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Chapter 1
Introduction: On the Conflict Between Common Good and Individual Good

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The notion of the common good and its relation to the good of an individual human being has been a recurrent and contested topic throughout the history of western philosophy, and it has played a prominent normative role in contemporary political theory and practice. In general terms, the common good signifies the good that is somehow shared or mutual among individuals, and it is often contrasted with self-interest that refers to things that are subjectively valuable to an individual agent. However, this opposition is rather simplistic. It overlooks the complexity of the notion of the common good, and it takes for granted that what is good for an individual at least occasionally conflicts with what is good for other people and the various communities in which she lives. The wealth of historical discussions concerning these conceptions is bound to make us think twice before accepting such a simple view of their relationship. To this effect, the purpose of the present volume is to analyse the relation and potential conflict, but also the compatibility, between the common good and self-interest (or individual good) in medieval and early modern philosophy. The starting point is that these two have not always been considered to be in real or potential conflict.

Qualifications will follow, but the basic story is that ancient ethics is based on the fundamental assumption that the good of an individual coincides with goodness that is common to all rational and social/political creatures. This assumption, commonly considered to be the cornerstone of what is known as 'eudaemonist ethics' (from Greek *eudaimonía*), entails that there is no conflict between individual happiness and the demands of a virtuous life. One is always better off by acting virtuously,

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which presupposes setting aside one's narrow self-interest, doing what is rationally and objectively good and thus also furthering the common good. In ancient (and later in medieval) moral philosophy, 'the good' was understood as objectively valuable and as capable of undermining any apparent conflict between self-interest and the common good.[1] However, as the basic story goes, at some point in the history of moral philosophy, a distinct type of good – the moral good – emerged, and it came to be seen as separate from the good of the individual. The task of morality was redirected to limit individuals, who mainly strive for their private interests in opposition to the common good and the interests of others.[2]

Early modern natural law jurisprudence in particular conceived morality predominantly as a matter of moral duties and only derivatively about virtues. This is one of the reasons why early modern philosophy has often been credited (or blamed) for parting ways with ancient eudaemonism especially in its Aristotelian guise. Although the extent to which the rejection of Aristotle's principles was carried out may be debatable, it is clear that many early modern thinkers paid lip service to the possibility that the good of an individual can be – and often is – in real conflict with the requirements of morality. The compatibility, or even identity, of the individual good and the common good was replaced by the idea that individuals' endeavour to further their self-interested aims must be checked against the moral good and limited when these two are incompatible.

A parallel development can be seen in the domain of political philosophy. The ancient approach was to assume that the political community promotes a universal vision of the good life associated with man's natural telos. A virtuous life can only be realised in an ideal political community.[3] The close connection between the well-being of citizens, understood in terms of virtuous action, and the well-being of the community as a whole (a prosperous and happy city is populated by virtuous people) entailed that there be no real conflict, or even real tension, between the common good and the good of the individual: the good of the whole necessarily includes the good of the parts that form the whole. However, at some point in the history of political thought, an individualistic conception of the good life came to play a more prominent role. Alongside the challenges to the Aristotelian and other forms of political naturalism, the role of the political community changed: now its main task was to ensure that human beings could pursue their individual ends without threatening the common peace and safety. In this picture, the common good characteristically consists of a legal order that provides individuals certain rights or liberties, and the political community is considered as an artificial institution that provides a juridical space for the pursuit of the material well-being of citizens.[4]

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[1] See, e.g., Annas 1993; Annas 2017; Long 2004.

[2] For an interpretation of early modern ethical anti-egoism, see Irwin 2008, 118–20; for qualifications, see Rutherford 2012.

[3] See, e.g., *Pol.* 1.2, 1252b28–29 and *EN* 2.1, 1103a29–b6 (ed. Barnes 1984).

[4] See, e.g., Harvey 2006.

