DESCARTES EMBODIED

This volume collects some of the seminal essays on Descartes by Daniel Garber, one of the preeminent scholars of early-modern philosophy. A central theme unifying the volume is the interconnection between Descartes’ philosophical and scientific interests, and the extent to which these two sides of the Cartesian program illuminate each other, a question rarely treated in the existing literature.

Among the specific topics discussed in the essays are Descartes’ celebrated method, his demand for certainty in the sciences, his account of the relation of mind and body, and his conception of God’s activity on the physical world.

This collection will be a mandatory purchase for any serious student of or professional working in seventeenth-century philosophy, history of science, or history of ideas.

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Reading Cartesian Philosophy through Cartesian Science

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To A. D., R. A., and J.-L. M.
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ABBREVIATIONS, CITATIONS, AND TRANSLATIONS

Although these essays were originally published at different times, in different places, and using different abbreviations and conventions of citation, I have tried to bring a certain amount of consistency to the collective whole, at least when dealing with the writings of Descartes. In the essays that follow, I have used the following abbreviations:


AT remains the standard original-language text, and CSM and CSMK have become the standard English translations. In some essays, there are references to both AT and an English translation; more often, not. Since CSM and CSMK key their texts directly to AT, it should be
easy enough to move from the AT citations that I usually give to those translations. Though I do not always cite them, I often do borrow from them in essays written after they became available. In the earlier essays, I made some use of earlier translations that they replaced. In particular, some of the earlier pieces in this collection borrow from the once standard translations of Haldane and Ross\(^1\) and the volume of Descartes’ letters edited and translated by Anthony Kenny\(^2\) (which metamorphasized into CSMK), as well as the translations of Anscombe and Geach,\(^3\) Laurence J. Lafleur,\(^4\) Paul J. Olscamp\(^5\) (for the *Dioptrics* and *Meteors*), and others that are lost in the sands of time and on the shelves of my library. To these helpful crutches go all the praise and none of the blame: If I have borrowed their mistakes in translation (or, even worse, made original mistakes of my own), it’s my own damned fault. In any case, direct references to outdated translations in the original essays have been eliminated.

I have not tried to revise essays or footnotes in any extensive way. When I found that I no longer agreed with a view expressed in an essay I published some years ago, I was more inclined to omit it from this volume than try to correct it. Also, I have made no attempt to update the notes and references. Changes are limited to making the system of references more consistent from one essay to the next, adding some cross references to other essays in this volume, and, in the case of one essay, translating the quotations from Latin and French into English. I also tried to omit some overlapping passages. However, these essays were written to be independent and free-standing, and given the interconnected themes, some amount of overlap is inevitable.

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