

de Spinoza, Benedictus

Spinoza's Algebraic calculation of the rainbow and calculation of chances. Ed. and transl. (from the Dutch) with an introduction, explanatory notes and an appendix by M. J. Petry.

(English) [Zbl 0606.01025](#)

Archives Internationales d'Histoire des Idées. International Archives of the History of Ideas, 108. Dordrecht-Boston-Lancaster: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, a member of the Kluwer Academic Publishers Group. 159 p. Dfl. 115.00; \$ 44.50; £31.95 (1985).

In 1687, approximately ten years after Spinoza's death, a thin volume appeared anonymously in The Hague containing a twenty-page essay on the rainbow (in Descartes sense) and an eight-page pamphlet on mathematical probability (in Huygens sense) with the undertitle "serving to unite physics more closely with mathematics". This work was republished in 1884 by D. Bierens de Haan who attributed the authorship to Spinoza, other investigations casted doubt on the authenticity of this fragment. A facsimile of the Dutch text and a modern English parallel-text are reproduced with an introduction, and a lot of notes are given. The appendix analyses in detail the evidence available concerning the origin of the texts and Spinoza's attempt to assimilate the mathematics of the exact sciences into his philosophical system.

Reviewer: H.Grimm

MSC:

[01A75](#) Collected or selected works; reprintings or translations of classics

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