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EDITORIAL

The modern guise of the good

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The guise of the good is the claim that whatever I desire or intentionally do is seen by me as good in some respect. Historical scholarship has so far predominantly focused on ancient and medieval treatments of the guise of the good, thus making it look like the doctrine had been largely forgotten or abandoned in later periods. This special issue is meant to partially fill in this gap. The contributions illustrate how GG was received, (re)formulated, defended, or rejected, by prominent philosophers including Hobbes, Locke, Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant, J.S. Mill and Sidgwick.

The guise of the good (GG)—the claim that whatever I desire or intentionally do is seen by me as good in some respect—is a recurring topic in Western philosophy. In the 20th century it has been brought back to attention chiefly thanks to Elizabeth Anscombe's *Intention* (1957), and is currently the object of a lively debate at least since Sergio Tenenbaum's *Appearances of the Good* (2007). Historical scholarship however has so far predominantly focused on ancient and medieval treatments of GG, thus making it look like the doctrine had been largely forgotten or abandoned in later periods. This special issue is meant to partially fill in this gap (which is not to say that issues surrounding GG have not been systematically investigated from the historical point of view, for example in special issue 21.1 of this journal).

GG has been described by Joseph Raz as "the keystone keeping in place and bridging the theory of value, the theory of normativity and rationality, and the understanding of intentional action" (2010, 134). It is easy to see why: if the good, or at least what appears to me as good, is central to understanding desire and intentional action, then a theory of action must go together with a theory of value. Further, if intentional action is action done for reasons (considerations in the light of which the agent acts), then there is going to be a tight connection between reasons and value as well. In fact, some have recently proposed that GG is better understood as—or replaced by—a 'guise of normative reasons' view, whereby whatever I desire or intentionally do is seen by me as supported by some good reasons (Gregory 2013). On the other hand, GG faces important objections: Cannot we ever desire or do something that just doesn't seem in any way good to us? Cannot we desire something because it seems bad to us? And doesn't GG make desire and action too intellectualistic, by requiring that the agent possess some evaluative or normative concept in order to desire or intentionally do anything at all?

The contributions in this special issue illustrate how GG was received, (re)formulated, defended, or rejected, by prominent philosophers from Thomas Hobbes to Henry Sidgwick. I leave it to readers to decide whether the scholarly pieces can help to move the current theoretical debate in fruitful directions—whether they do so or not is immaterial to their scholarly merits. The overall picture is that—be it defended or rejected—GG was very much alive in discussions about desire, will, and action, at least until Immanuel Kant, and in some cases it had significant implications for a philosopher's views in ethics and other areas.

Thomas Pink's paper helpfully starts this volume, by describing what he calls the "early modern crisis about rational motivation", captured in his narration by the opposition between Hobbes and the coeval Scholastic philosophy of Francisco Suárez. Suárez, following Aquinas,

identified motivation for rational beings as motivation by goodness—motivation by an evaluative property of the object of desire or intention, while offering a theory of how the power of goodness to motivate operates in humans (as a final, not efficient cause). Hobbes, instead, distinguished moral goodness from natural goodness (desire-satisfaction), holding that "rational direction" has simply to do with applying "theorems for survival"—direction by natural goodness. And he dismissed any kind of causation that is not efficient causation: it's the desire that causes us to act, not some property of an action-to-be. What we desire is still seen as good—but this goodness plays no explanatory role with respect to our motivation, it just marks the fact that attaining the object satisfies our desire. Pink also explores how Hobbes's legacy later plays out in Hutcheson and Hume.

Antonia LoLordo illustrates John Locke's evolving views. From an initial optimism (we are always motivated to pursue the greatest apparent good), Locke comes later to stress the possibility of preferring less than the greatest acknowledged good, and moves the focus of action explanation away from the apparent good and instead towards occurrent psychological states of "uneasiness". In Locke's shift it is tempting to see at play the "early modern crisis" described by Pink. Still, as LoLordo shows, Locke reserves a role for a "last judgment of the understanding" to the effect that the proposed action is the best, here and now. This evaluative last judgment may well be just an intellectual reflection of the most pressing uneasiness, but it is nonetheless necessary for the will to settle on an action. (There is a striking resemblance between Locke's last judgments and Donald Davidson's "all-out evaluative judgments"—which Davidson identifies with intentions (Davidson 1980).)

