

Summaries

ANDREAS BLANK

Protestant Natural Philosophy and the Question of Emergence, 1540–1615

This article explores the presence of emergentism—the view that once material composites have reached some level of complexity, potencies arise that cannot be reduced to the potencies of the constituents—in early modern Protestant natural philosophy. I will focus on work by three thinkers: Jacob Schegk (1511–1587), Nicolaus Taurellus (1547–1606) and Jacob Martini (1570–1649) and will argue that emergentist ideas can be found in their views concerning the origin of the natural substantial forms of mixtures, the origin of pharmacological potencies of plant-based medicaments, as well as the origin of the origin of the “plastic faculties” of animal seeds. By contrast, the origin of human soul turns out to be a controversial issue. Out of the three authors discussed, only Taurellus held that an emergentist account of the human soul could be compatible with Lutheran orthodoxy.

ROBERT R. A. ARNĀUTU

The Contents of a Cartesian Mind

In his works, Descartes writes of innate ideas, intellectual memory, the colours that are only in the mind, actions and passions of the soul, etc., which seem to be the ever-lasting content or entities that populate the mind. In a letter to Huygens, he even writes about the memory of loved ones that the mind preserves after their death. This article investigates if there is ever-lasting content of the mind, i.e. some content that pertains not only to an embodied mind but also to a disembodied one. I argue that there is no proper everlasting content of a Cartesian mind, i.e. innate ideas and intellectual memory, and that memory is a power of the *cogito* pertaining to the union between mind and body.

OLIVÉR ISTVÁN TÓTH

A Fresh Look at the Role of the Second Kind of Knowledge in Spinoza’s *Ethics*

The second kind of knowledge in Spinoza’s *Ethics* is a form of cognition based on general and particular common notions. In the secondary literature it is assumed that both types of common notions refer to very general properties of bodies, e.g. geometrical shapes or eternal truths. Therefore, the practical importance of this kind of knowledge has been downplayed. In this paper, I argue that the second kind of knowledge plays a much more

significant role than previously acknowledged. In order to illustrate this, a thorough examination of the propositions where Spinoza introduces common notions is presented. By analysing Spinoza's references to the use of reason, it can be established that Spinoza refers with reason to the second kind of knowledge, which can be of practical relevance. After having considered possible scepticism about the possible adequate knowledge of external objects, the second kind of knowledge is shown to establish a virtuous circle of nourishment and production of scientific knowledge, which can lead the subject to virtue.

JÓZSEF SIMON

Philosophical Atheism and Incommensurability of Religions in Christian Francken's Thought

The paper outlines the problem of tolerance in Christian Francken's (1552 – after 1611) thought from two perspectives. On the one hand, Francken undertook an holistic critique of rational theology while refuting a broad scale of traditional theistic arguments for the existence of God in his *Disputatio inter Theologum et Philosophum de incertitudine religionis Christianae* (Cluj ca. 1590). On the other hand, he promulgated the idea of tolerance among Christian denominations as well as among monotheistic religions. However, Francken was conscious of the theoretical dilemma whether the idea of tolerance could be maintained if all possible metaphysical conceptions of God had fallen prey to his radical criticism against rational theology. Maintaining the incompatible ideas of religious tolerance and theoretical atheism at the same time led Francken to give up the ideal of philosophical speech. Instead, he began to use metaphors to describe political and confessional reality and the chances of an intellectual conduct of life in everyday life. The paper argues that a radical criticism of rational theology implies the *incommensurability of religions* instead of the idea of tolerance between them.

