



NEWSLETTER ISSUE 1

Editorial

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Research on Aristotle and contemporary moral and political thinkers influenced by him has grown over the past couple decades. The Centre for Contemporary Aristotelian Studies in Ethics and Politics is the first research centre devoted to this field of study. One of the purposes of this newsletter is to inform you about CASEP and its recent and upcoming research activities. CASEP aims to foster the exchange of ideas by a network of people interested in Aristotelian research. This newsletter is edited with the intention of contributing to this aim. Thus, we hope that this newsletter will help you to be aware of current research activities, publications and projects conducted by the members of CASEP. You will find here a brief history of CASEP, information about upcoming and recent events, information about research fellows' activities and projects, recent and forthcoming publications (focussing on publications by members), and reviews of some of the most important recent Aristotelian books.

Mustafa Ongun

CASEP aims to foster the exchange of ideas by a network of people interested in Aristotelian research

We would like to thank our director Kelvin Knight for all his efforts to establish CASEP, to recruit advisors, fellows and members, and therefore to enable the events and activities covered in this newsletter

About CASEP

CASEP was formally approved as a research centre of London Metropolitan University, within its Faculty of Law, Governance and International Relations, on 5th June 2009. CASEP hopes to provide a milieu for some of the more important ongoing interpretive studies of those texts and arguments of Aristotle and of later Aristotelians that are concerned with ethics and politics. But its central concern is with the relevance of those texts and arguments to issues of ethics and politics in the contemporary world. Its first major conference was in 2010 on the contemporary Aristotelianism of Martha Nussbaum.

CASEP now has one senior research fellow, Professor Alasdair MacIntyre; visiting research fellows, including Professor Ronald Beiner and full-time fellow Dr Tolis Malakos; postdoctoral fellow Dr Marian Kuna and doctoral students, including Mustafa Ongun and Kim Redgrave — all of whom share CASEP's central aims and concerns. Our postdoctoral research fellow and PhD students are formally supervised by CASEP's director Dr Kelvin Knight. More informally, Alasdair MacIntyre supervises Kim and Mustafa. Besides these, CASEP boasts over 80 members from across the globe, many of whom regularly participate in our reading groups, seminars, colloquia and conferences. CASEP hopes to soon establish a *Contemporary Aristotelian Studies* journal, a Contemporary Aristotelian Studies 'organized section' of the American Political Science Association, and a Chinese website and branch, CASEP East, at Peking University, under the direction of Elizabeth Li.



Ronald Beiner, Timothy Chappell and Patrick Riordan, the three keynote speakers on the first day of June's Religion, Civil Religion, and the Common Good conference

Upcoming Events

CASEP will co-host (with London Met's Centre for the Study of Religion, Conflict and Cooperation) a conference on **Religion, Civil Religion, and the Common Good**. It will be at London Metropolitan University on 20th-21st June 2012. CASEP speakers will include CASEP Advisor and 2011-12 Visiting Research Fellow Professor Ronald Beiner (University of Toronto; author of *Civil Religion: A Dialogue in the History of Political Philosophy*, CUP, 2011), on "Secularism as a Common Good", CASEP Advisor Professor Timothy Chappell (Director of the Open University's Ethics Centre), on "Delivering the Goods", Dr Patrick Riordan, S.J. (Heythrop College; author of *A Grammar of the Common Good: Speaking of Globalization*, Continuum, 2008), and renowned Labour Lord Maurice Glasman. If you would like to present a paper, please email Kim Redgrave (k.redgrave@londonmet.ac.uk).

CASEP will co-host (with Nottingham's Centre for the Study of Social and Global Justice) the **second annual conference of the Contemporary Aristotelian Studies specialist group** of the UK Political Studies Association on 18th July 2012 (immediately followed by the three-day sixth annual conference of the International Society for MacIntyrean Enquiry, on the theme of well-being) at the University of Nottingham. For further information, please contact tony.burns@nottingham.ac.uk.

CASEP will follow the successful *Nicomachean Ethics* reading group (see page 5, below) by studying **Aristotle's Politics** (in accordance with CASEP's 2010 Statement of Intentions and Purposes). We will meet from 6pm every Wednesday, from 8th February to 28th March. Our primary concern will be to analyze and evaluate Aristotle's argument but we will likely relate that argument to historical context and influence, and certainly to contemporary politics and ethics. The first three sessions will be led by Dr Kelvin Knight, by Dr Chris Ryan, and by Prof Ronald Beiner. If you would like to participate, please email k.knight@londonmet.ac.uk.

8th February - 28th March

Reading Group on Aristotle's Politics

20th-21st June

Conference on Religion, Civil Religion, and the Common Good

18th July

Conference of the PSA Contemporary Aristotelian Studies group

CASEP aims to organize a stream in the London Conference in **Critical Thought**, 29th-30th June 2012. The theme of the stream is "Aristotle, MacIntyre and Critical Thought". In this, we intend to address issues such as Aristotle and criticism of contemporary society, possible contributions and criticisms from Aristotelians to critical theory, and the differences between Aristotelian and continental criticisms of modern society. If you might like to contribute, please contact Mustafa Ogun (m.ogun@londonmet.ac.uk).

Philip de Mahy (Catholic University of America) is coordinating an attempt to follow CASEP's success in establishing a Contemporary Aristotelian Studies specialist group of the UK Political Studies Association by setting up a Contemporary Aristotelian Studies organized section within **APSA, the American Political Science Association**. Professor Ronald Beiner has agreed to be President of the prospective group. Any actual or potential member of APSA who is interested in this exciting project should contact Philip at demahy@cua.edu.

CASEP holds research seminars throughout the academic year. A highlight will be 4-6pm on 22nd February, when Professor **Ronald Beiner** will speak on "Civil Religion: A Window into Perennial Themes of Political Philosophy". Dr Tom Angier will respond.

If you lack London Met ID and wish to attend a CASEP event at the University, please email casep@londonmet.ac.uk beforehand to ensure safe passage through security.



Philip de Mahy presenting one of the fine papers he delivered during transatlantic visits to London Met in 2011

*We congratulate
Professor Alasdair MacIntyre,
CASEP Senior Research Fellow,
for winning APSA's 2011
Benjamin E. Lippincott Award.
The Award, honouring a work by a living
political theorist that is of enduring
importance, was made for
After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory,
first published in 1981*

For further details or updates on the above events or on CASEP's other events and activities, please visit our website:

www.londonmet.ac.uk/casep.

You can also find useful videos, links and resources there.

