INTRODUCTION

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Nine years ago the members of the Political Theory group at the University of Minho (now the Centre for Ethics, Politics and Society) decided to hold the first edition of the Meetings on Ethics and Political Philosophy. It was conceived as a yearly encounter among researchers of the various disciplines in practical philosophy, fostering an amicable discussion among peers which would attract prestigious scholars and provide young researchers with an opportunity to present their work. So far this initiative has been met with success. Its last edition—the eight, in June 2017—gathered more than 68 participants, selected from the more than 162 abstracts that were received.

This very first issue of the *Ethics, Politics and Society* journal includes a dossier with papers based on some of the presentations delivered during the 8th Meetings. One of the defining features of our conference is the keynote address by at least one philosopher of international renown. Professor Gustaf Arrhenius (Institute for Futures Studies, Stockholm) was one of the keynotes in last year's edition, and he has been so kind so as to contribute to this issue with a paper entitled 'The Democratic Boundary Problem Reconsidered'. In it Professor

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Arrhenius addresses the problem of determining the criteria by which to identify the members of the people entitled to participate in collective decisions. He defends the All Affected Principle, as well as and democracy as a normative ideal, from important objections that have been levelled against them.

A selection of the speakers, chosen because of the quality of their contributions, were also approached to submit an article based on their presentations. Herein the six articles which received the highest scores are collected. They reflect the diversity of research interests which come together at the Meetings, including metaethics, normative ethics, political philosophy and philosophy of law.

Regarding metaethics, Ashley Lane (University of London) discusses Jacksonian functionalism in "Are moral functionalism's moral *a priori* commitments really *a priori*?" Moral functionalism was developed by Frank Jackson and Philip Pettit. One of its central claims is that it is *a priori* that a particular descriptive property playing a particular moral role is identical to a particular moral property, even if we can only know *a posteriori* what the actual descriptive property is. Thus, we know *a priori* that the property of moral rightness is whatever plays the moral-rightness role, though whether the actual descriptive property is being an act that maximises utility, one that is universally willable, one not reasonably rejectable or some other altogether different property is something to be discovered *a posteriori*. Adapting an objection made by D. H. Mellor against similar claims in Jacksonian metaphysics, Lane argues that these allegedly *a priori* claims of moral functionalism are actually *a posteriori*, since their truth can only be ascertained through *a posteriori* investigation.

For his part Josh T. U. Cohen (University of Cambridge) delves into feminist normative ethics in "Gender Identities and Feminism". Cohen is concerned with the rift in feminist philosophy between those accepting non-binary and trans identities, on the one hand, and radical feminism, which denies such identities. The former accept the principle of first person authority (FPA) about gender, allowing for gender self-categorization. The latter resist such principle. They claim that female subjugation is rooted in biology, so that the FPA is conceptually flawed and the political recognition which non-binary and trans people seek may

hinder women's liberation. In order to mend this rift Cohen proposes a conceptual framework (which he calls 'radical FPA feminism') that tries to preserve the FPA and to be compatible with understanding women's oppression as stemming from biology.

Nevertheless, in line with Prof. Arrhenius' paper, the bulk of the contributions deal with problems in political philosophy and philosophy of law. In "Are we post-justification? Stout's case for self-knowledge, political justification and public philosophy", Deven Burks (University of Luxembourg) raises the question of whether self-knowledge is necessary for having justified political beliefs. Burks claims that thick self-knowledge (an agent's knowledge of her own beliefs as well as further beliefs, attitudes, reasons and history at work in their formation) is indeed necessary and identifies this position with Jeffrey Stouts' views on public discourse and public philosophy. Concerned with Brian Leiter's naturalistic critique of political philosophy, he goes on to argue that Stout's position can work within the limits set by Leiter and even complement it.

Daniel Guillery (University College London) makes a contribution to the history of political philosophy with "Hobbes: A Voluntarist About the Possibility of State Enforcement?". In his article he argues that it would be a mistake to read Thomas Hobbes as a voluntarist regarding state enforcement, even if he is a voluntarist about political obligation. Rather, such possibility follows from there being no condition that can render state enforcement impermissible. Guillery contends, however, that this can only be one part of Hobbes's argument for state legitimacy. For the argument to be complete, his scepticism about state-independent morality is also required.

The last piece on political philosophy is penned by Stephen McLeod (University of Liverpool). In "Basic Liberties, the Moral Powers and Workplace Democracy", McLeod elaborates on one of the three Rawlsian arguments (the Fundamental Liberties Argument) for an entitlement to an element of workplace democracy, as discussed by Martin O'Neill. McLeod agrees with O'Neill that this argument should be rejected because, even if it can be modified to withstand O'Neills critique, it is invalid. As an alternative, though inspired by it, McLeod presents in this paper the Argument from Risk to the Moral Powers. According to this view, the exercise of the moral powers (a capacity for a sense of justice and a

capacity for a conception of the good) is severely jeopardised in the absence of economic-democratic entitlements, including the entitlement to a degree of workplace democracy.

Finally, Damiano Simoncelli (University of Genoa-FINO Consortium) completes our dossier with an article on philosophy of law—"From Natural Law to the Golden Rule: Aquinas Revisited". Simoncelli sets out to reinterpret the Thomistic account of natural law as a form of the golden rule. The author thereby attempts to avoid the traditional misunderstandings associated with the grounding of natural law on human nature and a shared human good. Simoncelli believes his reinterpretation can be fruitful in the development of an intercultural ethics that manages to eschew moral relativism.

This ensemble of contributions from various disciplines makes the first issue of *Ethics, Politics and Society* a fine representative of what the journal has been conceived to be. It is also representative of the sort of rigorous discussion we aspire to in our research Centre.