POLITICAL COURAGE:
A TEST CASE FOR THE *EUDAIMONISM* OF ARISTOTELIAN MORAL VIRTUE

By

Evelyna A. Radakovic

A DISSERTATION

Submitted
to Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Political Science – Doctor of Philosophy

2015

ABSTRACT

POLITICAL COURAGE:
A TEST CASE FOR THE *EUDAIMONISM*
OF ARISTOTELIAN MORAL VIRTUE

By

Evelyna A. Radakovic

The idea of moral virtue as that which constitutes the perfection and happiness of human beings is an idea one encounters almost everywhere in classical and medieval political thought. By contrast, as is widely agreed, this idea suffers a great decline in modern liberal thought. The modern departure from classical morality is especially clear with respect to the virtue of courage. With an eye to these historical changes, this study examines the prospect of *moral happiness* as laid out by Aristotle: does the life of moral action, and in particular of courageous action, prove conducive to happiness? While a moral virtue must always be chosen on its own account—independent of its consequences—we also choose it supposing it will make us happy. Formulated as such, the Aristotelian relationship between moral virtue and happiness is particularly dubious in the case of courage: can noble, but often fatal, acts restricted to the dangers of the battlefield be conducive to happiness? I ultimately answer this question in the affirmative after addressing a number of prominent challenges faced by the *eudaimonism* of political courage: the seemingly self-sacrificial concept of "the noble," the counterintuitive status of pleasure and pain in courageous action, the potentially subversive role of reason or prudence within moral virtue, and the expressed superior happiness contained in the life of contemplation. The following analysis of political courage provides rigorous evidence for the view that Aristotelian moral virtue is a viable path to *eudaimonia*, an *eudaimonia* that most of us are capable of.

Copyright by
EVELYNA A. RADAKOVIC
2015

To Dejan, my courageous husband.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The first debt I would like to acknowledge is to my first real teacher, Professor Clifford Orwin. It was he who nurtured my love for philosophy and set me on the path to radical self-examination. He will always be the "prime mover" of my journey toward rationality.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to thank those who helped me in writing this dissertation. From my precarious wandering at the proposal stage, through the many haphazard ideas I have had, to the meticulous refinement of my thoughts, I have been able to rely on the unwavering help of my teachers. In particular, my advisor, Professor Arthur Melzer, has been beyond generous with his time and suggestions as he patiently guided me through the completion of the project. His combination of stern criticism and intellectual affirmation has made him the best advisor I could have hoped for.

I would also like to thank the other members of my committee—Professors Steven Kautz, Jerry Weinberger, and Richard Zinman—for providing valuable comments, raising pertinent questions, and thus refining my understanding of political philosophy. It has been a privilege to work under their guidance. I am grateful to my parents for instilling in me a thirst for knowledge and for always maintaining the primacy of form over matter.

My deepest debt is to my husband, Dejan, without whose unflagging support in periods of stormy self-doubt I would have never been able to complete the project. But most importantly, his courageous nature has been a constant inspiration, and helped to bring this project to life.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Earhart Foundation and the Symposium on Science, Reason, and Modern Democracy for their generous financial support for the completion of the dissertation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

ARISTOTELIAN MORAL VIRTUE

1.1 Introduction

Arguably, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* raises the most consequential question for man:[1] What is the human good, rather than the good simply; What is the good life for a human being? In the course of his work, Aristotle conflates the human good with the concept of happiness (*eudaimonia*) by portraying the Good as the happy life.[2] The exploration of the human good makes the *Nicomachean Ethics* a monumental philosophical work and yet, its precise teaching on the subject is anything but clear: what, according to Aristotle, does human happiness consist in? The Philosopher investigates three authoritative lives with an eye to their conduciveness to happiness; one of them is the life of moral virtue. This life consists in the possession and continuous exercise of eleven distinct moral virtues, the first of which—courage—is the focus of the present study. By examining the virtue of courage, I hope to be able to determine whether the entire life of moral virtue is indeed capable of making man happy. In other words, if courage proves conducive to happiness, then the entire moral realm may indeed be a viable path to the human good.[3]

In order to grasp the peculiarity of Aristotelian courage, one must complete an assembling process. Throughout the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle puts forth a number of definitions of courage that are complemented by qualifications of those definitions and re-qualifications of those qualifications. As such, the whole of courage is scattered throughout the *Ethics*, with the exception of four chapters in Book III explicitly devoted to it. Alongside his scattered discussions of courage, Aristotle also provides insights into this virtue by addressing moral virtue in general. His presentation of moral virtue sheds light on the particular

1. Aristotle's *Eudemian Ethics* can also be argued to raise the most central human question, namely "what is happiness?"

2. Though prematurely, it is worth pointing out that the fusion of *the Good* with *happiness* is not without problems. When the Good and happiness are conflated the thing that gets lost—a fundamental characteristic of the good—is one's indifference to personal gain. Once merged with happiness, the human good becomes self-serving: the important distinction between "the right thing to do" and "the advantageous" disappears. From many perspectives, one of them being Kant's, the preservation of this distinction is crucial for morality.

3. I go into greater detail about why I find courage to be an appropriate test for morality's conduciveness to happiness later in this chapter.

virtue of courage, since what is true of virtue must also be true of courage insofar as it is a virtue. Therefore, in order to accurately examine Aristotelian courage, one needs to assemble all the pieces directly pertaining to courage, as well as the statements about virtue in general. It seems fitting to begin with the latter of these two—moral virtue—in order to unveil the essence of courage *as a virtue*, and then in light of what virtue is, to examine courage as a distinctive virtue.

An investigation of Aristotelian moral virtue requires a number of foundational steps. Before being able to address its genus and characteristics, we must see *how* Aristotle presents morality: is it derived from higher principles, such as happiness? The potential relationship between morality and happiness raises a fundamental preliminary question about happiness itself: on what grounds does Aristotle defend it as the supreme human good? Still prior to establishing happiness as the Good, the Philosopher discusses the essence of the human good: what makes it "the Good" and what makes it "human"? In other words, Aristotle "ends up" with moral virtue through a lengthy cumulative process, which begins with the concept of the human good. This is where I too intend to begin: with the human good, through happiness, onto morality, and finally to moral virtue as a characteristic of the human soul representing appropriate rational control over the passions.

1.2 The Human Good

At the very beginning of the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle professes his desire to complete an intellectual inquiry: to discover the best way of life for human beings as defined by their peculiar nature.[4] The question of how one should live is, undoubtedly, the most important to man. At the same time, this question is intimately tied to the question of the greatest human good: man should live in such a way as to secure for himself the supreme good. Articulated differently, the quest for the best way of life is ultimately the quest for "the human good" (*NE* 1094b6), which is all-encompassing and cannot be supplemented by additional goods. Despite it being somewhat self-evident that the supreme end is more desirable than the ends subordinate to it, Aristotle nonetheless decides to prove it: men always seek the ends of the inferior

4. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics,* translated by Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins, 2011, 1094b11; hereafter *NE*. Unless otherwise noted, all references will be to this translation.

arts for the sake of the ends of the superior (*NE* 1094a16; Aquinas 1993, 5). As he points to the probable[5] existence of this hierarchy of ends, Aristotle provides justification for seeking a final end, an ultimate good, above which there is no higher one: given the multitude of ends men pursue, there must be some end that we choose for its own sake, since if we choose all things merely as means to something beyond them, then the process would be infinite and our desires "empty and useless" (Grant 1874, 1:422). This final end, which is never a means, must be man's chief good.[6] It is important to note that Aristotle does not pursue a transcendental good that represents an ideal; instead, as the following paragraph explains, he seeks the good that is attainable in practice: *telos ton praktikon*. The search central to the *Nicomachean Ethics* is thus the search for the *summum bonum*, or highest good for human beings.

I should stress, since it proves to be of great consequence for the *eudaimonism* of moral virtue, that Aristotle's investigation into the *summum bonum* is not purely intellectual: "the end is not knowledge but action" (*NE* 1095a5-6). The knowledge of the supreme human good must, in turn, "have great influence on the conduct of life" (Stewart 1973,1:12). The intrinsic value of this knowledge is thus not his final goal; its use is. If one were to know the highest good, Aristotle seems to imply, one would be more likely to act correctly and avoid error in the quest for this good. Therefore, it is fair to say that the primary, or rather *telic,* value of this knowledge is practical: it seeks to help man lead a better life.[7] Aristotle argues that one should want to know the good in order to become good, as he explicitly states that "the end

5. I say *probable* rather than definite, because Aristotle prefaces his statement about the hierarchy of ends with the conjunction "if." In effect, he does not assert that lesser ends are necessarily subordinate to greater ones. He only leaves the possibility open, for human life *seems* to be ordered that way.

6. "We may define a good thing as that which ought to be chosen for its own sake; or as that for the sake of which we choose something else; or as that which is sought after by all things, or by all things that have sensation or reason, or which will be sought after by any things that acquire reason..." (Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 20; hereafter *R*).

7. It is important to note that since Aristotle raises the question of the highest human good, he implicitly but definitively refuses to rely on any authoritative answers provided by either piety or convention. For him, this most important human question has not been settled and remains open. The implication of Aristotle's position is that he rejects both *nomos* and revelation as truths. With regard to the former, while man possesses conventional beliefs about how he should live, there is nothing affirming the correctness of those beliefs other than his awe for the ancestors. The Philosopher refuses to accept the prejudices and superstitions of the ancestors as a legitimate authority. Ancestral custom proves to be intimately tied to piety, for the claim of custom to be correct is virtually always justified by revelation. This justification is tied to the belief that the past is superior to the present, since the ancestors were closer to the gods than men today: custom, therefore, derives its authority from an alleged divine source. It becomes clear, then, that Aristotle's rejection of convention as the ultimate authority on the question of the human good, or his religious skepticism,

is not knowledge but action" (*NE* 1095a5-6).[8] Likewise, rather than asking "what science creates the supreme end," Aristotle instead asks the action-oriented question "to what science does its production belong" (Grant 1874, 1:423).[9]

Having posed the question of the highest human good and having identified its primarily practical significance, Aristotle entertains the possibility that its answer may belong to the "most authoritative and architectonic [science or art], and such appears to be the political art" (*NE* 1094a26). He identifies the political art as the most likely place to discover the human good, because all of the other arts and sciences, however dignified, are ultimately subordinate to it. All human goods, all positive ends that are not ultimate ends but are subservient to higher ones, "appear" to act in the service of the political art (*NE* 1094a18-28). Hence, the end of politics must embrace the ends of all other arts and sciences and since the human good is man's highest end, it must be the subject of the most architectonic art. The way in which Aristotle proves that politics is the most architectonic art is as follows: it both "dictates what is to be done by the art or science subject to it, as the equestrian art dictates the manner of bridle-making…[and] it uses it for its own ends" (Aquinas 1993, 9). Stated differently, the political art determines which arts and sciences should exist in the city, who should practice them, and to what extent; all of this is ordered for the sake of living well and no end beyond it. Aristotle's insistence on the superiority of politics confirms his understanding of man as a political animal:[10] if man's chief good is to be realized in the political sphere, then "man's nature is to be a citizen" (Stewart 1973, 1:18). If he were to be somehow extracted from the body politic, man would be "like an amputated hand" (Stewart 1973, 1:18) which can no longer be characterized as a hand except by name, for only its function in the living body makes it a hand. By comparison, man outside society would not have a distinctly human function; he "would be either a beast or a god" (Stewart 1973,

---

is what enables him to engage in political philosophy and seek the answer anew (Bartlett and Collins 2011, 237).

8. The purpose of knowing the good is to live a good life: "with a view to our life, then, is not the knowledge of this good of great weight, and would we not, like archers possessing a target, better hit on what is needed" (*NE* 1094a22-24)? For further evidence of Aristotle's insistence on the practical purpose of knowing the human good, see *NE* 1103b26.

9. This is Grant's own translation; Bartlett's and Collins' does not include the word "production." See also *NE* 1094a25.

10. Aristotle, *The Politics*, translated by Carnes Lord, 1984, 1253a1; hereafter *Pol.* Unless otherwise noted, all references will be to this translation.

1:18; also *Pol.* 1253a19). In sum, politics "appears" to be the most authoritative and architectonic art for two reasons: because the ends of all other arts are subordinate to it and because human nature, and especially its perfection, is political. Following, Aristotle contends that the highest human good must reside in the highest art, since it cannot be superseded by another good and, therefore, the art to which it belongs must also not be subordinate to another. Thus, the most authoritative art or science is a sensible place to begin the search for the highest human good.[11]

1.3 The Three Lives

Despite having identified the art to which the human good is most likely to belong, Aristotle cannot specify the good in question for two reasons: first, because it varies from community to community (Bartlett and Collins 2011, 240) and second, because the Philosopher refuses to accept the definition of the human good simply on authority. Instead, he begins to survey the opinions concerning the highest good and notes that most people find it to be "happiness" (*NE* 1095a19).[12] Yet, while popular opinion is unified in identifying happiness as the highest human good, it is divided over the meaning of happiness: which way

11. It seems necessary that since Aristotle identifies politics as the most comprehensive and architectonic art, he implicitly sees ethics as a subfield of politics. Since man is first and foremost a political animal, an investigation of the human good in accordance with man's nature would ultimately have to culminate in a study of political life. Ethics, in turn, is what Browne (1889, vii) calls "the ground-work of the rest," meaning that the investigation of the parts has to precede the investigation of the whole. The development of man's moral nature must therefore come prior, and serve as an introduction, to an investigation of the principles of human society. The *Nicomachean Ethics* is, in this way, a prelude to the *Politics.* Since ethics is a subsection of the "great practical subject [of politics]" (Browne 1889, vii), the Philosopher does not wish to examine it abstractly. Instead, he investigates the good to the extent that it relates to man in his daily life, to the extent that it relates to practice. Ultimately, Aristotle seeks to study the good "which falls within the province of human nature, and is therefore attainable by man" (Browne 1889, vii). William Jelf agrees with this interpretation and argues that for Aristotle, ethics is "a branch of the great science of politics" (1856, 4). The good of man, which is the subject of ethics, belongs to the art of politics. I further argue that because politics is a both the realm for human perfection and an ultimately practical subject, and because ethics is a subsection of this most architectonic art, Aristotle's examination of morality has a practical purpose and hence, a practical approach. Therefore, the fact that ethics falls within the art of politics is yet another reason for the Philosopher's practical approach to the search for the human good.

12. The pregnant subject of happiness will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter. At this point, I will only *mention* happiness in reference to that which I am presently discussing: first the good and then, morality. I will subsequently return to the concept of happiness and attempt to tease out its peculiar role in Aristotelian morality.

of life makes man happy (*NE* 1095a19-22). Aristotle then goes on to examine three "especially prominent ways of life" (*NE* 1095b18) which claim to be most conducive to happiness.[13] These three contenders are the life of pleasure, the moral-political life, and the life of contemplation.[14] Each claims to be the exclusive route to human happiness and the combination of their exclusivity and their popular authority compels Aristotle to examine them.

The first life, or the first contender to happiness, is the life of pleasure. Aristotle attributes the belief that sensory or sensual pleasure—pleasure of the senses—leads to happiness to "the many and crudest" (*NE* 1095b16). As Thomas Aquinas correctly points out, the life of sensual pleasures "necessarily has to place [its] end in those very intense pleasures following from the natural operations by which the individual is preserved by eating and drinking and the race by sexual intercourse" (Aquinas 1993, 21). Indeed, Aristotle seems to be referring to the pleasures of eating, drinking, and sex only, since he explicitly compares the men leading a life of pleasure to animals. Their lives are bestial insofar as they are defined by these three primordial pleasures beasts are capable of experiencing. Because animals too rejoice in food, drink, and sex, the sensual pleasures are ultimately subhuman, for they blur the distinction between man and beast by emphasizing the commonality rather than the difference between them. It is noteworthy that the men devoted to a life of pleasure are not simply or necessarily the majority of ordinary people.[15] It is primarily those who are eminent in both knowledge and "uprightness of life" that make the pleasure-centered life appear so happy. These esteemed figures with intensely sensual lifestyles make this life attractive in the

13. See also Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics,* translated by Anthony Kenny, 2011, 1216a26; hereafter *EE*. Unless otherwise noted, all references will be to this translation.

14. It seems to be Pythagoras who first formulates the "three lives" that Aristotle makes use of in the *Nicomachean Ethics:* the Theoretic, the Practical, and the Apolaustic. He speaks of three kinds of men whose characters correspond to the three sorts of people attending the Olympic games. The lowest of the three 'classes' are those engaged in buying and selling: to them, the Olympic games is as a primarily economic venture. Then, there is the class of men who participate in the athletic contests; they are active and committed to practical success. Lastly, and at the top of this hierarchy of men, are the spectators of the games: they simply observe and contemplate (*theorein*). This genuinely Pythagorean idea of the three lives is, most likely, what inspired Aristotle's own formulation of the concept.

15. It is to the majority of ordinary people that Aristotle attributes the *opinion* that pleasure produces happiness, but not the life of pleasure itself. As such, pleasure is more of a cherished desire for the many than a reality of life. This makes sense, since wealth is a notable prerequisite for the pleasure-centered life: exquisite food and drink, as well as charming women, require money.

eyes of the people (Aquinas 1993, 20).[16] It is interesting to note that Aristotle finds the opinion that pleasure leads to happiness "not unreasonable" despite the fact that he quickly dismisses the devotion to sensual pleasure as "a life of fatted cattle" (*NE* 1095b20).[17] The grounds for Aristotle's rejection of this life is more pertinent than the partial reasonableness he attributes to it, and so this is what I will address. If the happiness of man consists solely in sensual pleasures, then beasts that enjoy food, drink, and sexual intercourse would also have to be called happy. However, Aristotle denies that this is the case and insists on a conception of happiness that is uniquely human, one that defines man's highest good. Since man's constitution is unlike that of animals despite the presence of certain similar biological functions, his happiness must be qualitatively distinct from the "happiness" of beasts.

Next, Aristotle addresses the conventionally political, or moral, life as a contender for happiness and goes on to revise it substantially. Once revised, this life becomes the most prominent life in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. The Philosopher attributes the opinion that the life of politics is what secures human happiness to the "refined and active" (*NE* 1095b23). They see politics as the best way of life because they are attracted to its end—honor (*NE* 1095b24). Therefore, those engaged in public life seem to find happiness in receiving honor. Yet, Aristotle insists, this only "seems" to be the case (*NE* 1095b23). He disproves the opinion of public men by offering two separate arguments to delegitimize honor as conducive to happiness (Aquinas 1993, 21-22):[18] first, he says that happiness belongs preeminently to the happy man and can only be taken from him with difficulty; second, since happiness is the most architectonic good, it is not sought on account of another, higher good (*NE* 1095b29). The first of these objections has to do with the passivity of honor: it belongs to the man bestowing it, not to the man receiving it and in this sense, the honor-giver is primary to the honor-receiver. Thus, the honorable man is always dependent on others to bestow honor upon him. As Thomas Aquinas observes, since one's honor is not truly one's own,

16. The Epicureans are a good example of this, since they considered pleasure to be the highest good but also cultivated the virtues. It is them, then, that Aquinas characterizes as *upright*.

17. Likewise, in the *Eudemian Ethics* Aristotle says that the life of pleasure is one suitable only for complete slaves, for it is no different than the life of the beast (*EE* 1215b30). Both, the slave and the beast are subhuman characters in Aristotle's thought, the former for not perfecting his reason and thus failing to be fully *human*, and the latter for being inferior to man on account of its lack of reason.

18. As is characteristic of Aquinas, he here engages in detailed classification of all of the different parts of the Philosopher's argument.

neither is the happiness that it supposedly produces: it too must be in the power of the honor-giver, not "in the power of the one honored" (Aquinas 1993, 22). "Honor is evidently a precarious advantage depending on others" (Grant 1874, 1:433), where no amount of merit can prevent it from being withheld from the honored. Honor is therefore "an insecure possession" (Grant 1984, 1:434). This makes the link between honor and happiness unstable: since honor does not ultimately belong to the honored, neither can happiness as a product of honor.

Following, Aristotle's second objection to honor is its incompleteness or insufficiency: honor is not self-sustained, as it points beyond itself; honor-based happiness thus becomes an unfeasible concept. The thing higher than honor, or the thing on account of which honor is sought, is the confirmation of one's goodness (*NE* 1095b28). Above all, political men "seek to be honored by the prudent...and for their virtue" (*NE* 1095b29). It appears that honor is thus a mere reflection of goodness, which is the actual end of political life; honor is not the authoritative end of politics despite seeming to be. Virtue or goodness is that which is superior to honor and it is the precise thing the existence of which honor seeks to affirm. Political men seek honor in order to confirm the opinion they have of themselves that they are good (Aquinas 1993, 22). They seek to be honored for their virtue as the source of their goodness. Happiness, therefore, does consist in honor but ultimately, in virtue; such is the *true* claim to happiness of the political life. The Philosopher confirms this in the *Eudemian Ethics*, where he says that some choose the life of politics even if they are not rewarded for it (*EE* 1216a22). Therefore, by means of honor, Aristotle manages to show that "virtue is to a greater degree the end of political life" (*NE* 1095b32).[19]

It is very important to point out that unlike the life of pleasure, the political life is not rejected by Aristotle as a contender for happiness. While the Philosopher raises objections against it, he seeks to *correct* it, rather than to refute it. Aristotle's critique of honor transforms the reader's understanding of the end of political life and it is this new, revised, Aristotelian conception of politics that, in turn, becomes a contender

19. Aristotle's analysis of the political life represents a fundamental transformation of contemporary Greek convention. He replaces the emphasis on honor in moral-political life with an emphasis on nobility, which according to the way in which he characterizes it, is essentially different from honor despite the fact that it is observable in the same actions; those actions which are noble are also honorable. Aristotle's conception of the noble will be discussed in Chapter 3. For now, it suffices to say that in reconstructing political life around the axis of virtue rather than honor, Aristotle draws a fundamental distinction between the noble, which is the end of virtue, and the honorable.

for happiness. In other words, the *Nicomachean Ethics* is largely devoted to a defense of the moral-political life. In effect, the question of this dissertation is about Aristotelian morality's conduciveness to happiness, where Aristotelian morality can be viewed as a self-conscious *correction* or *transformation* of traditional Greek morality. Aristotle's transformation of morality can be primarily characterized by an emphasis on the noble instead of honor, where the emphasis is made possible, first, by drawing a distinction between these previously conflated two concepts. After separating them,[20] he then orders them hierarchically and thereby dethrones honor and promotes nobility as the true end of moral-political life. This, then, is the first error in the conventional opinion about political life that Aristotle corrects.

The second is the understanding of virtue as a sedentary characteristic. In claiming that the sleeping man cannot be happy (*NE* 1095a25), the Philosopher argues that dormant virtue cannot produce happiness. Like the problem of honor, this defect too is corrected by Aristotle, as he redefines virtue as *virtuous activity*. He repeatedly stresses the notion of virtuous activity throughout the *Nicomachean Ethics* to the point that the very acquisition of virtue becomes entirely dependent on action: "without performing these actions, nobody would become good" (*NE* 1105b12). Inactive moral virtue thus becomes an unfeasible concept, for both the attainment and maintenance of virtue are made possible its exercise. The Philosopher alludes to this in the *Magna Moralia*, where he prioritizes the *use* of a thing over its *possession*: "wherever, therefore, one may use and possess something, the use is better than the mere possession and preferable thereto; for the use of a thing and its *mise en action* [*energeia*] are its true end, for the sake of which we possess it."[21] The end of men is his activity and the use of his faculties: the possession of sight would be useless if one were to keep his eyes shut; likewise, the possession of virtue cannot constitute man's end if that virtue is not exercised (*MM* 1184b11-14).[22] In sum, Aristotle objects to the conventional understanding of political life and offers an improvement of it, where virtue replaces honor and virtuous action

20. The precise way in which Aristotle distinguishes honor from nobility will be discussed in Chapter 3.

21. Aristotle, *Magna Moralia*, translated by G. Cyril Armstrong, 1969, 1184b15-16; hereafter *MM*. Unless otherwise noted, all references will be to this translation. See also *NE* 1098b33-1099a6.

22. The concepts of habit and habituation help to stabilize Aristotelian morality as a coherent doctrine. The primacy of the noble, which is the cornerstone of his moral teaching, is largely secured by the identification of virtue with virtuous action; the noble, not unlike honor, is tied to the performance of noble acts. Habit, in turn, is the means by which virtuous action is cultivated: despite having a natural basis, virtue is not strictly natural for Aristotle and it is also not produced by knowledge. One becomes virtuous through habituation and the habit of performing virtuous acts is what enables one to continue being virtuous.

takes center stage. He replaces traditional political life with the life of moral virtue; in turn, this life of moral virtue claims to produce happiness.

The contemplative life is the third and last contender for happiness Aristotle addresses. However, he refuses to discuss it at length until Book X of the *Nicomachean Ethics* after the life of moral virtue has been given its due. In Aristotelian spirit, I too will not examine the life of contemplation until the last chapter of this dissertation, where I will evaluate its conduciveness to happiness alongside morality's.

1.4 The Essence of Aristotelian Morality

Aristotelian morality, in its most simplified form, can be characterized as the endorsement of a life that revolves around the continuous exercise of eleven moral virtues. The life of moral virtue, in turn, is *supposed* to make men happy. In this sense, Aristotelian morality appears to be deduced from happiness: it claims to be the means by which men become happy and it seeks merit on this basis. Yet, the Aristotelian conception of moral virtue turns out to be more complex than that. For instance, Aristotle expounds his moral teaching dialectically rather than analytically and it becomes apparent that morality is both derived from happiness and underivable, as it stems from the moral inclinations of man—or at least of a certain kind of man. In other words, the Philosopher considers certain things that his readers are likely to believe and it is with the help of those beliefs that his moral teaching takes shape.

The newness of Aristotle's project consists in the creation of a largely underived self-subsistent moral realm. He carefully separates the moral virtues from the intellectual ones in order to avoid relying on philosophy to justify the goodness of morality. Because Aristotle seeks to confirm morality as a freestanding realm, he is compelled to draw a distinction between practice and theory. Now, because he draws this distinction, he cannot and, largely, does not deduce morality from higher principles. Instead, he presents it as primarily promulgated to men by something internal: by looking to men's common moral sensibilities and thus proceeding dialectically and inductively, Aristotle seeks to assert the dignity of the moral life without subordinating it to philosophy. At the same time, however, Aristotelian morality is, in a sense, derived: while the Philosopher claims to be laying the foundation of his new 'science' inductively from people's experiences, he simultaneously deduces it from happiness (Grant 1874, 1:416). Therefore, he neither simply

takes the moral leap nor simply derives morality from happiness, but weaves the two 'methods.' I will next attempt to make sense of this dual character of Aristotelian morality.

1.4.1 Not Deduced

First, Aristotelian morality is largely underivable. Without resorting to a higher first principle, Aristotle establishes moral virtue almost intuitively. He appeals to the moral intuitions of well brought-up gentlemen with strong convictions about good and bad. Because he does not deduce morality, Aristotle seems to simply jump to the moral virtues without explaining where they come from and why they are good. In his own language, the "that" takes precedence over the "why" (*NE* 1095b7). Toward the end of Chapter 4 of Book I, Aristotle asks whether his inquiry into the human good should proceed inductively or deductively: "one must begin from what is known...but there are things known to us, on the one hand, and things known simply, on the other" (*NE* 1095b2-3). The investigation must thus begin from the things known to men. But knowledge itself is divided into two parts, relative and absolute (Grant 1874, 1:431). The things "known to us" are the conventional things, the things into which we have been habituated. The things known simply are the abstract things, those independent of human experience.[23] Aristotle proceeds inductively from the standpoint of what *we* know and founds his ethical edifice on men's conscious moral experiences, on what *they know* about good and bad, noble and base.

It is important to note that Aristotle stresses the unnaturalness of the things known to us: they are not innate in men, but exist only in those who are "brought up nobly by means of habituation" (*NE* 1095b6). The student of Aristotelian morality must then be of a certain kind, with a certain upbringing, and hold certain moral convictions. In other words, he must be moral at the offset. The method of induction is

23. Alexander Grant (1874, 1:431) points out that the distinction Aristotle draws between absolute and relative knowledge is not one of things *knowable* but one of things *known*. The difference is significant, for the Philosopher should not be understood as arguing that abstract truths are inaccessible to men and thus, we have no choice but to experience life as ultimately relative. Moral relativism is not the doctrine Aristotle puts forth. He only contends that the absolute things are not known by men in general, perhaps because they are difficult to discover. It is because we, the gentlemanly readers of the *Ethics*, lack the knowledge of things "known simply," that the Philosopher is compelled to promulgate his moral teaching from the standpoint of "things known to us." Also, there is an important way in which the dignity of morality is compromised by appealing to first principles as a justification of moral truths. This problem will be addressed later in the chapter.

intimately linked to the character of the student. The question of the good must be investigated inductively because "particular cases of conduct are at first 'better known' to the enquirer than the general principles of conduct which give them significance" (Stewart 1973, 1:48). These particular cases of conduct must necessarily be of a certain kind; they must be moral. Otherwise, Aristotelian morality, since not deduced from higher principles, would be incomprehensible to the reader: the moral sentiments described by the Philosopher would be foreign to him and devoid of allure; in the absence of moral experiences Aristotelian ethics becomes categorically inaccessible. Thus, the particular cases of conduct must be those of the man habituated in performing correct and avoiding incorrect actions; they must be those of the man with a "stable [moral] character" (Stewart 1973, 1:48). To repeat, because Aristotle approaches the question of the good inductively, his moral science assumes a moral upbringing of the student. Only then is successful induction possible.