GÁBOR BOROS

Optics and Metaphysics in Hobbes

Optics played an important role in the 17th century renewal of philosophy. The thinkers involved in the renewal applied their basic metaphysical principles when treating the questions that today readers would subsume under the heading of pure natural science. This paper pursues a twofold aim. It intends to show, on the one hand, some of the main characteristic features of Hobbes' optical theory in his early treatise on optics. In the course of accomplishing this task I point out some important differences between the respective views of Hobbes and Descartes. On the other hand, I introduce the concept of metaphysics of the ether as a common background to the attempts to work out a metaphysical foundation for the new physics. Descartes, Hobbes, and Leibniz certainly shared the view of the necessity of such a foundation, and we also can reckon Spinoza to this group of thinkers on the basis of his rudimentary "principles of physics" in Book 2 of his *Ethics*.

CRISTIAN MOISUC

Metaphysical Unity of Sciences. The Malebranche Paradox

The purpose of this article is to underline the tension between metaphysics and sciences in Malebranche's work. The goal of metaphysics, which claims an architectonic primacy, is to "regulate everything". The status of other sciences, including the theology, is to accept to operate according to the principles and the laws prescribed by metaphysics, although this relation threatens their autonomy. On the basis of the idea that only metaphysics should seek and enunciate the truth, Malebranche edified a system which compels particular sciences to conform to this truth. The article claims that because of this hierarchy even the revealed word of God will be reduced to metaphorical language, and spiritual questions will be interpreted according to a legality borrowed from the natural world. In Malebranche—all this serves to justify a peace imposed by the force of metaphysics.

TAMÁS PAVLOVITS

Mathematical Models of Rationality in Descartes and Pascal

Descartes and Pascal, two major mathematicians of the early modern age, both reject the logic and use the mathematical method (analysis) to define the rules of the reason. In this paper I will argue that in spite of their common starting point in mathematics, Descartes and Pascal elaborate two different concepts of rationality because they define the principal mental acts and the epistemological status of mathematical principles (axioms) differently. The differences are due to the nature of the two new branches of mathematics which the two authors had devised. Descartes invented analytical geometry, while Pascal contributed towards the invention of projective geometry, the calculation of probability and the calculus. These branches of mathematics have different relations to the concept of the infinite, and the different uses of infinite also involve different concepts of rationality.

HANNA VANDENBUSSCHE

Pascal and Descartes, Two Critiques of the Stoic Sage

The Stoic sage was targeted by many seventeenth-century thinkers and moralists. René Descartes and Blaise Pascal are no exception to this rule; according to them, the Stoic sage is an "insensible" (Descartes) or "presumptuous" (Pascal) persona that induces an anthropologically insufficient and morally dangerous vision of the human being. This essay is concerned with introducing Descartes' and Pascal's respective critiques of the Stoic sage into their philosophical views of the passions and the will. Pascal and Descartes express different critiques of the persona of the Stoic sage. Descartes mainly criticizes the idea that the sage must radically dissociate the virtues and the passions. For Descartes, morality involves the passion of generosity which helps to streamline the other passions productively, and does not seek to destroy them. Pascal shares the Stoic's

hostility towards the passions and so must criticize their highest ideal from a different perspective. For him, the Stoic notion that human beings can approach divinity is among the most egregious of beliefs, an expression of the vice of vanity (*orgueil*).

MÁRTON KORÁNYI

The Program of *instauratio* in Bacon's Philosophy

In his big plan titled *Instauratio Magna* which was published as an introduction to *Novum Organum* in 1620, Bacon devised the program of *insaturatio* to reform sciences in six stages. In spite of the fact that he mainly accentuates the novelty of his ideas in this work, we can also find allusions to the purpose of his program: his aim is to restore a previous, idyllic condition of humanity. In this paper I investigate the meaning of *instauratio* in regard to both the biblical sources of Bacon's ideas and the pioneer-like nature of the program. I would like to show that the theological background of Bacon's philosophy is closely connected to his considerations about sciences. As we can see from the *New Atlantis*, Bacon knew that new inventions could change everyday life significantly and increase the responsibility of the political rulers as they can be used for wrong purposes. My intention is to demonstrate that religion has a crucial role in the program of *instauratio*, as it is the basis of morality for Bacon which limits the usability of sciences and inventions.