

“Preface”



Tabulae Rudolphinae : quibus astronomicae... by Johannes Kepler, 1571-1630, NOAA

Why Open Source?

Almost all classic major works in philosophy and literature are accessible *via* online sources on the Internet. Fortunately, many of the influential and abiding works in philosophy are in the public domain; these readings provide a convenient way to produce quality learning experiences for almost anyone seeking information and help. Our present collection of edited readings is free, subject to the legal notice following the title page.

By placing these selections in the public domain under the GFDL, this product is being open-sourced, in part, to minimize costs to interested students of philosophy and, in part, to make it widely available in a form convenient for a wide variety of readers. Moreover, users themselves can improve the product if they wish to do so. Viewed in this way, the release of these readings is, in a genuine sense, a small test of the Delphi effect in open source publishing.

This particular edition should not be viewed as a completed work. It is the first step in the development of the open-source text. The development model of *Reading for Philosophical Inquiry* is loosely patterned

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on the “release early, release often” model championed by Eric S. Raymond.¹ With the completion of version 1.0, various formats of this work can be made available for distribution. If the core reading and commentary prove useful, the successive revisions, readings, commentary, and other improvements by users can be released in incrementally numbered “stable” versions.

A Note about Selections

Reading selections in this collection of papers are often selections with deletions of text *in passim*; consequently, the ideas of the writers are examined out of their literary and historical context. The main focus for our approach to philosophy, however, is not so much on historical understanding as it is on the use of those germinal ideas which spark thinking about some significant issues of life and thought.

In general, as the difficulty of the reading increases, the length of the selection decreases. The primary consideration of selection and inclusion is to introduce original sources accessible to a wide variety of readers, including high school and homeschooling students. In addition to this core set of readings, supplementary readings are in process of publication.

Please send questions or inquiries of interest to the “Editors” at

<philbook@philosophy.lander.edu>

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1. Eric Raymond. *The Cathedral and the Bazaar*. Sebastopol, CA: O’Reilly & Associates, 1999. Online at The Cathedral and the Bazaar (<http://www.catb.org/~esr/writings/cathedral-bazaar/>).