How does Aristotle *arrive at* moral virtue in the absence of deduction? He characterizes virtue as the excellence or perfection of a thing. The virtue of any given thing is the fulfillment of that thing's purpose. For instance, the purpose of an eye is seeing and thus, the virtue of an eye is the act of seeing well (*NE* 1106a17).[24] Sight is the natural capacity of the eye and when that capacity is mastered and fulfilled, it becomes the virtue of the eye. As Thomas Aquinas puts it, the "utmost or best to which the power of anything extends is called its excellent performance" (Aquinas 1993, 104). For Aristotle, then, the virtue of any given thing is the *characteristic* in reference to which the thing is in a good state (*NE* 1105b25).[25] In characterizing virtue as excellent work, Aristotle sets up the question of what man's proper work consists in. Moral virtue, it turns out, has a powerful claim for being man's proper *ergon*.

Aristotle's inductive morality is not without problems. Both the goodness and the choiceworthiness of moral virtue are simply asserted rather than proven: "for even if nothing resulted from [virtue], we would choose [it]" (*NE* 1097b3; see also 1096a26). The portrayal of moral virtue as categorically choice-

24. Likewise, the virtue of a horse consists in the excellent performance of the things that define the nature of the horse: "running, carrying its rider, and standing its ground before enemies" (*NE* 1106a20).

25. This definition of virtue also appears in the *Eudemian Ethics,* where Aristotle says that virtue is the best "condition or state or power of whatever has a use or has work to do" (*EE* 1219a1). Likewise, the vice of any given thing is the characteristic in reference to which the thing is in a bad state. The terms "characteristic," "capacity," and "passion" are important in the definition of virtue, as Aristotle endows them with specific meanings. These meanings will be addressed later in the chapter.

worthy also appears in the *Magna Moralia:* "the End of Virtue is the morally beautiful or noble" (*MM* 11090a28), which is to say that it is chose for its own sake because it is noble and not as a means to a higher end. While this characterization of virtue may seem arbitrary to some, the appropriate student of Aristotelian morality—the well-brought up gentleman—is bound to find it compelling. Since he is convinced that virtue is good independent of its consequences, he finds Aristotle's inductive approach logical, sensible, and even appealing. Others, however, may not. The Philosopher's appeal to the moral sentiments of gentlemanly types seems arbitrary from the perspective of those without a moral upbringing. As such, it is unlikely to persuade them to lead a life in accordance with moral virtue.[26] In this sense, Aristotle's "inductive morality" is problematic. Yet, this approach is a necessary one because the essence of morality is such that its dignity is compromised by incentives and philosophical justifications. Moral actions have to be performed for the sake of the noble which is to say, for their own sake. Therefore, in deriving the *good* of morality from some more fundamental good, one invariably spoils the fabric of morality. This helps to explain why Aristotle insists that moral virtue is first and foremost good and practiced for its own sake, not for the sake of the result it produces. Genuine morality is underivable and because the Philosopher seeks to give his moral teaching real force, he sets it up in such a way that a *moral leap* is ultimately required.

This, then, is one side of the foundation of Aristotle's moral teaching: he adopts an inductive moral perspective on the basis of which he establishes his doctrine of moral virtue. At the same time, there is another equally important component to Aristotelian morality: it is derived from happiness. Though an end in itself, moral virtue is also a means to the supreme human end. This is the second pillar of Aristotle's moral teaching and also the focus of my present project: is the life of moral virtue truly conducive to happiness and in particular, does the virtue of courage make the courageous man happy?

26. For instance, because Aristotle does not deduce morality from higher principles, his presentation of the moral virtues fails to successfully refute someone sharing Thrasymachus' position, as laid out in Plato's *Republic*. The man unconvinced that the just and the advantageous go hand in hand and moreover, the man convinced that they are at odds, cannot be refuted by Aristotle's inductive approach to morality. The inductive approach is founded on an appeal to man's strong moral convictions.

1.4.2 Happiness as the End of Moral Virtue

While not strictly deduced from higher principles, Aristotelian morality is, in an important sense, derived from happiness. While men choose virtue for its own sake, they nonetheless also choose it for happiness, for they think that it will make them happy. Therefore, virtue has this twofold character, where it is both self-subsistent and a vehicle to happiness. The latter of these two renders it less perfect and complete than happiness itself: "what is never chosen on account of something else is more complete than those things chosen both for themselves and on account of this [further end]" (*NE* 1097a34). Happiness is the truly self-sufficient thing, as no one chooses for the sake of anything else. It is thus man's highest good.

Unfortunately, the relationship between happiness and morality is anything but straightforward and easy to discern. Aristotle's style of writing, especially in Book I of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, is highly elliptical: his argument does not proceed systematically and attempting to systematize it requires some maneuvering between disjointed, but thematically linked, statements. The discussion of morality precedes that of happiness, as Aristotle first discusses the political art as the place where the ultimate human good is lodged. So, at first morality is justified solely on account of its goodness and is said not to be subservient to a higher end. Yet, two chapters later, the ultimate human end becomes happiness and morality is demoted to the status of a potential means to it, along with two other contestants (pleasure and contemplation). In this sense, the goodness of Aristotelian morality gets deduced from the fundamental and unquestioned goodness of happiness. The precise way in which Aristotle does this is important and should be accounted for.

The first time that Aristotle uses the term "happiness" in the *Nicomachean Ethics* is in the opening paragraph of Chapter 4 of Book I. This important term—*eudaimonia*—is first raised in the context of opinion. We are told that both the many and the refined find happiness to be the highest good at which all other goods aim (*NE* 1095a15).[27] The reason for this consensus—a consensus in which Aristotle too seems to partake—is the completeness of *eudaimonia* (*NE* 1097a25). The good that every art and activity

27. This is not the place for a comprehensive discussion of the essence of Aristotelian happiness. Since happiness as a possible outcome of courage is the central theme of this dissertation, I have reserved a full treatment of it for the last chapter. As Aristotle himself says, a thorough examination of virtue is required so that "we might better contemplate happiness as well" (*NE* 1102a6).

seeks is the end of that art and activity: it is that for the sake of which it exists and functions. Happiness seems to be the end to which all other human arts and activities, along with their individual ends, are directed: "the simply complete thing...is that which is always chosen for itself and never on account of something else" and among all of the human goods, happiness "above all seems to be of this character" (*NE* 1097a35-b1). Since the distinction between means and ends characterizes every part of human life, and since the means are always subordinate to the ends, there must be some end that is never a means.[28] Having declared happiness the ultimate human end, Aristotle proceeds to explain what it is and, more importantly, to deduce moral virtue from it.

Happiness is defined as "living well and doing [or acting] well" in both the *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Magna Moralia* (*NE* 1095a20; *MM* 1184b9). Aristotle arrives at this definition through a functional argument: if something has a specific *ergon* (work to do), its goodness and end will be found in the act of doing that work well (*NE* 1097b25-33). Man too has an *ergon*, and it is the good performance of his *ergon* that defines his highest good.[29] Aristotle suggests that we look to man's faculties in order to discover his proper *ergon*. What characterizes man and sets him apart from other animals is his reason.[30] Therefore, the uniquely human thing, and thus the proper work of man, is "a certain active life of that which possesses reason" (*NE* 1098a4). In this pregnant statement, the emphasis is on both *reason* and *activity*. Each term merits a discussion in its own right.

Regarding reason as the defining faculty of man, one's happiness would consist in its full development. In other words, given than the human *ergon* is to be rational, the thing that makes man happy is the

28. In his commentary on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, Thomas Aquinas (1993, 35) makes an argument about the necessity of an ultimate end due to the unity of human nature. Because despite their differences in character and function all men belong to the collectivity of *mankind,* there must be one chief end for man as man. Similarly, Aquinas notes, there is a single end for a physician because of the unity of the art of medicine—health.

29. Aristotle proves that man must have an *ergon* in two different ways. First, he puts forth a moral argument: there must be a distinctively human *ergon*, since far less dignified things, like a shoemaker, have an *ergon*. Therefore, a being as venerable as man must surely have an *ergon*; idleness cannot be it, since man cannot be defined by a '*non-ergon.*' Second, Aristotle presents a mechanical argument about the necessity of a uniquely human *ergon*: if each part of the human body has a function to fulfill, there must be a function of the whole (*NE* 1097b25-33).

30. When Aristotle identifies the specific *work* that is proper to man in contrast with other animals, he quickly dismisses both the life "characterized by nutrition" and the life "characterized by sense perception," for those exist in the animal kingdom (*NE* 1098a1-2).

excellent performance of his reason. The link between rationality and happiness is, however, imprecise at this stage, since reason is an elaborate instrument that does not point to a specific purpose: man can use his reason in a variety of ways and in addition, reason seems to be divided into two kinds—theoretical and practical—that perform very different tasks.[31] Aristotle needs to add the concept of *activity* to reason in order to solidify the link between happiness and moral virtue. Since the *ergon* of a human being is "an activity of soul in accord with reason" (*NE* 1098a8), and the epitome of doing one's work is doing it well,[32] or" seriously" (*NE* 1098a9), or excellently (virtuously), then happiness "becomes an activity of soul in accord with virtue" (*NE* 1098a16). It seems that as a result of this formulation, human happiness is defined primarily by living *well* and *acting* well. Reason becomes secondary, as Aristotle drops it from the discussion, and *acting excellently* takes the focus. Because he pushes rationality to the background, the Philosopher can avoid an outright deduction of moral virtue from happiness. Therefore, the functional argument for happiness does not entirely derive moral virtue. It only introduces it by appealing to the reader's moral sense about right and wrong through the emphasis on *virtuous activity*.

In sum, Aristotelian morality is both underived from higher principles and deduced from happiness. Yet, even the deduction from happiness is not strict deduction: despite presenting virtue as a means to a happy life, Aristotle does not simply derive it from rationality. This complicated approach to morality is justified by the peculiarity of human psychology. The Philosopher seems to want to reproduce man's natural confusion about the end of life: the dilemma between *the right thing* and the *good for oneself thing*. As pure and dignified as it is, underived morality is insufficient for keeping man moral. Even the supremely moral person does, in some way at least, believe that it is good for him to be moral. In other words, the questions "how should I live" and "what is good for me" exist simultaneously in the human mind. It is this fact of the human condition that compels Aristotle to derive morality from happiness while simultaneously not going all the way and still relying on man's moral sentiment. Despite not fully deducing moral

31. W. F. R. Hardie (1968, 25) points out Aristotle's insistence on "rationality in a general sense, not theoretical insight" as man's unique *ergon*. Theoretical insight, he argues, is only one specialized way of being rational and thus, does not exhaust that which is uniquely human. Given Aristotle's emphasis on the life of moral action throughout the *Ethics*, what is significant about man's faculty of reason is not that he is "a natural metaphysician" but that he is thus capable of "planning his own life" (Hardie 1968, 26).

32. To do one's work well means to do it "in accord with the virtue proper to it" (*NE* 1097a15), which is to say *virtuously*.

virtue from happiness, Aristotle nonetheless insists on a causal link between the two: the life of moral action make man happy. It is this claim that I seek to scrutinize and although Books II through IX of the *Nicomachean Ethics* are entirely silent on the subject of happiness, it is in them that Aristotle develops his moral virtues. Following, the summation of these eleven moral virtues is said to be not only choiceworthy for its own sake, but also a vehicle to a happy life.

1.5 Why Courage?

In examining moral virtue's conduciveness to happiness, I have chosen to focus on a single virtue as representative of the entire moral realm—courage. Alongside justice, courage appears to be the hardest case for the *eudaimonism* of moral virtue; like justice, the Aristotelian "breed" of courage looks like self-forgetting and strict service to others. This look, however, is somewhat deceptive. I will proceed to show that Aristotle ultimately conceives of courage as a virtue of the individual—as conducive to his perfection—and not simply as something useful for society; the focus is thus not the city, but man. In addition, since the Philosopher separates the practical from the theoretical realm and morality is not derived from higher principles, courage becomes a uniquely *moral* virtue, as distinguished from a means to the philosophical life. In accordance with these two qualifications—the centrality of the individual and of the moral-political realm—I will use the term "political courage" to refer to Aristotle's first moral virtue. I call it 'political' because it exists in the context of the city and is exercised in service of the city, not because one practices it simply *for the sake* of the city as distinguished from one's own happiness. Because courage needs the city for its cultivation, the term 'political' is more suitable than the term 'moral,' despite the fact that it is a moral virtue. I will attempt to determine whether the happiness toward which political courage points—the happiness contained in the life of moral virtue—is real and self-subsistent.

I find courage to be the best-suited virtue for examining morality's conduciveness to happiness because it is, in a number of ways, the virtue most resistant to it. The argument that engaging in courageous actions, where one constantly risks and potentially loses one's life, ultimately produces a happy human being is a difficult one to make. The goodness of courage for the courageous individual is not immediately apparent and, in fact, it seems counterintuitive, since, as Ronna Burger says, it is the virtue with "the great-

est demand for self-sacrifice" (Burger 2008, 67). The sacrifices that courage may call for include pleasure and life, the former of which is problematic in the context of Aristotle's ethical theory: it seems to violate the general principle that the exercise of every virtue should be pleasant (*NE* 1199a14). In addition, one naturally wonders whether happiness too is not a thing sacrificed for courage. Aristotle's presentation of this manly virtue is complicated, for although he readily acknowledges its self-sacrificial nature, he also insists that these sacrifices are unavoidable, since their avoidance would prevent man from actualizing his moral perfection.

Next, only in his courage presentation does Aristotle feel compelled to, in a way, work backwards. In order for the reader to grasp what is praiseworthy about courage, he has to first work through "a set of states that mimic it, and are mistaken for it" (Burger 2008, 74). Thus, the Philosopher reveals five imperfect instances, or semblances, of courage before proceeding to speak of the true virtue. The mimicking of this particular virtue seems easier and more prevalent than any of the others, which may be the reason why Aristotle decides to first approach it negatively by showing what it is not. This unique complexity of courage is important for the current investigation because one of the five semblances Aristotle addresses happens to represent the Socratic position that virtue is knowledge.[33] Aristotle explicitly rejects the Socratic thesis when he identifies courageous acts accompanied by knowledge as less courageous than those accompanied by ignorance (*NE* 1116b4-23). The knowledgeable person undertakes dangers, because he either knows that they are not real dangers or has calculated the harm anticipated from them to be tolerable. He is a risk-calculator, not a truly courageous man.

In sum, I believe that political courage merits close study because of the tensions internal to moral virtue itself. First, courage is a problematic virtue from the perspective of human happiness—the end to which all of the virtues are said to be means. Its self-sacrificial nature makes it more difficult to reconcile with the pursuit of happiness than any of the other virtues. Second, the status of pleasure within courage needs to be clarified for the purpose of testing the Aristotelian claim that the practice of moral virtue is always pleasant to the virtuous man. Can a life of pain make man happy? Finally, the relationship between

33. The philosophical discrepancy between Plato and Aristotle is particularly apparent in the context of courage, as the possession of knowledge that ought to secure all of the virtues does not seem sufficient for courage.

knowledge and virtue is most troublesome in the context of courage: is courage a refutation of the Socratic thesis, is it an exception to it, or does it have a different relationship to knowledge altogether? It seems that the virtues cannot be divorced from knowledge—both Plato and Aristotle contend—and yet it is with courage that the relationship is most unclear and in need of examination. The ambiguous place of knowledge in courage further complicates the *eudaimonism* of moral virtue, because it is unclear precisely what role reason plays in the cultivation of happiness.

1.6 Courage as a Moral Virtue

Moral virtue in general seems to be a sensible a beginning point for the investigation of courage's conduciveness to happiness. This is so because the realm to which political courage belongs possesses unique characteristics; an inquiry into those characteristics would shed light onto the essence of courage itself. Thus, before proceeding to examine political courage as a unique Aristotelian concept, I feel compelled to inspect it as a member of Aristotle's underived ethical sphere. What is the genus of moral virtue, what part of the soul does it belong to, what qualities define it, how is it operationalized, and according to what principle does it function? What transpires as true of moral virtue will necessarily be true also of courage.

Aristotle understands the human soul—the place where virtue belongs, since happiness is an activity of the soul (*NE* 1102a16)—as divided into two parts: the rational and the nonrational, where each part has its proper virtues (*NE* 1102a26-1102b28). The intellectual virtues constitute the perfection of the former and the moral virtues pertain to the latter. While belonging to the nonrational part of the human soul, however, moral virtue represents rational control over the passions: the irrational passions of man are guided and ruled by reason (*logos*) (*NE* 1103a1-10). In this sense, reason participates in the moral virtues, but not in the authoritative way that it does with the intellectual virtues; there, it is pure and unmixed with irrational elements. This formulation of Aristotle's seems fairly intuitive, for if one were to observe a continent man or a man of self-restraint, one would see that "his sensitive appetite obeys reason" (Aquinas 1993, 79). His improper or bad desires are not translated into action, for reason participates in them by restraining them. He acts, therefore, not according to his passions but according to reason. Then, in the case of the virtuous man, whether the temperate or the courageous, the passions are even

more fully subject to reason than in the continent man: they are so subdued by reason that "evil desires in him are not vehement" (Aquinas 1993, 79). The way in which reason participates in the virtues, then, is that it persuades the passions, as Alexander Grant puts it, the passions "rise into communion with reason" (Grant 1874, 1:417). Moral virtue, therefore, resides in a subpart of the nonrational part of the soul that nonetheless "shares somehow in reason inasmuch as it heeds it and is apt to be obedient to its commands" (*NE* 1102b31-33).

1.6.1 The Genus of Moral Virtue

Having identified *where* moral virtue resides, Aristotle moves on to explains precisely *what* it is—the genus of moral virtue. Here, an immediate complication emerges but, I believe that it can be resolved with the help of Thomas Aquinas' commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*. In chapter 5 of Book II, Aristotle claims that there are "three things present in the soul—passions, capacities, and characteristics" (*NE* 1105b20).[34] This tripartite division of the soul seems to be in conflict with the aforementioned two-part one into rational and nonrational parts: what happens to reason, since it does not seem to belong to any of the three new parts? The word "things" used by Bartlett and Collins ("three things present in the soul...") is replaced with "principles" in Aquinas' commentary on the *Ethics* (Aquinas 1993, 100). The latter seems a better translation in this context because it does not imply exhaustiveness: the *principles* of the soul can be just some of the *things* present in it. By the term "principles" Aquinas means "operations of the soul," which, he says, relate to action. Men seem to always *act* from one of these three principles: angry men act from passion, artists act from characteristics ("habits" in Aquinas), and those beginning new activities act from capacities ("powers" in Aquinas) (Aquinas 1993, 100). By understanding these three things—passions, capacities, and characteristics—as principles or operations of the soul, Aquinas places them in the realm of action. This seems to be in line with Aristotle's presentation for two reasons: first, it does not contradict his previous division of the soul that includes reason, and second, it conforms to his characterization of virtue as *an activity* of the soul by classifying moral virtue as a thing in the soul having to do with action.

34. The *Magna Moralia* confirms this tripartite division by referring to the three "phenomena" of the soul: "feelings or affections, powers or faculties, and states or dispositions" (*MM* 1186a10-12).

This interpretation of the apparent discrepancy between Aristotle's two divisions of the human soul is supported by Thomas Aquinas' reading of the *Ethics*. He insists that the tripartite division is not meant to be exhaustive: "not absolutely everything in the soul is included under this division—the essence of the soul and the operations of the intellect do not belong here—but only the things that are principles of some operation" (Aquinas 1993, 100). What the tripartite division of soul adds to its two-part counterpart is that moral virtue is a *principle of some operation*. It thus has to do with the performance of an action and since only three things are responsible for the performance of actions—passions, capacities, and characteristics—"virtue would be one of these" (*NE* 1105b21).

Aristotle describes passions as "those things that pleasure or pain accompany" (*NE* 1105b21). In other words, passions are tied to 'feeling', where the feeling of pleasure or pain is the basis for every passion, whether it be anger, fear, confidence, envy, or joy.[35] He further argues that moral virtue is not a passion *(pathos)* and proves it through an appeal to language.[36] First, men are called 'good' and 'bad' on account of virtue and vice, rather than on account of mere feelings. Virtue is not a passion, since it is always praiseworthy, and a passion cannot be praiseworthy simply and always (*NE* 1105b33). For instance, anger is neither unconditionally *good* in the way that virtue is, nor unconditionally *bad* in the way that vice it. Its goodness and badness are wholly dependent on *manner*:[37] one must be angry at a certain thing, to a certain extent, and at a certain time in order to receive praise, just like one must be angry at a certain thing, to a certain extent, and at a certain time in order to receive blame. Anger itself does not incite a normative response: as a passion, it carries a certain value neutrality. The reason that virtue cannot be a passion, therefore, is that virtue is always praiseworthy; it is excellence; it is the perfection of a thing; it is always good and revered, which precludes the possibility of it being a value-neutral passion. Alexander Grant calls this the first "linguistic" reason that virtue is not a passion. There is also a second: we speak of being "moved" with regard to the passions, while we speak of having "certain disposition" with regard to virtue or vice (Grant 1874, 1: 494; also *NE* 1106a5). Therefore, a passion is a kind of unwilled motion,

35. See also *MM* 1186a15.
36. This is an observation made by Sir Alexander Grant (1874, 1:494).
37. What Aristotle calls "in a certain way" (*NE* 1106a1).

"which arises out of a capacity *independently of choice*" (Stewart 1973, 1:187). Virtue, however, is always the product of choice.

Next, Aristotle argues that virtue is not a capacity (*dunamis)* either, where by capacity he means "those things in reference to which we are said to be able to undergo [a passion]" (*NE* 1105b23). A capacity is one's ability to experience a passion. As Aquinas puts it, capacities "are said to 'suffer' or to receive [the] passions" (Aquinas 1993, 101). For example, the ability to feel pity is a human capacity, which a horse does not possess, while the ability to feel anger is a capacity, which humans and horses share.[38] Capacities, then, are the abilities to undergo the passions. They too are unlike virtue, since they possess the same value-neutrality as the passions. As Aristotle states in the *Magna Moralia*, capacities ('faculties' in the translation used) "are the potentialities by which we are said to be capable of feelings" (*MM* 1186a16). The ability to feel joy cannot be either simply good or simply bad; like the passion of joy itself, its goodness is derivative of the context and manner in which one experiences it. By contrast, virtue does not oscillate between praise and blame. Therefore, since neither passions nor capacities satisfy the primary condition of virtue—its unconditional goodness—it must be the case that virtue is a characteristic *(hexis*).[39]

Aristotle describes characteristics as "those things in reference to which we are in a good or bad state in relation to the passions" (*NE* 1105b25-26; *MM* 1186a17). In other words, if passions are the things accompanying pleasure or pain and capacities are one's abilities to experience the passions, then characteristics are the manners in which one experiences the passions: whether one experiences them in a good

38. It is interesting that in his discussion of capacities Aristotle treats them from the standpoint of the passions: as they differ from them and thus, always in reference to them. They are said to be able to *receive* the passions: for instance, the irascible capacity exists as one is capable of becoming angry.

39. *Hexis* has proven to be an extremely difficult Greek term to translate into English. The word "characteristic" does not capture its precise meaning. According to Joe Sachs, who translates it as "active condition," it is "any way in which one deliberately holds oneself in relation to feelings and desires, once it becomes a constant part of oneself. For example, fear is a feeling, and lack of confidence is a predisposition to feel fear; both are passive conditions. Cowardice or courage are active conditions one my develop toward them. One's character is made up of active conditions. Hence this is one of the most important words in the *NE*, and the foundation of Aristotle's understanding of human responsibility. It is sometimes mistranslated as 'habit' because in the 13th century Aquinas read a Latin translation that used *habitus* for *hexis* and *mos* for habit (*ethos*). The confusion that has resulted persists even when *hexis* is translated as 'disposition' or 'state,' words that are too general since they can mean something passively present as well as something actively achieved. A habit is a necessary precondition for the formation of an active condition (1114b21-23, 1104b8-13, 1179b24-26), but there is all the difference in the world between the two" (Sachs 2002, 201).

or in a bad way. As a characteristic,[40] then, moral virtue is a disposition rather than an inclination; it can be understood as a stand or posture toward the passions. The passion of anger, for instance, can be experienced in one of three ways: weakly, intensely, or in a measured way.[41] When one feels anger either excessively or deficiently, one either grows too angry in a situation that calls for less anger, or his anger is weaker than what the situation calls for. In both cases he is in a bad state in relation to anger. On the opposite side of the normative scale is well-measured anger: he who experiences the correct amount of anger is said to be in a good state. The same logic applies to all of the passions. Characteristics, therefore, are the good and bad postures toward the passions and this is where moral virtue is lodged.[42] At the same time, moral virtue is a particular characteristic, defined by adherence to the middle term, or the mean. It is always praiseworthy because it represents the correct measure by which one undergoes the experience of the passions.[43]

Two implications emerge from the fact that moral virtue is neither a passion nor a capacity and, I will argue, they come together to reveal something essential about virtue—the importance of habit. First, because virtue is not a passion, it is not divorced from choice (*NE* 1106a3). One cannot choose to feel angry, joyful, or fearful; the passions simply *happen* to men. By contrast, "the virtues are certain choices or not without choice" (*NE* 1106a4). One chooses to behave courageously or moderately; one is not overtaken or moved by courage or moderation. The choice to respond to a passion that arises without choice correctly is virtue; the choice to respond to that same passion either too extremely or too mildly is

40. It has been noted by a number of translators and commentators that the Greek term *hexis* is a difficult one to translate into English. While both *habit* and *characteristic* are acceptable translations, Jelf (1856, 38) notes that the word *hexis* strongly implies "the notion of a state, consisting in certain principles, or operations, or actions." The emphasis of the term is, therefore, primarily on "the operation of certain powers," which suggests an active or dynamic property.

41. As Bartlett and Collins (2011, 32) note the expression "in a measured way" is synonymous with the phrase "in a manner characteristic of the middle (*mesos*)."

42. This means that both virtues and vices are characteristics of the human soul.

43. Experiencing the right amount of anger is always virtuous and always a good thing, which however does not imply that the right amount of anger is the same in every given situation. Instead, the right amount is always relative to the particulars of a situation and thus varies across contexts; what remains static is the correctness of the amount of anger, not the precise quantity of anger. The correctness of the amount lies somewhere between the point of excess and the point of deficiency, although it cannot be assumed to be an exact mathematical middle term. The problem of the "middle term" will be addressed later in this chapter and for now, it is sufficient to establish the fact that moral virtue is neither a passion nor a capacity, but instead a characteristic of the soul.

vice. As a disposition and not an inclination, then, virtue does not happen spontaneously in the absence of choice: "in [the case] of the virtues and vices, we are not said to be moved" (*NE* 1106a6).[44] In the *Magna Moralia* Aristotle confirms this argument by means of conventional evidence. The rewards and punishments determined by legislators for virtuous and vicious acts would be senseless if those acts were devoid of choice: "surely it were absurd of him to enjoin by law what is beyond our power to fulfill. On the contrary, it would seem within our power to be good men or bad; and further testimony is borne to this by the praises and censures which are meted out to us. Praise is the meed of virtue, and censure of vice; and these are not assigned to things which our will does not control" (*MM* 1187a20-23).[45]

The second implication arising from the fact that virtue is neither a passion nor a capacity is that it is not natural; it does not spring by nature. Aristotle explicitly states that moral virtue cannot be a capacity because "we are possessed by capacities by nature" (*NE* 1106a9), whereas "we do not by nature become good or bad" (*NE* 1106a10). For example, while man possesses a natural capacity to experience pleasure, the virtue of being moderate, which is the disposition in relation to the passion of pleasure, is not a natural phenomenon. The same logic applies to courage and all of the other virtues: both passions and capacities are natural, while the good posture toward the passions is unnatural.[46] The unnaturalness of virtue suggests that morality is ultimately conventional:[47] while it represents rational control over natural

44. The term "moved" points to the absence of choice: since the passions move a person, he is moved by another and not by himself. One is taken over by the passions and relocated to a different emotional state. For instance, the passion of anger moves one from a state of tranquility, joy, or indifference into a state of anger. The moving is the product of the passion and not the person. With the virtues and vices however, it is man himself who does the moving and that always entails choice: when moved by the passion of fear, one, in return, chooses whether to move oneself in the direction of cowardice, courage, or rashness. This choice is man's own.

