

# Summaries

LÁSZLÓ LEVENTE BALOGH – ÁDÁM ZSIGER

## **The Historical Thought of Hannah Arendt in the View of Her Interpretations of Socrates and Plato**

In the political thought of Hannah Arendt, the paradigmatic contrasting of the space of politics with the time of history is the source of many problems, and it also determines the structure, content and tone of Arendt's historical narratives. This may be well shown by the opposition of the philosophies of Socrates and Plato: the former, for Arendt, exemplifies a spatial sense of politics, while the latter conceives politics as a product of processes. Underlying this narrative, a dichotomous relation between *space* and *time* is present. Our aim in this paper is to identify the background conditions which make this mutually exclusive relation possible in Arendt's texts. To achieve this, we rely on Reinhart Koselleck's theory of *Historik* which provides the fundamental prelinguistic categories of historical action and historical thinking. We demonstrate how Arendt's spatial essentialism, by disrupting the coherence of these complementary categories, creates a framework in which a paradoxical opposition of *space* and *time* necessarily emerges.

GYÖRGY CZÉTÁNY

## **German Idealism and Neoplatonism**

The present paper discusses the following questions: How do Schelling and Hegel refer to Neoplatonic thinkers and what do they focus on in relation to their own philosophies? What are the shortcomings of the Neoplatonic theories according to the two philosophers? Finally, with and beyond all that being said, how can the relation between German Idealism and Neoplatonism be determined? First we analyse how Hegel interprets the hypostasis of the intellect, the thinking of thinking in case of Plotinus and Proclus, and how he contrasts it with the metaphysics of the modern era. Afterwards we examine how Schelling criticizes the concept of emanation and how he constructs a theory which both shows similarities with Proclus' system and is its opposite.

GYÖRGY GERÉBY

## **Inconstantia Platonis – A Simmias-type interpretation**

Following a hint in Cicero, this essay proposes a new reading of the inconsistencies and unspecifieds in Plato's doctrines. The inconsistency addressed here is Plato's various positions about the immortality of the soul. On the other hand, the Simile of the Cave is disconcertingly unspecified. Concerning immortality, three basic positions can be iden-

tified in Plato: immortality (*Phaedo*, *Republic*, *Phaedrus*, *Timaeus*), mortality (*Symposium*), and scepticism (*Apology*). In addition, the accounts of the nature of the soul, whether complex or simple, are also widely divergent. The inconsistencies, however, are not to be explained away by either simply denying the differences (by presupposing a unity) or by adopting developmental schemes. Instead, the differences are better explained by the assumption of a deliberate strategy of underdetermination, preparing the ground for possible solutions for a supremely complex problem by experimenting with a variety of arguments. A further example of deliberate underdetermination is the Simile of the Cave, where Socrates mysteriously evades an answer to Glaukon's question about the reasons for the turning around of the inhabitants of the Cave (*Resp.* 521c1–3). The underdetermination, or “open myth” invites specific concrete interpretations. Examples of antique specifications of the Cave are analysed on the samples of the Gnostic *Apocryphon of John*, Neoplatonism, Mithras, and on an early text of Christianity, the *Protœvangeliium of James*. Julius Annas' criticism that the great simile points into too many directions simultaneously can be thereby answered that this openness is precisely the point: Plato offers a framework for a set of possible interpretations, all addressing the problem of liberation or salvation from an underworld (ignorance, materiality, the realm of change and decay, as opposed to knowledge, immateriality, the divine realm etc.).

ZOLTÁN HORVÁTH

### **Kant's Practical Platonism**

In this paper, I examine the question of how Plato's philosophy was a source of inspiration for Kant. He intends to follow the application of the concept of idea to certain areas of practical reason, such as virtue and the state. According to Kant, ideas are nothing but representations and have a causal effect (both properties are exactly the opposite of the way logical or mathematical Platonism views abstract beings). I will show that this judgment may indeed be legitimate on the basis of the Platonic texts. Although the historical connection here cannot be justified by Kant's direct references, I seek to highlight the parallel intentions of the two philosophers. On the one hand, I point out the relationship between Platonic ideas and the Socratic method in the philosophy of both of them. On the other hand, in addition to directly moral objects, Platonic ideas also affect the basic elements of the Kantian system, from teleology to constitutive consciousness and the Copernican turn. Finally, I try to capture this conceptual similarity of the two philosophers with a concept of dualism that is not metaphysical and not related to dualism in the philosophy of mind either, but, in line with the above, is practical.

FERENC HUORANSZKI

### **Platonism Reined**

The paper distinguishes two traditions, both having an equal claim to be called Platonist. According to one, the most important legacy of Plato's Theory of Forms was to discover a world existing separately from the sensibly accessible, a world with its own nature and rules. We may call this tradition, following John McDowell, “rampant Platonism”. Ac-

ording to an alternative tradition, called here “Platonism reined”, Plato’s doctrine can be interpreted as an attempt to understand the possibility and nature of change in the sensibly accessible world by reference to the unchangeable and only intelligibly graspable properties. It is not only that change in the sensibly accessible world is possible only if there are properties that are unchangeable, but also that these properties themselves are the very sources of possible and actual changes. It is argued then that Platonism reined is as important a source of contemporary modal-property based accounts of possibility as Aristotelianism is standardly recognized to be.

