

Summaries

On the Origin of the Hierarchical System of the Intelligible Principles in Ancient Greek Thought

(Empedocles fr.134.)

ALIRÁN GELENCZEY-MIHÁLTZ

Moderatus (1st cent BCE) may have been the first to present „Pythagorean” doctrines systematically. In his scheme, the First Hypostasis concerns a Supra-essential One, the Second is the truly existent (ontos on) and the object of intellection (noeton), and the Third is the Soul-realm. R.E. Dodds’ proposal, that this scheme rests on a metaphysical exegesis of the second part of Plato’s Parmenides has been universally accepted. After Moderatus, Eudoros of Alexandria and Numenius of Apamea (1st century BCE and 2nd century CE) tried to construct a hierarchical system of intelligible principles positing a transcendent One on the highest level of Being. The interesting thing about these commentaries is that – according to general consensus concerning Neo-Pythagoreanism – there is no evidence of any earlier Pythagorean advocating the existence of such a transcendent One. This tension indicates that there was a lively debate among Neo-Pythagoreans in the first two centuries about the sources on which Pythagorean philosophy ought to have been rebuilt. What makes this debate interesting is that, as a matter of course, a certain early Pythagorean philosopher, Empedocles of Acragas is missing from this general reconstruction of Pythagorean thinking. Empedocles lived in the middle of the fifth century BCE, and his teachings may have been the most significant concerning our main issue, i.e. the origin of the hierarchy of the intelligible principles in late antiquity. In his fr.134, Empedocles’ highest divinity is unlike his cyclical Sphere in several respects: his perfection is also intellectual, and unlike the Sphere he is distinct from the cosmos for he darts through it. Empedocles’ fr.134 presents some interesting analogies with Plotinus’ apophatism of the supreme One: first, God is expressed in a series of negations, second, it is defined as „inexpressible” and „lonely”. The latter attributes anticipate Plotinus’ ineffability and supra-transcendence of the One.

Parmenides and Non-Being

EMESE MOGYORÓDI

The paper discusses B 2, one of the most debated fragments of Parmenides and provides a novel suggestion for his reasons for repudiating “the route of *mê on*”. On the basis of some general assumptions underlying Parmenides’ investigations, the paper argues first, that the elision of the subject is meant to indicate that B 2 is concerned with the formal criteria the proper object of any (successful) scientific quest must meet. Second, it is further argued that Parmenides’ strict formal investigation does not allow for the (necessary) assumption of the existence of some such object and that the sense of the relevant forms of the verb “to be” in lines 3 and 5 is therefore copulative. It follows that the reason for the repudiation of “the route of *mê on*” is not that it is unreasonable to make a quest for an object that does not exist. Rather, Parmenides’ underlying insight is that it is unreasonable to make a quest for an object that is “not anything”. Exploring the various meanings of this ambiguous characterization of the theoretical object entailed in B 2 and noting the curious fact that *both* “the route of *on*” and “the route of *mê on*” are referred to as proper in some sense (*eisî... noêsai*, l. 2) to start with, the paper argues that Parmenides ultimately repudiates the “the route of *mê on*” not because the object to be found on this route is non-existent, nor because it does not have any attributes, nor because it is “nothing”, but because its identity is compromised. The paper concludes with some general lessons to be drawn on the plausibility of Parmenides’ argumentation and on his ontology including the highly debated issues of the nature of his monism and its compatibility with pluralism.

Kant’s idealism

ZOLTÁN HORVÁTH

In ordinary language, the term *idealism* refers to majestic ideals, whereas in philosophy to the priority of mind or consciousness. Both uses of the word is related to the term *idea*, which shows their origin in the history of philosophy, namely the Platonic tradition on the one side, and the early modern tradition, created by Descartes and Locke, on the other. In my paper I demonstrate that Kant’s philosophy embraces both meaning of the term. While several uses of the concept ‘idea’ designate the main lines of the structure of the Kantian system, they also preserve the – morally understood – Platonic meaning of the term. The philosophical term ‘idealism’, on the other hand, is also a characteristic of critical philosophy in a certain way. This duality exposes Kant’s two way commitment, and also expresses the link between the two kinds of idealism in his system: the Cartesian independence of self-consciousness is subordinated to the Platonic morality conception. We should understand the Kantian form of idealism accordingly as follows: the theory of transcendental idealism serves transcendental ideas (God, freedom, immortality), which, in the end, express the natural disposition of human reason to metaphysics.

“Subjective Religiosity” of Modern Individuality and Relativisation of the Absolute Spirit in Hegel

ERZSÉBET RÓZSA

The paper focuses on the subjective aspects of the Hegelian conception of religion (‘subjektive Religiosität’, ‘Glaube im Gefühl’). These are analyzed from two viewpoints: (1) How can knowledge about God be constitutive for the self-interpretation and self-determination of the modern individual? (2) In the framework of the Hegelian systematic conception of religion exactly which framework is tested by those subjective forms of religion which tend to relativize the eminent systematological status of the absolute spirit? The ‘need for unification’ as a basic motive of the early work is closely connected with the issue of how subjective religiosity affects the individuals’ self-interpretation in modernity.

Robert Pippin’s Interpretation of the Connection Between the Hegelian Rational Life and Freedom

SÁNDOR KÖMÜVES

Robert Pippin’s interpretation of Hegel’s practical philosophy can be seen as a fresh look at Hegel’s oeuvre, or at least at some essential parts of it. This paper gives a short outline of Pippin’s view focusing on Hegel’s concept of rational agency as ethical life. According to Pippin, the unique characteristics of Hegel’s theory of freedom is that (1) Hegel denies that we can separate the moral–psychological, individual dimension of freedom (the possibility of the “freedom of the will”) from and the social relations of dependence and independence, which are taken to be equally constitutive of freedom (the freedom to act), and (2) assesses these social arrangements in light of their rationality. Pippin claims that Hegel worked out a social theory of agency, the view that agency is not exclusively a matter of the self-relation and self-determination of an individual but also requires the right sort of engagement with and recognition by others.

Spirit in the Work of Art

ZOLTÁN ANDREJKA

This paper concerns the well-known problem Hegel’s aesthetics, namely the lack of a well-defined theory of aesthetic experience. This shortfall, however, relates not to an imperfection, but Hegel’s complex conception of art, which is based on his philosophy of spirit. Accordingly, my analysis focuses on the microstructure of the Ideal in connection with the Hegelian concept of consciousness and experience.

Ten and a half quaternities
(Are there any real philosophical quaternities?)

OTTÓ HÉVIZI

This paper addresses two questions by examining the quaternity theories of ten philosophers (Pythagoras, Empedocles, Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Heidegger, Foucault and Jung) and a writer (Géza Ottlik). 1. What are those philosophical quaternities which include only four elements? 2. Are there such philosophical quaternities whose elements are coequal? In other words: is there any quaternity which (a) does not pick out one element of the systematization by placing it above all the rest and/or which (b) is not committed to any sort of bipolarity – i.e. oppositional distinction – by a latent opposition in the quaternity? The conclusion of the paper is as follows: if we consider real quaternities which satisfy the above-mentioned two conditions, namely that (1) it includes only four elements and (2) its elements are coequal, then none of the quaternities discussed can be accepted as real.