45. The mandatory presence of choice in virtue does not imply that virtue is solely the product of choice: nature, and habituation play a role as well. Aristotle maintains that one cannot be virtuous in the absence of choice, not that choice is all that is required for virtue.

46. The unnaturalness of virtue should not be taken to mean that morality is contrary to nature. Aristotle's formulation only states that virtue is not a natural inevitability present in all human beings. The seeds of virtue are thus present by nature—the passions and reason—but the final product is not: the virtues are "present in us who are of such nature as to receive them, and who are completed through habit" (*NE* 1103a25).

47. According to Jelf (1856, 45) Aristotle implies that there is a strictly natural element common to all of the virtues. He calls it "a moral sense"—an inherent human intuition about good and bad, base and noble—and argues that despite not openly saying so, Aristotle "seems to recognize it as a faculty of our nature." The evidence to which Jelf points in justifying his conclusion can be found in the second last paragraph of Book II, Chapter 9. There, Aristotle says that the extent to which man's engagement in vicious behavior is blamewor-

passions, the control itself is the product of cultivation or habituation. Taken together, these two features of virtue—the presence of choice and its unnaturalness—point to the fundamental importance of *habit* in Aristotle's moral teaching.

1.6.2 Habit

Despite the centrality of *habit* in moral virtue, Aristotle does not provide a clear definition of this all too important concept in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.[48] He does, however, provide one in the *Eudemian Ethics*. The Philosopher describes habit as something produced by repeated motion: "an agent acquires a habit when it eventually becomes operative in a particular fashion as the result of the repetition of a certain motion under some non-innate impulse" (*EE* 1220b1-3). In other words, the repetition of an action that is not instinctive eventually removes the need for force in the performance of that action; once turned into a habit, the action becomes easy and appears to happen instinctively.[49] Habit thus becomes established after the repeated performance of acts of the same quality as those acts which are the goal of habituation: if seeking to develop the habit of courageous action, one must repeatedly engage in courageous acts.

Having addressed Aristotle's definition of *habit*, let us return to the relationship between choice and the unnaturalness of virtue. I believe that the union of these two features points to the necessity of habituation. If virtue is always accompanied by choice, then how and on account of what is this choice made? What compels one to choose virtue over vice? Aristotle has made it clear that it is not nature: one is not moved in the direction of virtue by nature. If not nature, then, could convenience be what prompts one's choice of virtue over vice: is virtue the path of least resistance? Given the demanding nature of Aristotle's eleven virtues, this seems unlikely: cowardice is much more instinctually attractive than courage, for it is both easier and safer; moreover, its ultimate appeal rests in the natural human instinct of self-preservation.

thy is "subject to perception" or "residing in the perception of particulars" (*NE* 1109b22-24). In light of this statement, Jelf attributes to Aristotle a recognition of an innate moral sense in men, by which they are able to recognize "right and wrong in particulars" (1856, 45). While Jelf's argument is not implausible, there is an alternative interpretation of the passage at hand: this moral sense to which the Philosopher indeed seems to allude could be the product of experience and instruction, or in other words, man could be habituated into having a moral sense about particular rights and wrongs.

48. There are two descriptions of how habit functions, but neither of them amounts to a "definition" of the term (*NE* 1103a19-26, 1179b23-26).

49. Aristotle notes that *habit* is a concept applicable only to animate agents.

The choice of virtue over vice is therefore by no means the default choice for men; virtue is the significantly more arduous of the two options. Since neither nature nor convenience seems to motivate the choice involved in virtue, it must be education that is responsible for it. The unnaturalness and difficulty of virtue raise the need for education in the formation of the virtuous man. Following, one chooses virtue on account of the content of that education.[50] The education in question is explicitly identified as habituation: Aristotle says that while the coming-into-being, and maintenance, of the intellectual virtues is the result of teaching, moral virtue is produced by habit (*NE* 1103a15). Repeated exercises in virtue make man virtuous, not intellectual lessons in virtue. Ultimately, in his classification of moral virtue as a characteristic, Aristotle makes three things apparent, the latter two of which point to the centrality of habit: first, virtue is always normatively good; second, it is always accompanied by choice and never spontaneous; and third, it is not possessed by nature.

1.6.3 The Middle Term

After identifying virtue as a characteristic and thereby stressing goodness, choice, and education as its fundamental features, Aristotle proceeds to show precisely "what sort of characteristic it is" (*NE* 1106a14). Here, *the mean* emerges as the definitive feature of moral virtue. Virtue, Aristotle insists, is "a certain middle term between excess and deficiency" (*NE* 1106a30). The concept of the mean encompasses more than just the "amount or extent" of a given passion; it also includes circumstance. Experiencing a given passion in accordance with the mean is to feel it "when one ought and at the things one ought, in relation

50. The unnaturalness of moral virtue does not unequivocally lead to the conclusion that virtue is the product of habituation. It only leads to the conclusion that it is the product of education. Education, however, can take the form of teaching instead of habituation. So, why does Aristotle maintain that virtue results from habit rather than knowledge? In an important way, the character of Aristotelian morality implies it. In order for something to be taught, it must be deduced; it needs to be thoroughly analyzed and justified. This educational method—the transmission of knowledge—threatens to compromise the fabric of morality. It renders moral virtue not simply good in itself, but either a necessary consequence of some higher principle or an advantageous path in life. This, in turn, strips morality of its nobility by reducing it to the status of a means or a necessity. If produced by knowledge, therefore, moral virtue becomes subordinate to non-moral ends. Moreover, in the *Eudemian Ethics,* Aristotle argues that pure knowledge is appropriate for the theoretical sciences: knowledge of architecture makes one an architect. The productive sciences, to which moral virtue belongs, however, are different: knowledge is insufficient (*EE* 1216b5). Unpracticed moral virtue is not moral virtue.

to those people whom one ought, and for the sake of what and as one ought" (*NE* 1106b22-23; see also 1109b15). It is "all these," Aristotle says, that "constitute the middle as well as what is best" in the context of virtue, both with respect to the proper disposition toward the passions and with respect to proper action (*NE* 1106b23). The *mean* is thus a more comprehensive concept than it first appears: it pertains to the amount of a given passion, the object of a given passion, and the context in which the passion is aroused.[51]

Aristotle goes on to prove that the mean is the appropriate standard for moral virtue by means of popular opinion and common practice: "every science in this way brings its work into a good conclusion, by looking to the middle term and guiding the works toward this" (*NE* 1106b8-9). This is confirmed by the character of popular praise, as men always say that good work requires nothing either added or taken away from it (*NE* 1106b11-12). In this sense, the perfection of the work consists in its compliance with the mean, while both excess and deficiency spoil it. Thus, good artisans perform their work "with an eye on the mean [and since] virtue...is more certain and even better than any art" (Aquinas 1993, 106), it too must conform to the principle of the *golden mean*. Moral virtue, then, is itself a kind of mean and it is an indicator of the middle course "inasmuch as it aims at the mean and accomplishes it" (Aquinas 1993, 106).[52]

How does one "choose the mean" (Stewart 1973, 1:191) so that he is in a good state in relation to his passions? The concept of "choosing the mean," Stewart argues, is the precise thing that qualifies virtue as a particular kind of characteristic. Since virtue is attained and preserved by choosing the mean and avoiding the extremes, the explanation of what "choosing the mean" is will reveal "the true differentia of virtue" (Stewart 1973, 1:191). Moral virtue consists in choosing the mean *relative to man*, not the arithmetical mean equidistant from the two extremes. Aristotle argues that virtue is not a middle term "of the thing

51. When characterizing moral virtue as a mean pertaining to both passions and actions, Aristotle definitively establishes the centrality of action in morality. It is crucial that the virtuous man not only experiences the passions in accordance with the mean, but also acts virtuously. Virtuous action thus emerges as central. This view is confirmed in the *Eudemian Ethics* (1222a6), where Aristotle refers to moral virtue as a kind of state (characteristic) that makes people doers of the best actions, and best disposed to what is best.

52. While not counterintuitive, Aristotle's *proof* that the mean is the common form of all the moral virtues seems intellectually unpersuasive. The Philosopher simply takes the common judgment of the arts as true and abruptly transfers it to morality: because artisans follow the middle course in their work, gentlemen must do the same in the acquisition and practice of moral virtue. The trichotomy of Aristotelian morality—virtue in the middle and a vice on each side—thus has a dubious foundation, for the Philosopher not only accepts common opinion as true, but also assumes that art and morality follow the same principle.

itself" (*NE* 1106a30) in the way that the number six is the middle term of the line from two to ten; as such, it is not an absolute mean that is the same at all times and in all places. Instead, virtue is a middle term that "is relative to us" (*NE* 1106b1). Virtue is a mean relative to the human situation: in this sense, the number six is not the middle term between two and ten from the perspective of a trainer deciding how many pounds of food his athlete should consume. Instead, the amount of food appropriate for the athlete is determined in consideration with his weight, level of exhaustion, and anticipated physical activity. That amount may turn out to be three pounds or seven pounds; this is the sense in which Aristotle characterizes virtue as *a mean relative to us* and not to the thing itself (*NE* 1106b7). Hence, the mean is not the same for all, but it is relative "in regard to us inasmuch as it neither exceeds nor falls short of a proportion suitable to us" (Aquinas 1993, 105). Choosing the mean thus consists in choosing what is "simply enough in the circumstances, avoiding excess and defect" (Stewart 1973, 1:191). This, then, is Aristotle's concept of the ethical mean and the absence of a precise formula for choosing the mean will be compensated by the all too important role of prudence in moral virtue.[53]

1.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, aside from being good and choiceworthy in itself, Aristotelian morality purports to make men happy. Aristotle devotes the longest part of the *Nicomachean Ethics* to his eleven moral virtues, the possession and exercise of which is said to produce happiness. Although the question of happiness virtually disappears from the treatise after Book I and only re-emerges in Book X,[54] it is nonetheless supremely important. It is also the precise question this dissertation seeks to answer. Does moral virtue satisfy the second requirement that Aristotle assigns to it—being conducive to happiness? As noted earlier, I will focus on political courage as a test case for the entire moral realm. Since it is among the virtues least likely to make its practitioner happy, if Aristotelian courage can be shown to lead to happiness, there is hope for the remaining ten virtues. In this particular chapter, I have tried to provide an account of the general

53. I have reserved the discussion of prudence in moral virtue for Chapter 5, where I will show that the role of practical wisdom is to discern the appropriate mean in every situation.

54. In Books II-IX Aristotle confines himself exclusively to the 'moral' perspective of morality: moral virtue as a good and an end in itself independent of any consequences it may produce.

tenets of Aristotle's moral teaching: by discussing moral virtue in general, I hope to have shed preliminary light on the specific virtue of courage. To put it as succinctly as possible, as a moral virtue, courage is "a characteristic marked by choice, residing in the mean relative to us, a characteristic defined by reason and as the prudent person would define it" (*NE* 1106b36-1107a2) in matters of passion and action.

CHAPTER 2

POLITICAL COURAGE

2.1 Introduction

Aristotle begins his enumeration of the eleven moral virtues with courage, or what I call *political courage* in order to set it apart from both philosophical courage and strictly moral courage understood as the courage of one's convictions. The initial formulation of this virtue is that "it is a mean with respect to fear and confidence" (*NE* 1115a6). Although this is where the Philosopher begins—with a statement on the passions pertaining to courage—it seems more fitting to me to begin elsewhere. When the end point is the place of courage within human happiness, the starting point should be human nature, because, as I will argue, nature determines the very possibility of this virtue. In effect, rather than identifying the passions associated with courage and thus beginning in a "definitional way," I will show the character of Aristotelian courage by first identifying its natural basis. This more organic approach is itself not un-Aristotelian: as the Philosopher decides to examine virtue "once again" (*NE* 1144b1) at the end of Book VI, he does so through a naturalistic account. Not unlike his description of the city in Book I of *The Politics*, here too he begins with virtue's most basic component—its natural basis—and then gradually ascends to virtue in the authoritative sense, to moral virtue *par excellence*. Just like the city originates from natural partnerships—the male and female for the sake of reproduction and the ruling and ruled for the sake of preservation (*Pol.* 1252a28-31)—virtue too stems from traits that are "in some way present by nature" (*NE* 1144b6). Thus, my decision to proceed from the "raw materials" to the "finished product" has a decidedly Aristotelian basis. Ultimately, what distinguishes *man* from *courageous man* is a set of characteristics, dispositions, and concerns stemming from two distinct sources: nature and education. The end product—political courage—is a combination of a specific human type *by nature* and a rigorous education *according to nature*.[1] Of these two formative components, nature is the primary one. Its primacy is based on its inde-

1. The phrase "according to nature" is quintessentially Aristotelian. As used in the *Politics*, it refers to the perfection of a thing: "what each thing is—for example, a human being, a horse, or a household—when its coming into being is complete is, we assert, the nature of that thing" (*Pol.* 1252b32-33). In the same vein, I call the education needed to elevate natural courage to the moral virtue of courage an education "according

pendence from education: while an education in courage, however impressive, is always conditional on the presence of a natural seed, a courageous nature comes into being spontaneously. Granted that the attainment of political courage is not guaranteed by a courageous nature, it is not possible without it.

2.2 The Nature of the Courageous Man

2.2.1 The Courageous are Spirited

Courage is a virtue, that is, a praiseworthy characteristic. The courageous man is praised for mainly two things: "for being, by nature, of a certain sort [and] for [his] condition in relation to something good and serious" (*NE* 1101b17), which is to say, he has both the natural seed of courage as well as its cultivated features. The courageous man is, first and foremost, a specific human type: he has natural tendencies, whose presence or magnitude set him apart from others. Aristotle identifies this type as *thumotic* when he says that "the courageous are spirited" (*NE* 1116b27). The naturalness of *thumos* is evident in Aristotle's depiction of it: in Book III of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, he explicitly identifies it as "an impulse" (*NE* 1116b31). It is an impulse that renders a person "most ready to face dangers" (*NE* 1116b31). From the description of "brute animals"[2] to whom Aristotle attributes *thumos*, one can see that this impulse manifests itself in acts of aggression against another "individual" or group of individuals; moreover, *thumotic* acts are arduous, as they involve a risk to oneself. In other words, *thumos* is a kind of spontaneous reaction to charge towards danger; it looks like primordial aggression where the urge to lunge forward is immediate and unplanned, thus superseding a clear concern for the consequences.[3] As Thomas Aquinas notes, "fortitude [courage]

to nature," for it takes a natural ingredient and perfects or completes it; it facilitates nature's actualization of itself.

2. "[L]ike brute animals who turn on those who have wounded them" (*NE* 1116b25).

3. The *thumotic* man, like the brute animal, "rushes impulsively into danger, being driven by pain and spiritedness, without seeing in advance any of the terrible things involved" (*NE* 1116b35). The act itself is that of resistance to an interference with oneself, where the power of the desire to repay harm leads to a disregard for the potential danger to oneself. Aside from being aroused by danger or harm, *thumos* can also be triggered by what Thomas Aquinas refers to as "an arduous good" (Aquinas 1948, "Treatise on the Passions," Q 25). An arduous good is a good sought by the irascible, rather than the concupiscible passions: the object of the irascible faculty is always something difficult or arduous. For instance, the *thumos* of a predatory animal can be aroused by the sight of a desirable prey animal: the prancing gazelle is an arduous good that stirs a lion's *thumos* as he bolts to catch it. Thus, the animal's impulse of fighting for his life and his impulse to chase after

has some likeness to rage [*thumos*] inasmuch as rage [*thumos*] incites against danger with a very strong impulse" (Aquinas 1993, 189). In other words, spiritedness is what causes an animal both to aggressively redress a real or perceived wrongdoing and to single-mindedly pursue an alleged good by facing danger: for instance, a lioness' act of protecting her young and her act of resolutely chasing her dinner are both *thumos*-driven. The *thumotic* impulse is that instinctual resoluteness with which a raging bull charges toward a red cloth without hesitation. He charges at the matador either because he perceives the red cloth as a wrongdoer or because he perceives of it as an arduous good; in either case, he charges toward it because of his *thumos.* Hence, we commonly say of spirited men that they "see red." In their glossary, Bartlett and Collins succinctly define *thumos* as "the seat of anger and of 'natural courage.'"[4] *Thumos* has a powerful emboldening effect on man and it is this emboldening effect, I argue, that supplies a disposition that is central to courage: the willingness to face danger. Without this disposition, one would experience a kind of "practical paralysis," where he would know what to do and would want to do it, but would "freeze up" when faced with doing it.

Thumos is natural in the strict sense because it is an impulse. By its very definition, an impulse cannot be the object or product of education. One either has it by nature or does not. Education can perhaps intensify or enervate an impulse by means of praise, blame, and reason, but it does not appear capable of creating it. Education can also redirect an impulse and thus shift the object of its focus from a harmful to a salutary one; but again, it cannot will it into being. Man's *thumos* must therefore be a natural given and it is only on the basis of it that cultivation can do its work.[5]

Aristotle's statement, "spiritedness renders a man most ready to face dangers" (*NE* 116b28), raises more questions about the essence of *thumos* than it answers. While it makes the behavior of the *thumotic* man clear, it leaves his psychology opaque. On account of what does his readiness to face dangers arise? For the sake of what does he exercise his *thumos*; what triggers it? The thing that motivates the courageous

---

an arduous good are one and the same; they are expressions of *thumos.* Both are instances of aggression where the impulse to lunge dictates the act and neither reason nor, in an animal's case, any regard for consequences, guides the given action.

4. *NE* "Glossary," 315. Later in this chapter, I discuss the relationship between *thumos* and anger.

5. Aristotle's remark that "the courageous are spirited" (*NE* 1116b27) indicates the impossibility of courage without *thumos*.

man's actions, as I will discuss in Chapter 3, is nobility; he acts in accords with courage for the sake of the noble.[6] By contrast, Aristotle explicitly says that the *thumotic* man is not concerned with nobility (*NE* 1117a7-8), and suggests a number of other possible driving forces. Among them are hunger and pain (*NE* 1116b38; 1116b33), but of these two only the latter seems suitable for the present discussion of *human thumos*. Hunger does not appear to be the prevailing motive for action observed in *thumotic* men; animals rather than men are driven to act by it. Pain, on the other hand, or rather its avoidance, does seem to be a prominent driving force in human behavior. Pain should be understood broadly in this context, as it applies to feelings beyond physical discomfort: Aristotle argues for the presence of pain in fear—that is, in the anticipation of bad things—and also for the presence of pain in the desire for revenge. Pain should thus be viewed as a decidedly psychological phenomenon, notwithstanding its purely physical manifestations. In order to adequately grasp the precise way in which pain participates in *thumos* let us turn to the four "Homeric"[7] quotations Aristotle uses in Book III of the *Nicomachean Ethics* to demonstrate the phenomenon of spiritedness. It is there that I hope to find greater clarity on the precise way in which *thumos*, or at least pain-driven *thumos,* functions.

2.2.2 *Thumos* and Anger (*orgas*)

Aristotle identifies the first Homeric phrase descriptive of *thumos* as "he infused strength into his spirit" (*NE* 1116b28). This phrase occurs twice in the *Iliad*, on two separate occasions. In the first instance, the Achaeans scan the battlefield realizing the terrible extent of their losses and Agamemnon proposes to withdraw the troops and sail home. Homer attributes the action in question to Poseidon who encourages Agamemnon to continue fighting and emboldens his army. In this instance, *thumos* is infused into the "heart of each man" by *a god* who inspires the demoralized Achaeans to "fight unceasingly" (Homer 1924, 14.151). The motive for, or trigger of, *thumos* is therefore something outside of man's soul—it is a divine being who gives the demoralized men hope of being victorious. Neither anger nor its accompanying passion, pain, seem to be present and instead, divine intervention motivates a feeling of hope. The

6. "Courageous men, then, act on account of the noble" (*NE* 1116b31).

7. While Aristotle attributes all four quotations to Homer, only the first three are, in fact, Homeric. The fourth comes from Theocritus' *Idylls;* it is found in its twentieth poem titled "The Young Countryman."

second time the phrase occurs is when Glaucus, a captain in the Lycian army and a Trojan ally, is grieving over the death of his commander and friend Sarpedon, who is killed by Patroclus. Glaucus prays to Phoebus Apollo who hears him, makes his grief-inspired pain cease, and "puts might into his heart" (Homer 1924,16.529).[8] Again, it is due to the intervention of a god that man recovers from his despair and becomes spirited. His *thumos* is aroused by the hope of victory that Phoebus Apollo infuses him with. The second quotation Aristotle uses again comes from the *Iliad*: "he roused up his might and his spirit" (*NE* 1116b29). Its context is the aftermath of an early Trojan defeat, when Hector is reluctant to carry on the fight after Diomenes kills Pandarus and wounds Aeneas with Athena's divine help. The quote itself describes the effect of Ares' speech, which instills *thumos* in the disheartened Hector by putting him to shame; Ares calls his lack of steadfastness unworthy of a son of Priam's (Homer 1924, 5.470). Yet again, the example of spiritedness chosen by Aristotle is one where the awakening of the impulse is the work of a god; this time, however, it is not hope that the god breathes into man, but shame; it is thus ultimately Hector's love of honor—and hate for dishonor—that triggers his *thumos* and impels him to fight. With the third quotation, a new pattern emerges: the full humanness of *thumos*. This time coming from the *Odyssey* (Homer 1919, 24.318), the quotation—"strength piercing his nostrils" (*NE* 1116b29)—depicts the disguised Odysseus who throws his arms around his grieving father, as he begins to cry over the supposed death of his son. This instance of *thumos* is unlike the others for two obvious reasons: there is neither a god nor an enemy in sight. It seems that anger or indignation is what arouses Odysseus' spiritedness: anger over the misfortunes of fate brought to him and his whole family.[9] Anger takes the place of a god here as that which goads the *thumos* of man. The last quotation shows the same thing. A young countryman's blood boils (*NE* 1116b30) and his face becomes "as red...as the rose with the dewdrops" (Edmonds 1912, 238) when a pompous city wench insults his rusticity. She says that she would not deign to kiss an oafish man like him. Again, without the help of a god and again, due to anger or indignation, man's *thumos* is goaded. In recapitulating all of the quotations, one sees that the first three depict *thumos* as the product of

8. The reason that the quotation used here differs from that in the *Nicomachean Ethics* is a discrepancy between the two translations.

9. Odysseus' anger is also directed towards Penelope's insolent suitors, but since they represent an enemy already defeated, I am reluctant to identify them as the *object* of his *thumos*. For this reason I describe as "fate" that which angers him.

divine intervention at times of complete hopelessness. When spiritedness is absent from the human heart, the gods insert it, causing man's readiness to face dangers to arise. Then, in the last two quotations *thumos* is triggered by anger, which naturally springs in man's heart without the gods. I interpret Aristotle's choice of quotations as evidence of his intent to stress the centrality of anger in *thumos*. When there are no gods to arouse man's spiritedness by infusing him with hope or by putting him to shame, anger steps in and fulfills that role. Anger looks like a special case of *thumos*: it acts as a powerful, as a godlike, trigger of it. I thus take the presence of the gods in the first two quotations, or the first three instances of *thumos*, to be allegorical: it portrays the force with which *thumos* engulfs man as eerie and mystical. Following, the last two quotations demystify the preceding ones by showing the work of the gods to be, in fact, the work of the human soul. They reveal *thumos* as an earthly phenomenon, the catalyst of which is oftentimes, though not always, anger. Aristotle's selection of precisely these four quotations as examples of *thumos* is, I believe, meant to illustrate the special relationship of spiritedness to anger.[10] This relationship requires further elaboration. At first sight, the relationship between anger and *thumos* is ambiguous. On the one hand, it is possible that the naturally *thumotic* get angry easier and quicker than the *unthumotic* types, as their very spiritedness makes them irritable and impatient. The example of Achilles is fitting here since he, on account of his infamous wrath, stands as antiquity's most hot-tempered hero.[11] Aristotle himself says that "what produces anger is manifold and varied" (*NE* 1125b30). It is thus not implausible that, besides other things, he has *thumos* in mind, as a potential source of anger. On the other hand, anger can precede and thus incite *thumos*, where one becomes angry at something and then, because he is naturally *thumotic*, rushes into danger on account of his anger.

10. As John Stewart (1973, 1:296) points out, in this passage of the *Nicomachean Ethics,* not unlike in the parallel passage of the *Eudemian Ethics* (*EE* 1229), Aristotle portrays *thumos* "chiefly in light of its special manifestation—anger." This claim of Stewart's is consistent with my argument that the four "Homeric" quotations do indeed seek to highlight *thumos'* relationship to anger: the first two by romanticizing spiritedness as the work of the divine, and the last two by demystifying the *thumotic* impulse and showing it to be the product of human anger. Thus, I am not alone in interpreting the Philosopher's goal in selecting these particular quotations as seeking to stress the intimate link between spiritedness and anger. It is perhaps not incidental that both Sir Alexander Grant (1874, 2:42) and R. W. Browne (1889, 76) translate *thumos* as "anger," while nonetheless acknowledging that *thumotic* acts extend beyond the scope of anger-inspired ones.

11. Achilles quickly gets angry at Agamemnon in response to his feeling of being publicly shamed, as the latter seizes Briseis. His rage causes him to nearly attempt to kill Agamemnon (Homer 1924, 9.407). It is possible that Achilles gets very angry very quickly because his soul is endowed with a great amount of *thumos*.

From these two possibilities of the relation between anger and *thumos*—*thumos* inciting anger and anger inciting *thumos*—Aristotle seems to find the latter more plausible. I find two distinct pieces of evidence for this. First, while he says that what produces anger is manifold and varied, he does not identify *thumos* as a possible source. This is not due to the fact that he is simply silent on the matter, since he does point to "insolent treatment" (*NE* 1126a8), "cholera" (*NE* 1126a18), and "bitterness" (*NE* 1126a19) as things that produce anger. Yet, nothing is said of *thumos*. Secondly, in the aforementioned passage containing the quotations from Homer Aristotle effectively identifies anger—especially in the fifth and most explicit quotation—as the trigger of *thumos*, rather than as its product. Thirdly, it is noteworthy that while in the chapter on anger *thumos* is virtually nowhere to be seen, the passage on *thumos* is saturated with anger. On the basis of these different pieces of textual evidence, I find the Aristotelian position to be that anger triggers *thumos* as opposed to the other way around. As a powerful trigger of *thumos*, however, anger should not be taken as *the only* or as *the necessary* trigger of *thumos*. By definition—a definition strangely found outside of Aristotle's ethical works—Aristotelian anger is "an impulse, accompanied by pain, to a conspicuous revenge for a conspicuous slight directed without justification toward what concerns oneself or toward what concerns one's friends" (*R* 56). In its own right, then, anger is a phenomenon bound by certain parameters. First, it is aroused by and directed toward "some particular individual" (*R* 56) or group of individuals, and not "man in general" or inanimate objects.[12] Second, the trigger for anger seems to be a perception—real or not—of having been inappropriately or unjustifiably slighted; the slight must have been directed at oneself or one's friends. Third, the angry person aims at securing some sort of compensation, usually in the form of inflicting compensating pain against the alleged wrongdoer. In sum, because it is accompanied by pain, "anger is a distressful, agitated desire for revenge" (Cooper 1999, 420) against a wrongdoer. Conceived of in these terms, anger certainly qualifies as a potent trigger of *thumos*: one's fighting aggression would easily be roused by the frantic pain-driven desire to avenge a wrongdoing and yet, *thumos* is not exhausted by anger. Anger is only one particular expression, albeit a very prominent

12. There are times at which men appear to get angry at inanimate objects—in Herodotus' account of the Scythians who angrily shoot arrows at the gods in order to punish them and in Herodotus' account of Cyrus the Great who angrily punishes a river by repeatedly striking it with his sword—but that can be explained by the fact that these inanimate objects of anger are always anthropomorphized. Once such objects are demystified and thus seen as devoid of responsibility, there cannot be anger toward them.

one, of the general aggressive energy that is *thumos*. Spiritedness causes one to pursue something difficult or dangerous in a heedless way: the object of pursuit can be either an alleged wrongdoer against whom one seeks revenge or a perceived good the attainment of which carries a risk to oneself. In other words, while the firefighter who enters a burning building, or the lion who lunges after a large wildebeest, is *thumotic*, he cannot be said to be angry. Not all manifestations of spiritedness are anger-driven. And yet, it is the angry who are most conspicuously *thumotic*, as their frantic desire for revenge renders them ready to face virtually any danger without hesitation; their *thumos* certainly seems to catch the most literary attention, as the Homeric writings indicate; in addition to being particularly potent and fascinating to the observer, anger also seems to be the most prevalent instance of *thumos*, as getting angry is more common than pursuing arduous goods. In turn, it may be the particularly pronounced *thumos* of the angry that compels Aristotle to focus so much on anger in his discussion of *thumos* and to identify pain—the pain of the revenge-seeker—as one of its key triggers.