PÉTER LAUTNER

### **The Relation of μνήμη and ἀνάμνησις**

Late Antique Variations on a theme (Pseudo-Simplicius, Damascius and Olympiodorus)

The paper aims to discuss two Aristotelian themes as they were elaborated by the Neo-Platonists in late antiquity. They are the relation between μνήμη and ἀνάμνησις, and their content. Are they quite separate activities with different kind of content or ἀνάμνησις follows on μνήμη in a certain way, which is shown also by the fact that their content is the same? The Neo-Platonists’ reaction to these questions varied depending on their view about the nature of sense-perception and the link between ἀνάμνησις and intellect. Pseudo-Simplicius concentrates on the role of μνήμη in the acquisition of concepts. The commentator insists that μνήμη is a necessary condition for the process to get started. He argues that for μνήμη draws on perceptual images and the task ἀνάμνησις is to recall memory images, none of them is capable of producing concepts by itself. His contemporary, Damascius, emphasizes the active role of μνήμη as a kind of judgement. Along with ἀνάμνησις it is an activity providing propositions for the intellect. One generation later, Olympiodorus has a different view of sense-perception since he claims that it is able to procreate universals. He takes it as an evidence that, although working with the information coming from sense-perception, μνήμη is linked to the intellect.

TAMÁS PAVLOVITS

### **Platonism and Infinity in Malebranche’s Thought**

Malebranche adopts the concept of infinity from Descartes, while making significant changes to it. On the one hand, he eliminates the conceptual distinction between the infinite and the indefinite, and on the other, he extends the use of the concept of infinity. Whereas Descartes attributes infinity only to God, Malebranche attributes infinity to general concepts and intelligible extension too in the actual sense. Malebranche extends in this way the actuality of the infinite beyond quality, to general ideas and extension. The mind has a clear and distinct certainty of the infinity of these, which is made evident by mathematical arguments. This reinterpretation of infinity opens the way to the mathematical application of infinity. In this paper, we argue that Malebranche may have become a believer in the Leibnizian infinitesimal calculus because he moved away from Descartes in his interpretation of infinity.

RÓBERT SOMOS

### **The Platonism of Origen**

Origen was a Christian thinker, who consciously or spontaneously, used, reused, adapted and reformed Greek philosophical thoughts and methods. The main reason of the scholarly disagreement about the significance of the philosophy and Platonism in Origen's thought is the difference of perspective. Some interpreters emphasize Origen's intentions. From this perspective Origen used philosophical matters as teachings derived from the Jewish tradition. Other scholars regard the Platonic teachings in Origen's writings as a substantially non-Christian element. The paper aims to show the purport of Platonism in three philosophical disciplines, theology, natural philosophy, and ethics. Origen, following Platonic paradigm, creates the concept of incorporeal, immaterial, unchangeable God in the Christian theology. The teaching of the eternal generation of the Son originates also from the Platonism. In the field of natural philosophy, the concept of pre-existent soul is a characteristic Platonic teaching adapted by Origen. Among the ethical doctrines the teaching of assimilation to God is the final end for Platonists and for Origen.

ENDRE SZÉCSÉNYI

### **The Platonism of Modern Aesthetics**

#### **The Case of Shaftesbury**

In my paper I discuss the ambiguous relationship between Platonism and modern aesthetics through some oft-interpreted passages by Shaftesbury. Although he has been widely recognized both as the follower of the Cambridge Platonists, and as one of the father figures of modern aesthetics, I claim that he can be considered as a significant contributor to modern aesthetics not because of, but rather despite his Platonic ideas (which, otherwise, seem inseparable of his Stoicism). Both the modern aesthetic conception of the *je-ne-sais-quoi* and of the (natural) sublime could be considered as a suitable case-study within which Shaftesbury's "aesthetic" insights can be analysed, but here I shall focus only on the former. Shaftesbury pursued a double strategy: on the one hand, he tried to discredit this modish phrase in the name of the classical union of beauty, goodness and truth, and, on the other, he attempted to domesticate its modern "gallant" features in the Neo-Platonic conception of grace (as a traditional accompaniment of beauty), while he neglected those potentials of this volatile quality which made it one of the inevitable ingredients of our modern aesthetic experience. I shall rely heavily on Dominique Bouhours's influential interpretation of the *je-ne-sais-quoi*, for I see it as the "aesthetic" counterpart of Shaftesbury's position on this mysterious something, while I try to demonstrate the basically non-Platonic nature of Bouhours's ideas. After all, my major aim with the current investigations is not to re-interpret Shaftesbury's philosophy from an aesthetic point of view, but to cast some new light on the emergence of modern aesthetics, with Shaftesbury's Platonic-Stoic efforts in the background.