

Review of: "Modern Monads: Leibniz, Continuity, and the Stream of Consciousness"

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Firstly, it is not clear how to frame this article. It is not a work of Leibniz exegesis, i.e., does not attempt to clarify concepts in Leibniz with modern physics. You may want to highlight certain phenomena in physics that you think are of philosophical importance but then saying they are sort of like something Leibniz said many centuries ago does not add much to modern physics. But we have seen Heisenberg discussing ancient Greek philosophy using modern concepts so I guess it is a genre.

Surely Leibniz was laying out a metaphysics for classical physics as it was emerging. Three principles were classically successful I would say: the principle of continuity, the principle of identity of indistinguishables (PII), and the principle of sufficient reason. All three are violated by Quantum Mechanics; Continuity by quantum jumps, PII by bosons, and sufficient reason by the objective probability of QM. Thus attempts to find good connections between Leibniz and QM are rather doubtful.

In general, this sort of philosophizing always faces the huge problem of carving out the right concepts and finding the right level of generality or abstraction "where theory lives." Otherwise, one ends up with in a rather incoherent set of ill-defined results.

I do much the same type of theorizing myself and it is a very long process of being your own best critic. Do not mistake the first glimmer of dawn for the noon day sun.