There is some truth to this general story, and the extremes are easy to recognise in the big picture: it is almost trivial to state that there are clear differences between ancient and early modern practical philosophy. However, the story also contains several controversial aspects, and especially when we turn to the details of historical discussions, the picture becomes far more complex. Self-regarding psychology does not necessarily divert individuals from the requirements of morality: it may be understood in such a way that it motivates them to promote the common good.[5] Likewise, the idea that members of a political community have an obligation to care about the common good, understood as the good of the whole that transcends but also encompasses the good of individuals, was a consistent theme in medieval and early modern philosophy. From this perspective, caring for the good of the whole does not automatically entail neglecting one's own good. The distinction between private and common dimensions of political life played a crucial and continuous role in this reflection.

The present volume adopts the view that important developments took place already in the Middle Ages and that these developments paved the way for early modern positions. This history is not merely shaped by radical ruptures but also by notable continuities. To mention two clear examples, we may note the persistence of the question whether a person should sacrifice their own good for the sake of morality or for the common good[6] and whether the authoritative power of natural law is related to the good of the political community or to the good that is shared by all members of the community.[7] The present book aims to show that it is possible to elucidate the notion of the common good and its relation to self-interest (or the good of the individual) in one historical period in light of another.

This aim comes with a methodological challenge: how can specific argumentative patterns from various historical contexts be analysed in comparable forms? One obvious problem that besets any attempt to write a history of the relation between the common good and self-interest is that the terminology is not historically fixed, and even when the terms are shared by different authors, their meanings may vary. The concepts of the 'common good', 'individual good', 'self-interest' and their many cognates resist being pinned down in any definitional formula, and therefore it is essential to analyse the precise meaning and use of these key terms in each historical and philosophical context. This endeavour immediately leads to several questions. We may ask, for instance, whether the common good is understood distributively as the good of each individual, collectively as the good of the whole, as some kind of aggregate of individual goods or as something else. We may also ask what 'the whole' is that is relevant for the notion of the common good: is it family, city, state, religious community or even humankind as a whole? Equally demanding questions arise in relation to the good of the individual, the complexity of which is

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[5] The moral rehabilitation of self-love as a motivational source of morality in the early modern period made room for constructive and positive treatments of self-love; see Maurer 2019.

[6] Crisp 2019.

[7] See Murphy 2010, 61–90.

already reflected in the terminology. The connotations of 'private good', 'self-interest', 'good of/for an individual' differ from each other, and the precise meaning of each of these expressions is a matter of philosophical investigation.[8] This is not a problem merely in the study of the history of philosophy. For some historical authors, such as Niccolò Machiavelli (d. 1527), the semantic ambiguity of the concept of the common good constrained its usage as an underlying principle of their moral and political theories.[9]

It is not the task of this introduction to settle all these complex questions, let alone to argue that there is a single core meaning that unites historical discussions. The authors of the chapters below use the terminology that best fits the topic and material that they examine, and we are convinced that the resulting diversity of viewpoints is beneficial for elucidating the complexity of these notions rather than being a source of confusion. At any rate, the problem concerning the relation between the common and the individual good is not perennial in the sense that it remains the same throughout history. It is evident that the intellectual, political and cultural contexts in which these terms have been used in the past vary, and this should make us sceptical of any decontextualized analysis. Instead of an ahistorical reading, we propose to use the notions of the common good and individual good as heuristic tools that can be used to analyse discussions that are connected on a deeper level: the historical developments in western moral and political philosophy can be seen as stages of a continuous but highly complex philosophical tradition. The notions of the common good and individual good/self-interest play a role in these discussions, but the common elements and differences that we may find in them must be evaluated against the more complex contextual background.

This is precisely what the present volume aims to do. The analysis of the relation between the common and the individual good is a philosophical and a historical matter that requires an analysis of the historical discussions on their own terms but that also benefits from asking questions that the original texts do not ask.[10] It is necessary to engage the details of historical discussions with a methodology that is at the same time historically sensitive and philosophically rigorous. For instance, the terminology referring to common good has also always been employed rhetorically, both to legitimise and criticise the conduct of sovereigns and their representatives. That is, "the common good" has functioned as an evaluative conceptual tool in moral and political practice.[11] It is important to keep this historical aspect in mind and advocate for historical and textual sensitivity to various contextual issues and remain open to the possibility that there are radical breaks within the tradition – both intentional and tacit. Yet, at the same time, it is vital to analyse historical ideas

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[8] A pioneering study on the various meanings of goodness is von Wright 1963. He doubts whether collective entities (family, state) can truly be said to have life and thus what he calls the "good of" (von Wright 1963, 50–51).

