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ALEX PRIOU, “. . . Going Further on Down the Road . . .” The Origin and Foundations of Milesian Thought

Praised for its reliance on observation rather than myth, the Milesian school signals the dawn of science in the West. Whereas Hesiod appeals to the long ago and far away to explain the here and now, Thales and his cohorts do the reverse. In this reversal, we are their thankful, even faithful heirs. But with Hesiod not everything is myth and hearsay. Indeed, Hesiod singles himself out by name as the bearer of a powerfully poetic and distinctly human wisdom that he consistently contrasts with Zeus’ divine wisdom. In this article, the author argues that the Milesians attempt to gain access to divine wisdom, and thus disregard the ambiguities characteristic of human wisdom. One sees this especially in a tension between Thales’ political wisdom and natural philosophy, and later between Anaximander’s cosmology and cosmogony. The author concludes that Heraclitus appears to have been the first thinker to confront the Hesiodic worldview on its own terms, inasmuch as his attempt to bridge the divide between divine and human wisdom always keeps one eye on the ambiguities that pervade human experience.

THOMAS W. SMITH, Love of the Good as the Cure for Spiritedness in Plato’s *Republic*

Plato’s teaching about the Good is sometimes blamed for denigrating particular goods. By contrast, this article argues that for Plato *pleonexia* is at the heart of disordered relationships to particular goods. In turn, the psychic root of *pleonexia* is spiritedness, the aspect of the soul that enables it to love what is “one’s own.” Plato employs Kallipolis as a heuristic device to diagnose these psychic roots of our attraction to *pleonexia*. Kallipolis’ reforms are ascetic practices that seek to transform his interlocutors’ spiritedness by reorienting the soul’s love away from *pleonexia* to the good. This love for the good turns out to be the condition for a renewed and healthy devotion to particular goods, rather than the cause of their denigration.

SAMUEL A. STONER, On the Primacy of the Spectator in Kant’s Account of Genius

This essay argues that §49 of Kant’s third Critique pursues the question of the nature of genius through an analysis of the spectator’s response to beautiful art. It presents and defends a spectator-centered interpretation of §49’s opening paragraphs, which clarifies Kant’s notion of aesthetic ideas and reveals that beautiful art provokes a productive imaginative activity in its spectators. This interpretation is significant because it elucidates the character of Kant’s account of genius and his understanding of art criticism. Moreover, it suggests that the imagination’s productive activity may provide a certain satisfaction to theoretical reason’s natural but unrequited desire for knowledge of the transcendent.

THOMAS BLACKSON, The Rationalization Explanation

According to the Stoics, human beings enslave themselves. When they change from nonrational children into rational adults, human beings form false beliefs about what is good and what is bad. These beliefs enslave them to things that are neither good nor bad. The author argues for an interpretation of how the Stoics understood the reasoning in terms of which human beings form these false beliefs. This interpretation helps make sense of the argument against Chrysippus's explanation of the origin of vice that Galen attributes to Posidonius. It also helps explain how the Stoics could think that nature is provident and that nature constructs human beings so that they enslave themselves when they change from nonrational children into rational adults.

D. GOLDSTICK, Rational Inconsistency