Recent Events



Alasdair MacIntyre's inaugural lecture as CASEP Senior Research Fellow, June 2010, chaired by London Met's Vice Chancellor, Professor Malcolm Gillies



Tony Burns, Ron Beadle and Keith Breen at the PSA CAS group conference



One of five simultaneous panels at the CAS conference

CASEP organized the **inaugural annual conference of the Contemporary Aristotelian Studies (CAS)** specialist group of the Political Studies Association of the UK (PSA) on the 3rd June 2011 at London Met. It was attended by a hundred academics and researchers from home and abroad. Professor Alasdair MacIntyre, CASEP Senior Research Fellow, opened the conference. His contrast of 'Four Political Aristotles' was followed by Dr Kirsten Ainley (LSE), presenting an Aristotelian account of international relations in 'Virtue Ethics Beyond the Nation State', and by Dr Keith Breen (Queen's University, Belfast) and Dr Ron Beadle (Newcastle Business School), discussing Aristotelian approaches to work and the economy. Panel sessions included papers by Professor James Connelly (Hull) and by Professor Timothy Chappell (Open University) on political virtue, by Professor Russell Keat (Edinburgh) on contemporary cultural practice, and by speakers from the UK, USA, Canada, Italy, Greece, Poland, the Netherlands, Ireland, Croatia, Spain, and Germany. (See page 5 for links to audios of the three plenary sessions.) The conference included the UK launch of *Virtue and Politics: Alasdair MacIntyre's Revolutionary Aristotelianism*, which is co-edited by CASEP Director Kelvin Knight and includes several essays by CASEP members.

Two further **public lectures by Alasdair MacIntyre** have been hosted by CASEP. The first, 'Two Kinds of Political Reasoning', was delivered on 7th June 2010, shortly before he officially moved to CASEP on 1st July. It was attended by almost two hundred people. The second (co-hosted with the Human Rights & Social Justice Research Institute; see link to video on page 5), on 'Intolerance, Censorship and Other Requirements of Rationality', was similarly well attended. Alasdair is therefore to be thanked for having truly placed London Met on the academic map of cutting-edge ethical and political philosophy.

Along with the CAS PSA group, CASEP organized a book symposium on **Tom Angier's *Techne in Aristotle's Ethics*** on 16th April 2011. Tom's respondent was Professor Joseph Dunne from Dublin City University.

On 14th April 2011 CASEP organized a one-day symposium on '**Identity, Power and Common Good in Advanced Liberalism**', including papers by Craig Iffland, Kelvin Knight, Matthew Knotts, Mustafa Ongun, and Kim Redgrave.

Amongst the many excellent papers presented to CASEP in 2011 are those by Visiting Research Fellow Rafael Ramis Barceló engaging, especially, with the work of Terence Irwin.

CASEP held a reading group on **Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics** over the eleven weeks of London Met's autumn term. We followed the book closely and discussed in detail both exegetical and critical issues, taking into account contemporary Aristotelian scholarship and paying particular attention to the relevance of Aristotelian ethics for contemporary philosophical debates. About twenty academics participated regularly, contributing by introducing different books and issues. London Met members Dr William Dixon, Dr Chris Ryan and Jim Grant are to be thanked especially. Serious travelling (and serious philosophical work) was done by Dr Willy Pfändtner, Dr Jenny Berglund and Dr Lovisa Bergdal from Södertörn University, Stockholm, by Elizabeth Li from Peking University, by CASEP members from Bristol, Birmingham and Sheffield, and from Italy, Slovakia, Spain and the USA. The group's inspirational leadership by Visiting Research Fellow Dr Tolis Malakos made such efforts worthwhile.



*Dr Rafael Ramis Barceló
(University of Balearic Islands),
who was a visiting research
fellow at CASEP in 2011*



*Professor Andrius Bielskis
(Mykolas Romeris University),
visiting research fellow at
CASEP until 2013*

Links to recordings of papers and discussions at CASEP

Alasdair MacIntyre, "[Intolerance, Censorship, and Other Requirements of Rationality](#)", 28th October 2010.

Alasdair MacIntyre, "[Four Political Aristotles](#)", 3rd June 2011.

Keith Breen, & Ron Beadle, on "[Work and Practical Reasoning](#)", and "[On the Distinction Between Virtue and Skill](#)", 3rd June 2011

Kirsten Ainley, "[Virtue Ethics Beyond the Nation State](#)", 3rd June 2011.

Research Projects and Associated Activities

Alasdair MacIntyre's research project and activities at CASEP as Senior Research Fellow

Professor Alasdair MacIntyre leads a research project on Common Goods and Political Reasoning and continues to be at work on a book on desire, practical reasoning, and narrative. He has read papers on political and economic aspects of practical reasoning to colloquia and public lectures at CASEP and the latter part of the book will reflect what he has learned from these discussions. Besides 'Two Kinds of Political Reasoning', which was presented publicly and followed by a colloquium, the colloquia have been on 'Happiness', on 'Political Rhetoric in a Fractured Society' and, most recently, on 'Common Goods, Modern States, Rights - and Maritain'. During Alasdair's visits to the UK he participates in CASEP research seminars and administrative meetings, and regularly comments on the work of Mustafa Ongun and Kim Redgrave. Additionally, in October 2010 he gave his first lecture to postgraduate students of human rights at London Met. His participation in CASEP is simply invaluable, and is very greatly appreciated by all of those able to participate alongside him.



Alasdair MacIntyre, Kelvin Knight, Jacqueline Laing, Mustafa Ongun and Tom Angier at one of Alasdair's Common Goods and Political Reasoning colloquia

Tolis Malakos' research project and activities at CASEP as Visiting Research Fellow

Dr Tolis Malakos is initiating a research project on Virtue and Truth: Dasein as ἀληθεύειν. Its aim is to critically evaluate Aristotle's influence on Heidegger's *Being and Time* and on the relationship of virtue to truth as it developed in the Western metaphysical tradition, using the work of MacIntyre, Gadamer, Levinas and others. He led the weekly *Nicomachean Ethics* reading group (see page 5), for which he produced three exemplary philosophical papers. On his extended visits to the UK, Tolis participates fully and brilliantly in all CASEP events.



Visiting Research Fellow Dr Tolis Malakos

Dr Piotr Machura's research activities in CASEP as Visiting Research Fellow, 2011

Between 4th and 15th April 2011, thanks to Erasmus programme, I had a chance to cooperate with scholars from London Met as Visiting Research Fellow at CASEP. In a friendly academic environment I spent two interesting weeks learning, studying and sharing my own experience in what I find to be a truly Aristotelian, friendship-based academic institution.

My activities were divided into three parts. Firstly, I was given an opportunity to develop my teaching skills working with a group of international students within "Citizenship and Social Justice" course led by Kelvin Knight as well as consult the work of PhD candidates Kim Redgrave and Mustafa Ongun. Secondly, I participated in some of CASEP activities such as a colloquium on 14th April (which I found very inspiring as an idea of how to develop the relation between students and teachers), a research seminar on 13th April, and the book symposium on Tom Angier's *Techné in Aristotle's Ethics* on 16th April. These were interesting not only in themselves but also because I could compare the working strategies of our institutions. Finally, and for me most importantly, it was the time of my hard research work. As I am focused on contemporary Anglo-American Aristotelianism, the possibilities of searching through London Met libraries and of discussing my work with scholars at CASEP were a great help. Accompanied by a unique possibility of having a tutorial with Prof. Alasdair MacIntyre, these helped me to clarify the habilitation thesis I would work on in following months.