[9] Hanasz 2010.

[10] See Knuuttila 1996; Knuuttila 2003.

[11] The most notable example is Cicero, whose writings on the common good were used in various contexts of medieval and early modern thought. See Nederman 2020, 90–95; Miller 2009.

in argumentative terms. Only then we can properly situate specific historical formulations of the common good in their intellectual contexts and analyse their contribution to long-term developments.

Keeping this methodology in mind, we suggest that understanding why, how, and when a radical distinction between the common and the individual good emerges – or, from another perspective, 'moral good' appears as a distinct type of good – is possible only if we have a clear grasp of what it takes for these two to be separate. Whether or not a particular discussion or theory distinguishes the common good and the individual good can be assessed only if we have at least a preliminary conception of (1) what the common good means in the context of that discussion, (2) what the good of an individual consists of in the same context, and (3) what the necessary and sufficient conditions are for a real and meaningful distinction between the two. These are complex philosophical questions that we do not pretend to solve in this introduction, but certain general considerations may be helpful when approaching the contributions to the present volume – contributions that offer insights into various stages of historical discussions concerning these questions.

The first remark is almost trivial, but perhaps worth stating anyway: a terminological distinction between the common good and the individual good is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a real distinction between the two. Philosophers must be able to talk about the relation between the common and individual good, and for that they need words. However, possessing and using different terms – "common good" and "self-interest", for instance – is not sufficient for any real and relevant distinction between the concepts. This condition has been met from the very beginning of western philosophical inquiry. Both Plato and Aristotle speak about the common and individual good even though they seemingly reject the possibility of their real separation.[12] Keeping this condition in mind is, nevertheless, important because it helps us avoid an obvious pitfall: the simple fact that a philosopher uses these terms does not by itself mean that there is a real conceptual and practical distinction between these notions.

A more substantial condition is the rejection of a strong metaphysical unity between the common and the individual good.[13] A Platonist strand in the history of philosophy is to consider the good as fundamentally one, so that all that is good is good because it ultimately stems from the Form of the Good. Any theory that accepts this metaphysical unity of the good, or something akin to it, obviously lacks the means (and the motivation) to consider the common and the individual good as embodying a real distinction. This idea was already criticised by Aristotle, but much of the subsequent history can nevertheless be read from the perspective of this issue on metaphysical unity. The principles of identity and inclusion – that is, principles according to which the individual good is either identical with or included in the

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[12] See, e.g., Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. Barnes 1984 (hereafter *EN*) 1.2, 1094b7–11 (ed. Barnes 1984); Plato, *Republic* 5.462c–e (trans. Reeve 2004).

[13] As Kempshall (1999) demonstrates, the concept of metaphysical unity was alive and well in the Middle Ages, although it was by no means the only relevant perspective in medieval discussions.

common good – continue to be relevant well into the Middle Ages and beyond, although they also face criticism on several fronts.[14]

Yet another condition can be called epistemological: it is easy for us in the twenty-first century to think that something is particularly good for us as individuals while being harmful to the common good, however the latter is construed (e.g., as the good of the community or in terms of the interest of others). However, this impression can be explained away as a mistake. It may seem to us that, say, money and fame are good things for an individual to have, but it can be argued (perhaps plausibly) that the apparent goodness of riches and reputation are based on a misunderstanding. If we just understood what our real good is, we would realise that it is not, and cannot be, opposed to the common good. To truly separate the common and the individual good, this epistemological solution must be rejected: the apparent difference between these two types of good cannot be just an intellectual mistake.

