ARTICLES

War as a Problem of Knowledge: Theory of Knowledge in China’s Military Philosophy  Barry Allen
A singularity of the famous Art of War (孫子兵法) attributed to Sunzi is the way this work conceives of knowledge as a resource for the military strategist. The idea is new in Chinese tradition, and new in the worldwide context of thinking about strategy, where Sunzi’s ideas about the value of knowledge are far in advance of the thinking of Western theorists like Machiavelli or especially Clausewitz. The role of knowledge in the Sunzi theory of strategy and the consistency of what this work says about knowledge with a philosophical idea of knowledge that emerges in Warring States texts of diverse genres are analyzed here.

Schopenhauer on Idealism, Indian and European  Christopher Ryan
This article is an examination of Schopenhauer’s evaluation of the comparative philosophical merits of modern European and ancient Indian idealism. Schopenhauer was an enthusiastic advocate of Indian wisdom, but it is rarely noted that he excluded it from the history of philosophy proper. Although he traced the origin of the “fundamental” point of view of idealism to the ancient śis of India, he also maintained that it had not received its proper philosophical articulation and defense until Kant. But when we probe beyond Schopenhauer’s effusive estimations of Kant’s achievements and seek out his conception of idealism’s epistemological and logical bases, they appear rather flimsy and insubstantial. It turns out that Schopenhauer thought that idealism originated in and is validated by a rare state of mind to which he gave the name “philosophical discernment” (philosophische Besonnenheit), a prerational and intuitive condition that conceptual proofs merely justify after the event. Schopenhauer’s emphasis on the primacy of intuition and discernment over reflective reason tends to undermine his official account of the philosophical attributes of post-Kantian idealism, while a comparison of his historical surveys on the cultural status of idealism in India and Europe, respectively, suggests that the former was the healthier and more durable species.

Political Theory in Canonical Buddhism  Matthew J. Moore
This article examines the canonical texts of early Buddhism and canvases recent scholarly literature to explore whether early Buddhism contains a
political theory, and if so, what it is. The article concludes that the early texts do express a normative preference for enlightened monarchy as the best form of lay government. However, it also concludes that early Buddhism saw politics as being relatively unimportant among human concerns. Further, it argues that this theory of politics should be of interest to political theorists today due to three unusual elements: its deflationary estimate of the importance of politics, its denial of the existence of the self, and its naturalistic theory of ethics.

Transcendence, Freedom, and Ethics in Lévinas’ Subjectivity and Zhuangzi’s Non-being Self  Guoping Zhao

Lévinas’ claim of ethics as the first philosophy has been compared to the Confucian project. While the similarity between Lévinas and the Confucians in their central concern for ethics is apparent, I argue in this essay that the Daoists may have a deeper resonance with Lévinas. With the inspiration of Lévinas’ insights into sense and meaning, I investigate how Lévinas’ subjectivity and the Daoist, in particular the Zhuangzian, notion of the non-being self draw on the same primordial experiential base that has given rise to an understanding of our self that leads to an embodied transcendence. In the context of battling the modern Western autonomous and egolistic self, which has caused much damage in modern history, I explore whether an appreciation of the pre-ego, pre-reflective experiences upon which Lévinas and Zhuangzi build their subjectivity and non-being self can lead us to ethics and spirituality, with a new understanding of human freedom that is radically different from the modern notion of freedom as autonomy.

A Genealogical Study of De: Poetical Correspondence of Sky, Earth, and Humankind in the Early Chinese Virtuous Rule of Benefaction  Huaiyu Wang

By identifying the basic meanings of de as “spiritual endowment” and “grateful offering,” this treatise aims to clarify the original meanings and structure of de and to establish the early Chinese moral and political order based on dezhī as the virtuous rule of benefaction. A critical reexamination of the influential mana thesis will lay bare the spiritual power of de as the sympathetic correspondence (gantong 感通) of cosmic forces of yin and yang. As a principle of genus, de stands for the grounding spiritual power nurturing the growth of human communities in empathetic and reciprocal harmony with the cyclical rhythm of cosmic forces. The true foundation of the early Chinese rule of benefaction consists precisely in such concept of empathy and reciprocity originating in the poetical correspondence of sky, earth, and humankind. The investigation of de here shall reveal a distinctive Chinese understanding of human person that is based not on the philosophy of entitlement but on the poetical way of embodiment. As a distinctive site of embodiment, the primary function of a Confucian political leader is not to uphold the consigned spiritual power with exclusive authority, but to promote its proper dissemination for the harmonious coalescence of all kinds of beings. I shall argue further that such sagacious personalities should be regarded as the archetype and origin of early Chinese and Confucian moral virtues.
Dignāga on Reflexive Awareness    Paul Bernier

The purpose of this essay is to present and defend an interpretation of some central views of Dignāga, an important Indian Buddhist philosopher of the fifth century C.E., on the theory of reflexive awareness (svasaṃvedana), or RA. According to RA, a conscious cognition, for instance a conscious visual experience, is directed not only at an object (or content), but also at itself. The Dignāgian view of reflexive awareness rests crucially on the so-called memory argument. An interpretation of this argument is proposed here, and three ways one could try to resist it are underscored. These objections rest, broadly, on three alternative ways of understanding the scenario of the memory argument. It is claimed that these alternative interpretations are faced with serious problems and, thus, that they fail to refute the memory argument. It is concluded that RA offers an adequate account of the nature of consciousness and self-knowledge, that is, how we know our own minds. Moreover, while Dignāga’s general philosophical views are typically understood as endorsing a kind of epistemological idealism, namely Yogācāra idealism, I point out that the interpretation of RA I propose is independent of such an idealist epistemology.

Aurelius Augustinus and Seng Zhao on ‘Time’: An Interpretation of the Confessions and the Zhao lun    Man Li and Bart Deesin

The question whether humans are the creators of their own lives within an either finite or infinite but nonetheless independently existing ‘time’ or whether the creative force of one’s life is restrained by a ‘time’ that is an inalienable part of this very life has permeated the entire philosophical and religious history of humankind. This article addresses Saint Augustine’s interpretation of time as developed in his Confessions and the interpretation given by his contemporary Buddhist counterpart Seng Zhao in the Zhao lun. It is argued that both Augustinus and Seng Zhao reinterpreted, albeit in a different way, a similar inherited cyclical time concept. Augustinus changed the cyclical time concept for a linear one, and he interprets ‘time’ as an objective reality for God, who created time together with heaven and earth, and as a subjective reality for humans: for humans, time can, by the pondering mind, only be regarded as ‘the protraction of the mind.’ Also, in Buddhist philosophy time has an objective reality, the cyclical mechanical process of karmic retribution, as well as a subjective reality: an individual has the power to stop this mechanical process, and, in this way, stop ‘time.’ The article shows how Seng Zhao develops the Madhyamaka concept of voidness, and goes beyond a mere objective-subjective dichotomy.

The Geography of Styles of Reasoning: East and West, North and South    Michael John Paton

Hacking’s (1985) concept of ‘styles of reasoning’ has prompted research into a multitude of markedly different areas, including: learning and teaching of science (Hawkins and Pea 1987), the history and philosophy of the use of case studies (Forrester 1996), epistemic differences in German and American embryology (Maienschein 1991), the relationship between philosophy and history of science (Radder 1997), and more recently even the relationship