Dr Piotr Machura
Assistant Professor of Ethics
Institute of Philosophy
Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland



"I spent two interesting weeks learning, studying and sharing my own experience in what I find to be truly Aristotelian, friendship-based academic institution"

Dr Marian Kuna's research activities in CASEP as Postdoctoral Research Fellow, 2010-12

From April 2010 I have been Post-doctoral Research Fellow at CASEP thanks to a three-year research grant from my university. This support has enabled me to participate in the Centre's various activities. I have very much enjoyed the hospitality and intellectually stimulating environment of the Centre.

In 2011 I participated in two colloquia with Alasdair MacIntyre devoted to his work-in-progress that covered the issues of common good and political rhetoric in contemporary politics. In addition, I attended a guest lecture by Philip de Mahy and a reading seminar on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* led by Dr Tolis Malakos. I also attended the June Contemporary Aristotelian Studies in Politics conference.

I have very much benefited from all these events (especially from their respective discussions), as I recently published a monograph on MacIntyre's philosophy entitled *Etika a politika v perspektíve Alasdaira MacIntyry* [*Ethics and Politics in the Perspective of Alasdair MacIntyre*], Ruzomberok 2010. My cooperation with CASEP has assisted me in reconsidering my current research plans. I have begun to focus more on the issue of academic institutional implications of Catholic social teaching for a university as an institution. This shift is related to my reflections on MacIntyre's emphasis on the principles of Catholic social teaching (e.g. the principle of the common good) as well as his interest in the status and content of university education.

Thus, in my contemporary Aristotelian research I have been indebted a great deal to MacIntyre's distinctions between practices and institutions (the "goods of excellence" versus the "goods of efficiency"), as well as his work as a Fellow of CASEP.

Dr Marian Kuna
Assistant Professor of Philosophy
Department of Philosophy
Faculty of Arts and Letters
Catholic University in Ruzomberok, Slovakia



PhD Projects

Kim Redgrave (estimated completion, Jan 2013). PhD study:

'The Flourishing Family in Contemporary Society: An Aristotelian Feminist Perspective'.

This research is undertaken in CASEP with the assistance of a Vice-Chancellor's Scholarship from the University.

Principal supervisor: Dr Kelvin Knight

Abstract: In philosophical discourse, the family is a contentious area of debate. In modern liberal theory it is often described as a private institution in which individuals learn how to be citizens and are taught the moral values of a liberal society, such as the importance of justice and autonomy. For many feminists the public private divide is one of the last obstacles to women's equality with men, arguing that the institution of the family is inherently unjust for women. For social conservatives the family is considered to be the pillar of society and one which is crumbling with the rise of divorce and single-parenthood. However, all of these approaches lack any truly ethical understanding of family life and what the good, or goods, of family is/are. Only through such an understanding, which draws on the Aristotelian tradition of teleological enquiry, can the family find a meaningful place in moral and political theory. In this thesis it is argued that family life is best understood as a practice with identifiable goods internal to the practice. I will argue that it is more useful to understand the well-being of families in terms of teleological ordered goods than in terms of institutional laws and structural paradigms. In order to make my argument I will draw on the resources of the Aristotelian tradition and bring it into fruitful dialogue with feminist care ethics. Feminist care ethics provides the resources for an account of the internal good of family life and the kind of virtues constitutive of that good. This is not a study of Aristotle's own views on the family. Instead I will be making use of distinctively Aristotelian materials to construct an argument for the possibility of human flourishing in the contemporary Western family. The practical and moral implications of an Aristotelian teleology on the modern family will also be discussed.



Mustafa Ongun (estimated completion, Jan 2013). PhD study:

'An Ethical Critique of New Managerial Governance': MacIntyre's Aristotelianism as an alternative to the critical social theories of Habermas and Foucault.

This research is undertaken in CASEP with the assistance of a Vice-Chancellor's Scholarship from the University.

Principal supervisor: Dr Kelvin Knight

Abstract: It has often been claimed that the last couple of decades have been the era of neoliberalism. Although neoliberalism is difficult to define, it is a distinctive doctrine of the liberalism of the recent past that free market rationality needs to be adopted by all forms of government, including the government of the self. What makes the liberalism of today 'neo' is its commitment to the rationality of the market as an ethics, rather than just an economical model to be promoted by government. Understood in this way, neoliberalism is a normative project, advancing not only the privatization of state agencies and less regulation of economic activity but also deployment of free market rationality to the whole of human practice. New public management (NPM) theories and practices in the UK have been a specific manifestation of this normative project of neoliberalism. NPM suggests that business management techniques and methods should be applied to all public institutions. Although this form of management has been criticized from various perspectives, a substantive ethical critique of NPM has not yet been developed. This study aims, first, to develop an ethical critique of new public management and, secondly, to argue for an alternative framework in which public institutions can be evaluated on grounds different from those of NPM. In order to do this, the study draws upon three different philosophical traditions, all of which claim to be critical: Foucault's genealogy, Habermas' social theory, and MacIntyre's Aristotelianism. The study contends that Habermas, since he restricts ethics to communicative rationality, leaves no room for an ethical evaluation of institutions concerned with productive activity. Foucault, whose work is centred on the ways in which institutional power constitutes subjectivities, lacks any substantive criteria for an ethical evaluation of institutions. Conversely, a social theory developed through the work of Aristotle and Alasdair MacIntyre opens up possibilities for a compelling ethical critique of, and an alternative to, NPM's evaluation of public institutions in terms of business techniques and methods. The study comes to these conclusions, in part, through considering the BBC as an empirical case.



Paul Anthony Chambers

"Civil war by other means": Conflict, resistance and coexistence in Colombia: Exploring the philosophy and politics of Alasdair Macintyre in a conflict setting.

Thesis submitted to for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford, 2010). Available online [here](#).