Finally, it may be worth noting that the distinction between the common and the individual good can be approached from a normative perspective. As long as eudaemonist ethics has face value, it is not easy to come by a substantial difference between the two types of good. As already mentioned, eudaemonist virtue ethics is based on the view that morally virtuous behaviour constitutes perfection and the highest happiness of the agent. Supposing that virtuous action tends to further the good of other people and the various communities to which they belong (ultimately, humankind as a whole, and if environmental virtue ethics is accepted, the good of other living beings and even of the natural environment), the happiness of the individual lines up with the common good. This connection may not be a necessary one, but it is deeply entrenched in eudaemonist ethics. To establish a real distinction between the two types of good, one needs to embrace a version of eudaemonism in which virtuous action is not directly related to, or does not depend on, the notion of the common good that all individuals naturally share. Another option is simply to reject eudaemonism and defend a version of morality in which acting morally well requires at least occasionally giving up one's own good in favour of the common good. And finally, the real distinction can emerge if one adopts a non-moral view of the common good, holding that we may have an obligation to act against the common good of a given community. This may happen, for instance, if one identifies common good with economic well-being and points out that in some cases we should do something that is not economically beneficial – or that acting (viciously) for the sake of one's self-interest furthers the common good.

It should be emphasised that despite these general considerations, the purpose of the present volume is not to offer definite criteria for identifying historical theories that distinguish the common good and the individual good or self-interest. In our view, there is no single moment in history when the distinction emerges. Rather, it is a result of a gradual shift that happens at a different pace in different contexts.

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[14] *EN* 1.6, 1096a23–b28 (ed. Barnes 1984); Kempshall 1999; Osborne 2005, 69–112. In the early modern period, unity between the common and the individual good was supported by Richard Cumberland, who argued that the individual good is part of the common good (Parkin 1999, 97–105).

Due to this, our guiding hypotheses are that (1) the distinction develops during the medieval and early modern periods, (2) it appears in different guises in different contexts, and (3) it has important repercussions for philosophical discussions in the field of practical philosophy – both ethics and politics. Although we have suggested above that there are several ways in which the common and individual good can be distanced from each other – terminological, metaphysical, epistemological, and normative – we propose these only as general guidelines and possible perspectives that can be adopted when approaching historical texts. The chapters in this volume pertain to ancient, medieval, and early modern discussions, and they identify crucial developments that together contribute to the general story about the way we understand the good in relation to ourselves, to other individuals, and to the communities in which we live. As such, they deepen our understanding of the complex ways in which the common and individual good (in their many guises) have been related to each other in the western philosophical tradition.

Before moving on to a more detailed description of the contents of this volume, we want to emphasise one more thing. Although radical changes in the general approach to ethics, political philosophy, and moral psychology take place in the period that is commonly subsumed under the rubric of "from the Middle Ages to the early modern era",[15] it is surprisingly difficult to find theories that embrace a clear and explicit separation of the common good and the individual good. For instance, in late medieval Aristotelianism, the concept of *bonum commune* (the common good) signified the connection between the goodness of the community and the goodness of the universe, while the Augustinian understanding of the promotion of *communis utilitas* (common utility) denoted the connection between material advantage and goodness.[16] While these two notions offered two rival conceptual alternatives, they both implied an intimate connection between the individual and common good. Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) radically challenged Aristotle's influential idea that humans are naturally social creatures, which he understood in the sense that their teleological nature leads separate individuals to a shared vision of a good life that facilitates communal life.[17] At the same time, Hobbes also held the view that the good that is common to all (in his case peace) is compatible with and necessary for the good of each and every individual.[18] Again, we can see how the precise meaning of the key terms and the views concerning the mechanism that explains the connection between the common and individual good change, but the

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[15] To be sure, the transition from medieval to early modern philosophy is neither a simple nor unified development, and nowadays the view that it constituted an intellectual revolution is commonly rejected. See, e.g., Leijenhorst 2002; Pasnau 2011; Pickavé and Shapiro 2012.

[16] Kempshall, 1999, 24.

[17] For an analysis on the complex relationship between Hobbes's and Aristotle's political theory and their disagreement on the essence of politics, see Gooding and Hoekstra 2019.

