ARTICLES

What Can Activist Scholars Learn from Rumi? Radha D'Souza
The neoliberal restructuring of higher education everywhere is accompanied by a distinctive branch of knowledge known as activist scholarship. Drawing from a number of disciplines including education, sociology, social anthropology, social theory, law, and human rights, activist scholarship proclaims as its core mission Marx's imperative that philosophy should transform the world. Activist scholars affirm human emancipation as the goal of scholarship and set themselves the task of building bridges between theory and practice. There is a spectrum of views on the theory-practice nexus. Regardless, they all share certain common grounds that affirm (1) a nexus between theory and practice; (2) a relationship between knowledge and action; (3) knowledge as a condition for emancipation and freedom; (4) the affirmation of love and solidarity for social change; (5) the importance of everyday life; and (6) the role of the activist scholar in social change. These themes form part of a long and entrenched tradition in dissident Eastern philosophies, in particular the poet-saint traditions. Here each of the themes in activist scholarship is interrogated using the works of Mawlana Jalal al Din Rumi, the thirteenth-century Persian poet. What can activist scholars learn from Rumi?

Incommensurability of Two Conceptions of Reality: Dependent Origination and Emptiness in Nāgārjuna's MMK Tao Jiang
Nāgārjuna is reconstructed here as someone who challenges the way that much of the mainstream Western and Indian philosophical traditions deal with the tension between conceptions of ultimate and conventional reality, termed "genic" and "generative." He argues for fundamental incommensurability between the two and proposes a radically different way to understand the world, making it generatively real and genically empty. In so doing, he questions the distortive presence of genic elements in our understanding of the world, everyday and meditative.

Is There No Distinction between Reason and Emotion in Mengzi? Myeong-seok Kim
The aim of this essay is to investigate what role emotions play in moral judgment in Mengzi's ethical thought. What is meant by 'moral judgment' here is basically a judgment of what is morally right and wrong in a broad
sense, and this essay specifically tries to answer the question of whether ethical emotions like compassion, respect, and shame would constitute the sole source of moral judgment in Mengzi's thought. The formulation of my leading question this way both is informed by and responds to the recent trend in Mengzi scholarship that emphasizes the positive roles emotions play in one's ethical life. This essay critically examines David Wong's thesis that there is no distinction between reason and emotion in Mengzi, and it alternatively argues that moral emotions in Mengzi provide an important but only partial basis for all-things-considered ethical judgment.

Śri Harṣa contra Hegel: Monism, Skeptical Method, and the Limits of Reason Ayon Maharaj
This essay identifies salient points of affinity and divergence in the monistic metaphysics and skeptical methodologies of the German idealist Hegel and the Indian Advaitin Śri Harṣa. Remarkably, both Śri Harṣa's Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhaṭṭāḍya (ca. 1170) and Hegel's Phänomenologie des Geistes (1807) attempt to defend a monistic standpoint exclusively by means of a sustained critique of non-monistic philosophical positions. It is argued here, however, that Śri Harṣa and Hegel diverge sharply in their specific views on the powers and limits of philosophy and on the precise nature of mōnistic reality. In stark contrast to Hegel, Śri Harṣa rejects the very possibility of a philosophical justification of monism, since he claims that the non-dual reality of Brahman lies beyond reason. Moreover, while Hegel drives a wedge between thought and empirical praxis, Śri Harṣa insists that how we think and reason depends on the nature of our mind, which is itself conditioned by how we live.

Ji Kang's Essay "Music Has in It neither Grief nor Joy" (聲無哀樂論) and the Structure (理) of Perception Jana S. Rošker
While Ji Kang's 謝康 (223–262) famous dispute "Music Has in It neither Grief nor Joy" has commonly been understood as a subtle and indirect critique of Confucian rituality and of the "abuse" of music for political intentions, the present article draws attention to a new interpretation based on his thesis on the structural connection between the subject and the object of perception.