Supervisor: Prof. Jenny Pearce

Abstract: Colombia's protracted civil war between Marxist insurgencies and the state has brought grave consequences for the civilian population and the prospects for constructing a viable political community in the country. With up to 5 million internally displaced people, rampant impunity for perpetrators of crimes against humanity and human rights and International Humanitarian Law violations, dozens of politicians and countless members of the armed forces linked to paramilitary organizations, along with increasing social injustices and inequalities, Colombia presents a troubling social-political panorama that has led to what is often referred to as a profound social and institutional 'moral crisis'. Much discussion has centred on the question of achieving some degree of minimal moral and political consensus and 'collective conscience' to humanize and slowly transform the conflict at local, regional and national levels. However, the philosophical and political parameters of this discussion have been and continue to be set firmly within variants of the liberal tradition which, it is argued, does not provide the necessary resources for adequately conceptualizing the problem and conceiving the task of addressing conflict, constructing moral consensus, and seeking social and political coexistence. The thesis argues that the philosophy of Alasdair Macintyre can provide such resources. Macintyre provides a convincing account of the philosophical problems that underlie on going intractable disagreement and the conflicts it breeds, offering a philosophy that can inform and underpin efforts at social transformation, resistance, and coexistence as well as aiding the necessary task of social scientific research and analysis of the conflict. The thesis analyses the moral dimensions of the conflict in light of Macintyre's philosophy but also critically explores the adequacy of his politics of local community for the Colombian context. Macintyre argues that a rational political community can only be constructed through the praxis of local communities engaging in shared moral-political deliberation. Through an empirical case study of a Constituent Assembly process in a rural community that has suffered the impacts of armed conflict for decades, the thesis explores an attempt at constructing peaceful social and political coexistence in light of Macintyre's moral-sociological framework.

PhD Studies will be a major feature of the next issue

If you know PhD students working on contemporary Aristotelians, please encourage them to become a member of CASE and to inform us about their studies

If you are working on or have recently submitted a doctoral thesis on contemporary Aristotelianism and would like us to list it in the next issues please email us (casep@londonmet.ac.uk)

Sinan Kadir Çelik (sinankcelik@gmail.com)

'A Survey of the Distinction Between Ethics and Politics with an Aristotelian Appraisal'.

Thesis submitted to the Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University.

Supervisor: Professor Dr Ahmet İnam

Abstract: In the history of philosophy, ethics and politics have either been considered as two unrelated, irreducible realms or as identical to each other. In this thesis the historical transformation of the problematic relation between ethics and politics is critically evaluated. It is argued that from the emergence of the conflict in Ancient Greece following the "Socratic ideal" to the modern attempt for its resolution by the "Machiavellian revolution," the prominent theories developed for dealing with the problem have defined politics as an amoral practice, as a science, a technique or an art. An alternative Aristotelian approach is tried to be developed so as to elucidate the nature of the distinction between ethics and politics. According to this view, ethics and politics can neither be strictly separated from each other nor be reduced into one another. The Aristotelian conception of politics as "philosophy of human affairs" has ethical, practical and technical dimensions. The thesis tries to clarify at which point ethics and politics should be conceived as two different practices and at which point they cannot be treated as independent from each other. Hence, the present study aims to determine the peculiarities and the strong sides of Aristotelian practical philosophy in order to offer an alternative to resolve the problem under consideration.

Buket Korkut-Raptis (bkorkut@nd.edu)

'The Narrative Nature of Ethical Discourse'

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Department of Philosophy, University of Notre Dame, 2010.

Supervisor: Professor David Solomon

Abstract: This thesis develops an account of ethical discourse through a unified approach to ethical evaluation, practical reasoning, and action explanation. It pursues a comparative analysis with respect to modern moral theories, theories of practical reasoning, and action theories so as to explain how a unified approach can resolve the chronic problems in each area. The thesis argues that, just as philosophy of science is concerned with explaining the nature of scientific discourse rather than establishing scientific truths, so too ethics is concerned with explaining the nature of ethical discourse rather than establishing ethical truths. The question of what is worth pursuing in life is not a question that philosophy is supposed to answer by providing a normative theory; it is a practical question that one needs to address in practice with respect to a particular situation. This is what ethical discourse is about, and ethics is a meta-level discourse about the nature of this discourse. The thesis proposes a phenomenological view of ethical discourse on which narrative is the central metaethical notion. In practice, what we are trying to assess, prospectively or retrospectively, are actions that we either might perform or have performed. So we inevitably turn to a form of description that shares the formal structure of action relations and reveals the evaluative qualities of particular actions. Narrative is precisely description of that kind. It is only in the broader context of a particular event that actions exhibit certain qualities; and it is only with respect to a narrative account of an event that we can judge or form an intention for acting in a particular way. Therefore, practical reasoning consists of narrative deliberation about possible actions, not just for arriving at a practical decision, but even for forming an intention; and explaining an action retrospectively consists in giving a narrative account of that action as well as of the reasons for the intention with which the action is done. Ethical discourse is the generic name for practical reasoning and action explanation, because narrative is the common form of prospective and retrospective practical assessment, and practical assessment is never merely a question of what it is rational to do, but involves evaluation of what is worth doing.

Recent and Forthcoming Publications

Below you will find recent and upcoming publications related to Aristotle or to contemporary thinkers influenced by Aristotle. We mainly focus on the publications of our members, but the list also includes publications from other scholars.

Journal Articles and Book Chapters

Ainley, Kirsten (2011). 'The Implications and Imperfections of Practice'. In *Human Rights Review* 12(2), pp 241-246.

Ainley, Kirsten (2011). 'The Social Practice of Institutional Responsibility'. In *Responding to "Delinquent" Institutions*. Toni Erskine (ed). Palgrave

Beadle, Ron, & Geoff Moore (2011). 'MacIntyre: Neo-Aristotelianism and Organizational Ethics'. In *Research in the Sociology of Organizations* 32, pp 85-121.

Hursthouse, Rosalind (2011). 'Virtue Ethics and the Treatment of Animals'. In *Oxford Handbook of Animal Ethics*. Tom L. Beauchamp & R. G. Frey (eds.). Oxford University Press.

King, Richard (2011). 'Ethical induction in Aristotle'. In *The Foundations of Ancient Ethics*. J. Hardy & G. Rudebusch (eds). Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Unipress.

Knight, Kelvin (2011). 'Agency and Ethics, Past and Present'. In *Historical Materialism* 19(1), pp.145–174.

Knight, Kelvin (2011). 'What's the Good of Post-Analytic Philosophy'. In *History of European Ideas* 37(3), pp. 304-314.

Moore, Geoff (2011). 'Churches as Organisations: Towards a Virtue Ecclesiology for Today'. In *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 11(1), pp. 45-65.

Nielsen, M. Karen (2011). 'Deliberation as Inquiry: Aristotle's Alternative to the Presumption of Open Alternatives'. In *The Philosophical Review* 120(3), pp. 383-421.

Sim, May (2011). 'Being and Unity in the Ethics and Metaphysics of Aristotle and Liezi'. In *How Should One Live? Comparing Ethics in Ancient China and Greco-Roman Antiquity*. Richard King & Dennis Schilling (eds). De Gruyter.

Solomon, David (2012). 'Alasdair MacIntyre'. In *Key Ethical Thinkers*. Tom Angier (ed). Continuum.

Books

Angier, Tom (2010). *Techne in Aristotle's Ethics: Crafting the Moral Life*. Continuum.

Annas, Julia (2011). *Intelligent Virtue*. Oxford University Press.

Beiner, Ronald (2011). *Civil Religion: A Dialogue in the History of Political Philosophy*. Cambridge University Press.