2.2.3 The Problem of *Thumos*

Having established the prominent causal relationship between anger and *thumos*, it is important to address its implications for courage. It is somewhat imprecise to characterize anger simply as a trigger or catalyst of *thumos*, for it seems to be something more than that. Anger can be that *on account of which* the *thumotic* act. Stated differently, anger is the end of *thumos* when the aim of the *thumotic* is to avenge a wrongdoer. Aristotle associates anger with the feeling of pain: "when human beings are angry, they feel pain" (*NE* 1117a7); anger is painful for the angry. It is the on account of anger, or in order to end the pain, that the *thumotic* man rushes into danger to exact revenge. As an end to *thumos*, anger's desire for revenge, along with the pursuit of arduous goods in instances when revenge is not the end of *thumos*, proves to be the decisive deficiency of spiritedness in comparison to courage. "Those who fight on account of anger or revenge are fit for battle, but they are not courageous" (*NE* 1117a8); "courageous men act on account of the noble" (*NE* 1116b31). The most fundamental point of difference between *thumos* and courage, and ultimately that which renders the former a mere impulse and the latter a virtue, is the colossal presence

of the noble.[13] The end of *thumos* is a base one, while that of courage is lofty. The pleasure the *thumotic* man feels upon exacting revenge, the courageous man feels when pursuing and attaining the noble. When anger or "the love of revenge" is replaced with the love of the noble, *thumos* is, in a decisive way, transformed into courage. Hence, it is the natural basis for courage that upon cultivation ascends to an authoritative moral virtue. In being based upon *thumos,* courage is not itself a form of *thumos*; instead, it grows out of *thumos*, not organically but by means of rigorous cultivation, and it consequently transforms spiritedness from being anger-centered or arduous-goods-centered to being nobility-centered. While Aristotle insists that the courageous are necessarily *thumotic* (*NE* 1116a26), he also indicates that *thumos* is insufficient for courage. The reason that pure *thumos* falls short of courage is, as argued above, its lowly end. Yet, the discrepancy between *thumos* and courage goes beyond the different end pursued by each. Ultimately, as an impulse, spiritedness is hot-headedness and the man possessing it does not act as he *chooses*, but as *thumos* compels him. He rushes into danger impulsively, which is to say thoughtlessly, without willfully choosing to do so. In the *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle characterizes the Celts as simply *thumotic* on account of their thoughtlessness in vehemently attacking the waves of the seas (*EE* 1229b27). When taken over by blind rage, the *thumotic* charge against real or perceived enemies without reflection: the act does not "stem from choice" (*NE* 1111b19). Aristotle unequivocally sees *thumos* as divorced from choice, for he refrains from calling the man whose *thumos* causes harm "unjust:" this wrongdoer is not unjust precisely because his act is not strictly chosen (*NE* 1135b20);[14] it is dictated by impulse rather than reason. While partially absolving him of guilt, a man's *thumos* also rules him, which is a crucial respect in which it is inferior to courage. The *thumotic* find themselves subservient to their *thumos*, which they are powerless to

13. Since Aristotle identifies the noble as the end of courage and since he simultaneously holds that "each thing is defined by its end" (*NE* 1115b23), he must necessarily mean that nobility is the end of *every* courageous act. In other words, real courage is fundamentally dependent on the right motive. Sir Alexander Grant shows his support for this conclusion with the following argument: "moral beauty is what characterizes bravery, therefore it is the end of bravery (because final and formal causes coincide), therefore it should be the end of each brave act" (Grant 1874, 2:36).

14. Although for Aristotle a *thumotic* act is not strictly "chosen," he refuses to call it "involuntary action" (*NE* 1111a24). Despite being impulsive, a *thumotic* act is voluntary, because it comes from the agent rather than from without. Yet, it is not chosen, since it is not the product of deliberation, or the product of reason in general. In effect, if choice is understood as something born out of deliberation and involuntary action as something purely accidental, then a *thumotic* act would fall in between. It is intentional, because man wills it, but it is not *chosen*, since impulse rather than reason selects it.

resist. In this sense, the *thumotic* are weak: they are incapable of single-mindedly pursuing a goal, because at any moment their *thumos* threatens to conquer them and lead them astray. It is thus the aggressive impulse rather than reason that rules in their souls. The absence of choice essential to *thumos* is thus its weakness. By contrast, the courageous man's resolve to act in accordance with courage always "includes choice" (*NE* 1117a5). He never rushes into danger impetuously on account of a passion that bewitches him, but always by soberly choosing it over its alternative. The courageous choose to face dangers for the sake of the noble; because they have this clear end in sight, their choice is the product of deliberation rather than impulse. The association of choice with reason is implicitly made by Aristotle in the section on *thumos* in Book III of the *Nicomachean Ethics*: within a single paragraph, he distinguishes *thumos* from courage twice and while the two statements are virtual duplicates of one another, the word "choice" in the first is replaced with "reason" in the second (*NE* 1117a5; 1117a9). First, the Philosopher says that when *thumos* includes choice and the noble, it becomes courage. Two sentences later, he argues that the *thumotic* are inferior to the courageous because they do not fight on account of the noble "or as reason commands" (*NE* 1117a9). I interpret this near repetition as an indication of the indispensable link between choice and reason: the courageous man chooses to face dangers because reason persuades him, not because passion compels him, as is the case with the *thumotic*. Ultimately then, the choice essential to courageous acts is significant because it is derivative of reason; what Aristotle means by "choice" is, above all, something produced by deliberation. In sum, the absence of nobility and choice, or reason, is what ultimately renders the *thumotic* inferior to the courageous.[15] While being an indispensible component of courage, *thumos*[16] does not amount to virtue. The display of *thumos'* shortcomings paves the way for the next step in my discussion: the features of courage which, since they are not by nature, elicit the need for education or habituation. Aristotle insists that neither the virtues nor the vices arise by nature; for instance, he refuses to call brutishness a vice for the simple reason that it springs from nature (*NE* 1148b32). For something

15. John Stewart (1873, 1:298) correctly points out that in the absence of cultivation, *thumos* "manifests itself chiefly as anger—a pain hungering for the pleasure of personal revenge." Without proper cultivation, spiritedness remains the mere brutish impulse to face danger whose most conspicuous manifestation is anger: it lacks both the noble as a proper end and reason as a loyal ally.

16. In the spirit of the argument I make here, Jelf describes *thumos* in the following way: "the animal instinct, which, when regulated and elevated into a rational instinct, and directed towards the *kalon*, may become *andreia*" (1856, 69).

to be considered a vice or a virtue, it must be the product of education. It is important to give an account of both the natural and conventional elements of courage before scrutinizing the Aristotelian claim that, as a virtue, it makes man happy.

2.3 The Education of the Courageous

2.3.1 The Passions: Fear and Confidence

The most distinctive feature of courage—that which sets it apart from the other moral virtues—is the specific passions to which it pertains. While the presence of reason and nobility are marks of virtue as such, the proper disposition toward two particular passions makes courage a discrete virtue: they are *fear* and *confidence* and the *mean* is the virtue's correct disposition towards them (*NE* 1115a6). As passions, fear and confidence occupy an ambiguous place in the nature-education dichotomy put forth by Aristotle. On the one hand, like the impulse of *thumos*, human passions are natural and their existence is independent of education. On the other hand, the expression of the passions, both in terms of the context in which they are triggered and in terms of the degree to which they are stimulated, can be manipulated, which is to say educated or habituated. One can, therefore, characterize courage's relationship to fear and confidence as both natural and conventional. Yet, for my present purposes, the placement of the passions within the realm of education seems more fitting. Despite the fact that they exist by nature, it is not their mere existence, but the way in which they express themselves that amounts to virtue. Although it is not impossible to naturally fear the proper things properly, and similarly with confidence, such instances are very rare. Knowing what to fear and how much to fear it so that one ascends to courage does not, therefore, appear to be the result of one's nature. It is for this reason that I have chosen to include the passions in the "education" portion of this chapter.[17]

17. The centrality of action in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* provides further justification for my choice to discuss fear and confidence in the context of education, rather than nature. When he speaks of the cultivation of courage, he insists that one becomes courageous by continuously performing courageous deeds (*NE* 1103b16). Courage is therefore largely the product of habit. In particular, habit is indispensable to the proper state of the passions: one ceases to fear excessively by the practice of facing one's fears; one ceases to fear deficiently by experiencing the gravity of fears previously underestimated; likewise with confidence, it is brought in accordance with the mean by practice and thus habit. Overall, Aristotle's emphasis on habituat-

2.3.2 The Genus of Fear

Despite being concerned with two different passions—fear and confidence—courage is more accurately characterized as the proper disposition toward fear: remaining clear-headed in the midst of a frightening situation is more courageous than being properly confident "when it comes to what inspires confidence" (*NE* 1117a31). As the primary passion pertaining to courage, fear merits a detailed discussion. Fear is a passion impelled by the presence of frightening things. Such things Aristotle characterizes, "speaking unqualifiedly" (*NE* 1115a9), as bad things. One experiences fear when faced with the anticipation of bad things.[18] Fear thus concerns the perceived future, which may or may not happen: when we are in the presence of bad things we feel direct pain, while when we expect bad things to come about we feel fear, which too is accompanied by pain. While what is absolute to fear is the anticipation of something bad, what is relative about it is the character of the bad. It is true both that some evils are greater than others, thus inciting greater fears, and that different people perceive different things as bad, thus finding different things frightening (*NE* 1115b7). Yet, despite the variability of human fears, Aristotle insists that there is one particular thing "that is too much for a human being to bear... [and that] everyone who has any sense" (*NE* 1115b8) fears. While the "humanly bearable" fears vary, the fear of the most frightening thing is absolute and uniform. This greatest human fear is not mentioned by name in the context of Aristotle's assertion of its universality, but in the preceding paragraph *death* is branded as "the most frightening thing...for it is a limit [or end], and there seems to be nothing else for the dead, nothing either good or bad" (*NE* 1114b26). Identified as such, death appears to be the unnamed ultimate fear that Aristotle sees as common to all men. It is life-threatening things that we all unqualifiedly fear, while humanly bearable frights admit to variability.[19]

---

ing the passions to correspond with the middle term leads me to examine them as objects of education rather than nature.

18. In Chapter 6 of Book III of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle points to the fact that people have "correctly" described fear as "the anticipation of bad things" (*NE* 1115a10). This is a reference to Socrates' depiction of fear in the *Laches* (Plato 1995, 198b8) and *Protagoras* (Plato 2004, 358d6-7).

19. Aristotle's depiction of the relationship between fear and pain is interesting and somewhat surprising. In the *Eudemian Ethics* (*EE* 1229a38), he argues that human pain, both physical and psychological, cannot be said to cause fear. Painful things do indeed trigger an emotional response of pain, but Aristotle refuses to call that response "fear." "Fear of pain" is thus a phenomenon that the Philosopher would not see as correctly identified. He goes as far as agreeing that some pains "appear" (*EE* 1229b20) frightening to men, but no

Among the bad things men fear, there are sound and unsound ones. In other words, it is sensible to fear some bad things, while senseless to fear others. Aristotle characterizes "disrepute" (*NE* 1115a13) as one example of the former and "poverty" and "sickness" (*NE* 1115a17) as examples of the latter. In general, the criterion by which the Philosopher distinguishes between legitimate and illegitimate fears is accountability: "one ought not to fear anything that is not the result of vice or one's own doing" (*NE* 1115a17). Disrepute is thus a legitimate thing to be feared because it results from one's own behavior, while poverty and sickness are not, since they are the products of fortune.[20] Aristotle's basis for dividing fears into legitimate and illegitimate ones is rather counterintuitive and thus, it requires further spelling out. It is common and even sensible for men to fear potential malignities of fortune—poverty, illness, injury—despite not being responsible for their coming-into-being. Thus, it seems overly harsh to call such fears illegitimate. So, what justifies Aristotle's verdict regarding these matters? It seems to be the absence of reason: what he calls illegitimate fears are ultimately, irrational ones. It is irrational to fear fortuitous evils, because the fear of them is futile and thus crippling. When one fears potential harms that are out of one's control, he is doomed to live in fear. There is no way of preparing oneself for their arrival, no way of preventing their arrival, and in general, no activity to engage in on their account. By contrast, when one fears disrepute, this fear motivates him to conduct himself honorably in order to avoid that which he fears. His fear is rational, because reason dictates a path by which to avoid the feared object. This seems to be why Aristotle calls the fear of bad fortune illegitimate: reason supplies no provision for avoiding, or even ameliorating, this bad thing. Ultimately, the centrality of reason in Aristotle's thought compels him to make this particular distinction between legitimate and illegitimate fears: when unable to resort to reason for the solution of a problem, fear of that problem is irrational and thus illegitimate.[21]

---

further. For him the fear aroused by pain is only a semblance of fear. The one exception Aristotle admits of is life-threatening pain: only the real or perceived approach of pain threatening to take one's life gives rise to fear rightly understood. Fear cannot be stimulated by pain, with this one exception. From this postulate, a reciprocal question emerges: can pain be stimulated by fear? The relation between fear and pain will be discussed in Chapter 4.

20. This logic applies only to cases of poverty and sickness that are not actively precipitated by one's own actions; they have to be purely fortuitous.

21. Thomas Aquinas makes the interesting argument—an argument different from mine—that the criterion according to which Aristotle seems to distinguish between *some* legitimate and illegitimate fears is honorability or respectability rather than accountability: "It is good to fear these things [the objects of legitimate fear] inasmuch as fear is not only necessary for the preservation of respectability, but even fear itself is some-

Hitherto, we have seen Aristotle divide human fears along two different lines—according to their universality and according to their legitimacy or rationality—and now, a third dimension must be introduced: their pertinence to courage. Frightening things are, ultimately, bad things and fear is the response men have to them. Courage, however, is not concerned with the fear arising from all possible bad things: neither man's legitimate fears nor the multitude of illegitimate fears concern this moral virtue. Aristotle characterizes fearlessness (*NE* 1115a15)[22] before illegitimate fears as courage-like and a good thing, but ultimately not courage; fearlessness before legitimate fears is also courage-like, but not courage; finally, the total absence of fear in the context of legitimate fears is seen as shameful or base, for it is lowly not to fear what one ought to fear.[23] Fearless men then, whether in the face of legitimate or illegitimate fears, do resemble the courageous. The precise way in which they resemble them is worth spelling out. Despite the fact that courage does not concern itself with all of the fears that fearlessness may be concerned with, it appears to encompass them. Aristotle explicitly says of the courageous man that he is "in fact a sort of fear-

thing honorable. There is a kind of disgrace attached to the person who does not fear evils of this sort. This is obvious from the fact that one who fears a bad reputation is praised as decent, i.e., morally good and modest. But one who does not fear evil of this kind is blamed as shameless (Aquinas 1993, 176)." Yet, Aquinas simultaneously agrees with my position on the illegitimacy of the fears of poverty and sickness: they are unfounded because their avoidance is out of one's power.

22. The word "fearless" (*atromos*) used by Aristotle does not, I believe, mean to imply "without any fear," but rather "fearing properly, in accordance with the mean." On the basis of what Aristotle says about the mean and its position between the extremes of excess and deficiency, fearlessness understood as 'the total absence' of fear would make it an extreme. So, when he says that the courageous man is fearless, Aristotle would have to mean that he is not virtuous. This is highly implausible. Therefore, I believe that the term "fearlessness" is intended to mean "the mean with respect to fear;" that would put it in line with courage. Of course, there are important differences between fearlessness and courage, but those differences have to do with things other than the disposition towards fear. There is an additional piece of evidence in support of my interpretation about the meaning of fearlessness: Aristotle labels the total absence of fear in the man "who exceeds in fearlessness" "madness" and "insensitivity to pain" (*NE* 1115b27), never fearlessness. Since Aristotle admits of the existence of excessive fearlessness, then he cannot conceive of fearlessness as the 'absence of fear,' since an absence does not admit of excesses. Lastly, in Chapter 7 of Book III, Aristotle uses the phrase "he who exceeds in fearlessness" (*NE* 1115b24), which implies that fearlessness itself is a mean, since there can be no excess of the total absence of fear.

23. The word Aristotle uses here is *aischros*, which is the traditional antonym of *kalos* (noble or beautiful). In the moral sense, *aischros* means "shameful" and "base." Throughout the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Collins and Bartlett translate *aischros* as "shameful." I however, find that "base" is a more fitting term in this context, since it more clearly depicts its opposition to the noble. Additionally, Aristotle uses another word that Collins and Bartlett also translate as "shameful"—*aidos*. These two words—both translated as "shameful"—bear important differences, the precise nature of which I will explicate elsewhere. For now, it suffices to indicate that I will stray from Collins and Bartlett's translation of *aischros* as "shameful" and will call it "base" instead.

less person" (*NE* 1115a16), which implies that fearlessness, strictly speaking, is a feature or an element of courage. Moreover, "no one more steadfastly endures terrible things" (*NE* 1115a23) than the courageous man, which is to say not even the fearless. Not unlike *thumos* then, fearlessness is a component of courage and those possessing it resemble courageous men. As a moral virtue however, courage is more demanding than fearlessness. It supersedes it by acting on account of the noble and by following the dictates of reason in a specific manner.[24] In addition, as noted earlier, courage is not concerned with all of the possible bad things toward which man can be fearless. There is but a single evil in the face of which fearlessness can amount to courage—death in battle.

2.3.3 Courage and Fear

The bad thing, the fear of which concerns the courageous man, is death—the greatest of all possible evils (*NE* 1115a26). At the same time, courage is not concerned with the fear of death simply, but only with the fear associated with a particular kind of death: that "amid the greatest and noblest danger" (*NE* 1115a31), the death occurring in war. Thus, from all the legitimate human fears, death in battle is the only one that pertains to courage and there seem to be two reasons for that: the degree of fear springing from it and the presence of the noble. In other words, death in battle represents a danger that is both "the greatest" and the "noblest."[25] The fatality of death is, by itself, insufficient for courage and the man fearless in the face of death by illness is not considered courageous (*NE* 1115a28). Likewise, the presence of the noble is also, by itself, insufficient: one who has the welfare of the city as his end, but who does not risk his life for the sake of that end, falls short of the virtue of courage.[26] It is, therefore, because of both its severity and its nobility that death in battle is the singular fear concerning courage. Aristotle substantiates his selection of death in battle as the appropriate context for courage with a contemporary convention: cities and monarchs give honors to fallen or wounded soldiers, rather than to persons battling illnesses or sea

24. Courage's relationship to the noble and to reason will be addressed in Chapters 3 and 5, respectively.

25. Sir Alexander Grant characterizes the restricted context of courage established by Aristotle as "a protest against the doctrine represented in the *Laches*...where courage is extended to all those objects which are here expressly excluded from it—dangers by sea, illness, political conflicts, even the encountering of temptation. Aristotle treats all such applications of the word *andreios* as merely metaphorical, to these he opposes the *proper* use of the word as belonging peculiarly to war" (1874, 2:33).

26. A modern day example of such a man would be the drone "pilot."

storms, on account of their courage (*NE* 1115a31). Regarding the passions pertaining to courage then, the way in which man fears death in battle, and similarly with confidence, is what characterizes him as courageous or not courageous.[27]

2.3.4 The Middle Term

Having identified the precise fear with which the courageous man is concerned and having explained how it is appropriate for him, it is now time to show the way in which he fears. How do the courageous experience the fear of death in battle and what is their response to it? Courage, Aristotle says, is the mean of fear and confidence (*NE* 1107a35), which suggests that the courageous man fears death in battle to an appropriate degree: neither too much nor too little. This formulation seems to make sense in the way that we conceive of courage: a man with too much fear risks being paralyzed, nearly frozen by it and thus unable to act; likewise, a man of no fear risks being overly emboldened and thus oblivious to the consequences of dangers. By contrast, the mean with respect to fear is as a kind of clear-headedness in the face

27. A noteworthy complication, or ambiguity, emerges from Aristotle's association of courage solely with the fear of death in battle. It appears that a man can simultaneously be courageous and fearful towards things outside the context of war. For instance, Aristotle maintains that a courageous man can nonetheless fear "malicious envy" and "wanton violence against his children and wife" (*NE* 1115a23). This means that aside from fearing things one ought to fear (disrepute), one can have illegitimate fears and still be courageous, so long as he is fearless before the prospect of death in battle. This seems highly counterintuitive: if death is the most frightening thing and the courageous man is fearless before it, how can he fear less frightening things, especially since Aristotle distinguishes fears by "degree" (*NE* 1115a25)? Based on what Aristotle says about courage and fearlessness—the courageous are fearless and "no one more steadfastly endures terrible things" (*NE* 1115a26) than them—one would expect for courage to encompass and supersede fearlessness. In fact, Aristotle explicitly says that the courageous are "fearless when it comes to...any situation that brings death suddenly to hand" (*NE* 1115a34-b1), for instance a sickness and a shipwreck. They are said to be fearless in the face of these less than noble deaths because they are "as undaunted as a human being can be" (*NE* 1115b12). Yet, in the examples noted above—malicious envy and wanton violence against one's children and wife—the fearless and the courageous do not seem to intercept. How is it possible for the fearless man to be less fearful of certain frightening things than the courageous? In pushing this discrepancy to its extreme, one is faced with the following conclusion: one can be courageous when one is fearless in the face of death on the battlefield, even when one is fearful of all else in life. In the *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle seems to confirm that this is indeed the case, as he says that "people who are very soft about some things are nonetheless courageous, and some who are hard and tough are cowards" (*EE* 1229b3-12). In the context in which they are used, the words "soft" and "hard" refer to one's ability to endure non-life-threatening evils, such as envy. The fear or softness towards some things does not, therefore, seem to compromise one's courage. All in all, despite its internal complexity, the relationship between courage and fearlessness permits us of one unambiguous observation: the fearlessness of courage only pertains to death in battle.

of danger: the courageous man fears death enough to approach dangers cautiously, but he does not fear it so much as to become unnerved, panic-stricken, and thus inactive. Aristotle paints a similar picture of the mean with respect to confidence. To be appropriately confident before death in battle is to be diffident in advance of dangers, but keen in the midst of them (*NE* 116a9). The two extremes avoided by the mean are boastfulness prior to dangers and over-anxiety when facing danger. The middle term is, therefore, what is most appropriate for a passion and courage is the mean of fear and confidence. Because courage is defined by the mean, the concepts of excess and deficiency are inapplicable to it: there can be neither an excess nor a deficiency of courage. It is only the passions—fear and confidence—that admit of having excesses, deficiencies, and means. The excesses, deficiencies, and means themselves cannot have any of their own (*NE* 1107a20). The fact that courage admits of no excess or deficiency shows the degree to which its possessor fears: it is not that the courageous man finds nothing frightening and he is incapable of fear but rather he fears "what he ought...and in the way he ought and when" (*NE* 1115b19). The thing he fears is death, the way in which fears it is in accordance with the mean,[28] and the time at which he fears it is in the midst of a battle.

2.3.5 Endurance

The extent of fear experienced by the courageous man is thus in accordance with the middle term. In response to his moderate fear, the courageous man *endures* that which is frightening to him (*NE* 1115b13). The endurance of a frightening thing is unlike both the effacement of fear and the suppression of fear. The courageous man endures the prospect of death in battle, meaning that he "faces his fear," while still remaining in full awareness of it. He does not convince himself that his fear is unwarranted, and so he does not overcome it. He also does not repress it in the way that some people are able to repress pain: by focusing on other "positive" things and thus distracting themselves from the feeling of pain. Neither

28. I take the phrase "in the way he ought" to refer to the mean because of its context: the four paragraphs immediately following the one to which it belongs are all devoted to the vices corresponding to fear. As such, their subject is the moral infirmities resulting from fearing what one ought not and in the way one ought not. The coward, for instance may fear both the wrong things and in the wrong way (*NE* 1115b34). Regarding the latter, he deviates from the mean in fearing excessively, or in not fearing in the way one ought. "The way" therefore seems to refer to the mean.

of these two phenomena are what the courageous man experiences when he endures: his fear of death remains constant and omnipresent and his response to it is that of "biting the bullet." The endurance of fear can also be described as the distinctive phenomenon of willing oneself to face one's fears without tricking oneself that they are either insignificant or absent. That on account of which the courageous man endures is the noble.[29] Because nobility is the end of courageous action, it makes sense for endurance to be the proper response to fear: in addition to flight in battle, or the refusal to face frightening things, both the effacement and suppression of fear can be seen as forfeitures, or at least compromises, of the noble. If one were to eliminate one's fear, one's resolve to face it would lose its allure: it is hardly impressive for a man to be steadfast in the face of things he finds comforting even if they happen to be frightening to most. It is easy, and thus unremarkable, to be tenacious before that which is not frightening. Without fear, courage loses the arduousness essential to it and it hence ceases to be a moral virtue.[30] Likewise, the repression of fear, understood as the silencing of its voice by means of diversions, is also a faulty response. In eliminating the difficulty of looking frightening things in the eye, repression eliminates the splendor of courage. Bravery by distraction and bravery by deception both compromise the nobility of courageous acts, for they make their performance too easy. Endurance is thus the courageous man's proper posture toward fear. The noble is that which justifies his endurance. Moreover, the noble makes his endurance possible: nobility is, for the courageous man, more important than anything else and thus more powerful than fear.[31]

The relationship between endurance and the mean state of fear appears to be ingeniously two-sided. Aristotle's union of the two not only proves necessary for courage from the standpoint of the mean, but it also seems to be essential from that of endurance. Stated differently, it is important for endurance that it is coupled with the mean of fear. In the preceding paragraph, I explained why the mean fails to satisfy the

29. As noted earlier, a full account of the noble will be given in Chapter 3.

30. Aristotle says that the ignorant are not courageous, for they are simply deceived about the bad and dangerous (*NE* 1117a22-25). Bravery through deception does not seem far from bravery from self-deception, which means that Aristotle is likely to refuse to see the effacement of fear of death as noble or courageous. The effacement of fear would have to rest on self-deception, since the fear of death is a legitimate one.

31. The courageous man's love of the noble may not be the only thing responsible for his ability to endure fear. His *thumos* may also play a role, since it is said of *thumos* that it renders a man steadfast and willing in the face of danger.

requirements of courage in the absence of endurance, or why endurance is needed for the mean to "work." I will now attempt to show why endurance too is dependent on the mean. For this purpose, it is useful to examine the deficiency and excess of fear and see how the concept of endurance would work in each case. First, deficient fear would not require endurance. There is nothing *to* endure when one fears nothing, for the term implies a kind of toleration of hardship. Thus, the man without fear cannot endure fears; Aristotle characterizes such a man not as courageous but as "mad" (*NE* 1115b26). Similarly, an excess of fear cannot be complemented by endurance for one of two possible reasons. The first possibility is the phenomenon of psychological crippling: when one's fear is extreme and pervasive, one cannot muster the resoluteness to act; one finds oneself petrified. Endurance would, therefore, not be an available response for such a person.[32] The second possibility is if one is somehow, perhaps due to immense strength of will or staunch devotion to something, able to perform in the context of tremendous fear. This is a rarer and more complicated case and yet, one that fails to motivate endurance. In the rare event that a horrified man remains steadfast, he effectively falls into a state of war with himself. Two sharply opposed and equally intense forces are in tension within him: on one side is his excessive fear and on the other his exceptional tenacity. Both would exercise immense force and push against one another thereby creating a situation of extreme pressure. Here, a tightening vise[33] serves as a nice visual analogy: because the fear is excessive, its jaw would push maximally and because the steadfastness is immense,[34] its jaw would do the same, thus completely crushing, or at least deforming, that which is situated in the middle. Whatever the precise outcome of this extreme pressure, I feel fairly confident in saying that Aristotle would not deem such a state healthy for one's soul. It is a tormented and insalubrious state of soul and it is thus unfitting of virtue, for virtue represents health of soul. Ultimately then, it is important for courage that the mean of fear and endurance go together, for one does not make sense without the other.

32. In Chapter 7 of Book III, Aristotle provides circumstantial evidence of this. He claims that the coward, on account of his excess of fear, which Aristotle equates with an excessive feeling of pain, always seeks to "flee suffering" (*NE* 1116a15). Because of this, he cannot endure the prospect of death in battle, unless death is to him a flight from something worse. Poverty and erotic love are offered as examples by Aristotle.

33. Vises ordinarily have only one mobile jaw; the other one remains fixed. For the purposes of this illustration however, one should imagine both sides to be movable.

34. The steadfastness has to be immense for the aforementioned reason: it has to withstand immense fear and not cause a state of paralysis.

