Summaries

The Prince and the Philosophy of Nature
Hume: Experience, Testimony, Science
János Laki

On the face of it, Hume's essay 'Of Miracles' is about the existence of divine providence. My reading, however, focuses on its epistemological content, investigating how the rational acceptance of testimonies is related to the problems of inductive generalisation. I offer arguments to the effect that Hume's assessment of testimony was somewhat anachronistic already at the time of its inception. A brief comparison with Bacon's concept of naturalism and induction and a quick look at the appreciation of testimonies by people present at experiments indicate that from the 17th century on a particular epistemic community started to separate from the society at large. People dealing with *philosophia naturalis* began to realise that epistemic individualism cannot in all cases be regarded as the proper framework of cognition. One of the steps taken in the direction of establishing science in the modern sense was the recognition that real scientific knowledge can only be gained collectively, hence testimony cannot be ignored as a genuine source of knowledge.

Hume and the British Paradigm of the Aesthetics of Taste
Ferenc Horkay Hörcher

This paper aims to show that Hume is a key figure in eighteenth century discussions of beauty and taste. It tries to establish this claim first by referring to the personal-biographical element of his essays, as presented in his on his *My own life*, where he introduces himself not as a philosopher or historian, but a man of letters. Then it proves that the 18th-century concept of taste is closely related to the idea of a social sense. The next part shows the distinction betweeen reason and taste in Hume's essays, and provides two more concepts which connect the beautiful and the social in Hume's mind: sympathy and imagination. Finally: it refers back to the early modern discourse of taste, as it was reconstructed by Gadamer and Baeumler, and claims that Hume's philosophy of taste is part of a larger framework of practical philosophy as opposed to the metaphysical bent of Kantian aesthetics.

Hume, the Historian. The Enlightenment Narrative, the Science of Man and Sceptical Patriotism

László Kontler

This article examines Hume's historical works, in particular the History of England, against the general background of the seminal developments in eighteenth-century historical studies – as a form of political thought, of literary expression, and as a branch of learning with emerging claims to the status of a scientific discipline. It is argued that Hume resorted to history not merely to illustrate the philosophical views advanced in his other works (presumably at a "higher" level of abstraction), but as a natural and independent medium of formulating such views and disseminating them to a suitable audience. The history which Hume, as well as several contemporaries, wrote, was thoroughly comparative, and employed both large scale sociological schemes of interpretation and quasi-biographical, psychological analysis, while these theoretical and methodological devices were intended not to undermine but to consolidate the fundamentally narrative purposes of history. Very largely also thanks to this combination, in Hume's hands the patriotic-political aspects of historical writing also assumed a distinctive character, which it is helpful to term "sceptical".

Hume's Theory of Passions and the Heritage of Descartes

Gábor Boros

My analyses concerning Hume's theory of passions disclose not a thinker prone to scepticism but rather the opposite. Hume emphasizes in the context of the theory of passions three main components: the cognitive-perceptive character of all the passions; the concept of the "self" when systematizing the theory from those "indirect" passions on that have "self" as their basic components – pride and humility –; finally the principle of sympathy that works almost with the efficiency of the necessary natural laws. These are the components of a system not so much contrary to the systems of thinkers of the previous century, but rather built on considerably different foundations: not on a slightly "dogmatic" cognitive metaphysics but on science naturalized. The result is a sort of the philosophy of the "Newton of the morals", although Hume uses the classical canon of historical exempla as a means almost like Montaigne.

Conceivability Arguments

Gábor Forrai

Philosophically interesting possibility-claims are usually founded on arguments of this form: it is coherently conceivable that *p*; therefore, it is possible that *p*. The paper attempts to clarify the notion of conceivability which is suitable for supporting such arguments. A notion of this kind has to satisfy two criteria: (1) we should normally be able to decide whether we conceived a proposition, and (2) conceivability should indeed be evidence for possibility. The paper starts from Yablo's seminal paper, then reviews and rejects Van Inwagen's and Hawke's recent developments of Yablo's notion of conceiv-

ability and proposes a new alternative, which is roughly this: to conceive *p* is to conceive conditions *c*, itself possible, such that the counterfactual *if it were c, then it would be p* is true.

Vis Aleativa – the *Propensity* Interpretation of Probability
Gábor Szabó

In the paper three questions are posed concerning the propensity interpretation of probability: What entities have propensity? What is the manifestation of the propensity? In what sense propensities explain their manifestation? It will be argued that neither the long-run nor the single-case propensity interpretation has a clear-cut answer to any of these questions and therefore they cannot be considered a correct interpretation of probability.

The Term *phantasia* in Aristotle's *Parva Naturalia*
Attila Hangai

In this paper I examine the concept of *phantasia* in Aristotle by giving a close reading of two slightly peripheral texts of the *Parva Naturalia: On Dreams* (De Insomniis) and *On Memory and Recollection* (De Memoria et Reminiscentia). I assume that *phantasia* is one of the functions of the perceiving faculty. I argue that although phantasms may phenomenally be pictorial, they are not pictorial by nature. On the contrary, they are physiological changes that represent things to higher faculties, although not to the perception. They are not connected necessarily with obscure contexts, for they play a role in veridical cases, as thinking or remembering, as well.

Parallel Terminologies – A Late Response to János Tanács' Work on Bolyai
Zoltán Győrfi

I am going to clear up some philosophical and historical misconceptions by János Tanács regarding hyperbolic geometry. Of these, the most important are as follows. (1) In §1 of his *Appendix*, Bolyai didn't define a parallelism concept of hyperbolic geometry. (2) In the *Appendix*, Bolyai discussed parallelism in terms of equidistance, which is quite different from Lobatchevsky's approach. The aim of this paper is to refute these claims. At the same time, I attempt to explain why Bolyai and Lobatchevsky used the term „parallel" in different ways.