Berti, Enrico (et al.) (2011). *Bene comune*. Petite Plaisance.

Blackledge, Paul, & Kelvin Knight (eds) (2011). *Virtue and Politics: Alasdair MacIntyre's Revolutionary Aristotelianism*. University of Notre Dame Press.

Burns, Tony (2011). *Aristotle and Natural Law*. Continuum.

Breen, Keith (2012). *Under Weber's Shadow: Modernity Subjectivity and Politics in the Work of Arendt, Habermas and MacIntyre*. Ashgate.

Greco, John, & Ruth Groff (eds) (2012). *Powers and Capacities in Philosophy: The New Aristotelianism*. Routledge.

Ierodiakonou, Charalampos (2011). *The Psychology of Aristotle, the Philosopher: A Psychoanalytic Therapist's Perspective*. Karnac.

Irwin, Terence (pb. 2011). *The Development of Ethics: A Historical and Critical Study*. Oxford University Press.

(2007) vol. 1, *From Socrates to the Reformation*.

(2008) vol. 2, *From Suarez to Rousseau*.

(2009) vol. 3, *From Kant to Rawls*.

Lennox, James G., & Robert Bolton (eds). (2010). *Being, Nature, and Life in Aristotle: Essays in Honor of Allan Gotthelf*. Cambridge University Press.

Lutz, Chris (2012). *Reading Alasdair MacIntyre's After Virtue*. Continuum.

Miller, Jon (2011). *Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics: A Critical Guide*. Cambridge University Press.

Morrel, Kevin (2012). *Organization, Society and Politics: An Aristotelian Perspective*. Palgrave.

Natali, Carlo (ed) (2011). *Aristotle: Metaphysics and Practical Philosophy: Essays in Honour of Enrico Berti*. Peeters.

Nederman, Cary J. (ed) (2011). *A Companion to Marsilius of Padua*. Brill.

Pakaluk, Michael, & Giles Pearson (eds) (2011). *Moral Psychology and Human Action in Aristotle*. Oxford University Press.

Paul, Ellen Frankel, Fred D. Miller, Jr & Jeffrey Paul (eds) (2011). *What Should Constitutions Do?* Cambridge University Press.

Pinches, Charles R., Kelly S. Johnson & Charles M. Collier (eds) (2010). *Unsettling Arguments: A Festschrift on the Occasion of Stanley Hauerwas's 70th Birthday*. Cascade Books.

Slote, Michael (2011). *The Impossibility of Perfection: Aristotle, Feminism, and the Complexities of Ethics*. Oxford University Press.

Spranzi, Marta (2011). *The Art of Dialectic Between Dialogue and Rhetoric: The Aristotelian Tradition*. John Benjamins Publishing.

Book Reviews

Claudia Baracchi, *Aristotle's Ethics as First Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, 2008 (pb. 2011).

Reviewed by Kelvin Knight

Traditionally, Aristotle's logical treatises were prioritized within his *corpus* by both his Greek and Latin followers. Unchanging logic fitted that unchanging being which Aristotle sometime called the subject of "first philosophy". This prioritization of atemporal and abstract knowledge was challenged by Heidegger, first in reinterpreting Aristotle and then by reinterpreting philosophy and by challenging its tradition. For Heidegger, what comes first is indeed "being" but necessarily in the temporal form and human activity of "being *there*", in some particular and changing situation. He intended to cut the ground from beneath the feet of what he regarded as *the* tradition of Western philosophy by publishing a thoroughgoing reinterpretation of Aristotle's metaphysics. This ambition remained unfulfilled. Instead, he wrote *Being and Time*.

Claudia Baracchi is not the first interpreter of Aristotle to follow on from Heidegger. Several monographs and collections on "Heidegger and Aristotle" or "Heidegger and the Greeks" have been recently published, but Baracchi's express concern is with Aristotle, not Heidegger, and few before have had the courage to strike out alone from the ground that Heidegger cleared. Her most notable forebear is Hans-Georg Gadamer. His *Truth and Method* redeployed Aristotle against the logic of positivism, a later, shorter monograph dealt with the idea of the good in Platonic-Aristotelian philosophy, and his final book translated and commentated on *Nicomachean Ethics* [NE] VI. Even if we might say that Gadamer (like Emmanuel Levinas) regarded ethics as first philosophy, he had little to say of human being as such. Baracchi's criticism is that, unlike Heidegger, Gadamer simply inverted the traditional hierarchy in prioritizing "practical" over theoretical philosophy and marginalizing ontology.

Aristotle's Ethics as First Philosophy is, then, the most ambitious and sustained single work of Heideggerian reinterpretation so far, grappling with more of Aristotle's texts than did Gadamer, even if less than Heidegger. Her book neglects both Aristotle's biological texts and (unlike Heidegger) his *Physics* since, on her account, he is little concerned with logical explanation or, therefore, causation (e.g. p. 161). Although her opening line points to the *Organon*, only the *Posterior Analytics* from amongst Aristotle's writings on logic attracts much attention. Pointedly, the *Rhetoric* attracts none (and Hannah Arendt, celebrant of political speech, attracts similar criticism to Gadamer). Perhaps even more surprising is the extent to which Baracchi is prepared to rest her interpretation on the *Magna Moralia* (similarly, the *Problemata* is cited at p. 124 and *Oikonomikon* at p. 133), in a way that might be thought to weaken her account as an interpretation of Aristotle himself, even if not as a reinterpretation of the origins of Aristotelian tradition. When she identifies "Aristotle's ethics" as first philosophy she certainly does not intend his *NE* alone, even though this is the one text of which she intends to give a comprehensive account.

Baracchi's opening line tells us that her aim is "to demonstrate the indissoluble intertwinement of practical and theoretical wisdom ... in Aristotle's thinking" (p. 1). Accordingly, and in accordance with almost any Heideggerian reading of Aristotle, *NE VI* is central to her account. Half of her book, and one of its four chapters (its "Main Section"), is devoted to *NE I* to *VII*, and the last third of this, "The Virtues of the Intellect" (her longest subsection) discusses *NE VI*. Whereas Gadamer emphasizes Aristotle's separation of practice from production, Baracchi regards this conceptual distinction as "overstated" and "suspect" (181). Like Heidegger, she stresses practice's productivity. In passing, she spends a couple pages in "reply" to *De Anima's* inconvenient dichotomy of productive and passive *nous* (pp. 200-202), and much of her interpretation of *NE VI* itself might be thought similarly contentious (as is her description of *NE VII* as concerning "incipient psychoanalysis", p. 216; cf. p. 73). Her general approach to Aristotle's conceptual distinctions here, as elsewhere, is to sublimate what he has separated. Analysis is followed by synthesis or, in Baracchi's preferred terms, "first in the order of being, ethics is ... last in the order of knowledge, most encompassing - for it entails humans ... coming back full circle to reflect on their own undertakings" (p. 173).