2.3.6 The Extremes Corresponding to Fear and Confidence

It has been established that fear and confidence are the passions pertaining to courage and that the proper disposition toward them is the mean: what the courageous man experiences in the face of death in battle is measured fear and measured confidence; he responds to them with endurance. The virtue of courage is thus situated in the middle of the fear-confidence continuum and it is surrounded by vices on both sides.[35] The improper ways of experiencing the passions—excess of fear, deficiency of fear, excess of confidence, and deficiency of confidence—admit of four possible vices as opposites to the virtue of courage. A brief discussion of each will help to illuminate courage by showing what it is not. The first vice Aristotle addresses is left nameless. It characterizes a person who is deficient in fear (*NE* 1115b26). Such a person can be seen as incapable of fear: he feels no fear towards things one ought to fear in accordance with the mean. Thus, he does not endure what is frightening since nothing frightens him, although he appears to endure to those who, correctly, recognize those things as frightening. This nameless man does not fear to the appropriate extent since he fears deficiently and he also does not fear the appropriate things, since he fears nothing. Despite refusing to give this person a proper name, Aristotle nonetheless alludes to one. Before proceeding to disclose it however, I have to account for an important distinction within the deficiency of fear that Aristotle implicitly makes. Of those who are deficient in fear, there can be two types: the deficient in fear and deficient in confidence, and the deficient in fear and excessive in confidence.[36] Aristotle *truly* leaves the former "nameless," perhaps because such a human being is a difficult one to imagine: it would be a man of no fear and excessive insecurity, which is an improbable combination, since insecurity implies a state of mind characterized by self-doubt, vulnerability, and fright. It seems unlikely for the insecure man to fear nothing, whether the opinions of others, physical harm, heartache, poverty, or insanity. The

35. Although Aristotle does not use the term "vice" when speaking of the extremes of fear and confidence, he does use it to describe prodigality (*NE* 1119b18). Since he calls the opposites of liberality "vices," I feel confident that the opposites of courage can also be properly labeled as "vices."

36. These seem to be the only two alternatives that Aristotle sees as possible: combinations of extremes. The hypothetical combination—deficiency in fear and the mean of confidence—is not considered by the Philosopher, since it represents the mixture of a virtuous and vicious characteristic. At any rate, whether or not it is an objectively viable human phenomenon, it is nowhere discussed by Aristotle. The same is true of his treatment of the man excessive in fear: he can be either deficient in confidence or excessive in confidence, but not confident in accordance with the middle term. The mean of fear thus seems to only correspond to the mean of confidence; this is also the case with the mean of confidence.

second possible combination however—deficiency fear and excess in confidence—is indeed plausible and Aristotle alludes to a name for it: "someone would be mad or insensitive to pain if he should fear nothing, neither earthquake nor floods" (*NE* 1115b26). Madness or insensitivity to pain, an infirmity of soul and body respectively, is thus what is required in order for one to possess no fear and undue confidence.[37] Of those who are deficient in fear then, there are two types: the nameless, who is also deficient in confidence and the mad, who is excessive in confidence. Next, excessive fear is also a vice that can be separated into two sub-vices. The first one is recklessness, which is characterized by the combination of excess in fear and excess in confidence. This vice is rather opaque, for it does not initially appear to be what it is. At first sight, the reckless seem to be also without fear, or at least fearless. This is due to their willingness, and even eagerness, to face danger. Their excessive confidence causes them to be gutsy and audacious. Aristotle however, argues that this stance is misleading, for they are only "boaster[s] and pretender[s] to courage" (*NE* 1115b30). The truth about the reckless is that they are "reckless cowards" (*NE* 1115b34), and thus, ultimately, excessively fearful.[38] Such is the psychology of the reckless man, or at least of "most" (*NE* 1115b33),[39] reckless men: he is simultaneously overly confident and overly fearful. The reckless approximate the courageous in appearance, since they have the façade of being "as the courageous man actually is with respect to frightening things" (*NE* 1115b32). Their deceptive courage, however, is only possible "where circumstances permit it" (*NE* 1115b34), which is to say where no courageous act is required of them: "prior to the dangers they are willing" (*NE* 1116a8). When life really tests their courage—in the midst of danger—"they withdraw, whereas courageous men are keen in the deeds but quiet beforehand." Ultimately then, the reckless appear courageous only in situations when they experience no fear, which is to say in "safe situations." Because of this, he who is reckless does "not endure frightening things" (*NE*

37. The madness Aristotle ascribes to persons deficient in fear and excessive in confidence does not need to be strictly clinical. Without being clinically deranged, one can be seen as mad if he is unable to comprehend the finality of death and is thus without fear in life threatening situations. Also, a hubristic man—excessive in confidence and deficient in fear—would be mad if he conceives of himself as god-like and thus invulnerable.

38. Their excess of fear is implied by the term "reckless cowards," for cowardice is identified by Aristotle as an excess of fear.

39. Aristotle does not, at any point in the text, provide an example of a reckless person who is not cowardly. As noted in an earlier footnote, Aristotle does not entertain the possibility of an excess-mean or a deficiency-mean combination.

1115b34) but rather, approaches safe things with courage-like, or rather excessive, confidence. When he finds himself in a truly frightening situation, he flees like a coward.[40]

The second vice within excess of fear is cowardice and Aristotle argues that it corresponds to a deficiency in confidence (*NE* 1107b3). Yet, the coward's disposition toward both of these passions is not as straightforward as it seems. Regarding his fear for instance, he both "fears what one ought not and in the way that one ought not" (*NE* 1115b35). Stated differently, he has both illegitimate fears and excessive fear, as he fears the wrong things and also the correct things in an improper way—too much. Aristotle does not talk at length about the illegitimate fears of the coward, but mentions something in passing that is worth considering: the coward fears the suffering brought about by painful things like poverty and erotic love (*NE* 1116a13). Poverty was earlier identified by the Philosopher as a thing one ought not to fear (*NE* 1115a17). Of love he says no more, which for my purposes is unimportant and beside the point. What is important, however, is what makes poverty and love alike: they are both painful things (*NE* 1116a14). The coward is thus terrified of pain generally, both when he ought and when he ought not, on account of the suffering it brings about (*NE* 1116a15). The prospect of suffering so deeply frightens the coward that he may be inclined to take his own life, just so that he "avoid[s] a bad thing" (*NE* 1116a15). Aristotle confirms the suicidal tendencies of cowards in the *Eudemian Ethics,* where, curiously, he uses Cheiron as an example. In the words of the tragic poet Agathon, Cheiron is unable to bear the agonizing pain from the wound caused by Heracles' arrows and falls "in love with death" (*EE* 1230a1). Cheiron's cowardice stems from him fearing the wrong thing—physical pain—and the extent to which he fears it: so excessively that he is "praying" (*EE* 1230a3) for an end to his immortality and for death. In general, the coward's *preference* of death over suffering is starkly opposed to the courageous man's *endurance* of death for the sake of the noble. While the latter's choice is driven by love for nobility, the former's signifies his "softness" (*EE*

40. Aristotle's depiction of the reckless man in the *Eudemian Ethics* (*EE* 1228a28) is somewhat strange and thus worth mentioning. Initially, he seems to identify recklessness as the opposite of fear, which is to say, as the absence of fear. He further says that the reckless man is "less afraid than is right, and more daring than is right" (*EE* 1228a34). The word for daring—*tharsaleos*—is the same as the word for confident in the Collins/Bartlett translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics.* The initial presentation of the reckless in the *Eudemian Ethics* therefore suggests that they are deficient in fear and excessive in confidence, which contradicts their depiction in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Three paragraphs later however, Aristotle seems to "correct" himself: he speaks of the reckless man as simply overly confident and drops the deficiency in fear part. This makes his depiction correspond to that in the *Nicomachean Ethics.*

1230a3) in being unable to endure suffering. He is unable to endure it because he is soft and his awareness of this softness fills him with fear. In addition to his excessive fear, the coward's deficient confidence is also responsible for stifling his ability to endure. Although Aristotle argues that it is "in his exceeding of feeling pain that he is more conspicuous" (*NE* 1116a1-2), the coward's deficiency in confidence is also noteworthy. He is ultimately a man of faint hope, this much is clear. What is not immediately clear, however, is what Aristotle implies about the cause of his lack of confidence: "the coward...is someone of faint hope, for he fears everything" (*NE* 1116a3). In other words, the coward's excessive fear is that which causes his deficient confidence. It is because he fears everything—and he fears it too much—that he finds himself without confidence. On the flip side, the courageous man fears only what he ought and in accordance with the mean, which leads him to also be confident about that which he ought and in accordance with the mean.[41] In sum, there are four vices opposed to courage derived from the four possible combinations of the extremes of fear and confidence: the nameless, madness, recklessness, and cowardice. Courage is different from all four in that it is a mean of both fear and confidence, and yet it is closer to each extreme than the corresponding extremes are to one another. It is also not equidistant from the extremes, which makes it unequally opposed to them: while recklessness bears some similarity to courage, cowardice does not (*NE* 1108b31). Therefore, cowardice is more opposed to courage than recklessness.

2.4 Conclusion

The discussion in this chapter has been preparatory to the end of testing Aristotle's claim that the life of moral virtue leads to happiness. The precise goal I hope to have accomplished here is that of identification: what exactly courage is and what the parts that compose it are. Aristotle scatters the various pieces of the puzzle that is courage throughout the *Nicomachean Ethics*. In assembling them, one constructs the fol-

41. My argument for the existence of a causal mechanism between fear and confidence—where the former impacts the latter—is challenged by the phenomenon of the reckless man, whose excessive fear does not cause a shortage of confidence, but rather its opposite—excessive confidence. This challenge however, can be overcome in the following way: unlike the coward, the reckless man does not fear everything and thus, his confidence surfaces in situations where he is not facing things that are frightening to him. In other words, he is confident because he is not afraid, whereas the coward is always afraid and thus never confident. When the reckless man finds himself in a situation that genuinely frightens him, his confidence ceases and he, effectively, becomes identical to the coward.

lowing picture of this manliest of virtues: courage has *thumos* as its natural basis, it is characterized by the experience of fear and confidence in accordance with the mean, it pertains strictly to the fear of death in battle, it instills a posture of endurance, it interacts with reason in some way, and it has the noble as its end. I have argued that all of these elements are best conceptualized in a nature-education framework. Conveniently, Aristotle captures the educational components of courage in one terse statement: the courageous man is he "who endures and fears what he ought and for the sake of what he ought, and in the way that he ought and when, and who is similarly confident" (*NE* 1115b19). However momentous, this statement is also elusive and it therefore requires some unpacking. Each clause represents an important ingredient of courage. First, the courageous man fears what he ought: he fears the greatest of all bad things or the worst of all frightening things, namely death (*NE* 1115a23). In response to his fear, he shows endurance; he neither overcomes nor suppresses his fear, but instead bears it, since that is what is fitting of a virtue. As the next clause of the sentence implies—"for the sake of what he ought"—the fear and endurance of death need to be in service of a specific end in order to be testaments to courage. That end is the noble (*NE* 1115b13). Next, the courageous man fears and endures death for the sake of the noble "in the way that he ought and when." The first part of this clause is a reference to the mean: he fears death neither so much that fear paralyzes him, nor so little that he thinks himself invulnerable; instead, he fears it in accordance with the middle term.[42] Lastly, the "when he ought" refers to the specific context in which courage properly elicits itself: on the battlefield. In sum, courage is characterized by the following fundamental features: fear of death, willingness to endure death, the noble as an end, the middle terms of fear and confidence, war as a context, and finally as the basis on which all of these can ascend to the moral virtue of courage, the presence of a *thumotic* soul. Can courage, understood as the totality of these natural and conventional components, deliver happiness to its possessor.

42. This is the place for the strongest involvement of reason, as will be shown in Chapter 5: reason is the means by which the mean is determined.

CHAPTER 3

THE NOBLE: THE FIRST CHALLENGE TO HAPPINESS INTERNAL TO MORAL VIRTUE

3.1 Introduction

As the explicit end of courage and courageous action, the noble represents the first and most pregnant challenge to the eudemonism of Aristotelian moral virtue. Courageous acts motivated by the noble turn out to be self-sacrificial, or at least life-threatening. This is especially true in light of the circumscribed context of Aristotelian courage: facing death in battle. Since nobility requires the potential loss of one's life, it immediately calls virtue's conduciveness to happiness into question. The tension between the noble and happiness poses a problem internal to moral virtue, as the two sides of its dual end—nobility and happiness—are conspicuously at odds with one another. In this chapter, I try to offer a solution to this problem. I argue that the noble need not be in tension with happiness: Aristotelian nobility has a peculiar character which, when understood correctly, complements rather than challenges happiness. In particular, Aristotle's ostensible presentation of the noble as other-directed[1] is misleading. Upon closer examination, the Philosopher's conception of nobility transpires as perfective of the character of the courageous man and thus self-directed. In perfecting man's character, nobility becomes constitutive of his happiness, rather than an impediment to it. This is the argument I seek to make: as the end of courage, the noble primarily serves the individual rather than anything outside of him. The way in which I proceed is as follows: first, I provide textual proof of Aristotle's insistence on the noble as the proper end of courage; next, I move on to discuss the particular Aristotelian meaning of *to kalon* by comparing it to *time* or honor; following, I give an account of the ways in which Aristotelian nobility genuinely serves the good of others; and finally, I argue that despite its sincerely other-directed tendencies, Aristotelian nobility ultimately stands as a kind of lofty selfishness and therefore, complements the eudemonism of moral virtue.

1. I use the term "other-directed" to connote service of another's good. I do not use it in the sense of being directed by another rather than by oneself. In other words, I take the opposite of "other-directed" to be "self-directed" (in service of oneself), rather than "inner-directed" (directed by oneself).

3.2 Courage for the Sake of the Noble

From the eleven Aristotelian moral virtues, the identification of the noble as the end of virtuous activity is most definitively emphasized in the case of courage (*NE* 1115b11-13).[2] The noble is that on account of which the courageous man engages in courageous acts. While the spirited man faces danger on account of his *thumos*, the courageous man faces danger because of his love of the noble. True courage results when a spirited desire to stand firm in the face of danger is wed with a considered choice—the product of deliberation—to act this way and is directed toward the noble. All of the aforementioned aspects of courage—being a mean with respect to fear and confidence, pertaining to the battlefield, and representing conscious choice—inform nobility-oriented action; the courageous man is fearful and confident in a measured way and he chooses to risk his life in battle not for any other reason but "because it is noble to do so, or because it is shameful not to" (*NE* 1116a12-13; see also 1115b23). In light of Aristotle's presentation of courage, the noble comes to be its central defining feature: "each thing is defined by its end" (*NE* 1115b23). This means that courage is less of a mean with respect to fear and confidence and less of a reasoned choice than it is something noble. All of its other characteristics are secondary, because they are in service of the noble; the very purpose of their cultivation is the nobility of the actions they come to perform.[3] As Sir Alexander Grant puts it, the noble should be understood as "that End-in-itself which a man proposes to himself in each separate act of bravery in order to constitute it brave" (Grant 1874, 2:36). The primacy of the noble in courage is also emphasized in the *Eudemian Ethics*, where the author stresses that only nobility justifies the exposure of one's life: "in a case where it is not noble but insane, he will not face the danger, for that would be something disgraceful" (*EE* 1230a33).[4]

In a crucial way,[5] the noble establishes the autonomy of Aristotle's ethical sphere. Because nobility is the explicit *telos* of courage, Aristotelian moral virtue is neither elevated to the status of a gateway to

2. This observation is made by Susan Collins(1999, 133).

3. This view is explicitly laid out in the *Magna Moralia*, where as the end of virtue, the noble is given precedence over the "materials" (*MM* 1190a29) of which virtue is composed.

4. The identification of the noble as the end of virtue is most clearly emphasized with respect to courage. It is here that the term *to kalon* appears most frequently and resonates most emphatically. With respect to the other virtues, Aristotle identifies nobility as also the end of moderation (*NE* 1119b17), liberality (*NE* 1120a25), magnificence (*NE* 1122b7), and in a more ambiguous way, greatness of soul (*NE* 1123b20).

5. This statement is qualified by the virtual absence of the noble from Aristotle's last six virtues.

philosophy nor reduced to an instrument for politics and the common good.[6] Moral virtue is separate from both of these realms: it dwells between the political and trans-political, where it retains an attachment to the *polis* but finds expediency and honor to be unworthy ends and where it exhibits wisdom but of the practical kind without forsaking the real for the ideal. The primacy of the noble is thus crucial for the autonomy of Aristotelian morality.

Aristotle's discussion of the five semblances of courage in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, when interpreted side by side with the same discussion in the *Eudemian Ethics*, provides further evidence of the centrality of the noble. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, one encounters five explicit instances of pseudo-courage that fail to amount to real moral virtue. At first sight, the five kinds of false courage appear to have nothing in common with one another. The first type, civic courage, is identified as the closest approximation to real courage, but falls short of it because it has honor rather than nobility as its end (*NE* 1116a19-29). Within the same category falls the pseudo-courage produced by compulsion: it is imperfect because it too does not aim at the noble, and is instead motivated by force and pain (*NE* 1116a30-b4). Then, the second semblance of true courage is that of professional soldiers. These men perform the same deeds as the courageous man, but do so on account of their knowledge or experience and not the noble: their fear and confidence are not brought in accordance with the mean and when faced with unknown or unpredictable situations, their excessive fear becomes apparent (*NE* 1116b5-24). The naturally spirited represent the third kind of false courage. They are moved to face danger by their *thumotic* impulse. As a result, their daringness is not the product of choice and "they fight not on account of the noble or as reason commands but on account of their passion" (*NE* 1116b24-1117a9). The fourth instance of false courage belongs to those of good hope. Aristotle characterizes these men as exceptionally confident in the midst of danger. This confidence of theirs, however, is the result of an illusion about one's own invincibility. Upon recognizing their vulnerability, they flee danger in order to preserve themselves (*NE* 1117a10-23). Last are the ignorant who face dangers in oblivion of the risks involved; their steadfastness ceases the moment they discern the truth (*NE* 1117a23-27).

6. The independence of morality from philosophy is ensured not only by the noble, but also by Aristotle's division of the rational soul into two parts: one occupied by practical and one by theoretical reason. I address the question of the rational soul in Chapter 5 of the dissertation.

As I mentioned earlier, these five kinds of false courage seem to exhibit qualitatively different deficiencies: the first and the third lack a worthy end, and the second, fourth, and fifth have an improper relationship to knowledge and exhibit either fear or confidence contrary to the mean. This is how things appear on the basis of the *Nicomachean Ethics* alone. If, however, one considers this passage alongside its *Eudemian Ethics* counterpart, a different picture emerges. In the *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle mentions the same five semblances of courage, but he prefaces his discussion of them with a statement about their commonality: "they resemble courage in being endurance of the same dangers; but the endurance is for different reasons in the different cases" (*EE* 1229a12). The persons exhibiting these five types of pseudo-courage face dangers for the sake of the wrong thing. In other words, the problem in all five cases is one of false ends—none aim at the noble.

If we take this statement from the *Eudemian Ethics* and interpolate it into the corresponding passage of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, we see a nice fit. Indeed, the five semblances of courage examined in the *Nicomachean Ethics* all have ends different from the noble. Civic courage seeks honor rather than nobility; professional soldiers become cowards in the face of unexpected dangers, because their bravery does not aim at the noble and in the absence of certain success, they fear excessively; the spirited types are simply the victims of their passion and are often motivated by mere anger; the supremely confident too do not aim at the noble and only face dangers because of their overestimation of themselves; finally, the ignorant face no known dangers at all, and there is no clear end to actions in illusory situations. All five kinds of pseudo-courage thus share one fundamental flaw: none of them aims at the noble and this produces inconsistent, conditional, and sporadic acts of bravery rather than the unwavering resoluteness of the courageous man. What is the significance of this? Why has Aristotle selected precisely these five types of pseudo-courage, given that the thing they all share is the absence of nobility? I believe that the Philosopher sought to emphasize the following point: the thing they all lack is the thing most fundamental to courage. The five kinds of false courage seek to bring attention to the thing that unifies them: they are all divorced from nobility, and in that, they fall short of true courage, since true courage is, above all, the pursuit of the noble.

In addition to the five semblances of courage addressed in the *Nicomachean* and *Eudemian Ethics,* whenever Aristotle critiques someone's alleged courage, he does so in reference to nobility. For example, in his appraisal of Spartan virtue in *The Politics*, the Philosopher disparages Lacedaemonian courage precisely on these grounds—that it is not in service of the noble, but of "the good things men generally fight over" (*Pol.* 1271b9). Rather than aiming at the noble and thus being and end-in-itself, Spartan courage is an instrument to an end external to virtue. The Spartans want the good things (power, wealth, territory, honor) and while they believe that these good things ought to be acquired through virtue rather than vice, they err in making these goods the end of courage. They place external goods higher than virtue itself and thus, ultimately, higher than the noble. The Spartan commitment to virtue is thus insincere, since it is conditioned on virtue's ability to supply non-moral goods. Their virtue feigns aiming at the noble while, in truth, it aims at gain.

I have tried to show that Aristotelian courage unequivocally pursues the noble and, as its end, nobility is its most essential feature. As an end, the noble takes precedence over anything else courageous action may seek to accomplish, like victory for instance. While it is true that military campaigns always have the tangible goal of victory, that goal is external to courage and does not signify the existence of potentially conflicting ends as some Aristotle scholars insist. In two separate papers, D. F. Pears argues that Aristotelian courage is problematic on account of always having some goal other than nobility (Pears 1978; Pears 1980). He calls courage an "executive virtue" (Pears 1978, 273) in the sense that it is "harnessed for some such further goal as victory or keeping a secret." Pears insists that there is a conflict between nobility as courage's internal end and victory as its external goal, since courage is never practiced entirely for its own sake in the way that moderation is. The conflict arises when the attainment of external goals contradicts the demands of nobility; in these situations, the courageous man is faced with the dilemma of forsaking one end for the sake of the other. This tension, he says, makes courage an unstable virtue. In response to Pears' reservations, I would first like to point to Aristotle's explicit descriptions of courage. Nowhere in any of his works does the Philosopher identify victory as a goal of courage. Furthermore, there is no mention of victory in any of the passages on courage. The subject of victory is raised on two separate occasions in Aristotle's writings—once in the *Politics* and once in the *Nicomachean Ethics*—and it is not

linked to courage in either one. In the *Politics*, Aristotle identifies victory as the end of the military art (*Pol.* 1258a10) and in the *Nicomachean Ethics* he identifies it as the end of generalship (*NE* 1094a9). Victory is thus the end of war and since courage manifests itself on the battlefield, commentators have mistakenly confused the end of the warrior with that of the courageous man. While fighting side by side, the warrior faces danger for the sake of victory,[7] and the courageous man for the sake of the noble. This fundamental distinction between courage and war warrants further explanation.

The end of politics is the common good and, as a subfield of politics (*NE* 1094b2-6), the military art aims at victory, since triumph over one's enemies provides the *polis* with a fundamental good— freedom, wealth, or land. In order to secure victory, the military art employs warriors, who may or may not be courageous men. There are others, besides the courageous, who make good and even "the most excellent soldiers" (*NE* 1117b18-19): among them are the men with little to lose (*NE* 1117b20), the citizen-soldiers concerned with honors (*NE* 1116a27-29), those forcefully compelled to fight (*NE* 1116a30-35), and presumably, mercenary soldiers. Therefore, while the military art may employ courageous men, its goal of victory is not in existential need of them. This said, courageous men nonetheless participate in military campaigns and one must analyze their behaviour given the different ends involved—of courage and of war. While victory is not the end of courage, the courageous man nonetheless hopes to be victorious. This hope of his, prompted by his love for the homeland, however, never rises to the level of an end. Therefore, if victory comes into conflict with nobility, he would readily sacrifice the former, since his character is defined by the latter. For example, a general with good foresight may discern that victory requires occasional retreat in battle or flight from confrontation altogether. By contrast, the performance of noble actions resists such calculated tactics; flight is generally a base thing and courage demands steadfastness amid the greatest dangers (*NE* 1116a14-15, 1115a28-35). Since flight is base, the courageous man rejects it even when flight secures victory, for his end is the noble. As Kelly Rogers points out, this does not mean that the courageous "simply rush into pointless perils" (Rogers 1994, 305). Instead, it means that they only face danger when it is noble to do so, not for any other reason; by extension, they remain steadfast for as long as it is noble to do so, and not for as long as it is beneficial to do so. If retreat is a base means to securing victory, the

7. Since the proper end of the warrior is victory, he errs when he faces danger on account of something else, like material goods (*Pol.* 1258a12).

courageous would not retreat. Ultimately, in response to Pears' critique of Aristotelian courage, I would argue that the courageous man's primary concern is to heed the noble; in effect, while he may also heed the requirements for victory, he would only do so provided they are not in tension with nobility. The end of courage trumps that of war.[8]

Thus far, I have sought to show that the noble is the undisputed end of Aristotelian courage. In addition to being its undisputed end, nobility is also courage's only end. This is what the Philosopher means when he says that man chooses virtue on its own account and for its own sake, for even if nothing good resulted from it, he would still choose it (*NE* 1094b2-5). Neither honor, nor material goods, nor victory is the end of courage, but nobility alone. Now, since the courageous man always faces danger for the sake of the noble, how can he attain happiness given the apparent other-directedness of nobility? The noble seems to point beyond oneself and to the benefit of the *polis*. How does Aristotle maintain the link between courage and happiness when he identifies the noble as virtue's explicit end? The answer to this question requires, first, an examination of Aristotelian nobility: with precisely what meaning does Aristotle endow this elusive concept and, in particular, is the noble as selfless as it first appears?

8. Kelly Rogers (1994, 303-306) makes the sensible argument that victory cannot be a motive for courage, because victory may require the performance of shameful acts; by definition, courage is noble and thus, not shameful. This means that courage and war are not entirely compatible: the primacy of nobility may compromise the prospects for victory; likewise, the primacy of victory may require the abandonment of nobility, and thus the abandonment of courage. There are two examples of the latter that Rodgers points to: Achilles' desecration of Hector's corpse and America's nuclear attack on Hiroshima. Both acts can be argued to have secured victories and yet, neither one is courageous. It is the proper concern of every state to lead successful military campaigns, for its survival and freedom depend on it. Therefore, if nobility and thus courage must be abandoned in war, so be it. With respect to the courageous individual, however, the values are reversed: while it is desirable to be both courageous and victorious, nobility trumps victory. Hence, he would not choose a shameful victory over a noble defeat. The tension between the noble and victory exposes the tension between the good of the city and the good of the individual. This is why courage, as well as the other ten virtues, should not be understood as other-directed: while courageous men are useful to the city, if victory were to come into conflict with the dictates of the noble, they would betray the city and choose nobility.

3.3 Aristotelian Nobility

3.3.1 The Variability of the Noble

Strangely, Aristotle offers no direct account of the concept *to kalon* despite its all-too-important role as the *telos* of moral virtue. Some commentators believe this omission to be a result of the fact that nobility is "sufficiently obvious" to his audience (Rogers 1993, 355). I would argue that this is true, but only in an unhelpfully limited sense. It is true that Aristotle's audience—and it should be noted that there is considerable debate over who his intended audience is—is certain to have had an opinion about the essence of nobility. As heirs to the Homeric tradition and Greek poetry in general, the readers of the *Nicomachean Ethics* are not likely to have been confused about the meaning of the noble in the way that modern, and especially postmodern, readers may be. This much is true and yet, it is only in this sense that the aforementioned argument is correct. In the sense that it implies a harmony between conventional nobility and Aristotelian nobility, however, it is mistaken. The Philosopher puts forth a radically new conception of the noble despite refusing to define it. Furthermore, the reason he refuses to explicitly define it is because he seeks to straddle morality and thus blur the distinction between "the right thing to do" and "the thing good for oneself."

Early on in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the Philosopher raises the question of the conventionality of the noble. He says that "the noble things and the just things...admit of much dispute and variability, such that they are held to exist by law alone and not by nature" (*NE* 1094b17). In saying that the noble things "are held" to exist by law alone, Aristotle attributes the conventionality of nobility to popular opinion. While he does not explicitly say whether or not he agrees with common opinion on this matter, he does say that the noble things do "admit of much dispute and variability." Does that, however, make them purely conventional as people insist? One way to answer this question is to look at Aristotle's view on the purpose of ethics. He holds ethics to be a practical system of how man should live his daily life. At the same time, this life, the life of practice, is chiefly concerned with things that are contingent and variable: "matters of action and those pertaining to what is advantageous have nothing stationary about them" (*NE* 1104a4-5). Stewart points out that as a result of this practical moral approach and as a result of the variable

nature of 'the practical', "moral rules must suit themselves to the varying exigencies of life and ethics cannot be made an 'exact science' without ceasing to be a practical system" (Stewart 1973, 1:29). I believe that the inevitable variability in ethics compels Aristotle to identify popular opinion about the noble namely, that it is conventional, without contesting it. He refuses to provide his own view on the matter because that view would be irrelevant; or worse, it may compromise his project of establishing a practical system of morality.[9] Aristotelian nobility thus resists a fixed definition because the nobility of moral action is ultimately contextual. Just like the mean cannot be expressed as a fixed mathematical distance between two extremes, the noble too cannot be given a definition that is unequivocally applicable to all situations. Therefore, the appearance of the noble as conventional is justified by its variability. The truth about the naturalness of nobility, while of great importance to philosophy, is not germane to the subject of morality and this causes the Philosopher to remain silent on it.