Spinoza might seem to follow Hobbes as a protagonist of the "early modern crisis", as he famously writes: "we do not seek or desire anything, because we judge it to be good; on the contrary, we judge a thing to be good because we endeavor it, will it, seek it and desire it" (Spinoza 1998, part 3, proposition 9, scholium). Matthew Kisner argues that a careful analysis of Spinoza's unorthodox terminology complicates the picture. Judgments about the good do come after and are the result of desires—and judgments fundamentally share in the same volitional nature as desires. However, it is not the mere desiring, but the ideas affirmed in a desire (e.g. a cake as something delicious or satiating or attainable), which have the role of justifying the judgment about the good. Unlike Hobbes, Kisner's Spinoza can hold an evaluative conception of desire, which in turn explains the rationalizing power of desires.

Julia Jorati guides us through Leibniz's relation to GG. In explicitly endorsing GG ("the will is determined only by the preponderating goodness of the object" (Leibniz 1985, §45)), and in providing an argument for it based on the principle of sufficient reason, Leibniz would seem to firmly stand against the "early modern crisis". In fact, motivation is always motivation in accordance with "reasons that are true or apparent". However, Jorati shows that, like Locke, Leibniz tries to find room for cases of weakness of will, and even gets close to admitting the reality of perversity (doing bad for badness' sake), while granting an important motivational role to purely psychologistic factors (though these have to do more with the vivacity of evaluative representations than with the intervention of a further psychological state).

Famously, in the *Critique of Practical Reason* Kant critically discusses "the old formula of the Schools": *nihil appetimus, nisi sub ratione boni; nihil aversamur, nisi sub ratione mali* (we desire nothing except under the guise/consideration of the good; we are averse to nothing except under the guise/consideration of the bad) (1997, 5:59). But does Kant's own restatement amount to a version of GG ("we will nothing under the direction of reason except insofar as we hold it to be good or evil" (ibid., 5:60))?

According to Robert Louden, Kant's reformulation suggests, first, that humans do not always act under the guise of the good and, second, that when we do, "the good" is actually secondary to "the right"— the guise of the good is entirely determined by the moral law. Kant would thus not endorse GG as claim about the nature of human desire and action as such. Moreover, Kant's stark distinction between moral good (*das Gute*) and well-being or pleasure makes it impossible to speak of a generic goodness (further specifiable in moral or non-moral ways) under which guise we act. Louden shows that, on this account, Kant has no problem acknowledging the reality of weakness of will and even of perverse (if not "diabolical") modes of willing.

Sergio Tenenbaum's contribution stands in partial contrast. He rejects the idea that Kant posits a "duality of motivation"—acting under the guise of the good (but only when acting from the motive of duty) *versus* acting from self-love. Actions done from self-love do not need to be alternatives to the guise of the good, and in fact when one adopts self-love as an "unconditional practical principle", one does represent one's actions as good. This in turn explains how immoral actions can be free actions—in these cases the agent incoherently identifies the guise of (one's) pleasure with the guise of the good. Still, Tenenbaum reserves a special role for the awareness of the moral law—even when the guise of the good is not necessarily the guise of the morally right.

It is fair to say that, after Kant, GG does fall into relative obscurity until Anscombe's *Intention*. However, this need not mean an abandonment of the doctrine. Several authors have suggested that something like GG must be tacitly adopted by J. S. Mill in his proof of the principle of utility. Francesco Orsi explores this interpretive line both for its role in supporting Mill's proof, and for its exegetical merits, arguing that Mill's guise of the good is to be identified with the guise of the pleasant. In this sense Mill can be seen as the continuator of an empiricist tradition which does not so much reject GG as reinterprets it in a hedonistic (though not necessarily egoistic) fashion.

Gianfranco Pellegrino closes this issue by offering a rich picture of Henry Sidgwick's moral psychology. Similarly to Tenenbaum's Kant, Sidgwick's endorsement of GG comes to light somewhat unexpectedly, only after a careful analysis of passages which initially suggest only a limited application of GG to motivation by moral judgment. In fact, Sidgwick appears to be both directly and indirectly committed to the apparent good as a necessary feature of desires, which also makes sense in light of his general rationalistic view of ethics.

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