The ethics of Baracchi's Aristotle is reflective and weakly normative, but hardly at all prescriptive. The only one of what are conventionally called 'the moral virtues' upon which she focuses is the subject of *NE V*, justice. "Ethics is politics", she begins (p. 143), but her argument favors the originality and singularity of action against the universality of law.

The claim that "ethics is politics" bolsters Baracchi's proposition that Aristotle intended ethics as first philosophy, because in *NE I* "ethics (politics) is said to be most architectonic and authoritative" amongst "the sciences" (p. 40). She originally intended her book to be entitled *The Architecture of the Human*, and crucial for her identification of theory and practice, metaphysics and ethics, is the coincidence of Aristotle's identification, first, of politics as both "architectonic" (her understanding of which is elaborated at pp. 58-67) and "most authoritative" and, then, of both politics and metaphysics as "most authoritative". The significance of this "common thread" "cannot be overemphasized", on Baracchi's view. Unfortunately, "the semantic range of [Aristotle's] language of" "authoritativeness" (p. 42) is such that one might well suspect that Baracchi's usage allows her to elide what should be separated, analytically. Theology is, for Aristotle, most authoritative 'in the order of being' (*Metaphysics VI:1, XI:7, XII*), whilst politics is most authoritative in architectonically ordering subordinate human activities (*NE I:1-2*), but it does not follow that the authority of theology and of politics is of the same kind. Perhaps what Baracchi calls the circularity of Aristotelian reflectiveness should not be so readily squared.

Although differing from Aristotle in stressing the productivity of practice, Baracchi has to de-emphasize the architectonic function of political practice in "structuring, ordering, and coordinati[ng] civil coexistence" (p. 286). To do otherwise would separate ethics from the noetically "self-reflective character" of "first philosophy" as "science thinking itself in its possibility and principle(s)" (228) and, indeed, as "the science of god" (p. 233). Baracchi's ethics involves human reflection upon the condition of being with others, and the conclusion to which she moves is that ethics is about friendship. In considering *NE VIII* to *X*, she elaborates an account of friendship as "love ... of and for the good" (pp. 260, 274). Here it becomes clear that her

aspiration is to substitute Aristotelian ethics for Aristotelian politics, in a "transfiguration of politics into friendship" (p. 264) and of justice into love.

Baracchi's proposition that ethics was for Aristotle "first philosophy" is ranged against Aristotelianism's traditional prioritization of *episteme* and *logos*. Where she concedes the importance of *logos* she emphasizes that it "rests on *dia-logos*" (p. 8), on a discourse ethics that is essential to the human condition of being with others. *Logos* "comes to be in certain living beings" and "their altogether temporal and embodied practices" (p. 127). As a human possession, *logos* comes to be in many ways. So too does ethics. "Inquiry into 'the good itself' finds its structure" in "human involvements and operations always already under way" (p. 47; Baracchi's emphasis), and Baracchi's account of ethics is authentically Aristotelian in its emphasis on "the good constituting the *ultimate end*", in which "comportment find[s] its measure and direction".

In sum, *Aristotle's Ethics as First Philosophy* is an ambitious and important book. It could yet prove the culmination of a century-long reinterpretation of Aristotle. This reinterpretation began with Heidegger but, for Baracchi, Heidegger moved too swiftly from interpreting Aristotle to deconstructing the history of metaphysics. In reconstructing what might have become Heidegger's Aristotle, Baracchi succeeds splendidly. The point of such an exercise is not simply exegetical, as is obvious from her disagreement with Aristotle over the productivity of acting. Rather, her ambition is to reintroduce Aristotle to philosophy as a critic of the isolation of logic and metaphysics from sensual human being and difference.

Aristotle's Ethics as First Philosophy is also an attractive work. Like Heidegger, Baracchi loves language. She is evidently a master of several. Nonetheless, she wants her meaning to be more "excessive" (to use one of her favourite words) than mere words. Meaning, for her, "thrusts" (to use another) for the infinite. Potentiality is here, again, prior to actuality. Her objection to *logos* - or, rather, to *ratio* - is not only that it separates mind from matter, nor even that it separates thought alike from being, action, nature and divinity, but that it attempts to limit meaning to propositions.

When she writes that ethics was for Aristotle first philosophy, she does not intend to privilege moral theory. What she means is that Aristotle's philosophy expressed intellectual wonder and desire, and not a series of arguments. This may help us to understand Aristotle but, if we desire to understand adequately that which Baracchi tells us fascinated him, then there remains much to be said for the Aristotle of tradition.

Talbot Brewer, *The Retrieval of Ethics*, Oxford University Press, 2009.

Reviewed by Craig Iffland

On the very first pages of *Retrieval of Ethics*, Talbot Brewer announces: “the history of ethics looks like a story of progress only if its main texts are read in reverse chronological order” (Brewer, 2009, p. 1). In a clear nod to the philosophical works of Elizabeth Anscombe and Alasdair MacIntyre, Brewer claims that it is symptomatic of contemporary analytic philosophy that it “tends to generate theories of agency and allied ethical theories that systematize and entrench –rather than, say, identify and contest– the background culture’s reigning prejudices” (ibid., 9). The project of “retrieval”, as it turns out, is as much a piece of cultural criticism as it is an attempt to bring ethics back to some semblance of critical coherence. I aim only to outline two features of Brewer’s work: first, his insistence that the ‘good’ of human activity cannot reasonably consist in some future “state”, but rather in the unity our characteristic *doings* have in virtue of their being conceived as constitutive parts of a practical inquiry into the value of *being human*, or human agency; and second, how this conception of human agency relates to our understanding of the distinctive value of *other* human beings. I examine each in turn.

In the opening chapters of *Retrieval of Ethics*, Brewer takes aim at what he terms the “world-making” account of human agency that dominates contemporary philosophical ethics. On this view, our desires to act in this or that way are characterized as “propositional” attitudes towards bringing about this or that particular states of affairs –making it such that the ‘world’ conforms to our initial desires. Such theories view agency as a “species of production” (ibid., 12). By contrast, ancient thinkers conceived of action as intelligible by reference to an “apprehension” or “intimation” of the ‘good’ internal to some activity even though “we are not able to identify an achievable state of affairs that would represent the full realization of the good by which we are guided” (ibid., 13-14). According to Brewer, “productive” accounts of human agency suggest that the ‘good’ one desires to attain in such an activity will be “antecedently represented...in propositional form” by the agents in question, but such accounts fail to make sense of our desire to engage in “dialectical” activities of whose value we only have an indistinct intimation and thus without “the benefit of a clear and definite representation of the mode of engagement that would properly consummate one’s desire” (ibid., 37).

