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Robert Lockie: Free Will and Epistemology. A Defence of Transcendental Argument for Freedom.

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Since the problem of free will is one of the most discussed issues in analytic philosophy since the '70s, it is difficult to develop a new perspective from which one is able to look at the problem in a novel way. Yet Robert Lockie's book "Free Will and Epistemology" does just this through approaching the problem from an epistemological point of view. He argues, rather exhaustively, that the belief in Libertarian free will is justified because an agent is able to justify any of her beliefs only if she has free will that is incompatible with determinism.

The book consists of ten chapters (plus an introduction), and it is divided into two main parts. The first five chapters are centered around arguing that a deontic concept of internalism cannot be eliminated from epistemology.

The first chapter defines and clarifies this concept. Deontic internalists hold three strongly related claims. First, they hold that one's belief is rational and in this sense justified if and only if she is not blameworthy for violating her related epistemic obligations. Second, they claim that agent can have epistemic obligations only if she has responsibility-relevant access and control over her cognition. Third, they endorse the view according to which whether the agent has responsibility-relevant access and control over her cognition in a given circumstance depends on the internal features of the agent's cognition. Thus, the deontic account of justification explains why the deontic internalist is an internalist with respect to justification.

The second chapter focuses on the distinction between the 'regulative' and the 'theoretical' in epistemology. Lockie argues, on the one hand, that internalist theories of justification can provide an account of rationality, and on the other hand, externalist theories of justification can result in the adequate theory of knowledge. That is, (deontic) internalism cannot give an account of knowledge but it has an indispensable role in guiding us regarding what we have to do in order to be rational.

From Chapter 3 to Chapter 5, Lockie attempts to refute various arguments against deontic internalism. In Chapter 3, Lockie focuses on those arguments which are based on the reflection of doxastic voluntarism. He does this by pointing out that even if agents are not able to choose their belief, deontic internalism remains intact insofar as they are free to self-regulate their cognition by controlling their attention and other executive functions. Chapter 4, which brilliantly plugs an irritating gap in the literature, argues on the basis of the results of the cognitive sciences that agents do have sufficient control over these functions. In Chapter 5, Lockie turns the table and argues what cannot be coherently defended is in fact a purely externalist account of epistemology because denying that we have epistemically relevant freedom of cognition and deontic epistemic duties is self-refuting. If one claims that nobody has relevant control over her way of thinking, she has to admit that she herself does not

control her cognition in the light of her reasons. Moreover, insofar as she also *calls us* to reject that we have deontic epistemic duties because she believes that to be justified depends only on external relations between beliefs and the world, she cannot justify even this imperative because she relies on a 'final ought' which cannot be justified by a purely externalist account.

These arguments are transcendental ones of which the goal is to show that particular totalizing and reductivist claims are self-refuting. Many worry that these kinds of transcendental arguments are invalid in general but who does not have this general suspicion may find the argument for deontic internalism plausible. Furthermore, in Chapter 8 and 10, Lockie provides other epistemic transcendental arguments based on his epistemic results. These arguments are against the belief in universal determinism and the denial of libertarian free will that are the main targets of the second part of the book.

Before Lockie turns to the problem of universal determinism, he defends the principle 'ought implies can' (OIC) against Frankfurt-style examples in Chapter 6. Lockie's main point against Frankfurt-style examples is that the most intuitive ones let the agent *attempt* to produce *more than one* event, thus they are not good counter-examples to OIC given that they are able to *do* two different actions. The argumentation of Lockie is plausible to me but there was missing the analysis of those examples in which the indeterminism can be found not at the moment of intention formation but before this moment somewhere in the deliberation process.

Chapter 7 is one of the most novel chapters of the book. It reinterprets and uses the (in)famous *Logon AErgon*, aka the Lazy Argument, which says that "if determinism is true, all our strivings are equally futile to an absolute and categorical degree" (153). Lockie attempts to rebut the most well-known answers to this argument but I am not convinced that he successfully argues against the co-fated response. The determinists differentiate between acts which are superficial or cannot produce their intended consequences and which are indispensable for producing a consequence. In response to this, Lockie argues that if the act is determined by someone other than the agent, the agent cannot determine the act *qua* his agential powers. Granted that this is Lockie's ultimate answer to the determinist, the main question becomes whether determinism is compatible with agency? Since the Lazy Argument argues that our strivings *are futile* and not that there are *no strivings* (which are basic actions) at all, the Lazy argument is not the real challenge for the determinist. Although Lockie argues that agency is incompatible with determinism, he does not have enough room to do this because he reinterprets and defends the Lazy Argument in the same chapter.

Chapter 8 in which Lockie gives three different transcendental arguments against determinism is, in my view, the most remarkable part of the book. The conative argument shows that if everything is futile in a deterministic universe as the Lazy Argument concludes, it is pointless to try to understand the arguments for and against determinism and so futile to justify belief in determinism. The ethical transcendental argument's aim is that embracing OIC makes it impossible to reasonably accept determinism. If one holds both of them, she should claim that there is no deontic basis to morality at all, so she has no basis for opposing those who reject this position towards deontic morality. Finally, the indirect epistemic transcendental argument argues that since a belief

can be unjustified only if one ought to believe something else, if someone accepts determinism, she should accept also that the belief in the falsity of determinism cannot be unjustified.

In sum, if these arguments are on the right track, there is a normative asymmetry between determinists and those who believe in an undetermined Libertarian free will. The determinist is even in principle not able to show herself as someone who justified her belief in determinism but the Libertarian can in principle justify her belief in epistemic (deontic) justification and free will. It is clear that Lockie's book is not the last word on these matters but it is one of the first, and it would be nice to see a lively debate about these arguments.

Chapter 9 argues that self-determined agency is a third possibility besides undetermined and (pre)determined agency. However, an agent-causal metaphysics won't be able to cash out its nature, only an emergentist substance-free metaphysics will do the job. Furthermore, Lockie claims that reasons and the self do not overdetermine actions because "reasons only are reasons *in* a mind and *for* a self" (207). They only have any role through the activity of the self.

In the last chapter, Lockie argues that compatibilists are unable to plausibly explain self-determination because if determinism is true, the self has to be ultimately determined not by itself but the Big Bang and the natural laws. In the second half of the chapter, Lockie gives another transcendental argument. Briefly, it says that insofar as one believes in determinism, she should come to the conclusion that every belief (even her belief in determinism) is determined not by *epistemic justifiers* but by the Big Bang and the natural laws. So, she should see her belief in determinism as an epistemically unjustified view. Nevertheless, Lockie does not wholeheartedly support this argument because it proves too much. It seems that if the argument is right, there could be no, say, biological determination in a deterministic universe which seems to be implausible.

Lockie deserves praise for connecting the topics of epistemology and free will in a clear and thoughtful way. Although, I think the Lazy Argument is still not particularly powerful, Lockie's ethical and indirect epistemic transcendental arguments pose a more serious challenge for the opponent of Libertarianism. Even more importantly, Lockie's book persuasively shows the intimate connection between deontic internalism and Libertarianism. If they are so closely related to each other, Lockie provides one of the strongest reasons in the literature for embracing Libertarian free will.

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