[18] It should be mentioned that Hobbes is not alone in considering that peace is one of the most important aspects of the common good. Just to mention two other examples, Marsilius of Padua (d. 1342/43) and Francisco Suárez (d. 1617) emphasise it as well (see, e.g., Moreno-Riaño and Nederman 2012; Pace 2012).

basic idea that one's own good is not radically distinct from the good of other people and of the community retains its value: act morally well, and everyone, including you, is better off.

Due to various contextual issues that influence historical discussions on practical philosophy, our purpose is not to tell a teleological story about a progress nor to evaluate past ideas from the perspective of the present. Rather, our aim is to provide fresh approaches to conceptions of the common good during the so-called formative period of modernity. However, clarifying historical views will make visible the differences and similarities between contemporary theories and those defended in the past, and we submit that understanding the historical developments behind our own ways of thinking, and making philosophical sense of these ways, is necessary for understanding the world in which we live.[19]

Moreover, we would like to propose that the present volume may have contemporary relevance in an additional way. Namely, it seems to us that the common good – be it the good of a city, a nation-state, humankind, or just an aggregate in which the good of other people plays a role – is often understood to be opposed to people's self-interest in some radical way in today's individualistic western societies. We may have a moral duty (or something akin to it) to limit our own good for the sake of the interests of other people and for the good of the various communities we live in, but we would be better off if we could avoid limiting ourselves in that way. In current political philosophy, issues relevant to the common good are often discussed in the context of an opposition between liberalism and communitarianism. Liberal theorists have argued that if there is such a thing as "the common good", it is politically loaded and fundamentally partial. In such a picture, the concept of the common good has been conceived predominantly in terms of individual liberties, as a legal order that secures citizens' rights to act in accordance with their own interests and needs.[20] It has also been noted that the notion of the common good has sometimes been used in ways that do not even mean to include everyone's own good. Instead, states have regularly employed a collectivist vision of society that demands extreme sacrifices from their citizens. Moreover, the concept of the common good is often seen as a way to maintain a hierarchical social order in the form of male dominance and female subordination and to prevent marginalized groups from attaining their own individual or group interests.[21] Today this grim characterisation of the common good perhaps applies best to neoliberal individualism, and this is not the place to explicate why it may be problematic. Rather, we want to underline that the opposing view – call it communitarianism – appears equally problematic if it holds that there is a straightforward connection between the good of the

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[19] Connections between contemporary and historical perspectives are developed, e.g., in Bloomfield, ed. 2008. See also Keys 2006.

[20] Rawls 1971, 243. For a defence of the role of the common good in contemporary politics and in criticism towards liberal individualism, see, e.g., Etzione 2004.

[21] Despite their limited understanding of humanity, the philosophical ideas of past thinkers can be used for emancipatory purposes in contemporary politics (DeCrane 2004).

political community, understood as a collective entity, and of each and every individual living in that community.

Understanding the historic-philosophical developments that contribute to our difficulty in reconciling these two perspectives may allow us to attain a better grasp of the reasons *why* it is difficult. This may encourage us to nurture a degree of scepticism towards our current moral and political commitments. The consolidation of a shared understanding of the relation between the common and individual good is especially difficult in our current individualistic societies that have deep social and political cleavages.[22] However, we hope that the chapters in this volume provide conceptual tools for practical reasoning among the members of contemporary societies. While politics could be understood as a pursuit of the common good, we do not suggest that it is the task of moral and political philosophy to determine a single common good that can be shared by everyone.[23] It just seems to us that the blunt and often unproductive opposition between liberal individualism and communitarianism does not capture the historical discussions properly. Thus, there is the possibility, however remote, that by investigating historical developments we may be able to overcome the sharp opposition between two equally problematic extremes and to reconsider the relation between the common good and self-interest from perspectives that may be somewhat alien today but that might also prove to be useful in the future. Renewed attention to historical ideas could serve as an intellectual resource for addressing the problem of how to connect the good of the community with the wellbeing of its members in a more just and functional way.

