

not be regarded or used as a work of serious history', in the sense of a work that strives for objectivity, but this does not exactly come as a shock. As he acknowledges in the same passage, 'Most historians now approach the *War Memoirs* with extreme caution.' Indeed, many of the original reviewers of the memoirs, as quoted by Suttie, were themselves clearly aware that the book was marred by Lloyd George's self-evident desire for revenge on those who he thought had wronged him. This calls into question Suttie's assertions, which he makes little attempt to justify, about the subsequent influence of Lloyd George's account. Nor does he ask searching questions about the autobiographical genre, the processes of memory, or the degree to which Lloyd George may himself have been influenced by the 'literature of disenchantment' with the war that had already emerged by the time the *War Memoirs* were composed.

While Suttie does his best to be fair to Lloyd George, the catalogue of the (genuine) failings of his memoirs at times becomes somewhat relentless, and we do not really learn what led to them. In a rare moment of psychological speculation, Suttie

suggests that Lloyd George's attacks on Haig and others reached 'a level of vituperation which must ... have sprung from a deep sense of guilt at not having stopped the carnage' (p. 6). Perhaps, but no evidence is offered for this surmise. It seems just as plausible to suggest that Lloyd George, no matter what the topic, was driven by a near-pathological urge to justify himself. Frances Stevenson, his mistress, recorded in her diary as he was writing the memoirs that 'Some of his friends think he would do better sometimes to admit that he has occasionally made mistakes, and been in the wrong, but he seems incapable of doing this – possibly because he is able always to make out such a completely good case for everything – the instinct of the clever lawyer at all times.' If even Lloyd George's friends could see this, it is no surprise that the *War Memoirs*, in spite of the huge flurry of interest they attracted when published, never attained classic status, and failed to arrest the ongoing decline of his personal reputation.

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This new volume, then, forms a valuable critical guide to the *War Memoirs*. It deserves to be read by anyone who is still in thrall to the *Blackadder* view of the Great War.

that while liberty had been the prerequisite of trade in republics, the causal relation between liberty and trade had become inverted in the large monarchies characteristic of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. From being dependent on liberty, commerce was now the agent of civil liberties in modern states. The depth of Hume's insights into the factors that made for this process, and hence moulded modern nations as well as international relations, place him at the heart of contemporary political theory today.

This was by no means always so. Indeed, not only was his importance to political thought very much underrated until relatively recently, but his place within the history of philosophy was also far from secure, certainly until the end of the nineteenth century or arguably even the first half of the twentieth. The Old Catalogue of Cambridge University Library (in full use until fairly recently) listed him as 'Hume, David, the historian'. Amongst those who contributed most to rehabilitating David Hume as not just 'the philosopher' he became principally known as in the latter part of the twentieth century, but as one of the greatest of philosophers, Norman Kemp Smith was one of the most significant.

As Don Garrett writes in a succinct new introduction to *The Philosophy of David Hume*, students of Hume and philosophers more generally are very much in Kemp Smith's debt; his seminal work kindled much scholarship on Hume himself and stimulated valuable philosophical enquiry into the various epistemological and moral issues the eighteenth-century Scot raised and tackled. Kemp Smith's sympathetic and lucid explication of Hume's philosophy as expounded principally in *Treatise of Human Nature* (1739–40) and the *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding* and *Concerning the Principles*