Yet despite characterizing it as variable and thus opposed to a fixed definition, Aristotle nonetheless identifies a set of *qualities* that nobility always exhibits.[10] An examination of these qualities will shed light on the directedness of the noble—whether it primarily serves the good of its subject or of its object. *To kalon* is a pregnant term that signifies both *beauty* and *nobility*, where each of these two meanings seems to be important for Aristotle's conception of courage.[11] Throughout the *Nicomachean Ethics*, *to kalon* is used to connote different aspects of moral and aesthetic beauty. First, nobility is a very rare thing (*NE* 1109a29-30). Its rarity stems from its difficulty: noble action is difficult because it demands of man what is contrary to his inclinations (*NE* 1109b1-12). In the case of courage, one's natural inclination in the face of danger is to flee and preserve oneself. Nobility, however, requires of him to remain steadfast—a difficult

9. It is important to note that Aristotle openly attacks Plato's attempt to do precisely that—to discover and establish a fixed meaning of the idea of things such as "the good" and "the noble" (*NE* 1096a11-29).

10. Although it is not pertinent to the present discussion, it is interesting to point out that John M. Cooper discerns the presence of non-moral dimensions of the noble. For instance, a discussion in the *Metaphysics* (Aristotle 2004, 1078a31-b36) reveals an aesthetic dimension to Aristotelian nobility: the noble exudes "order, symmetry, and determinateness" (Cooper 1999, 273). The mean, understood as a condition of harmony and balance against two extremes also fits here. For a full discussion of the aesthetic dimension of the noble see Cooper (1999, 273-276).

11. The aesthetic dimension of courage is intimately tied to the mean as the correct standard. Just like a beautiful work of art has the right amount and correct arrangement of color, symmetry, movement, and proportionality, courageous action likewise exhibits measured fear and confidence without slipping into extremes. The balance of the passions is thus beautiful in the same way as the harmony of artistic elements.

demand that only a few can meet. Second, nobility is associated with what is fitting or correct. The people who judge things nobly, are said to be good judges of those things.[12] To judge nobly means to judge as one should, to judge truthfully and avoid error. Third, nobility is praiseworthy (*NE* 1115a29-32, 1117a32-35). Noble acts are always worthy of praise for reasons that I will explain later in this chapter. What unifies these three characteristics of nobility is the fact that, in Jonathan Sanford's words, "*kalon* activity is always perfective of the person" (Sanford 2010, 439). Put differently, the centrality of the virtuous individual is what all of the different uses of the noble have in common: the rarity of the noble signifies man's rational control over his passions; the fittingness of the noble indicates one's possession of truths; and, as I will show, the praiseworthiness of nobility ultimately signifies self-respect.

Aristotle definitively establishes the primacy of the subject in noble action when he identifies happiness as the most noble and pleasant thing (*NE* 1099a22-25). Since happiness, as the highest and also most self-oriented good, happens to be also the noblest, then nobility must, in some inconspicuous way, point to the good of the individual. Therefore, while noble acts are beneficial to the city, their primary function must be the perfection of the individual's moral character. In the case of the courageous person, the perfective function of nobility transpires via his possession of confidence. The courageous are confident in the face of danger not because they are certain to be victorious, but because what they are doing is beautiful, and thus, "tantamount to an individual's flourishing" (Sanford 2010, 440). The noble is thus somehow primarily perfective of the person whose actions aim at it, even if great sacrifices, such as that of one's life, are required. The precise way in which Aristotle shows nobility to be good for oneself will be addressed later in the chapter.

3.3.2 The Independence of Nobility from Honor

Before proceeding to argue that Aristotelian nobility is chiefly self-directed, I should briefly address the grounds on which it has been conceived of as other-directed. An action, such as a courageous action, can be other-directed in one of two ways: it can either seek the esteem of others or it can seek the good of

12. These are the instances in which Aristotle speaks of "judging nobly" in Book I of the *Nicomachean Ethics* alone: 1094b28, 1095b6, 1098a15, 1098a23, 1098b2, 1098b6, 1098b16, 1099a24, 1100b20, 1101a5, 1101b28.

others in a *silent* kind of way, which is to say without looking for recognition. In other words, if nobility were other-directed, the noble individual would be either a lover of honor or an anonymous servant to others. I will address these two possibilities in order and will attempt to refute each one as characteristic of Aristotelian nobility: the first entirely and the second, partially. In light of the first possibility—the recognition-seeking sense of other-directedness—one should examine Aristotle's treatment of nobility alongside that of honor. At first sight, these two goods appear to be inextricably interconnected: honor is bestowed upon noble actions because of their service to the common good; noble acts are honorable acts and ignoble acts are shameful ones. The apparent link between nobility and honor implies that when acting nobly, one acts for the sake of others, since no one would honor selfish actions no matter how difficult and rare they are. Selfishness can be admired if it exemplifies skill, hard work, and determination, but it cannot be honored. Others' esteem always requires the performance of good deeds for someone other than oneself and so receiving the honor of the community requires one to benefit the community. The selflessness of nobility is thus forcefully implied by its traditional, and also logical, relationship to honor. However, as I will proceed to argue, Aristotelian ethics severs the link between these two concepts to the extent that it frees the noble from its dependence on honor.

Aristotle, for what appears to be the first time in political philosophy, sought to definitively rid nobility from its concern with honor. The textual evidence indicative of this actually pertains not to honor and nobility but to their opposites—shame and baseness. The Bartlett-Collins translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* makes the intended contrast between baseness and shame difficult to notice, since both terms are translated as "shame." When we look at the work in its original Greek, however, the contrast becomes visible. Whenever Aristotle speaks of shame, as the opposite of honor, he uses the term *aidos*. By contrast, whenever he speaks of baseness, as the opposite of nobility, he uses the term *aischros.* The two words are significantly different in their meanings. *Aidos* connotes shame, modesty, and regard for others. *Aischros,* on the other hand, is the traditional opposite of the noble and as such, it strongly implies ugliness, ill-suitability, baseness, and disgrace. While *aischros* can be, and often is, legitimately translated as "shameful," in the Aristotelian context such a translation greatly obscures the Philosopher's intention—to sever nobility from the judgment of others. Aristotle presents nobility and baseness as moral phenom-

ena indifferent to the esteem in which they are held, whereas honor and shame are strictly social qualities that always seek the recognition of others. A more detailed look at how Aristotle uses *aidos* and *aischros* throughout the *Nicomachean Ethics* will clarify this distinction.

Aidos is a quality outside the realm of moral virtue and when exercised in moderation, as in the case of the bashful person, it can be a praiseworthy thing (*NE* 1108a32-33). While having a sense of shame, or wishing to appear respectable before one's community, is a good thing, engaging in shameful behavior is unqualifiedly bad from the perspective of someone who seeks honor. When Aristotle discusses the first semblance of courage—the citizen soldier—he identifies its end as honor (*time*) (*NE* 1116a27-30). Citizen soldiers want to be honored by the community and they wish to avoid reproach, since it is shameful (*aidos*). The "shameful" is here correctly identified as the opposite of honor and Aristotle characterizes the citizen-soldier as inferior to the courageous man: the former's actions aim at honor and seek to avoid shame, while the latter's actions aim at the noble and seek to avoid the base. Honor and shame are thus chiefly concerned with the opinion of others, whereas nobility and baseness, as I will proceed to show, are not.

The best way to see the difference between shame and baseness is to look at a passage where *aidos* and *aischros* both appear. Chapter 9 of Book X provides such a passage. Here, the discussion concerns the many and the things that motivate their actions. The Bartlett-Collins translation reads as follows: "For the many are not naturally obedient to the governance supplied by a sense of shame (*aidos*) but rather to that supplied by fear, and they do not naturally abstain from base things because of the shamefulness (*aischros*)involved but do so rather because of the vengeance that may be exacted" (*NE* 1179b11-13). This is a complicated sentence, as it implicitly distinguishes between three kinds of persons, rather than two as the Collins-Bartlett translation would lead us to believe. This becomes clearer when we look at the Hackham translation of the same sentence: "For it is the nature of the many to be amenable to fear but not to a sense of honor (*aidos*), and to abstain from evil not because of its baseness (*aischros*) but because of the penalties it entails." So, at the bottom we have the many, who obey on account of fear and pain and are concerned with neither honor nor nobility. Then, above them are public-spirited citizens, such as those who represent the first semblance of courage. These men obey because they seek honor and would

thus be ashamed (*aidos*) to disobey their rulers. The virtuous men are at the very top: they abstain from base things on account of their baseness (*aischros*), for they aim at the noble. Their obedience is thus derivative of their love of nobility and aversion to baseness, rather than of their love for honor and aversion to shame. The passage contrasts the many to both of these types of men—the virtuous and the honor-loving—but what is more important than this explicit contrast is the implicit distinction between nobility and honor. As an end, honor compels man to avoid the shameful, while nobility compels him to avoid the base.[13] While what it shameful and what is base may frequently coincide, that is irrelevant, since the ends motivating their avoidance are not the same.[14] In thus drawing a distinction between shamefulness and baseness, Aristotle divorces nobility from the need to be recognized by others; therefore, it cannot be other-directed on account of seeking recognition. The Hackham translation makes this distinction obvious: he translates Bartlett and Collins' "a sense of shame" as "a sense of honor," which stresses its divergence from nobility; likewise, he translates "shamefulness" as "baseness," which separates it from the need for societal recognition. Base acts are resisted by one's love of the noble, which is independent of the praise of the community, while shameful acts are resisted by one's love of honor, and honor is always the *polis'* to bestow.

My argument that the word *aischros* should be understood as the opposite of the noble in Aristotle's thought, and thus translated as "baseness" rather than "shame," is supported by further textual evidence. In Chapter 3 of Book II, Aristotle lists the three desirable objects in human life and their corresponding three objects of avoidance. The former three are "the noble, the advantageous, and the pleasant" (*NE* 1104b31-

13. Citizen-soldiers are characterized as "most closely resembling" (*NE* 1116a27; *EE* 1230a16) courage. The citizen-soldier endures death in battle "through a sense of shame and longing for what is noble (since it is for honor) and through avoiding reproach since it is shameful" (*NE* 1116a28-29). What is at stake, therefore, are honor and dishonor: both are other-directed, in the sense that they depend on the opinions of others. This makes them theatrical kinds-of-virtues. In the absence of spectators, the citizen-soldier would not endure frightening things, since no honor can be bestowed upon him. This shows that although he may "long for the noble," the honorable is his true end. This is why he is closest to courage and yet, not courageous. That which separates him from real courage is the noble, where the noble needs neither the recognition nor the affirmation of others.

14. Nobility *par excellence* belongs to the great-souled man, since he possesses all of the moral virtues (*NE* 1123b29-30). At the same time, this man "is not disposed even toward honor as though it were a very great thing" (*NE* 1124a17). Since honor is not a great thing to the great-souled man and since he always aims at the noble, there appears to be a clear distinction between nobility and honor as ends.

32). Their opposites are, *aischo*, *blabero,* and *lupero:* Bartlett and Collins translate these as "the shameful, the harmful, and the painful" (*NE* 1104b33-34), while Hackham translates them as "the base, the harmful, and the painful." The latter of these two is more accurate, for it explicitly attaches *aischros* to the noble, rather than the honorable. The Bartlett and Collins translation is less precise, for in translating *aischros* as shameful, it conflates nobility and honor in a way that Aristotle persistently seeks to avoid.[15] In conflating these two concepts, the Bartlett-Collins translation creates the impression that nobility is concerned with the praise of others in the way that honor is. This impression is false.[16] Aristotelian nobility is indifferent to being praised and therefore, true courage is unaltered by the loss of incentives (*MM* 1191a10-15). The courageous man, unlike the citizen soldier, is steadfast in the face of danger whether alone or in company (*NE* 1191a20).

The preceding discussion, though it may seem like a digression, has a justifiable purpose. It seeks to correct, what I consider to be, the consequential error of conceptually conflating nobility and honor by translating *aischros* as "shameful" rather than "base." Such a translation creates the false impression that the noble seeks praise. If nobility were concerned with praise, then noble acts would have to aim at the good of others—at the good of those whose praise is sought. If, therefore, nobility aims at praise, it must necessarily be other-directed. Translating *aischros* as shameful suggests that the noble man, in seeking the esteem of the community, acts for the sake of the common good. In truth, however, Aristotle actively seeks to sever nobility from any concern with receiving the praise of others. This, of course, does not necessarily mean that the noble is self-directed, since one can act for the sake of others without caring for their praise. Yet, it does mean that the noble *may be* self-directed, since it is not tied to others by the need for praise. The other way in which an act can be other-directed—by serving the good of others without seeking recognition for that service—is what I will turn to in the next section of this chapter.

15. For an insightful discussion of the cleavage between nobility and honor in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics,* see Aquinas (1993, 21-22).

16. The honor lover is, according to Aristotle, mistaken, for he ranks honor higher than the fine actions through which he earns it. Thus, he measures the excellence of his actions by their success in receiving honor: their nobility is, for him, derivative of their effect. To put this in Machiavellian terms, the honor lover is "effectually" noble in the sense that he deduces the nobility of an action from the honor earned by its performance. This is a radically un-Aristotelian position, for the Philosopher insists that the truly noble acts are independent of their effects (*NE* 1097b4).

My argument that Aristotelian nobility is divorced from the need for praise may seem unconvincing in light of the Philosopher's explicit claim that the noble is a praiseworthy thing (*NE* 1115a29-32; 1117a32-35; 1169a8-9). For instance, Terence Irwin is quick to suggest that since the noble is a praiseworthy thing, it must, in turn, serve the good of others, or the common good (Irwin 1985, 115-43). Yet, Irwin's legitimate objection to nobility must be reconciled with Aristotle's explicit devaluation of honor as a proper end to political action (*NE* 1095b22-26). So, how is the praiseworthiness of nobility compatible with the rejection of honor as a worthy end? I argue, in agreement with Kelly Rogers, that the praiseworthiness of the noble man is primarily self-bestowed. In other words, while they may be praiseworthy in the eyes of others, the deeds of the noble man are, most importantly, praiseworthy in his eyes (Rogers 1993, 359). The virtuous man pursues the noble for the sake of his own sense of self-worth. Courageous acts are subject to the praise that the courageous man bestows upon himself for having a noble character.[17] While it may seem counter-intuitive, the praiseworthiness of nobility does point to the individual rather than the community: in aiming at the noble, one invariably conceives of oneself as "a superior type of man who repudiates the many's slavish attachment to advantage" (Rogers 1993, 359). The connection between the advantageous and slavishness is explained in the *Eudemian Ethics*, where Aristotle characterizes the many as slavish precisely on account of their esteem for utility above virtue (*EE* 1095b19-20).[18] By contrast, the virtuous man readily abandons goods that are merely useful for the sake of the noble (*NE* 1169a18-31). Thus, he forsakes the expedient for the pursuit of something loftier (*NE* 1117b9-15). As a consequence of his rejection of expediency, the virtuous man takes pride in himself and acquires self-respect. His actions are thus first and foremost praiseworthy to himself. This, then, is how I argue the praiseworthiness of

17. Lee Ward disagrees with this interpretation and insists that in being subject to praise, courageous acts are ultimately "subject to the political community, which confers praise and blame through the distribution of public honors" (Ward 2001, 71). I believe that this is implausible given Aristotle's overt rejection of honor as the standard for political conduct and also given his rejection of the citizen-soldier as a properly courageous man.

18. Likewise, in the *Nicomachean Ethics,* Aristotle says that longing for the noble differs from longing for the advantageous in the same way that living according to reason differs from living according to passion (*NE* 1169a5-6). This, in light of the Aristotelian distinction between man and animals on the basis of reason, implies that the pursuit of the advantageous is bestial or subhuman.

nobility ought to be interpreted: not as identifying the community as the source of praise, but as pointing to the individual and his own sense of self-worth.[19]

3.4 The Noble as Primarily Self-Directed

I hope to have shown that Aristotelian nobility cannot be other-directed on account of its concern with the esteem of others. The noble is indifferent to validation from the community. There is, however, another way in which nobility can serve the good of others: the virtuous man can aim at the good of others without seeking their praise. Just like most parents aim at the good of their children unconditionally, the courageous too may seek the good of the city selflessly, without hoping or caring for any rewards. This is the challenge that I will proceed to address in the remainder of this chapter: does the apparent selflessness of risking one's life in battle compromise the link between courage and happiness? I will ultimately try to show that it does not, since in facing dangers on account of the city, the courageous man primarily serves the nobility of his own soul rather than the common good. Before making this argument, however, I should say that the self-directedness of Aristotelian nobility must not be overemphasized. In the case of courage in particular, there is a genuine concern with the common good that I will proceed to give an account of. My argument, therefore, is not that courage is an unequivocally self-serving virtue, but rather that it *primarily* serves the individual's good notwithstanding its genuinely other-directed tendencies.

3.4.1 Other-Directedness of Courage

Aristotelian courage appears to be highly self-forgetting and thus an implausible means to happiness, for it seems to serve the good of others. The other-directedness of courage is most clearly visible in the context to which Aristotle restricts the virtue's practice—the battlefield. War is one of the clearest means by which the good of the city is served, and in that, it is the paradigmatic example of risking one's life for others. Aristotle's restriction of courage to the battlefield is puzzling: why exclude other, more self-oriented

19. For Aristotle, the self-respect of the virtuous man, aside from being a good thing by making one more independent of others and thus more self-sufficient, is also *necessary* for the continuous exercise of virtuous actions. When a man lacks a sense of self-worth, he refrains from noble pursuits, since he sees nobility as unreachable. Aristotle testifies to this in his discussion of the small-souled person in *NE* 1125a19-28.

manifestations of bravery from courage if the goal is to show moral virtue's conduciveness to happiness?[20] Thomas Aquinas makes a compelling connection between the battlefield as the sole forum for courage and Aristotle's identification of the good of the city as supreme (*NE* 1094b7-11). He argues that death in battle is the only proper context for courage for two reasons: first, because in battle "man easily loses his life" (Aquinas 1993, 177); second and more importantly, because "a man undergoes the danger in that case on account of the common good that is the greatest good" (Aquinas 1993, 177). Aquinas insists that the synthesis of these two separate provisions makes the battlefield the proper forum for courage: it represents courage in its most perfect and noble form, because it happens to be the most dangerous place with the highest purpose.[21] Aquinas' interpretation is supported by textual evidence from the *Nicomachean Ethics*: Aristotle says that courage is only concerned with fear of death in the noblest of circumstances and "such deaths are those in battle" (*NE* 1115a30).[22] As evidence for the supreme nobility of death in battle, the Philosopher offers the honors given by monarchs (*NE* 1115a32-33). The nobility of death in battle must stem from the primacy of the common good to the individual's: courageous acts in battle are noble because they serve a good greater than one's own. The fact that courageous exercises serve the good of the *polis* is a testament of the sincere other-directedness of nobility. In arguing that the nobility of courage is primarily self-directed, I therefore do not mean to imply that it is exclusively self-directed,[23] since it indisputably also serves the common good.

20. Plato for instance, who does not go as far as Aristotle in seeking to establish a causal link between morality and happiness, characterizes courage as present in many settings, including sea storms, suffering, illnesses, and poverty (Plato 1995, 191d-e).

21. Harry Jaffa argues that Aristotle's choice of the battlefield as the proper setting for courage is motivated by an intent to rest his account of courage on an authoritative but "unsophisticated" general opinion: "that of every schoolboy" (Jaffa 1973, 79). The idea that death in battle is the truest testament of courage "carries immense conviction," as both the people and the gentlemen agree that the man who sacrifices himself in war for the sake of the common good is courageous. Jaffa characterizes this Aristotelian presentation of courage as belonging to "legal justice" (Jaffa 1973, 80), where legal justice refers to the common good, as established by laws. Jaffa goes on to argue that the conception of courage discussed in Book III is an imperfect one; more importantly, he holds that it is not Aristotle's final one. I will discuss Jaffa's distinction between the two kinds of Aristotelian courage in the chapters on pleasure and reason, since pleasure and prudence seem to be the basis on which Jaffa makes the distinction.

22. Sir Alexander Grant argues that Aristotle's identification of the battlefield as the only proper sphere for courage represents his subtle protest against the Socratic doctrine presented in the *Laches* (Grant 1874, 2:33).

23. For that matter, I also do not mean to imply that the courageous man consciously experiences his courageous acts as selfish or conducive to his own good. I only wish to argue that that *they are* conducive to his own good.

If Aristotle's emphasis on the battlefield is the first indication of courage's genuine other-directedness, then his discussion of nobility in the *Rhetoric* is the second. It is striking that while the *Nicomachean Ethics* does not explicitly address the question of the directedness of the noble, Aristotle's non-ethical work does. The *Rhetoric* generally characterizes the noble as a capacity to benefit others: nobility is "that which is both desirable for its own sake and also worthy of praise" (*R* 31). Aristotle openly says that the praiseworthiness of the noble comes from the benefits it confers to others: the noblest actions and thus the noblest virtues are those "which are most useful to others" (*R* 31), namely, courage and justice. Likewise, noble actions are those " in which a man aims at something desirable for someone else's sake; [they are] actions [which are] good absolutely, such as those a man does for his country without thinking of himself; [they are] actions good in their own nature; [and, they are] actions that are not good simply for the individual, since individual interests are selfish" (*R* 32). The Philosopher's position on nobility in the *Rhetoric* is unambiguous: nobility is service to others and in having the noble as its end, courage thus aims at the common good and not the individual's.[24] This view of the noble poses a problem, not only to my argument that the noble is primarily self-directed, but also to the presentation of nobility in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. The *Ethics* insists that the life of moral virtue makes man happy and is thus good for oneself, while the *Rhetoric* depicts the virtues as "beneficial capacities" (Irwin 1996, 162).[25] How is one to reconcile these seemingly contradictory views?

Terrence Irwin suggests that the answer lies in the different purposes of the two works. Since the *Rhetoric* is not a work of ethical theory and instead teaches the art of making persuasive speeches, it seeks to produce convincing arguments, rather than true conclusions (Irwin 1996, 142). Convincing rhetorical arguments are not unrelated to the truth, for their proximity to it impacts their persuasiveness. Yet, as Irwin correctly notes, these arguments do not themselves aim at the truth but at something else (Irwin 1996, 143). If we accept Irwin's position, we must nonetheless refrain from dismissing the *Rhetoric*'s arguments as simply untrue and should instead try to make sense of them in light of the Philosopher's position in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Two accounts can be reconciled if we understand the *Rhetoric* as having "a selec-

24. It is possible that for this very reason Aristotle omits wisdom from his list of virtues in the *Rhetoric*; wisdom is not a virtue whose benefit to others is at all apparent.

25. Note that in the *Rhetoric* virtue is said to be a capacity (*dunamis)* rather than a characteristic (*hexis)*.

tive focus" (Irwin 1996, 163): the *Rhetoric* focuses on only one aspect of the virtues while their totality is described in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. If this is the case, then the focus on nobility's other-directedness is a partial rather than an alternative account of the noble.[26] The description in the *Rhetoric* therefore contains true but insufficient conditions for the virtues. In the case of courage, the incompleteness of the account is fairly obvious: the conditions for courage in the *Rhetoric* can easily be satisfied by the citizen-warrior that the *Nicomachean Ethics* identifies as an example of imperfect courage. Ultimately then, while the *Rhetoric*'s depiction of nobility is not inconsistent with the *Nicomachean Ethics'*, it is partial. Incidentally, the part that is missing happens to be the fundamental link between courage and happiness, namely the self-directedness of nobility.

The genuine altruism of the noble, as it pertains to courage, is always directed toward the *polis*. In identifying the battlefield as the proper context for courage, Aristotle implicitly affirms the nobility of the city. In order for the abstract concept of the noble to materialize and occasion courageous acts, it must be represented by something precise—the *polis* and its preservation fulfil that role. The city is a properly noble end for the courageous man because "it exists for the sake of living well" (*Pol.* 1252b30). Human flourishing understood as the perfection of man's nature, requires the *polis*. The beings who can flourish independent of it are not men, but either beasts or gods (*Pol.* 1253a2-3). Humans need the *polis* because the full development of their moral character is a product of education and, in particular, of habituation (*NE* 1103a23-26). Therefore, the nobility of the city stems from the moral education it provides: one's teachers are not merely one's parents and tutors, but most importantly, the legislators of one's community (*NE* 1103b4-7).[27] Risking one's life for the sake of the *polis* is thus a properly noble act: self-sacrifice in the service of the city is a noble thing not because it is noble to protect one's own,[28] but because it is noble

26. For an interesting account of the reason behind Aristotle's choice to restrict virtue in the *Rhetoric* to only its other-directed aspects, see Terence Irwin's essay "Ethics in the *Rhetoric* and the Ethics," 142-175.

27. Aristotle makes a qualification when arguing that the city is a properly noble end for courage: the city must be of a certain kind. The nobility of the *polis* requires that the community be organized with an eye to pursuing virtue and human flourishing (Brady 2005, 201; also *Pol.* 1280b5-14).

28. That would be an expression not of courage, but of natural *thumos* instinctively seeking to protect its own.

to protect moral excellence.[29] The *polis* is thus a noble object because it contains the condition for moral virtue—habituation—independent of reverence for the ancestors. The courageous man risks his life for the *polis* because the latter contains the conditions for moral virtue. Without the *polis,* there can be no such virtue.

While the self-forgetting tendency of nobility is undeniable, it can be incorrectly overemphasized. For example, Stephen Salkever argues that in the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle uses an "instrumental version" of courage similar to that of the guardians in Plato's *Republic* (Salkever 2007, 205). Salkever sees the restriction of courage to death in battle as indicative of the primacy of the city and the irrelevance of the individual. In effect, he argues that Aristotelian courage is "a necessary virtue, but not of the highest order" (Salkever 2007, 205), since it is merely instrumental to the security of the city. In opposition to Salkever's position, I maintain that while there is a genuine disregard for oneself in nobility, the noble is nonetheless primarily self-directed, though not consciously so. Steadfastness in the face of danger may be good for the city, but its ultimate goodness rests in its perfective effect on man's moral character.

3.4.2 Self-Directedness of Courage

Having exposed nobility as the undisputed *telos* to Aristotelian courage, having addressed the important distinction between honor and the noble, and having given an account of the genuine other-directedness of courage, I will now proceed to argue why Aristotelian courage is a primarily self-directed virtue—the noble ultimately culminates in the nobility of one's own soul.

From the perspective of the city and the common good, courage is not a necessary virtue. The security of the *polis* can be attained in the absence of true courage. Men representative of at least one of the types of false courage—civic courage—make excellent warriors (*NE* 1116a17-1116b4; also *EE* 1230a16-25). The citizen-soldier, in his desire for honor, is certain to remain steadfast on the battlefield no less than the courageous man. Therefore, nobility understood as serving the common good is, in fact, unnecessary for

29. This immediately reminds one of Lincoln's 1852 eulogy for Henry Clay in which he says of Clay that "He loved his country partly because it was his own country, but mostly because it was a free country" (Lincoln 2001, 127).

securing the common good; honor accomplishes that just as well.[30] This leads one to suspect that the noble must point beyond the common good: nobility is a loftier standard than the *polis* requires for its continued existence. Not only can the city fare well in the absence of courage, but Aristotle goes as far as saying that the courageous might not be its best guardians: the men who possess nothing good could, in fact, be "the most excellent soldiers" (*NE* 1117b19). These men would readily face dangers and exchange their lives "for small gain" in the way that a courageous man would not. Aquinas points out that the men of whom Aristotle is speaking in this context are "those who are less brave and attend to no other good, not even the good of fortitude" (Aquinas 1993, 194). They are ready to face danger and death and this readiness of theirs stems from the emptiness of their lives: "they barter their life, which they expose to risk, for trifling gains of money and booty for instance" (Aquinas 1993, 194).[31] These less complete and thus inferior human beings have less to live for than the courageous person, since their lives are devoid of good things—presumably both material goods and virtues of character. Because of this, they are more daring than the courageous in the sense of being more willing to throw away their lives. It is clear that the

30. If the welfare of the city were the true embodiment of nobility, then death in battle would not be the exclusive context of courage. The welfare of the city in wartime can be secured in a variety of other ways that Aristotle refuses to call courageous: poisoning the enemy, engaging in tactical retreats, or in the modern case, using sophisticated weaponry that eliminate or at least reduce the need for physical risks. Why, according to Aristotle, should these actions not be courageous? I argue that it is because they are not activities in which man exercises his own virtue; they are not activities that contribute to the perfection of man's character. They may be good for the city, but are not noble because Aristotelian nobility is synonymous with the nobility of one's soul rather than with the common good. This is also why he identifies civic courage as imperfect courage: it lacks the noble as its *telos* despite the fact that it serves the city just as effectively as true courage.