1.1 Contents in Brief

The present volume focuses on some of the most relevant medieval and early modern discussions, as well as their ancient backgrounds, that are crucial for understanding the dynamic between the common and the individual good. It goes without saying that the selection of authors and theories leaves gaps to be filled by future studies, but the thirteen chapters that constitute this book analyse many crucial aspects of the social, moral, and political dimensions of human life from the perspective of the uneasy relation between the common and individual good. Some chapters focus on broader developments that span several authors over the centuries and recognise long-term developments, and others address various stages in history by opening new perspectives on canonical figures or by investigating the works of lesser known but historically significant authors. The chapters are organised into a rough chronological order for the sake of convenience. The chronological division is certainly somewhat problematic because it may conceal important philosophical connections and overlaps between chapters that are grouped under different parts.

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[22] See Macintyre 1998.

[23] In this we agree with Sluga 2014.

To ease this problem and highlight the connections, we have added cross-references that allow the reader to follow a certain theme from one chapter to another, even when the chapters are not adjacent.

PART ONE takes up the task of looking at the how the complex relationship between the common and individual good was conceived in ancient and medieval philosophy. In the opening chapter, CALVIN NORMORE offers a broad overview of an important development in moral philosophy. He evaluates the writings of moral philosophers from antiquity to the late-medieval period and asks whether there might be various kinds of genuine good that are in real conflict with each other. Normore argues that the central question in the history of moral philosophy is how to resolve the tension between perspectival and objective notions of goodness, that is, between self-interest and the demands of morality. ANTHONY CELANO provides a nuanced interpretation of Aristotle's treatment of the relation between the individual good and the common good in the context of his accompanying ideas of human happiness, practical wisdom, and contemplative and political virtue. Celano maintains that Aristotle does not offer a definite solution to the problem in what sense the common good should be understood as being superior in relation to individual happiness. Instead, he thinks that it is up to a practically wise person to choose the best course of action in order to attain human goodness. For this reason, the relation between the common good and the individual good is open to multiple interpretations. Celano continues his analysis by showing how medieval authors, such as Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), interpreted Aristotle's concept of the common good. RITVA PALMÉN's chapter focuses on the Augustinian idea of the order of charity, which entails that the individual good and the common good participate in the same highest good that derives ultimately from God. She analyses how twelfth century monastic authors dealt with the concept of love/charity (*caritas*, *amor*), the dynamic between altruism and egoism, and the problems that individual needs, both emotional and physical, pose for shared religious life. We learn how monastic authors attempted to explain the apparent conflicts between the common and individual good by referring to the sinful state of human beings and how they proposed means for maintaining balance in communal life. IACOPO COSTA continues with the theme of charity by drawing attention to the influence of Aristotle's conception of politics as the means to the ultimate end of human beings, that is, happiness. He investigates the conception of charity found in two highly influential Dominican theologians of the thirteenth century, namely Albert the Great (c. 1200–1280) and Thomas Aquinas. Their texts that are devoted to this theological virtue demonstrate to what extent the true good of the human being can only be understood by taking into consideration the social and political dimensions of human lives. The individual good can only be achieved if the faithful put their own personal interest behind the love of God and the love of their neighbour.

The chapters in PART TWO consider how the relationship between the individual good and the common good was theorized in late medieval philosophy. CARY NEDERMAN's chapter explores how a wide array of medieval thinkers from the mid-twelfth to the end of the fifteenth century considered the pragmatic issues related to how the material self-interest of individuals coincided with the augmentation of