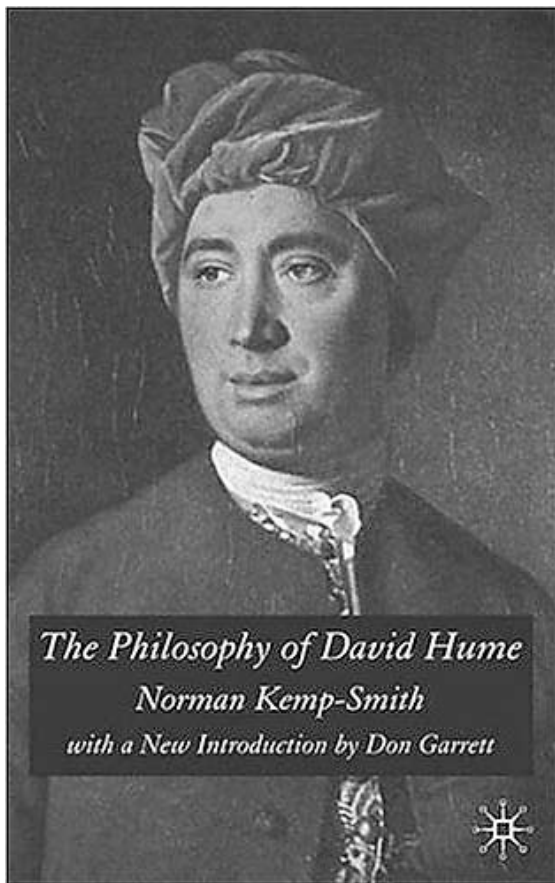
Theoretician of modernity

Norman Kemp-Smith, *The Philosophy of David Hume: A Critical Study of its Origins and Central Doctrines*, with a new introduction by Don Garrett (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005)

Reviewed by **Sylvana Tomaselli**

DAVID HUME is one of the most acute theoreticians of modernity. Amongst other things, he understood how commerce had come to occupy the centre of modern politics; he was the first politi-

cal commentator of note to examine the processes by which commerce had become a matter of state in modern nations. More interestingly still, and as Istvan Hont has argued in *Jealousy of Trade* (2005), Hume saw



of *Morals* (1748–51) went a long way to counter the negative impact of T.H. Green's critical introductions to *The Philosophical Works of David Hume* which he co-edited with T. H. Grose and published in the 1870s. Garrett remarks how the principal aim of reading Hume according to Green seemed to be that one would never need to do so again. Green would have been pleased for students to skip Hume altogether and move straight on to Kant and Hegel, for in his view their philosophical approach wholly superseded the empiricist tradition represented by what is now recognised as the great British trio: Locke, Berkeley and Hume.

The Philosophy of David Hume was originally published in 1941. Norman Kemp Smith (1872–1958), a distinguished Kant scholar and the translator of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1929) as well as a philosopher in his own right, took Hume as seriously as Kant had, but went further. Unlike Kant, Kemp

Smith did not think Hume's philosophy ended in a debilitating philosophical scepticism from which his admittedly brilliant understanding of the limits of human understanding had to be rescued; he sought to demonstrate the cogency of Hume's philosophy and the relation between its sceptical and realist aspects; in fact, he wished he had been able to demonstrate the coherence of Hume's entire output, including his writings on politics and religion, but his competence did not extend that far, or so he modestly claimed.

Reflecting on the subject for much of the first half of the twentieth century, Kemp Smith placed Hume's assertion that reason 'is and ought only to be' the slave of the passions at the heart of his interpretation of the Scot's philosophy. This claim, Kemp Smith stated from the outset of his Preface, was the 'key to the non-sceptical, realist teaching' expounded in Book IV, Part I of the *Treatise* and reiterated in the concluding section of the *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Outside the philosopher's study, to put it crudely, our passions save us from the scepticism that cannot but reign within it, according to Hume. While this assertion might be intuitively appealing when speaking loosely, it is not so easy to maintain under closer scrutiny, that is, so to speak, if one were back in the philosopher's den.

Kemp Smith was the first to admit this. It was the aim of *The Philosophy of David Hume* to examine the difficulties raised by his endeavour to reconcile the two Humes, the sceptic and the realist. He thus sought to address the tension generated by, on the one hand, the denial in Book I of *Treatise of Human Nature* that we have an impression of the self in itself (i.e. as opposed to being aware that we are experiencing any given sensation, feeling or thought) and, on the other, his assumption that we do have just such an

impression of the self, indeed an ever-present one, when he discusses indirect passions (e.g. pride, humility, ambition, vanity, love, and hatred; examples of direct passions being desire, aversion, grief, joy, hope, and fear) in Book II. In thinking about this and other problems that he first raised, Kemp Smith came to question the order in which the different parts of the *Treatise* had been conceived, and argued that Hume had come to his subject, not from the epistemological starting-point of Book I, but from the ethical considerations that are the subjects of Books II and III. However unsettling, but ultimately highly influential, his epistemological reflections were to be, especially if one thinks of the effect they had on Kant, Hume had been a moral philosopher in the first instance, and this was the perspective from which he could best be understood.