31. Sir Alexander Grant provides literary proof of the willingness of men with worthless lives to face danger and risk their well-being. He cites a passage from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* Act III, Scene I in which two wretched murderers speak after one another:

> *Second Murderer*:
> I am one, my liege,
> Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
> Have so incensed that I am reckless what
> I do to spite the world.
>
> *First Murderer*:
> And I another
> So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,
> That I would set my life on any chance,
> To mend it, or be rid on't.

good citizen and the virtuous man differ in this regard: what is best for the city is something different, something less, than true courage. I believe that the acknowledged military excellence of lowly souls is a subtle indication of the following: our initial impression that nobility consists in the selfless sacrifice of one's life for the sake of the *polis* is mistaken. The city is not in existential need of courage; indeed, equally viable and perhaps even superior guardians can be found in the honor and money loving citizen-soldiers, or in those with nothing to lose. I will proceed to argue that acting for the sake of the noble is different from, or at least more comprehensive than, acting for the sake of the city; without being fully conscious of it, the courageous act for their own sake. That the city does not need courage has been established. The inverse, however, remains: courage needs the city in order to achieve nobility. Courage requires an opportunity to perform noble action and war affords it.[32] It is in this sense that Aristotle says virtue is chosen for its own sake (*NE* 1105a28-35): the nobility of the courageous man consists primarily in his dedication to his own virtue, not to something outside himself. Thus, rather than needing nobility, the city is instrumental to it: notwithstanding the courageous man's genuine love for his community, the nobility toward which his actions strive is not a social but a personal one.[33] His military exploits are indeed beneficial to the community, but it is not chiefly on account of this benefit that Aristotle calls them noble. Instead, he calls them noble because he shows them to be good for, and perfective of, the individual's own moral character.[34]

The availability of war as an opportunity for courage seems to be responsible for the confidence of the courageous man. In other words, there is a causal relationship between nobility and confidence, where the latter is the product of the former. I need to take a step back in order to properly flesh out this argument. We know that the virtue of courage is a mean of two passions—fear and confidence—and also that the noble is the *telos* of properly courageous action. Following, Aristotle suggests that while the fear proper to courage is motivated by the prospect of death, the confidence proper to courage is motivated by the

32. The courageous man remains steadfast in the face danger at sea and in sickness, but is "disgusted with this sort of death" (*NE* 1115b2). The absence of nobility from such dangers make them unsatisfactory for the man seeking to develop and affirm the virtue of his own character.

33. Again, I must stress, and will go on to explain, that this is the *essence* of nobility, not the *perception* of it held by the courageous man; in his own right, he experiences his noble deeds as wholly self-forgetting

34. The perfection of man's moral character is, in turn, the means by which he becomes happy (*NE* 1098a5-18; 1099a23-30).

opportunity for noble action (*NE* 1115b4-6). This means that war plays a crucial role not merely for the good of the *polis* but also for the courageous man: it enables him to pursue the noble. It is on account of this opportunity that the courageous man's confidence is stirred. Without war, he cannot be confident, since his confrontation with danger would not be noble.[35] The battlefield is that which inspires his confidence: it provides him the opportunity, with the only opportunity, for noble action.[36] I further argue that in acting for the sake of the noble, the courageous man acts for his own sake, for he "acts in accord with and for the sake of the characteristic or virtue he possesses" (Collins 1999, 134).[37] He is noble on account of his dedication to his own virtue.[38] In addition to battle being the proper context for courage, which, as I suggested, points to the primacy of the individual, what other evidence does Aristotle present in support of the thesis that nobility is a self-directed good?

Aristotelian nobility can be characterized as self-directed on account of the exalted self-love of the virtuous man. The virtuous man is the man who "secur[es] for himself what is noble" (*NE* 1169a21-22) and he is "a self-lover" (*NE* 1168b29; also *MM* 1212b4-5). In reference to the courageous in particular, Aristotle says that in dying for others, "they thus choose some great noble thing for themselves" (*NE* 1169a26).[39] In serving the good of the *polis* the man of courage effectively "assigns to himself...the greater good" (*NE* 1169a29). Because he loves the noble above all, the courageous man is able to part with his safety and even his life: since life is for him a lesser good than nobility, this trade of lesser goods for a greater

35. Nobility requires the union of two provisions: a grave risk to one's life and conferring a benefit to something lofty. War satisfied both of these requirements. That the city must be of a certain kind was discussed in the previous section of this chapter.

36. Susan Collins agrees with this interpretation of Aristotelian courage and insists that "in showing his prowess as a man or dying nobly, if it is necessary to die, such an individual is willing to suffer death only in an action in which he exercises his own virtue" (Collins 2006, 53).

37. Sarah Broadie agrees with this interpretation of the noble as primarily conducive to the good of the individual. She reasons that "the agent who does A because it is noble to do it does A as one who, by the doing of this independently right action, renders *himself* noble or fine" (Broadie 1991, 93).

38. In the context of discussing friendship, Aristotle identifies noble deeds as beneficial to oneself, in addition to the obvious benefit they confer on others: "...the good person ought to be a self-lover - he will both profit himself and benefit others by doing noble things..." (*NE* 1169a12-13). Stewart correctly points out that because the noble man is intensely devoted to his nobility, or as he says, "he cares only for Human Perfection," he takes advantage of any situation that furthers the nobility of his soul, even "at the cost of his bodily life" (Stewart 1973, 2:381).

39. I should note that Aristotle does not say this with certainty and instead prefaces the statement with "this is perhaps what happens."

one makes noble actions self-directed rather than selfless. Moreover, the risking of one's life is ultimately done for the sake of a private good, though it may not be perceived as such—having a noble soul—not a public one and not even the good of a friend.[40] Noble acts—whether liberal, magnificent, moderate, or courageous—always involve sacrifices: the lover of nobility "will give up money, honors, and in general, the goods that are fought over" (*NE* 1169a20-21). While the sacrifices involved in nobility are obvious, the end toward which they are directed is easily obscured: it is not one's community or friends that are the primary benefactors of one's noble sacrifices but one's own soul. In giving up the lesser goods—money, life, political offices—and in benefiting others in the process, the lover of nobility "manifestly allots more of the noble to himself (*NE* 1169a35).[41] If then, the zealous pursuit of nobility impels one to secure the greatest possible nobility for oneself, the noble must be a primarily *personal good*. In other words, the nobility of one's own character is that which turns out to be one's greatest good and hence, the noble is primarily perfective of the individual. Aristotle exposes the self-directedness of the noble very clearly in his discussion of the magnanimous man. Ronna Burger observes that greatness of soul, as a moral virtue, has the noble as its *telos;* and yet at the same time, the great-souled man cannot be said to act for the sake of the *kalon* (Burger 2008, 83). He cannot be said to act for its sake in the sense that he cannot be said to act for the sake of anything outside of himself, since, as Aristotle notes, magnanimity is "some kind of

40. In Chapter 8 of Book IX, Aristotle climaxes the argument that one's best friend is ultimately oneself. It would follow that human happiness depends not on the possession of friends, but on one's ability to secure the truly good, like nobility, for oneself. For a full account of the development of this argument, see Lorraine Pangle (1999, 171-202).

41. The self-directedness of nobility, as Hardie (1968, 328) correctly points out, does not make Aristotle's view of human nature a cynical one. Likewise, Smith claims that "there is nothing sordid [and] nothing gross" (Smith 1889, 46) about Aristotelian self-love. Aristotle's characterization of the virtuous man as a self-lover needs to be understood in the context of his reformulation of the term "self-love." Being a conventionally pejorative term, "self-love" connotes selfishness. The Philosopher addresses this common usage, as he says that to most people the self-lover, who is solely concerned with himself, is diametrically opposed to the noble man, who disregards his good for the sake of his friend's (*NE* 1168a28-35). Aristotle insists that this dichotomy rests on a misconception and seeks to correct it: the man who loves the *self* which desires objects like bodily pleasures and money is not the real self-lover; the man who secures the noble for himself is the real self-lover; the *self* is that which stems from the most authoritative part of man—his reason. "Just as a city and every other whole composed of parts seem to be their most authoritative part above all, so too does a human being" (*NE* 1168b32-33). When a base man loves himself, he loves himself "merely because he is himself" (*MM* 1212b22). There is nothing further to justify his self-love, for it is unreflective of the quality of his character. It is based only on the fact that his self is his own. The good man, however, loves himself because he loves nobility and his character is a reflection of it. Thus, he only loves himself because his character has ascended to a state worthy of love.

cosmos" (*NE* 1124a1-2). If magnanimity is a kind of cosmos, in the sense that it contains and completes all of the individual moral virtues, then its possessor himself must be "the subject in which the beautiful is incarnate" (Burger 2008, 83). Therefore, when the magnanimous man acts magnanimously, the *telos* of those actions is the nobility of his own soul—he acts for himself insofar as he is the true representation of the noble. There is no higher nobility than that which he embodies, since he unifies the plurality of virtues and his character is the epitome of moral excellence.[42]

There is a real risk of overemphasizing the self-love that lies in the heart of the love of nobility. The virtuous man is depicted as a self-lover whose apparently selfless act are, in fact, the testament to his selfish quest to secure for himself moral beauty. At the same time, however, Aristotle nowhere suggests that this is what the morally virtuous person experiences. It is not incidental, as Ronna Burger argues, that the discussion of self-love does not take place in the chapters on the virtues (Burger 2008, 176). In those chapters Aristotle provides an internal perspective on virtue—he speaks of it, as the virtuous man understands it. The courageous man, for example, does not perceive his sacrifice as a self-interested pursuit of his own good. Only when observed from the outside does action for the sake of the noble begin to reveal itself as a powerful means of serving one's personal good. I believe that in spatially separating these two perspectives, Aristotle seeks to stress their divergence: books III to V of the *Nicomachean Ethics* reveal morality from the internal perspective of the virtuous person, while Book IX provides an external evaluation of the motivations of the moral agent. From the latter perspective, the courageous man's self-sacrificial striving for the noble is shown to be the product of lofty self-love. This, however, is not and *cannot* be the self-understanding of the virtuous man. That would destroy the very fabric of morality, understood as the primacy of "the right thing" over "the good for oneself." The moral agent experiences his sacrificial acts

42. John M. Cooper (1999, 266) has an interesting interpretation of the noble as the end of virtuous action. He argues that Aristotle's morally virtuous person has three distinct ends when performing virtuous acts: Cooper refers to them as "values" and he claims that they are the good for oneself, the noble, and the pleasant. There is some merit to Copper's analysis, since Aristotle indeed claims that virtue is noble, good for oneself in the sense that it is conducive to happiness, and also pleasant. At the same time, Cooper's argument is more radical than mine, for he implies that the virtuous person is consciously motivated by all three of these "values." That is to say, every time he performs a virtuous deed—remaining steadfast in battle, for instance—he clearly has all three values in mind, where his own good and pleasure are pursued as consciously as the noble. This, as I will proceed to argue, does not seem to be the way in which Aristotle portrays the psychology of the virtuous man. While virtuous activity is indeed held to be both pleasant and good for the virtuous man, the agent himself is not in conscious pursuit of these goals when aiming at the noble.

as genuinely other-directed and other-serving. He does not sacrifice lesser goods for the sake of obtaining the greatest good for himself; instead, he does it because he is convinced that it is the right thing to do. In effect, the moral agent is not fully aware of the self-directedness of nobility; if he were, the noble would cease to be beautiful, as it would be reduced to something useful; the noble requires one to believe himself acting for the sake of others. To put it more concretely, the man of courage suffers battle wounds not because he thinks it is good for him, but simply because his beloved city is a noble cause worth fighting and suffering for. The ethical root of virtue—self-love—is unknown to him and in effect, his moral experiences are genuinely pure: he displays the self-forgetting indispensible to morality. From the internal perspective of the moral agent then, the noble appears to be other-directed and, therefore, not neatly conducive to the individual's happiness. In this sense, Aristotelian morality cannot be adequately vindicated from a moral standpoint. The necessary naiveté of the moral agent precludes him from grasping the lofty self-service of his apparently selfless actions. Once we step outside the psychology of moral virtue, we begin to see that the virtuous man does not truly know himself. In being convinced that his noble actions serve others, he fails to see that they are primarily self- directed: he procures the noble for himself and thereby perfects his moral soul.

3.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter sought to address the most immediate objection to moral virtue's conduciveness to happiness: the apparent other-directedness of the noble as the end of virtue. Nobility appears to be the act of sacrificing one's own good for the sake of benefiting others. Understood in this way, the end of virtue does not seem to lead to happiness; indeed, the two stand in conflict with each other. Yet, I have argued that Aristotelian morality, when examined externally, looks wholly different. Not only is the virtuous man indifferent to the esteem in which others hold him, but more importantly, in aiming at the noble, his actions secure a good that is primarily his own: the nobility of his own soul. Therefore, as the end of virtue, the noble is not in conflict with, or unrelated to, happiness: it directly contributes to the happiness of the individual by obtaining a good indispensable to it. The full development of one's

moral character is something without which, Aristotle suggests, *most*[43] men cannot be truly happy. For this very reason, children and animals are seen as incapable of happiness. At the same time, moral perfection requires the mastering of the passions by reason and virtuous exercises for the sake of the noble. Noble acts are indisputably good for their object, whether that is the *polis* or one's friend. Of much greater importance, however, is the benefit that these acts confer on their subject: they ennoble his soul and thus enable him to be praiseworthy to himself, and ultimately, a self-lover. As the product of noble deeds, self-love is not only harmonious with, but also conducive to, happiness. While this is a truth that the naiveté indispensable to morality prevents the moral agent from clearly understanding, it is a truth nonetheless: his self-love stems not from the benefits he confers on others, but from the nobility he attains for himself through the performance of "selfless" acts

43. The philosopher stands as the definitive exception to this rule, as I will explain in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 4

PLEASURE AND PAIN: THE SECOND CHALLENGE TO HAPPINESS INTERNAL TO MORAL VIRTUE

4.1 Introduction

The second discernible challenge to the *eudaimonism* of moral virtue—and in particular to the virtue of political courage—is the experience of pleasure and pain. Pleasure poses a notable challenge to the link between courageous activity and happiness because its opposite, pain, appears to define exercises in courage. This chapter attempts to investigate, and ultimately salvage, the relationship between pleasure and courage in light of the often ambiguous arguments of Aristotle. I will argue that despite the pain courage entails, its exercise is nonetheless pleasant to the courageous man. In order for one to recognize the ultimate pleasantness of courage, one must embark on a long and laborious journey through the Philosopher's subtle presentation of the concept of pleasure; the pleasure involved in this journey is as inconspicuous as that associated with Aristotelian courage.

I examine the pleasure and pain of courageous action in the following manner. In the first part of this chapter, I show that Aristotle characterizes pleasure[1] as a good, and more importantly, as a component of both happiness and moral virtue; therefore, moral virtue and happiness agree in their possession or exhibition of pleasure. The second part addresses the undeniable painfulness of courage: remaining steadfast in the face of fear of death contains both physical and psychological pains; this makes courage seem like a primarily painful moral virtue and therefore, one unlikely to make its possessor happy. Yet, the understanding of political courage as chiefly painful betrays the subtlety with which Aristotle weaves pleasure into courageous action. He effectively weds pleasure to courage by means of two main arguments: that pleasure is an inherently heterogeneous thing and that habituation molds the human experience of pleasure. The third part of this chapter addresses the first of these arguments by showing how Aristotelian pleasure falls into different, hierarchically ordered, categories; hence, there are higher and lower pleasures

1. Or rather, certain pleasures, since Aristotelian pleasure is anything but a homogeneous concept, as I will proceed to show in this chapter.

which turn out to correspond to higher and lower kinds of activities. In effect, both the pain associated with courage and its alleged pleasure must be compared accordingly: if its pains are shown to be of an inferior kind to its pleasures, then the argument that ethical virtue is pleasant to the morally virtuous person would no longer seem unreasonable.

I then move on to address the crucial role of habituation in the cultivation of pleasure and pain—Aristotle's second argument, mentioned above. Like the moral virtues themselves, Aristotle insists that the pleasures and pains accompanying them are largely the product of education: good education produces men who take pleasure in the correct or "natural" things. Moral education is thus a broad concept that encompasses sentimental education, where a pupil attains not only a proper disposition toward the passions, but also a proper experience of the pleasures and pains associated with them. In this sense, the pleasure characteristic of courage is a learned pleasure, and because, as I will go on to argue in Parts IV and V of this chapter, it is deduced from the love of nobility, it is a learned pleasure of the highest kind.

4.2 Pleasure in Happiness: Situated within Moral Virtue

Aristotle maintains, and often repeats, that pleasure is essential to a happy life.[2] In other words and contrary to the view of some, pleasure is a vital ingredient of human happiness, rather than a hindrance to it: "the truly happy man will also have the most pleasant life" (*EE* 1249a19). "Most people assert that happiness is accompanied by pleasure" (*NE* 1152b6), says Aristotle, and he finds this assertion to be a reasonable one. Yet, at the same time, when he discusses the three lives in Book I of the *Nicomachean Ethics*—each of which believes itself to be the authoritative path to happiness—the Philosopher hastily dismisses the life of pleasure as a serious contender. Now, what is particularly interesting, and more important than this dismissal, is the concession he makes to pleasure-lovers: they "suppose, not unreasonably, that the good and happiness are pleasure" (*NE* 1095b16-16). On the one hand then, the life of pleasure is the "life of fatted cattle" (*NE* 1095b20) and thus incapable of elevating man to happiness; pleasure-lovers

2. At this point, it is worth noting that there is a qualification to this thesis namely, that the pleasure accompanying the happy life must be of the correct kind. It is the ignorance of this qualification that leads opponents of pleasure as such to deny that happiness and pleasure are at all congruent. Aristotle addresses their position in Book VII of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

hold the belief that pleasure as such, which is to say any pleasure, is conducive to human happiness. Yet, on the other hand, it is not unreasonable of the many to equate happiness with pleasure; in other words, the equation is a sound one. From the looks of it, pleasure appears to be both uncharacteristic and characteristic of happiness. At first sight, Aristotle's position seems contradictory, but luckily, the puzzle it contains is not difficult to solve: "the many and the crudest" (*NE* 1095b15) err in assuming that indiscriminate indulgence in pleasure can make one happy; they are mistaken that all pleasure or any pleasure are part of the happy life; yet, these same people are "not unreasonable" in noting a connection between pleasure and happiness. This connection, however, is not the causal mechanism that they hold it to be, where pleasure directly produces human happiness. Instead, Aristotle holds that the former always *accompanies* the latter: happiness contains pleasure, but not just any pleasure and not pleasure alone; furthermore, in merely containing pleasure, happiness cannot be said to be "produced" or "caused" by pleasure (*NE* 1153b14-15).[3] Neither pleasure by itself nor pleasure understood as the totality of its manifestations is happiness: it falls short because it is not sufficient for happiness, because only certain kinds of pleasures are compatible with the happy life,[4] and because happiness is never the direct result of pleasure—while we cannot be happy without pleasure, we cannot achieve happiness by aiming at pleasure directly. Ultimately, then, the pleasure-lovers err in two distinct ways: first, it is not pleasure as such, or any pleasure, but the right kind of pleasure that is a part of happiness; and second, happiness is not found by aiming directly at pleasure, but is instead supervened or accompanied by pleasure.[5] To repeat, Aristotle calls hedonists "not unreasonable" due to the partial correctness of their opinion: pleasure cannot be separated from happiness and hence, "we also suppose that pleasure must be mixed into happiness" (*NE* 1177a23).[6]

Having established that Aristotle sees pleasure as a constitutive part of the happy life, we need to determine the place of moral virtue within this scheme. Specifically, is pleasure a component of happiness

3. To the argument that a certain kind of pleasure may, in fact, be the best thing or the ultimate good, Aristotle replies—"For this reason, all people suppose the happy life to be pleasant, and they weave pleasure into happiness - reasonably so" (*NE* 1153b14-15).

4. I will address the heterogeneity of pleasure and its corresponding ranking of the pleasures later in this chapter.

5. I will address the precise way in which pleasure supervenes happiness—by supervening activities constitutive of happiness—later in this chapter.

6. "Happiness, therefore, is the best, noblest, and most pleasant thing; and these are not separated" (*NE* 1199a25-26).

alongside moral virtue, in the way that wealth and health seem to be, or is it situated within moral virtue? To put it very simply, in belonging to the happy life, is pleasure an ingredient of moral virtue or not? Luckily, Aristotle is unambiguous in his answer to this question: notwithstanding the pleasures independent of moral virtue that partake in the happy life—such as the pleasure of eating a fine meal—what is primarily pleasant in happiness is moral virtue. At the offset of Book II of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the Philosopher notes that "the pleasure or pain that accompanies someone's deeds ought to be taken as a sign of his characteristics" (*NE* 1104b5-6). Moral virtue, as we know, is a characteristic of the soul and since pleasure and pain accompany every passion and every action, and since virtue is concerned with passions and their respective actions, it must also be concerned with pleasure and pain (*NE* 1104b14-16; 1105b23-27). The pleasures and pains of man are thus both, products of moral virtue and moral vice and also confirmations of their existence. Here, Aristotle uses the moderate and courageous persons as examples of pleasure's reflectiveness of virtue and vice: "he who abstains from bodily pleasures and enjoys this very abstention is moderate, but he who is vexed in doing so is licentious; he who endures terrifying things and enjoys doing so, or at any rate is not pained by it, is courageous, but he who is pained thereby is a coward" (*NE* 1104b6-9). Human pains and pleasures are thus indicative of the presence of moral virtue for the simple reason that they are products of it: the good man experiences the performance of good deeds as pleasant, while the bad man experiences it as painful. This formulation implicitly ties the pleasure found in the happy life to moral virtue.

In case the implicit link of moral virtue to pleasure is insufficient for persuading the reader, Aristotle provides a number of more explicit statements. For instance, in Chapter 8 of Book I of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, we are shown that from the perspective of the virtuous person, the "good" and the "pleasant" overlap in their application. In an attempt to respond to the charge that noble acts, though grand, are difficult and painful, the Philosopher argues that the life of moral virtue "is pleasant in itself" (*NE* 1199a6). Each person, Aristotle says, feels pleasure "in connection with whatever he is said to be a lover of" (*NE* 1199a9). The love of horses and the love of theater are the two examples outside the realm of moral virtue provided to illustrate this point. While anyone can spend time with a horse or go to the theater, it is only the lover of horses and the lover of theater who take pleasure in doing these things. Similarly, different kinds of

men can abstain from bodily pleasures, but only the one taking pleasure in the abstention is moderate; the others are merely continent. Ultimately, the person who does not enjoy his moral behavior is, in fact, not acting morally (*EE* 1237a8-9). On the flip side, the moral person's pleasure stems from his love of morality. This said, one should not take Aristotle's position to be that virtuous men behave morally for the sake of pleasure. On the contrary, the gentleman would choose moral virtue even if he were to receive no pleasure from it (*NE* 1174a8-9). It is when he behaves virtuously for its own sake that he experiences pleasure: pleasure comes on its own without being directly pursued, as a kind of spontaneous gift that cannot simply be grabbed. Thus, equally important to the presence of pleasure in virtue is the indirectness of pleasure in virtue: it comes without being aimed at and hovers over one's virtue. The pleasures and pains one takes in virtuous deeds signify the extent of one's virtuousness, because they are borne of it; this makes them yardsticks of virtue and vice. Painted with this broad brush stroke, the life of moral virtue appears to contain or produce pleasure, nobility, and happiness in perfect harmony with one another. Yet, the virtue of political courage challenges this serene picture very potently: where is the pleasure in physical pains and the prospect of death?

4.3 The Presence of Pain in Courage

The painfulness of courage is unsurprising. One need not possess much intellectual astuteness to infer that facing death on the battlefield is a notably painful act. Aristotle himself explicitly says that "courage is in fact a painful thing" and "it is because they endure painful things...that people are spoken of as courageous" (*NE* 1117a33-34). Though most of us would agree that the pain of battlefield courage does not require thorough confirmation, I believe that it nonetheless begs for an explanation.

Aristotle seems to distinguish between two qualitatively different kinds of pain in courageous action: physical and psychological pain, or pain of the body and pain of the soul. Given the Philosopher's unwavering emphasis on the superiority of the human soul over the body, we may confidently infer that the latter type of pain must be more significant and thus more troubling than the former. In steadfastly facing death in battle, the courageous man first and foremost feels pain in his soul; his body also undergoes pain

which, although inferior, is nonetheless added to the pain of the soul in forming the overall painfulness of courage. I will address these two kinds of pain in an ascending order.

Most conspicuously, the man of courage endures purely physical pains; these are the pains stemming from the necessities of military combat. In Chapter 9 of Book III, the Philosopher testifies to the painful character of courageous acts by comparing them to the labors of boxing: "for to boxers...being struck is grievous and, given that they are made of flesh and blood, painful, as is all the exertion involved" (*NE* 1117b 4-6). Not unlike boxers, men of courage too are made of flesh and blood and in addition to being struck, they are likely to face the cold steel of a blade in battle. Battle wounds, along with hunger, fatigue, and the unforgiving blows of the elements are all things involved in battlefield courage. Their painfulness is conspicuous and undisputed. It seems fair to say that the analogy of courage to boxing is meant to emphasize the purely physical pains that accompany this moral virtue. The pains of the flesh are thus the first and most obvious way in which courage is a painful thing. Yet, as I noted earlier, the conspicuousness of the physical pains accompanying courage is offset by their relative insignificance. Aristotle contends that the realm of the body—including the pleasures and pains that belong to it—is secondary and inferior to that of the soul.[7] In effect, whatever physical pain the courageous man may face, the severity of that pain is insufficient for challenging the *eudaimonism* of moral virtue. This conclusion, of course, is contingent on the alleged pleasure in courage being of a non-physical kind: courage can be redeemed as pleasant despite the physical pains involved in it, provided that the pleasure it contains pertains to the soul. We can find clear evidence of Aristotle's conviction that the pains and pleasures of the body rank lower than those of the soul in the *Eudemian Ethics*. There, the Philosopher argues that bodily pleasures carry a grossly exaggerated importance: "But the pleasures of the body have monopolized the name because they are the ones

7. The *Politics* provides evidence of Aristotle's conviction of the superiority of the soul to the body: "So if the soul is more honorable than both possessions and the body both simply and for us, the best state of each must necessarily stand in the same relation as these things [among themselves]. Further, it is for the sake of the soul that these things are naturally choiceworthy and that all sensible persons should choose them, and not the soul for the sake of them" (*Pol.* 1323b15-21). In *The Parts of Animals* we read, "As every instrument and every bodily member subserves some partial end, that is to say, some special action, so the whole body must be destined to minister to some plenary sphere of action. Thus the saw is made for sawing, and this is its function, and not sawing for the saw. Similarly the body too must somehow or other be made for the soul, and each part of it for some subordinate function, to which it is adapted" (Aristotle 1882, 645b); and in *Generation of Animals,* "...also Soul is better than body, and a thing which has Soul in it is better than one which has not, in virtue of that Soul" (Aristotle 1943, 731b).

we most often come across and the ones all people share; so because they are the only ones people recognize, they think them the only ones there are" (*EE* 1153b33-1154a1). The association of pleasure and pain with the purely physical realm is thus "a falsehood" that only "appears true" (*EE* 1154a24).[8] After discussing the reasons behind this erroneous judgment at some length,[9] Aristotle announces that the highest kinds of pleasure are those that "do not admit of excess" (*EE* 1154b15). We are given a single example of such a pleasure: the pleasure of contemplation, which belongs exclusively to the soul. Ultimately, the pleasures of the soul, and in particular that of contemplation, are the highest in Aristotle's classification of pleasures in the *Eudemian Ethics.*[10] Since, then, bodily pleasures are inferior to the pleasures of the soul, the pains of the body must also be inferior to those of the soul. As such, the indisputable physical pains accompanying exercises in courage are not particularly severe according to the hierarchy of pains. Their presence does not pose a great challenge to the *eudaimonism* of moral virtue if the declared pleasure of courage proves to be a soul-based one. In that case, the courageous man would submit to small pains and receive great pleasures, thus making courage significantly pleasant despite being slightly painful.