For example, the ‘good’ sought in conversation consists in the continual unfolding of our understanding of how to engage in and appreciate ‘good’ conversations as opposed to ‘bad’ ones and not the production of some *future* ‘good’ conversation we may have. The ‘good’ desired in conversation is nothing other than the refinement of our ability to engage in conversations well (ibid., 40). Our understanding of the ‘good’ of those activities like conversation or singing, or those shared activities constitutive of the lives of friends and lovers (e.g. marriage or friendship), will evolve and unfold over the course of a lifetime of one’s being thrust into them. Their intelligibility *qua* intentional human action, as aiming at the human attainment of some ‘good’, does not derive from the effects such activities tend to

aiming at the human attainment of some 'good', does not derive from the effects such activities tend to bring about, but rather by their manifesting a unified striving toward a better understanding of the standard of excellence internal to them (ibid., 83).

This fits in nicely with Brewer's claim that Aristotle's conception of the *ergon* –the species-specific agency of a particular kind– consists in *energia* –the actualization of one's species-specific agency– (ibid., 123). Our desires are not consummated or attained by some specifiable future state of affairs, but rather by engaging in activities in a way that manifests our *ergon*. What Brewer wants to argue is that the characteristic activities that make up a human lifetime can be seen as constitutive and intelligibly connected parts of a temporally extended dialectical practical inquiry into the distinctive *telos* of human agency (ibid., 83; 129). The "completion" or "perfection" of human agency *per se* is characterized by a "vivid and continuously deepening apprehension of the intrinsic value latent" in its exercise (ibid., 90). If such apprehension is present in a wide variety of our dialectical activities, then it seems that the species-specific flourishing or *telos* of human beings does not consist in some "state of affairs" *produced by* our species-specific form of agency (*ergon*), but rather in its habitual and sustained exercise (*energia*). The 'good' of being human just is the leading of a life informed and shaped by rational inquiry into and appreciation of the point and purpose of our characteristic human *doings*.

Yet, it is not that our reflection on our activities is constitutive of our distinctive *telos*, but rather that such reflection enables us to be more responsive to and appreciative of the 'good' or 'value' present in this or that activity. In other words, the point and purpose of friendship isn't to just think about the point and purpose of a particular friendship, but rather that our articulation of the point and purpose of a particular friendship allows us to be more responsive to the value(s) expressed in said relationship, in particular the value of the 'other'. In this way, our relationship to our own activity is never wholly internalized by our understanding of its point and purpose since *proper* understanding consists in the adaptation of our mode of engagement in the activity to the specific value(s) "expressed" by the activity –whether it be an 'act' of friendship or comfort to a person in a dire state (ibid., 163). One of the chief insights of Brewer's work is the extent to which he has recaptured the Aristotelian (and Thomistic) idea that human agency ought be conceived as a kind of extended inquiry into its point and purpose and that such inquiry is characteristically extended through *praxis*.

A further virtue of Brewer's account is the attention he gives to the unique value of those relationships in which human *praxis* is embedded. Self-consciously echoing the work of Alasdair MacIntyre, Brewer stresses the extent to which our 'desires' or intimations about the 'good' initially arise within contexts completely alien to the rigid specialization of the contemporary academy –e.g. within those cooperative activities proper to friends, fishing-crews, farmers and lovers. For though one throws oneself into such activities out of some vivid sense and appreciation of their value and purpose, it is through our dialectical relationships with those whom we share in those activities that enables the "possibility of limitless accretion of layers of perceived meaning, hence of limitless repetitions in the outward form of shared activities without a single

repetition in the inner texture of these same activities" (ibid., 262-3). For Brewer, it is friendship that makes it possible to conceive of how one might credibly claim, as Aquinas and Aristotle did, that the attainment of Man's *telos* is not found in the bringing about of some "state of affairs", but rather consists in the sustained exercise of one's species-specific form of agency. Man's *telos* then is not exhausted in and could not possibly be produced by some "final" activity, but rather is attained by the progressive unfolding of the unlimited well of "meaning" that is expressed in those activities shared by friends, families and spouses. By focusing on the 'good' proper to sustained cooperative activity, Brewer calls attention to the unique and irreplaceable value of the intimate relationships implied by such activities. And this has some implications for our understanding of the 'value' proper to human beings.

On Brewer's account, the refinement of our evaluative sensibility with regards to the 'good' that is present in our dialectical activities stems (in part) from the *human* 'other' with whom we intimately engage in such activities. The loss of an intimate then undermines (though does not destroy) our ability to retain attentive appreciation for and (hence) further attentive inquiry into the 'good' expressed by various forms of characteristic human activities. Brewer thus equates the loss of an intimate –whether they be a friend, family member or spouse– with "the loss of a jointly created world of significance and possible activities" that enables human beings to tap into the infinite layers of meaning expressed by even the most mundane instances of human agency that is shared by such intimates (ibid., 264).

Two further points on which one would hope Brewer would set his attention is a more sustained reflection on the relationship between our 'value' as human beings and the 'value' of human action *and* an analysis of how an Aristotelian conception of human agency might help resolve particular debates central to contemporary theories of action i.e. the individuation and specification of (human) intentional kinds of 'just' and 'unjust' action. Given Brewer's stated admiration for the work of Elizabeth Anscombe, the latter seems a worthy project to pursue. In all, I enthusiastically affirm Tom Angier's (2010) comment that the *Retrieval of Ethics* "presents a systematic analysis of, and a forceful challenge to, a series of disassociations that have become entrenched in moral philosophy since the Scientific Revolution" (884). Moral philosophers (and theologians) and Aristotelian (and Thomist) enthusiasts should benefit greatly from its many insights.

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Martha C. Nussbaum, *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*, Harvard University Press, 2011.

Reviewed by Ignasi Llobera

What does it mean to be an Aristotelian nowadays? How can contemporary Aristotelian practical philosophy be done properly? One could follow Aristotle's philosophy to the letter and try to defend it at all costs. But no one actually does so, for that would entail defending slavery, the inferiority of women in respect of men, and other obviously false and even dangerous ideas. More importantly, defending Aristotle's philosophy to the letter at all costs would go against the Aristotelian way of doing philosophy, which Martha Nussbaum calls the 'inclusive dialectical method'¹. It is essential to this method to consider each and every major alternative theory, holding them up against one another and against the participant's life experiences in order to advance a better theory which would always remain open to revision – everything must be open to revision in this process; everything except the principle of non-contradiction, Nussbaum clarifies.

Aristotelians should not defend Aristotle's philosophy to the letter, then, but should consider it one of the major alternative theories that must be set up against others, as well as with the participant's life experiences. In Nussbaum's words: "Now the fact that Aristotle believes something does not make it true. [...] But it does, on the whole, make that something a plausible *candidate* for the truth, one deserving our most serious scrutiny."² Hence, Aristotelians must be prepared to assert that *amicus Aristoteles, sed magis amica veritas*.