Derrida and Zen: Desert and Swamp Takao Hagiwara
By comparing D. T. Suzuki's soku-hi 即非 (lit. immediately not) logic (A is A, because A is not-A), which is connatural with what might be called the "Japanese swamp/womb sensibility," to the desert and nomadic concepts of Derrida's deconstruction, this essay argues that, contrary to some critics' views, Suzuki's soku-hi logic accords with Derrida's thinking.

Between Nihilism and Anti-Essentialism: A Conceptualist Interpretation of Nāgārjuna John Spackman
This essay defends a "conceptualist" interpretation of Nāgārjuna that stands in between two other prominent accounts, the nihilist view and what is called here the anti-essentialist view. The nihilist reading, recently defended by Thomas Wood, holds that for Nāgārjuna nothing exists either at the ultimate or at the conventional level. In the anti-essentialist account, supported by Jay Garfield and David Kalupahana, though Nāgārjuna rejects the ultimate existence of
things as svabhāva (independent), he affirms their conventional existence as interdependent. It is argued here that the nihilist view raises two challenges to which anti-essentialists have given no adequate response. The first alleges that the notion that all things are interdependent is incoherent. The second consists of passages from Nāgārjuna’s writings that seem to claim that whatever exists is svabhāva or depends on what is svabhāva. The conceptualist interpretation, it is suggested here, allows us to respond to these challenges while avoiding the implausible nihilist account. In this view, the passages in question assert a claim not about what exists but about the concept of existence, namely that it is a core part of this concept that what exists is either svabhāva or depends on what is svabhāva. Thus, contra the anti-essentialist, Nāgārjuna’s view is that there is no coherent concept of universal interdependent existence. But contra the nihilist, things can still be said to exist conventionally, since conventional discourse is precisely discourse in which subjects do not endorse the svabhāva component of the concept of existence. The upshot—again contra the anti-essentialist—is that both conventional truth and emptiness are strictly inconceivable.

Shang Yang Was a Cooperator: Applying Axelrod’s Analysis of Cooperation in Early China  Charles Sanft

Many scholars view Shang Yang as a philosopher of totalitarianism. This article argues for a reconsideration of that understanding. It is suggested that, despite Shang Yang’s reputation, elements of the governmental changes in the state of Qin that are credited to him would have promoted cooperation. To support this argument, this essay draws from Robert Axelrod’s analysis in The Evolution of Cooperation. An examination of the Shang Yang reforms in light of Axelrod’s suggestions for encouraging cooperation indicates that some of the most famous changes would have worked to do just that. The result may have been different from what the Qin rulers expected, as further analysis suggests that this cooperation likely contributed to the eventual fall of the Qin dynasty.

The Moral Standing of Animals and Plants in the Manusmṛti  Christopher G. Framarin

Here it is argued that the Manusmṛti attributes direct moral standing to animals and plants at least in part because they are sentient (i.e., capable of pleasure and pain). The argument for this goes as follows. The Manusmṛti claims that certain actions produce merit and demerit, which often cause pleasure and pain. Pleasure and pain are suitable consequences of merit and demerit only if they have value and disvalue. The value and disvalue of pleasure and pain are not derived entirely from the value of the further ends to which they are a means. Hence, the value and disvalue of pleasure and pain are at least partly intrinsic. Hence, any entity capable of pleasure and pain has direct moral standing.

The Manusmṛti claims that animals and plants are sentient. So the Manusmṛti attributes direct moral standing to animals and plants, at least in part because they are sentient.
COMMENT AND DISCUSSION

The Heated French Debate on Comparative Philosophy Continues:
Philosophy versus Philology  Thorsten Botz-Bornstein  218
Since 1990, two eminent French-speaking sinologists, François Jullien and
Jean François Billetter, have been engaged in a debate on the principles of
comparative philosophy and sinology. The debate has been developed in
several books and articles and attracted the attention of a relatively broad
public as well as of a wide range of French intellectuals. The arguments
with regard to an older discussion on the difference between philology and
philosophy are evaluated here, and conclusions are drawn concerning the
present status of comparative philosophy in academia.

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