



### The Good Life and the Good State

A Neo-Aristotelian Theory of Government

By Katharina Nieswandt

**Pub Date:** 14 January 2025

**Binding:** Hardback

**Price:** £80.00 / \$110.00

**ISBN:** 9781839992834

**Extent:** 152 pages

**Size:** 153 x 229 mm /

6 x 9 inches

**BISAC CATEGORY:** PHILOSOPHY / Political

POLITICAL SCIENCE / History & Theory,

PHILOSOPHY / Ethics & Moral Philosophy

**BISAC CODE:** PHI019000

**BIC CODE:** JPA

**RIGHTS**

**Exclusive:** WORLD

Draws inspiration from Aristotle's philosophy and argues that the good life is only achievable within a state, updating the ancient concept of a common good for contemporary, pluralistic societies.

There is no good human life outside of a state, and the good state enables us to live well together – so says Constitutivism, the theory developed in this book. Reinvigorating Aristotelian ideas, the author asks in what sense citizens of modern, populous and pluralistic societies share a common good. While we can easily find examples of cooperation that benefit each member, such as insurances, the idea that persons could share a common good became puzzling with modernity – a puzzlement epitomised in Margaret Thatcher's 'What is society? There is no such thing!' This puzzlement, the author argues, results from our profoundly modern understanding of rational actions, which we see as means toward outcomes. If we allow that not only outcomes but also histories and identities can be good reasons for actions, then it makes sense to see a person's good and the common good of their political community as constitutive of one another, as Aristotle thought. Building on this idea, the author argues that in designing our institutions, we also give ourselves an identity – in other words, we constitute ourselves as persons.

#### Readership

The target audience are scholars and advanced students from the disciplines of philosophy, political science and law.

#### Contents

Introduction; 1. My good against the common good?; 2. From ancient city to modern nation state; 3. What is a common good?; 4. What is a state? Why have one?; 5. Reasons for institutions; 6. Collective and personal identity; 7. Constitutivism as a holistic alternative; Acknowledgments; Bibliography; Index

#### About the Author(s) / Editor(s)

Katharina Nieswandt is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Concordia University in Montreal. She specialises in metaethics and political theory.

##### Ordering in North America, Latin America and Caribbean

Ingram Publishers Services (US)  
1 Ingram Blvd. Mail stop  
#512 Laverne, TN 37086, United States  
Tel: +1 866 400 5351  
ips@ingramcontent.com

##### Ordering in the UK/Rest of the World

Ingram Publishers Services (UK)  
1 Deltic Avenue, Rooksley  
Milton Keynes, MK13 8LD  
United Kingdom  
Tel: +44 (0) 1752 202300 | Fax: 01752  
202330  
IPSUK.Orders@ingramcontent.com

##### Ordering in Australia

NewSouth Books  
C/O Alliance Distribution Services (ADS)  
9 Pioneer Avenue  
Tuggerah 2259 NSW, Australia  
Tel: +61 (02) 4390 1300 | Fax: +1800-66-44-  
77  
adscs@alliancedist.com.au

75-76 Blackfriars Road | London SE1 8HA | United Kingdom | Tel: +44 (0)20 7193 7371  
244 Madison Ave. #116 | New York | NY 10016 | United States | Tel: +1 646 736 7908  
info@anthempres.com | sales@anthempres.com | publicity@anthempres.com | www.anthempress.com