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Sceptical Doubt and Disbelief in Modern European Thought

A New Pan-American Dialogue

This volume examines modern scepticism in all main philosophical areas: epistemology, science, metaphysics, morals, and religion. It features sixteen essays that explore its importance for modern thought. The contributions present diverse, mutually enriching interpretations of key thinkers, from Montaigne to Nietzsche.

The book includes a look both at the relationship between Montaigne and Pascal and at Montaigne's criticism of religious rationalism. It turns its attention to an investigation into the links between ancient scepticism and Bacon's Doctrine of the Idols, as well as into the ancient problem of the criterion in Cartesian philosophy. Next, three essays focus on more general topics, like modern sceptical disturbances, clandestine literature and irreligion. Two essays investigate the role of scepticism in Bayle's moral thinking and his theory of religious toleration. Hume's sceptical philosophy is the subject of two papers by distinguished scholars. In addition, many contributors address the presence of scepticism in Kant and in the German Idealism, such as the role of Schulze's scepticism in the works of the young Hegel. The book closes with a paper on Nietzsche and scepticism, and an essay on the role of Popkin's and Schmitt's works on modern scepticism.

This collection continues along a rich, fruitful path opened by Richard H. Popkin and pursued by many important scholars, like Gianni Paganini, John-Christian Laursen, and José Raimundo Maia Neto. It re-establishes that necessary dialogue between researchers of scepticism from all over the Americas, which began with Popkin, Oswaldo Porchat and Ezequiel de Olaso long ago. This insightful reflection on modern European scepticism will also serve as an important resource in the history of modern philosophy.