Kemp Smith was led to this view partly by placing Hume within his context, eighteenth-century Scottish philosophy, and thereby realising that Hume had been far more exercised by Francis Hutcheson's *Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725) and *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections, with Illustrations upon the Moral Sense* (1728) than had previously been thought. What Kemp Smith therefore produced was a study that combined the sharpened analytical skills of a practised philosopher with the historical sensitivity of a scholar deeply committed to understanding his subject as one would a fellow intellect one respects. He studied the text, paying heed to the precise meanings Hume gave to the words he used (e.g. 'Hume's Manner of employing the terms "Fiction" and "Illusion"'), and putting the whole against the background of the works we know Hume to have been reading (appendices include, for

instance, parts of some of the less accessible works that Hume referred to in the *Treatise*). What is more, he also studied the manner in which others read Hume, and *The Philosophy of David Hume* therefore also serves as a contribution to the history of the reception of Hume. Kemp Smith thus set in motion some of the best practices that the

history of political thought and intellectual history have come to enjoy. The re-issue of his work is wholly welcomed and Garrett's introduction is a very helpful addition to it.

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Vacillating statesman

Arthur Aspinall, *Lord Brougham and the Whig Party*
(originally published 1927; reprinted Nonsuch, 2005)

Reviewed by Mark Pack

LAWYER, ORATOR, politician and prolific writer of letters, articles, history and even a three-volume romance, Henry Brougham was a prominent advocate of parliamentary reform and a leading opponent of slavery (at least after his early years), who helped found London University and was a successful promoter of widespread education. His political career saw him serve as one of the leading Whig politicians in the long years of opposition before 1830, before the brief climax of a very high-profile election victory in 1830 in Yorkshire and then a short period as Lord Chancellor before he was retired off. Scornful and outspoken, he was one of the foremost political publicists of his day, but also frequently mistrusted by colleagues.

Understanding the importance and impact of Henry Brougham poses the same problems for historians as ascertaining the significance of London Mayor Ken Livingstone is likely to pose in the future. They have in common political careers containing many years in opposition, years in power in relatively peripheral posts, but notwithstanding that, a

hold on the public imagination and political debate wholly disproportionate to an otherwise rather limited tally of actual policy achievement.

The detailed treatment of Brougham's life in Aspinall's extensive (480-page) volume helps explain the lack of trust he generated – the author frequently recounts Brougham's changes of position and flirtations with erstwhile opponents. As Aspinall summarises, 'His unwillingness to support all Whig policy unquestioningly, and his occasional support of Tory and Radical policies, led to conflict with his fellow Whigs and was, perhaps, the principal reason he failed to reach even higher political office.'

In his early years he had more Tory than Whig sympathies and toyed with such illiberal causes as support for slavery – even urging cooperation with the French to support slavery – and Aspinall makes a convincing case that, had the Tories tried to harness his talents, he might have ended up a Tory. This flirtation with the Tories hindered his desire to be an MP, for it meant many Whigs were reluctant to help find him a seat, an important consideration at a

time when relatively few seats were open to genuine election and competition. Even when not flirting with the Tories, his favour moved back and forth between traditional Whigs and more radical reformers, leading Ricardo to say of him, 'A man who wishes to obtain a lasting name should not be a vacillating statesman, too eager for immediate applause.'

His eloquence and hard work, and his skill at attacking the Tories in public debate, gradually earned him over the years more support from his fellow Whigs, though often it was only granted grudgingly and it was frequently undermined by over-zealous and self-defeating attacks on poorly-chosen opponents in his speeches. Without these lapses in judgement, 'Blundering Brougham' – as he was sometimes known – might well have become the leader of the Whigs in the House of Commons, and as a result enjoyed a more senior role in Grey's 1830 Whig government. As it was, when power

