in the immutable nature of things, and in the ideas of the divine understanding, than the principles of arithmetic and geometry'.¹⁶

The reason that Leibniz could not and did not *consistently* maintain this idea of justice is that there is no voluntary act in it; a justice of harmony and proportion alone presupposes an aesthetic passivity which fails to take Christian voluntarism into account. In most Christian thought, justice is not simply a relation, but an action; and Leibniz, who grew up reading the scholastics, was aware of the transformation made in the idea of justice by philosophers such as St Thomas Aquinas:

Now justice does not aim at directing an act of the cognitive power, for we are not said to be just through knowing something aright. . . but since we are said to be just through doing something aright. . . justice must needs be in some [rational] appetitive power.¹⁷

That Leibniz (usually) favored this view – originally suggested by Aristotle's *Ethics*¹⁸ and much elaborated by medieval philosophy – is perfectly clear: in an important early work he insisted that Christian virtues 'consist not only in talking and in thinking, but in thinking practically, that is, in acting';¹⁹ and in a late letter (1706) he described justice and injustice in terms of the 'moral goodness or badness of actions'.²⁰ Justice, then, cannot be a simple proportion or harmony in Leibniz; harmony may be the product of justice, but it cannot be the essence of it. (It must be granted, however, that there is a certain tension in Leibniz' work which is caused by his working with two kinds of premises – Christian voluntarism and Platonic rationalism – simultaneously; and this makes interpretation of his thought exceedingly difficult.)

If Leibniz was, as a Christian, unavoidably a voluntarist, that does not mean that justice for him was founded on will alone; far from it. This, in fact, is what he accused Hobbes (together with Thrasymachus) of doing; and he asserted again and again that to say, *stat pro ratione voluntas*, let