

**A.A. Guseinov**

**Morality and politics: what Machiavelli has to teach us**

The article deals with the problem of relations between politics and morality in *The Prince* of Niccolo Machiavelli. It is shown that Machiavelli's position concerning this question differs significantly from both that of Aristotle and the one implied in more recent vulgar versions of Machiavellianism. Machiavelli's main idea can be summarized this way: do not turn aside the Good whenever possible and take the path of Evil whenever necessary for the benefit of the state.

**Keywords:** morality, politics, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Machiavellianism, good, evil, lesser evil, personality, state

**V.P. Vizgin**

**Existentialism and the theological thought of George Florovsky**

This paper offers an analysis of the relations between Florovsky's historical theology and existentialism. According to the author, Florovsky would accept the term "existential" as an essential characteristic of his own theology. At the same time the Russian theologian distances himself from existentialism. In particular, he sharply criticizes what he calls "dialectical theology" as a typical manifestation of "existentialism in theology". Finally, and in contrast, e.g., with Tillich, for these key notions of existentialism Florovsky gives no philosophical explanation of his own. In Florovsky's complex attitude towards existentialism, therefore, elements of a positive reception are combined with a critical attitude.

**Keywords:** existentialism, theology, Georges Florovsky

**N.P. Volkova**

**The irrational part of the world soul and the individual soul according to Plutarch of Chaeronea**

The paper submits to a close examination the passage 35a1–36b5 from Plato's *Timaeus*. Two basic ancient traditions of interpretation are singled out: the first one, reflected in Cornford's translation which is dependent on Proclus's commentary, and the second one, exemplified by Jowett's understanding of the passage and by the views shared by his followers; this latter approach is shown to go back to Plutarch's version given in his essay *On the Generation of the Soul in the Timaeus*, influenced by that thinker's literal diachronic understanding of the creation as described by Plato, which prompted Plutarch to regard the soul of the *Timaeus* as a mixture of four essential elements rather than the three explicitly postulated by Plato, and to assert the existence of the evil version of the World soul. On the account of this theory, however, it will be wrong, as the author of the present article argues, to label Plutarch's concept of the soul as dualistic: he is rather a metaphysical opportunist pursuing above all ethical interests.

**Keywords:** the soul, World soul, creation, mixture, ideas, sensual world, being, becoming, participation, dualism, the nature of evil, the literal and the metaphoric reading of the *Timaeus* myth

**A.S. Karpenko**

**The basic question of metaphysics**

Why is there something rather than nothing? The article examines the theories that require realization of physical potentialities and, moreover, of whatever is thought of as possible. This marks the transition from substantive

thinking to modal thinking. One discerns here a new philosophical paradigm operating a totally new set of problems and supported by contemporary development of cosmology.

**Keywords:** possibility, possible worlds, reality, principle of plenitude, principle of fecundity, Everett's worlds, modal realism, substantive thinking, modal thinking, counterfactual thinking, multiverse

### **I.A. Gerassimova**

#### **Early Russian *Hexamera*: a logical and methodological analysis**

The role of the techniques of logical reasoning in the tradition of transfer of learning from the master to the student is the main topic of this paper. In the tradition here brought to examination, a special role belongs to the method of analogy. The author concentrates on revealing above all the methods of proof and argumentation employed in such texts as the *Hexamera*, which are commentaries on the Six days of Creation, and the *Paley Explanatoty*.

**Keywords:** Medieval Russia, scribes, learning, master, student, *Hexamera*, analogy, concept, image, argumentation, literal rendering, thought experiment

### **V.P. Tchinaev**

#### **Metamorphoses of the beautiful in the past and present of the art discourse**

This analytical survey of art practices past and present takes as its point of departure the view of the beautiful current in Early and Later Hellenistic Age. Reflections of the beautiful in romanticism, symbolism, postmodernism, and the New Age manifest the essentially different ideas of beauty in which the ancient tradition often passes through a radical transformation. Under the dominance of various cultural codes, such as aestheticism, Neo-Academism, kitsch, the New Sacrality, the discourse of the beautiful becomes subject of unexpected and sometimes paradoxical interpretations ranging from a "nostalgia for the beautiful" to its total devaluation, from "abstract beauty" to creative intentions of coming back to the Attic springs of "exalted beauty".

**Keywords:** the beautiful, beauty, kitsch, post-vanguardism, postmodernism, New Sacrality, Arvo Pärt, Valentin Silvestrov, Bill Viola, New Academy, AES+F

### **I.N. Inishev**

#### **The range of the aesthetic: from discourse to texture**

The present paper touches upon the problem of defining and redefining the limits of the realm of the aesthetic, which has acquired particular importance over the last two or three decades due to the widening of the subject field of aesthetics and aesthetic discourse. The author insists that such expansion of "aesthetics beyond aesthetics" is inherent in the logic of the development of the original project of aesthetic theory right from the beginning. The field of the aesthetic as first configured by its basic notions already implies a logic of emancipating that field from the categorial framework conditioning it. Under the influence of the factors of modern society this logic eventually led to changing the very "topology" of the aesthetic: from the sphere of subjective appraisal and expression, the aesthetic drifted towards the sphere of material surfaces involved in social interaction and the corresponding ways of perception. The final part of the article examines theoretical, political and anthropological implications of the said transformations.

**Keywords:** aestheticization, aesthetic surface, cultural materiality

**N.N. Sosna**

**The “scientifically” beautiful: from the “zero-dimensional” to a physics of the senses**

In the present paper, the author traces down the path which eventually led contemporary theorists of new media aesthetics to proclaiming their mottoes like “everything should become aesthetic”. Zero-dimensional images as the object of early theories in media research (Vilém Flusser) and images as the maps of possible ways of reasoning in the thinking of French theorists (Jean-François Lyotard) are shown to be the elements of the soil giving origin to a specific interpretation of the aesthetic which regards every act of data capture as being of direct relevance for art whenever there occurs a choice of elements and an intensifying of the senses.

**Keywords:** aisthesis, new media, senses, affects, science, Whitehead

**V.Y. Kuznetsov**

**The problem of unity of culture in post-classical perspective**

While classical metaphysics teaches us to treat any variant solely as a subcase of an invariant, non-classical thought tends to treat variety, regardless of any obvious invariants, primarily as plurality. Yet in both cases an implicit opposition of one vs. multiple is present. The article suggests a concept of unity (including the unity of culture) that would be capable of encompassing multiplicity in its various forms.

**Keywords:** unity, unity of the world, plurality, multiplicity, unity of culture, invariant, variants, postclassical philosophy