In *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*, Nussbaum explicitly acknowledges that she is following the Aristotelian philosophical method as developed by John Rawls as "reflective equilibrium" (77-81). In addition to this, when reading Nussbaum we should never lose sight of her argument that form and content are interrelated and both make philosophical claims. That is the reason why her *Creating Capabilities* begins with a long and detailed narrative of the life of an Indian woman called Vasanti, whose capabilities were threatened by a variety of policies until she joined SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association), which changed her life for the better (2-12). The role of such a narrative is not to justify the theory: a story is never neutral; it always presupposes a conception of what is significant and what is not (14-16). But its role is primarily educational: to cultivate the reader's imagination (80-81).

The second chapter of the book is devoted to a detailed theoretical account of Nussbaum's Capabilities Approach, giving clear characterizations of fundamental concepts such as capabilities (distinguishing basic, internal, and combined capabilities), functioning, and dignity. The Ten Central Capabilities

¹ Martha C. Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge. Essays on Philosophy and Literature*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 23-29.

² Martha C. Nussbaum, "Non-Relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach", p. 34, in A. French, Th. E. Uehling, Jr. & H.K. Wettstein [eds.], *Midwest Studies in Philosophy Volume XIII. Ethical Theory: Character and Virtue*, University of Notre Dame Press, 1988.

List is put forward (33-34) with only some minor changes with regard to the list published in Nussbaum's *Women and Human Development* (2000).

After narrating Vasanti's story and expounding the Capabilities Approach in detail, and following the Aristotelian inclusive dialectical method, Nussbaum goes on to set her theory up against the major alternative theories and some of the current international, political and social challenges.

In chapter 3, the Capabilities Approach is contrasted with rival theories of development (the GDP approach; the Utilitarian approach; Resource-Based approaches; Human Rights approaches) which are explained and criticized. The Capabilities Approach is in turn defended against the criticisms formulated by rival theories. So, overall, Nussbaum shows why the Capabilities Approach is preferable to rival theories of development.

Chapter 4 follows the same structure as the previous chapter, this time contrasting the Capabilities Approach with rival philosophical theories (Utilitarianism, Rawls and Kant). While Nussbaum explains and criticizes these theories, she also acknowledges that her Capabilities Approach is in some ways indebted to each of them. Sen's version of the Capabilities Approach, conceived as a theory of quality of life, is also contrasted with Nussbaum's, which is conceived as a theory of basic social justice. So, overall, Nussbaum shows why her Capabilities Approach is preferable to rival philosophical theories as well as to Sen's version of the Capabilities Approach.

Chapters 5 and 6 are devoted to exploring what the Capabilities Approach has to say regarding two of the most important social challenges facing the contemporary world: cultural diversity and global justice. Nussbaum puts forward interesting suggestions, but nothing more than suggestions, in need of further development and discussion.

The philosophical influences on the Capabilities Approach are explored in the seventh chapter, which starts by asserting that "the intuitive ideas that lie behind it [the Capabilities Approach] have their roots in many different cultures, and probably in all cultures." (123). Western sources of the theory are given special attention, with emphasis on the crucial role played by Aristotle's account of human vulnerability and the Stoics' understanding of human dignity. These two main ideas of the Capabilities Approach, human vulnerability and human dignity, were developed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by Smith and Paine and then by Mill and Green-Barker during the nineteenth century. Once again, Nussbaum declares herself to be an Aristotelian, not only following the Aristotelian philosophical method but now also taking on board some of the most characteristic Aristotelian ideas, namely human vulnerability. She goes as far as to assert that "The earliest and most important Western historical source for the Capabilities Approach is, then, the political and ethical thought of Aristotle" (125).

In chapter 8 Nussbaum indicates how her Capabilities Approach would solve some current issues: disadvantage, gender, disability, aging, the importance of care, education, animal entitlements, environmental quality, constitutional law and political structure, and capabilities and human psychology. Once

again, the reader is delighted by the powerful and interesting implications the Capabilities Approach has for those issues, but at the same time left unsatisfied by the shortness of the treatment of each of these pressing matters.

Why is the Capabilities Approach so appealing to contemporary Aristotelians? Nussbaum's Capabilities Approach is a political theory of basic social justice, a pending issue in contemporary Aristotelian practical philosophy which has greatly developed its ethics but left its political philosophy still unresolved.

Nussbaum starts from the fact of pluralism, which is not judged to be either good or bad in itself, but is an undeniable fact in need of acknowledgement in practical philosophy. That is why her Capabilities Approach begins with a commitment to political liberalism, which asks us "to show respect for the diverse views of human life that are present in a pluralistic society, by not building our political principles on any metaphysical, epistemological, or psychological doctrine that is controversial between such groups" (182). The Capabilities Approach does focus on human flourishing and self-realization like Aristotle, Mill and Tagore did, but aims at the political goal of capabilities instead of the ethical goal of functioning (25-26). So the first and most important question for this theory is not 'What is each person doing?' (functioning) but 'What is each person actually able to do and to be?' (capabilities) (vid. p. x, 14, 18, 20, 59, 106). However, Nussbaum is aware that her Capabilities Approach is not ethically neutral: "Respect for pluralism is in this way totally unlike cultural relativism or deference to tradition: it requires the society to take a stand on some overarching values that protect all citizens in their choices" (111).

Hence, the Capabilities Approach is not an ethics of maxims which must be endorsed by each and every citizen, but a minimum political agreement resulting from a debate in which everyone can participate. The Ten Central Capabilities List is not the final list or a dogma but a contribution to national and international debate. This theory is not rigid but is open to new learning from the debate with other people, nations, cultures, etc. The minimum political agreement is not neutral but stands up for values found in many different cultures, and probably in all cultures: equality, individual freedom, etc. So this minimum political agreement is compatible with very different ethics of maxims, as long as they respect widely shared human values such as respect for equality and respect for dignity.

Creating Capabilities succeeds in its aim of filling the gap in accessible books on the Capabilities Approach for undergraduates and general readers (xi). Indeed, this book is a comprehensible presentation of the Capabilities Approach which is especially suitable for non-specialists in this theory, such as philosophers, sociologists, economists, political scientists, and researchers from other disciplines. The book is also accessible to people working on basic social justice in the political and social arena, for *Creating Capabilities* is not only a theoretical book, but one with practical commitments and implications. Aristotelian practical philosophy cannot but be committed to understanding the world and trying to make it better.

The danger of a book which is accessible to general readers is that it may leave certain interesting and promising issues underdeveloped. More work needs to be done on the implications of the Capabilities Approach for current international, political and social challenges such as cultural diversity, global justice, the importance of care, education, animal entitlements or environmental quality. The Capabilities Approach must

give a more detailed and fully-argued response to these issues in the future. Perhaps Nussbaum is not the one who is addressing those challenges, but rather another of the many specialists working on the Capabilities Approach, for it is not a single author philosophical theory, but one developed by an interdisciplinary network of specialists of many nationalities and from both theoretical and practical perspectives (101-102).