public wealth within the community. By focusing on discussions in which the common good was conceptualised in terms of pragmatic economic considerations, Nederman shows that medieval thinkers held a shared understanding that the pursuit of material self-interest is advantageous for the common good. As a result, the government's duty was to protect private advantage in order to promote public wealth. This view is surprisingly close to the one Adam Smith defended several centuries later, and thus Nederman's chapter poses a challenge to the view that political economy was a particular narrative that only emerged in the early modern period. NICOLAS FAUCHER explores John Duns Scotus' (1265/66–1308) view about the notion of the common good or the good of the community. Most notably, Scotus produced a short biblical genealogy of private property as it was known and practiced in the societies of his time: it was instituted in answer to the Fall to ensure that humans would interact peacefully and that each of them had what they needed to survive. This goal is the general definition of the common good itself, which is obtained by making all goods private and by having a wise ruler to arbitrate all conflicts. ROBERTO LAMBERTINI's contribution investigates the use of the expression *bonum commune* (the common good) in the mature political works by William of Ockham (1285–1347). The chapter focuses on the various ways in which Ockham uses this expression in his political theory and argues that *bonum commune* functions as a conceptual device that aims to relativise the conclusions of normative political theory. Lambertini suggests that, according to Ockham, safeguarding the common good may require a solution that deviates from the ideal constitutional form in certain situations. JUHANA TOIVANEN focuses on how a lesser known thirteenth century Parisian author Nicholas of Vaudémont (fl. 1370s) understood the tension between the common and individual good when dealing with the problems of self-sacrifice and capital punishment in his commentary on Aristotle's *Politics*. Toivanen argues that Vaudémont's view is innovative as it opens the possibility of a theoretical fracture in the compatibility of the common and individual good, which had been a central feature in Aristotelian eudaemonist ethics.

The chapters in PART THREE turn our attention to early modern philosophers and how they reflected on the relationship between the good of the individual and community. While the moral and political concerns that underlie their arguments were obviously not the same as in medieval philosophy, early modern theories of the common good show notable commonalities and continuities with their earlier counterparts and can be fruitfully considered alongside medieval discussion. JUKKA RUOKANEN begins the section by analysing Johannes Althusius' (1563–1638) depiction of a reciprocal and harmonious society in which the individual and common good align through the division of labour and jurisdiction between different individuals and various types and levels of communities. Ruokanen focuses on the potential conflicts between the individual and common good and argues that their alignment is the result of successful politics and that it is not a guaranteed state of affairs. LAETITIA RAMELET explores the interactions between individual and common utility within Hugo Grotius' (1583–1645) theory of the state. Grotius famously argued that while human beings are naturally sociable creatures, they voluntarily establish the state for the sake of their individual utility. As a result, the utility of the

state may prevail over their individual rights. Ramelet analyses how Grotius deals with the balance between individual and common utility (*utilitas*) in his *De jure belli ac pacis* by attempting to demonstrate the correspondence between self-interest and obedience to the state. Alexandra Chadwick's chapter considers the extent to which the individual and the common good are compatible within Thomas Hobbes's philosophy. She argues that according to Hobbes's theory, real individual goods are compatible with real common goods. Moreover, this compatibility ensures the stability and prosperity of the commonwealth. Real politics nevertheless requires defusing potential conflicts between individual goods and the common good in a different way, namely, by encouraging citizens to accept the sovereign's judgement of what is "good". Chadwick traces the theoretical compatibility between real individual goods and the good of the commonwealth in Hobbes's thought and shows how the preservation of a Hobbesian political community relies not only on citizens accepting the sovereign's judgement, but also on the sovereign's ability to see the real common good. Heikki Haara focuses on how Richard Cumberland (1631–1718) and Samuel Pufendorf (1632–1694) dealt with the conflict between self-interest and the common good. Both thinkers replied to Hobbes by attempting to demonstrate that natural law imposes binding moral obligations to promote the common good instead of functioning as a means for individual self-preservation. At the same time, they maintained that self-interest is the most effective motivational force for the promotion of the common good and that it leads people to take the benefit of others into account. In this sense, Cumberland's and Pufendorf's treatments of self-interest as a source of actions that take others into consideration anticipate the eighteenth-century explanations of the socio-psychological mechanisms that lead to the promotion of the common good. The final chapter, by Colin Heydt, provides a taxonomy of early modern modes of relating self-interest and the common good by exploring Protestant natural law theory, republicanism, utilitarianism and the social thought of Adam Smith (1723–1790) and other authors of the Scottish Enlightenment. By paying special attention to Scottish innovations, Heydt demonstrates how their systemic and social approach to the common good de-emphasises the psychology, character and intentions of individuals, and concentrates on social dynamics instead. This development altered the nature of political theorising by shifting its emphasis from jurisprudence towards modern social science. Heydt argues that the Scottish social theory of the common good offers some of the best and most systematic conceptual resources for considering the relation of the individual and community in present-day industrial states.

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