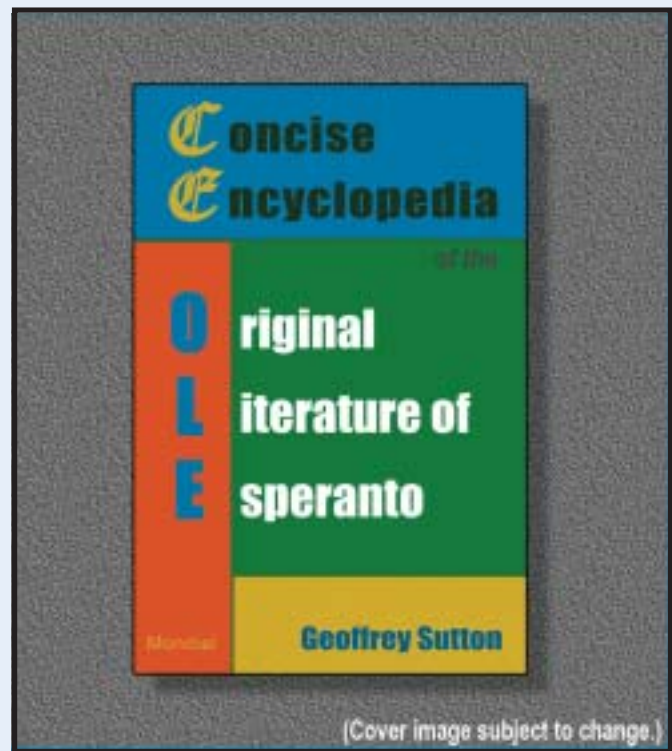


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Esperanto literature is created by writers from many countries who have chosen to use it because of its merits. It is, as yet, nearly always a labour of love – that is to say a product of culture. It is also most fundamentally democratic – a product of people, as opposed to capital, power or national prestige. More generally, the precise nature of Esperanto culture is still debated. It is certain, however, that it is unusually aware. In contrast to other contemporary cultures, Esperanto-speakers are more likely to be acquainted with their poets, despite the lack of a state-financed education system.

The beginnings of the philosophy behind Esperanto may be found in the work of Descartes. This philosophy is the concretization of an ideal that has been incubated by enlightened people for centuries: *If all our mental processes and operations should be ruled by reason, then the first field into which we must introduce it is that means by which we express and interconnect our thoughts, which is language.* (Gaston Waringhien).

Leibnitz continued the work of Descartes. At the end of a French-language manuscript, discovered in Hanover Library in 1903, he wrote: *When this project (of a universal language) is realized, the happiness of mankind will depend solely on themselves, because then they will have a tool at their disposal that will serve to increase their good sense as the telescope serves to increase the capacity to see ...*

Esperanto is a vernacular and literary medium that belongs equally to all and to no one, used by people who are universally bilingual or multilingual and generally support language diversity.

Concise Encyclopedia of the Original Literature of Esperanto 1887–2007 by Geoffrey Sutton. New York, NY: Mondial, 2008. Approx. 740 pages. 6" x 9" (152 x 229 mm). ISBN 978-1-59569-090-6. Price €66.00.

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