Having rejected physical pain as a serious challenge to the *eudaimonism* of courage, I find the pain stemming from one's fear of death to be much more consequential. The courageous man is primarily pained by the prospect of losing his life—a life made particularly worthwhile by the possession of virtue.

8. At the beginning of the *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle examines the hedonist claim that the life of pleasure is constitutive of happiness. After identifying the pleasures to which hedonists refer as those of the body alone, the Philosopher then addresses the relationship between bodily pleasure and happiness. If happiness can be said to contain certain pleasures, those are not, Aristotle argues, bodily pleasures (*EE* 1216a36). While the happy person does indeed experience bodily pleasures at certain occasions, his happiness is not on account of those pleasures. While bodily pleasures are necessary to prevent the obstruction of virtuous activity (*EE* 1153b18), as they are processes that restore us to our natural state, "perhaps" man's happiness "is on account of quite different pleasures that he is rightly thought to live a life that is pleasant and not merely painless" (*EE* 1216a36-38); these, I believe, are the pleasures belonging to the soul.

9. This discussion, located in *Eudemian Ethics* 1154a8-1154b35, is not pertinent to my project and so I will not delve into it.

10. In chapters 12-14 of Book VI of the *Eudemian Ethics,* Aristotle presents a five-fold hierarchical classification of pleasures. At the very bottom lie the pleasures of the infirm, which Aristotle insists cannot be deemed pleasures at all. Right above them are what he calls "coincidental pleasures:" those of food, drink, and sex that have the remedial effect of restoring something deficient to its natural state. Next are the aesthetic pleasures of the senses. These are divided into two classes according to the rank of the senses involved: the pleasures of touch and taste rest beneath those of sight, hearing, and smell. Finally, the pleasures of the mind, which also belong to the realm of the soul, are situated at the very top.

It is this pain then, and not the pain stemming from physical exertion, that poses the greatest challenge to the *eudaimonism* of political courage as a moral virtue.

I see man's fear of death as invariably conducive to psychological pain and Aristotle seems to as well. To begin, the Philosopher posits that the endurance of psychological pain is an important element of courage: "it is because they endure painful things, as was said, that people are spoken of as courageous" (*NE* 1117a32-34). The "as was said" clause, as pointed out in a footnote by the translators, refers to section 1115b7-13, where Aristotle speaks of exclusively human fears, the most severe and uncontested one of which is the fear of death. No reference is made to anything physical, only to fear. This leads me to believe that the "painful things" mentioned here must refer to the "psychological pain" one experiences when one fears something. Indeed, it does not seem counterintuitive that fear—the anticipation of something evil—would cause pain and one only need look as far as the *Rhetoric* for the Philosopher's explicit affirmation of it.

At the beginning of Book II of the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle introduces the topic of the passions, defining them as "all those feelings that so change men as to affect their judgments, and that are also attended by pain (*lupe*) and pleasure (*hedone*). Such are anger, pity, fear, and the like, with their opposites" (*R* 56).[11] Following this general characterization of the passions as proper subjects of pleasure and pain, the Philosopher goes on to discuss ten distinct passions, each in its own right. Of these ten, six are explicitly defined as instances of pain[12] and most notably, fear is among them: "fear may be defined as a pain or disturbance due to a mental picture of some destructive or painful evil in the future" (*R* 65).[13] So, it is

11. The association of the passions with pain and pleasure is not unique to the *Rhetoric* and occurs standardly in Aristotle's thought, his ethical writings in particular. See *NE* 1105b23, *EE* 1220b13-14, and *MM* 1186a13-14.

12. It is worth noting, since there is some debate in the secondary literature, that Aristotle characterizes these six passions as *instances of pain*, not as merely *accompanied by pain*. On this point, I am in agreement with Stephen Leighton (1996) who argues that pleasure and pain *include* the passions, rather than *walk alongside them*. His essay "Aristotle and the Emotions" also offers a good discussion on the similarity and difference between the pleasures and pains contained in the passions: is the pain felt in fear unique to fear or is it interchangeable with the pain of shame; do the passions and pleasures of the passions differ only in number and intensity or is there a qualitative difference between them?

13. A few qualification of fear are then made which, although not pertinent to my argument that fear exudes pain, are nonetheless interesting: the evils to which Aristotle refers must be "destructive or painful," not evils like wickedness or stupidity; also, they must be imminent, not in the distant future. Martha Nussbaum captures these qualifications nicely when she says that "the object of a person's fear must...be an evil that seems

clear that Aristotle sees pain as a central feature of many of the passions and as the essence of six of them, among which is fear. What is less clear, however, is the precise way in which the fear of death is an instance of pain.

Along with moderation, courage is a virtue of the irrational part of man's soul. As Saint Thomas Aquinas explains, moderation is concerned with (sensual) pleasures and pains, which are found in the concupiscible part of the soul and courage is concerned with the passions of fear and confidence located in the irascible portion of man's soul (Aquinas 1993, 196). Furthermore, courage and moderation seem to belong to the irrational part of the human soul not only on account of the passions they govern, but also due to the particular objects of those passions: moderation is concerned with the pains and pleasures associated food, drink, and sex, (*NE* 1118a2-24), and courage with the fear of death. These two passions are irrational because they are shared by man and beast alike (*NE* 1118a24-26). Animals too are pleased by food, drink, and sex and pained by their absence; likewise, the fear of death belongs equally to both. Yet, as Harry Jaffa correctly points out, there is something unique about the human fear of death, which makes it qualitatively different from that of beasts: "the fear of death because 'it is the end,' certainly distinguishes the human fear from the merely animal fear" (Jaffa 1973, 85).[14] Indeed, human beings seem to fear death on the basis of a foresight and an appreciation of life that are exclusively human. While beasts cannot comprehend that the pain preceding their death culminates in the termination of their lives, men can. The irrevocability of death, or the fact that it represents a point of no return, is a fact only the human mind can grasp. Only we are aware of our own mortality.

Man's awareness of his own mortality is inextricably bound with the pain accompanying his fear of death, conscious and fearful as he is of losing the goods he has acquired throughout his life when he dies.

---

capable of causing great pain and destructions, one that seems to be impending, and one that the person seems powerless to prevent" (Nussbaum 1996, 307). Then, with respect to confidence, while the Philosopher does not mention pleasure in its definition, he does say that confidence essentially involves "the expectation associated with a mental picture of the nearness of what keeps us safe and the absence or remoteness of what is terrible" (*R* 66); I owe this insight to John Cooper's *Reason and Emotion* (1999, 245). This discussion, then, provides clear evidence that Aristotle defines fear in terms of *lupe*, and there is some, though weaker, evidence that he correspondingly defines confidence, and the emotions that involve pleasure, in terms of *hedone*. Now, since fear, not confidence, is the primary passion constitutive of courage, courage looks to be chiefly painful.

14. Jaffa describes the way in which animals fear death as fear of the pain associated with the things that precipitate death, not as fear of death's finality or as fear of the termination of the good that is life.

Since the goods of the virtuous man—his virtues of character—are greater than material goods, his attachment to life would also seem to be greater. His virtues are hard won and rare. The intensely painful fear of losing them that necessarily accompanies exercises in courage is therefore understandable: "And the more he possesses complete virtue and the happier he is, the more he will be pained at the prospect of death. For to this sort of person, living is especially worthwhile, and he is deprived of the greatest goods knowingly—and this is a painful thing" (*NE* 1117b10-13). Ultimately, this is the psychological pain belonging to courage—the painful fear of losing the goods of life—that challenges this moral virtue's ability to be pleasant and thus, to make its possessor happy. Harry Jaffa observes that the progression of pain in fear of death which corresponds to the progression of virtue makes the exercise of virtue increasingly difficult: "the action of courage, involving the possible loss of life, requires even more virtue just because a virtuous sacrifice is a greater sacrifice" (Jaffa 1973, 86). Unlike Jaffa, however, I would argue that this is not an insurmountable problem. I believe that the solution lies in one's love of nobility and proper education in pleasure and pain, the former of which I have discussed in the previous chapter and the latter of which I will address later in this chapter.

There is a noteworthy discrepancy in Aristotle's treatment of the relationship of courage to pleasure between Book III and Book IX of the *Ethics*. In the former (*NE* 1117b1-20), he shows courage to be a painful thing: just like the boxer takes a lot of hard and painful blows, the courageous man too feels pain when facing danger on the battlefield. Moreover, "the more he possesses complete virtue and the happier he is, the more he will be pained at the prospect of death" (*NE* 1117b10-12). Then, in Book IX Aristotle argues that self-sacrificial noble action, in fact, provides one with "a short period of intense pleasure" which he shows to be preferable to "a long one of mild enjoyment" (*NE* 1169a17-26). The ultimate discrepancy between the two passages lies in this: exercises in courage are shown as painful in Book III, while they are explained as pleasant in Book IX. Jaffa offers a potential reconciliation of the two, which I, however, think is mistaken. He says that "the only point at which [they] appear reconcilable is the qualification at the end of the former, that the exercise of courage is painful, except in so far as it reaches its end" (Jaffa 1973, 55). Moreover, Jaffa argues that in the context of the passage in Book III, the "end" simply means conquering and not dying. The only way in which courageous action itself can

be shown to be pleasant is by reading this passage retrospectively, from the passage in Book IX. Jaffa then concludes that Aristotle is ultimately speaking of two different kinds of courage: a lower one in Book III and a higher one in Book IX. The exercise of ordinary and imperfect courage is painful, while exercises in heroic courage are pleasant. In response to this interpretation of Jaffa's, I contend that Aristotle does not refer to two species of courage and instead, Book IX only qualifies the initial presentation of courage. I, like Aquinas, believe that every definition or description of courage in the *Nicomachean Ethics* refers to perfect courage. Thus, even Aristotle's earlier definition of courage in Book III implies the presence of prudence, which is something Jaffa rejects. How do the two passages fit together, then? I believe that Aristotle seeks to portray courage as both, painful and pleasant. In effect, the statements in Book III and those in Book IX are both partial truths about the experience of political courage. The fact that the courageous man of Book III chooses courage in spite of the pain it causes him testifies to his belief that life, even a good life, is a lesser good than nobility. The noble and pleasure share an important commonality: they are both strongly influenced by education to the extent that man can be habituated into loving nobility and feeling pleasure in noble accomplishments. I will address this pedagogical phenomenon in the fourth and fifth parts of this chapter.[15]

4.4 Aristotle's Conception of Pleasure

While the pain associated with exercises in courage poses a serious problem to the *eudaimonism* of moral virtue, that problem it not insurmountable. I will try to show that for Aristotle, pleasure is an intricate concept whose essence is such that it renders it malleable, and thus subject to education. The things in

15. The effect of an education in courage is that the pleasure of courage comes to supersede the pain associated with it: courage is more pleasant than painful, since the pleasure accompanying nobility is great. In effect, the courageous man chooses the noble and endures pains, but ultimately secures for himself greater pleasure than the absence of those pains. The question of why Aristotle chooses to delay the subject of the pleasure of courage until Book IX is a pregnant one and the subject of much debate. Since it is not intimately tied to the topic of this dissertation, I will abstain from thoroughly addressing it. I shall only make the preliminary suggestion that the delay may be necessitated by two things: first, Book III abstains from addressing the pleasure of courage because the concept of prudence has not yet been introduced and since moral virtue does not exist apart from intellectual virtue, there is a way in which prudence impacts the pleasure-pain calculus of courage; second, the topic is delayed because it needs to be prefaced by the discussion of the heterogeneity of pleasures that takes place in Book VII.

which man takes pleasure are not unrelated to the things that he esteems. In effect, pleasures and pains—or rather certain pleasures and pains, since Aristotle does not see pleasure as a homogeneous concept—are products of cultivation. As was the case with nobility, pleasure and pain too will prove to be amendable by a certain kind of education. An education in pleasure, in turn, defines the things in which the courageous man takes pleasure or feels pain and the extent of the pleasures and pains he experiences. Ultimately, I will seek to show that the pleasure felt by the pursuit of the noble far exceeds the pain of fearing one's pending death. This then, is where my argument is headed. The first step in this process of vindicating courage as pleasant is to understand the essence of Aristotelian pleasure: what is its genus, how does it function, is it one or many, and is it predetermined by nature or susceptible to manipulation?

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle addresses the subject of pleasure on two separate occasions.[16] The first discussion takes place in Book VII, chapters 11-14, following the examination of the phenomenon of "lack of self-restraint."[17] Here, the Philosopher, or he "who philosophizes about the political art" (*NE* 1152b2), takes up the task of "contemplating what concerns pleasure and pain" (*NE* 1152b1); as Ronna Burger puts it, his primary concern is "what constitutes pleasure according to nature" (Burger 2008,154). He discovers that pleasure is an activity—unimpeded or unobstructed activity— and not a movement of restoration, as its critics hold it to be (*NE* 1153b8-14). Real pleasure or pleasure *par excellence* is the pleasure of the unobstructed use of man's faculties. For instance, the violinist who perfects the art of playing the violin, in turn, experiences pleasure as the hum of his excellent activity. To put it more succinctly, Aristotle argues that pleasure rests in the high-functioning of one's healthy parts. Next, Book X provides an account of pleasure, succeeding Aristotle's lengthy discussion of friendship, that is unique to the *Nicomachean Ethics*. In contrast with Book VII, this account focuses on exclusively *human* pleasure: it seeks to answer the question of whether there is a distinctively human pleasure or pleasures. It is also here that Aristotle warns the reader about overtly and hastily rejecting pleasure as the human good, as he himself did

16. There are, in fact, three discussions of pleasure in the *Nicomachean Ethics*: the two that I proceed to discuss (in Book VII and in Book X), and one in Book I. The last, however, is not comprehensive, as it consists of a rather superficial dismissal of pleasure as the good life. This discussion takes place prior to Aristotle's examination of pleasure and thus, it likely refers to pleasure as commonly conceived of, which is to say as the devotion to bodily pleasures.

17. This discussion of pleasure also belongs to the *Eudemian Ethics.*

in Book I; such a rejection, he holds, is ineffective and potentially injurious.[18] More importantly, Book X presents pleasure as a desirable *by-product* of activity (*NE* 1174b20-1175a22); this means that pleasure is now super-added onto something else. Even from this preliminary discussion of the two passages, it becomes clear that Aristotle's two treatments of pleasure contain interesting differences.[19] This said, it seems that what is most significant in the Philosopher's views on pleasure remains the same in both, though it is more fully developed in Book X than in Book VII. The standard for "significance" I use here is the topic of this dissertation: not the study of pleasure as such, but its role in ethical virtue. In light of this standard, the teachings of the two passages represent a single coherent doctrine. This doctrine, beginning with the genus of pleasure and culminating into pleasure's perfective effect on the active faculties of healthy and high-functioning men, paves the way to the ultimate conclusion that courage is pleasant to the courageous man.

4.4.1 The Genus of *Hedone*

Before setting out to show precisely the kind of thing that pleasure is, Aristotle addresses a number of prominent but ultimately mistaken views on the nature of pleasure. These views are mainly two and they are shown to be implicit in the opinions of those who deny the goodness of pleasure to various degrees. The first popular view belongs to those who hold that no pleasure is good, "for the good and pleasure are held not to be the same thing" (*NE* 1152b10). This erroneous belief, the Philosopher argues, rests on the understanding that pleasure, every pleasure, "is a perceptible process of coming into its nature" (*NE* 1152b13) or of coming-into-being. In other words, they hold that pleasure is a *genesis.* They identify

18. It is ineffective because in matters like these, speeches are far less credible than deeds (*NE* 1172a34-1172b7). See Burger (2008, 191-192) for a good articulation of this argument.

19. Aristide Tessitore suggests that the two separate discussions of pleasure are meant to address different audiences. The discussion in Book VII, which opens with an explicit address to political philosophers, is addressed to them or at least to potential political philosophers, whereas the treatment of pleasure in Book X and its minor treatments elsewhere "is subordinated to the moral-political horizon that dominates the *Ethics* as a whole" (Tessitore 1996, 63). The section on pleasure in Book X, therefore, has a wholly didactic concern (*NE* 1172a19-25). Furthermore, Tessitore argues that Aristotle's definition of pleasure as "unimpeded activity" is incomplete and remains incomplete throughout the Ethics. He suggests that its completion is to be found in the Philosopher's purely philosophical works like the *Metaphysics,* where the divine activity of the prime mover is identified with pleasure (Tessitore 1996, 67).

pleasure as the path of return toward the natural or healthy state of an organism. For instance, one finds drinking pleasant because one's body is deprived of fluids; upon quenching his thirst, he no longer takes pleasure in drinking and, in fact, may even experience it as painful. The pleasure one feels when drinking is the process of restoration of the body to a properly hydrated state. In effect, pleasure is a restorative process of coming-into-being, thus implying the presence of a deficiency from the perspective of man's natural state. Following, given that pleasure is a *genesis*, it cannot be good since what is good must be a *telos* rather than a *genesis*: goodness is stable and permanent and thus, has to belong to the end or else it is only transitional and hence, not good. This is the first popular conception of pleasure that Aristotle sets out to refute. He argues that the pleasures to which proponents of this view refer—the restorative pleasures—are not real pleasures, only incidental ones: they signify the negative state of the removal of pain rather than the positive state of experiencing pleasure. By contrast, that which is essentially pleasant, like smelling a rose or listening to music, is not relative to any lack and thus, does not lead to satiety. Real pleasure is not replenishment and it presupposes that its subject is already in a healthy or natural state.[20] Having established that pleasure is not a *genesis*, Aristotle proceeds to confirm it cannot be a *kinesis* either.

Aristotle likens *kinesis*, or motion, to the construction of a house. The act of building a house, as we know, is wholly distinct from its end product, the house that is built. Therefore, a *kinesis* is not complete at any given moment but only once its end is reached; this is the precise moment at which it ceases being a motion, because it no longer moves upon reaching its end (*NE* 1152b13-15; 1174a20-23). It follows that pleasure cannot be properly understood as a motion, as it is whole at every moment, despite the possibility of it being experienced in various degrees. For instance, the pleasure one feels when he smells a rose is full the moment it begins; it does not go through transitional stages until it reaches completion; it thus does not "move" through gradually perfective stages. Following, the pleasure of smelling a rose does not in itself

20. As W. F. R. Hardie points out, there may also be a purely logical reason behind Aristotle's rejection of pleasure as a *genesis:* it is asymmetrical to that which it should be symmetrical to, its opposite. Pleasure cannot be a process of return to a natural state, or "a process of replenishment" (Hardie 1968, 300), because its proper opposite would have to be "a process of depletion" (Hardie 1968, 301). Pain, however, especially in terms of nutrition, corresponds to depletion, not to a process of depletion: one is pained when one's stomach is empty, not when one's stomach is becoming empty. A further testament to this is the fact that the pains of depletion do not cease the moment replenishment begins: while a cut or a burn is painful, the process of healing cannot be said to cause pleasure.

increase if it is prolonged. It is as perfect at the moment of its inception as it is hours later: men do not experience pleasure the perfection of which is derivative of its duration (*NE* 1174a17-18). A motion, by contrast, always "occurs in time" (*NE* 1174a20) and it is not complete at any given moment, but "only in the whole time involved" (*NE* 1174a28). Though pleasure can be caused by a motion, it is not itself a motion since a motion is time-bound and defined by change and incompleteness. Pleasure, Aristotle insists, is not of this sort, as "what resides in the 'right now' in the case of pleasure is something whole" (*NE* 1174b9). Since pleasure is neither a *genesis* nor a *kinesis*, and not inherently incapable of being good—those thinkers who deny that pleasure is good on the grounds that it is a *genesis* or a *kinesis* have simply misunderstood its genus— just what precisely it is along with the status of its goodness remain to be seen.

Given that pleasure, like seeing, has no beginning, middle, or end and is complete at any moment, Aristotle reckons that it must be an activity, *energeia.* The Philosopher explicitly characterizes pleasure as an activity in Chapter 12 of Book VII: "pleasures are not processes of coming-into-being, nor are all pleasures even accompanied by a coming-into-being; rather, they are activities and an end, and they do not occur when there is a coming-into-being but when [our capacities] are put to use" (*NE* 1153a8-11). Following, the definition of pleasure is refined: it is an unimpeded activity of a natural state (*NE* 1153a14-14; *EE* 1153a14).[21] In order to correctly grasp the idea of pleasure as an activity, an examination of the consequential differences within "pleasure itself" is necessary. As it turns out, Aristotle sees pleasure not as one but as many, and the characterization of pleasure as an unimpeded activity must be considered in the context of this heterogeneity.[22]

21. In the *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle briefly explains the sense in which a pleasure is "natural." He divides the pleasures into "natural" and "coincidental" and characterizes the latter as corrective of some kind of deficiency and thus, less genuine since they merely remove pain. By contrast, natural pleasures, or the unimpeded activities of the natural state, are "those that stimulate the activity of a healthy nature" (*EE* 1154b19). It becomes clear, as I will later discuss, that the Philosopher sees pleasure as a heterogeneous concept. At this point, it suffices to say that his definition of pleasure as an unimpeded activity of a natural state seems to refer to the highest type of pleasure, or pleasure *par excellence*, where "natural" carries the connotation of *healthy* or *perfected*.

22. There is an evident discrepancy between the Philosopher's definition of pleasure in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Rhetoric* that merits serious attention. While in the former work he characterizes pleasure as an activity and thus "not a transition, but a fruition" (Grant 1874, 1:247), in the latter he says that pleasure is "a movement, a movement by which the soul as a whole is consciously brought into its normal state of being; and that Pain is the opposite" (*R* 38). These two definitions are in obvious tension with one another and moreover, the one in the *Rhetoric* is explicitly rejected in the *Ethics* and attributed to anti-hedonists who on account of

4.4.2 Not One but Many

There are two different ways in which Aristotle draws a distinction between pleasures, though as I will proceed to argue, the first is only apparent, while the second is genuine and thus of real consequence. The first way of classifying the pleasures is according to the state of health of the person experiencing them: there are the restorative pleasures that lead to the perfection of a natural state, and natural pleasures experienced in an already perfected state. The former can also be called "incidental pleasures," since they are born out of deficiency and thus have a limit beyond which they cease to be pleasures: the pleasure of eating when hungry is an apt example, for its function is corrective and it admits of excess (*NE* 1152b33-1153a8). Furthermore, these restorative or curative pleasures require an organism to be in a state of illness and thus depend on pre-existing pains.

Natural pleasures, on the other hand, are pleasures in the strict sense: they represent a healthy organism's unimpeded activities. Since they are not born out of deficiency, they do not possess a limit beyond

---

it, hold the view that either all or most pleasure is bad: in the *Ethics* Aristotle insists that pleasure does not arise from our movement into a natural state, but from our employing it. The definition of pleasure in the *Ethics* is equally applicable to the high operations of the mind as well as the basic functions of the body, since even in the case of the pleasure felt by supplying a want, though the experience of pleasure is concurrent with the satisfaction of the want, the two are not identical. The definition of pleasure in the *Rhetoric* as something restorative, however, does not seem to account for the high pleasures, such as that of contemplation. Within the secondary literature, there are competing views on how to understand the glaring discrepancy between Aristotle's two accounts of pleasure. For example, Dorothea Frede (1996, 274) argues that Aristotle must have "changed his mind" and ended his "Platonizing period," because his conceptions of moral virtue and happiness matured. They matured in such a way that a specific problem in the Platonic account of pleasure became evident to him: if pleasure is a restoration of a defective state into a natural state, then perfect beings and perfect activities must be devoid of pleasure. Others, like Whitley J. Oates, attribute the discrepancy to the disparate purposes of the two works. He argues that unlike the *Ethics*, which is meant to put forth a unified theoretical system of moral virtue, the *Rhetoric* is only "a practical handbook for the instruction of public speakers in all the techniques and tricks of the trade" (Oates 1963, 333). In effect, the *Rhetoric* "moves into the realm of amoralism if not immoralism." It follows that the "truths" Aristotle professes to speak are no truths at all but means by which one can become an accomplished orator; an orator, in turn, does not need to grasp ethical or political truths in order to be successful. Both of these scholars caution the reader against taking the view expressed in the *Rhetoric* to be Aristotle's true conviction and thus, reject the presence of a close connection between it and the Philosopher's ethical writings. There are also others who share this position: John Cooper (1994) and S. Halliwell (1994). Even those who insist that there is an ethical dimension to Aristotle's *Rhetoric* tend to separate the pleasure discussion from the question of the moral insight of the orator and, in turn, dismiss it as strictly rhetorical: see Gisela Striker (1996, 286), Markus H. Worner quoted by Troels Engberg-Pedersen (1996, 116), E. M. Cope (1867, 235), and W. M. A. Grimaldi (1980, 243-246).

which they cease to be pleasures. Contemplation is a natural pleasure in the fullest sense, because it accompanies the high functioning of a healthy mind and contains no limit.

Within the curative category, pleasure can be properly characterized as a *genesis*, as it is indeed a process that leads to the perfection of one's natural state. Yet, since pleasure is neither a *genesis* nor a *kinesis*, this category must be faulty: the restorative pleasure of eating is no pleasure at all, as it has a beginning, a middle, and an end. At the same time, as Aristotle correctly observes, there does seem to be a pleasure associated with the act of eating when hungry. What precisely is this pleasure if not in the restoration of a natural state? I want to argue that the pleasure in curative processes, such as eating, is something *simultaneous* with the process of restoration. Simply put, I draw a distinction between the restorative act and the pleasure accompanying it: the removal of the pain of hunger is distinct from the pleasure of eating. If one's hunger were to be satiated through intravenous therapy, one would not experience pleasure despite the fact that his depressed organs are being restored to their natural state. Undoubtedly, one's pain would be removed, but the removal of the pain of hunger is not the same as the pleasure of chewing a flavorful piece of steak; the former pertains to the fullness of the stomach, while the latter to the sensation in the taste buds. This means that the term *genesis* applies to the removal of hunger, and not to the pleasure of eating contemporaneous with it. The taste buds of the hungry person, unlike his stomach, are not in a depressed state and thus the pleasure they experience is not curative; it is not a motion from sickness to health. Instead, it is an *energeia:* the unimpeded activity of a natural state. Thus, while there seem to be two distinct pleasures associated with the act of eating—the pleasure of taste (natural and an *energeia*) and the pleasure of filling an empty stomach (curative and a *genesis*)—only the former is truly a pleasure; the latter is the mere removal of pain. Since the two are contemporaneous, they are often either mistaken for one another or mistaken for being two types of the same thing—pleasure. Ultimately then, I reject the classification of pleasures on the basis of the function they serve as deceptive and ultimately unhelpful.[23]

23. Aristotle's initial classification of pleasures—into curative and natural—is, I believe, not genuinely held to be true by him. He seems to take a conventional or popular view on the taxonomy of pleasure, assert that it is authoritative, and then stress its misleading character: "whatever restores us to our natural characteristic is pleasant only incidentally" (*NE* 1152b34-35). In other words, the Philosopher pretends to support this popular classification of pleasure only to point out its great flaw: it incorrectly mixes semblances of pleasure (curative "pleasures") with real pleasure (natural pleasures). I therefore take his discussion of the first classification of pleasure to be a subtle attack on the conventional and authoritative view of pleasure.

Pleasures cannot be divided between curative and natural, for there are no curative pleasures; there are only pleasures contemporaneous with curative processes.

As I mentioned earlier, there is a second, sounder, way in which Aristotle categorizes the various pleasures. He insists that the pleasures differ in kind because the activities that those pleasures accompany themselves differ in kind (*NE* 1175a21-76a29). Because men possess different faculties and thus engage in different activities in accordance with those faculties, the pleasures corresponding to them also differ from one another: thinking, seeing, and tasting are three distinct human activities stemming from different faculties. It follows that there is no *Pleasure* as such; there are only specific pleasures which differ in kind in light of the activities they accompany. Moreover, Aristotle contends that the pleasures differ not only in kind but also in worth, as they are hierarchically ordered in accordance with the value of their corresponding activities. Thus, the lowest pleasures are those that accompany the lowest activities and the highest pleasures those that accompany the highest activities. To put this more concretely, the lowest ranked pleasures are the ones associated with the basic needs and activities of the body: the pleasures of food, drink, and sex foremost among them. Aristotle views these pleasant bodily functions as necessary, but not choiceworthy in themselves; more precisely, since they ought to be practiced within the right measure, which is determined by necessity, they cannot be choiceworthy in themselves (*NE* 1154a7-18). Because there is a natural excess of bodily goods—a point after which they cease to be good for oneself—the pleasures attached to them also admit of excess (*NE* 1154a14).

Then, there are pleasures not associated with necessary physical activities but with activities that are desirable in themselves: such are virtue and contemplation. In this same category we find certain activities that only come to be desirable through accidents or perversions of development, like cannibalism. There are also pleasures within this second class—the pleasures not associated with physical needs—that are neither intrinsically good like contemplation nor perversely desirable like cannibalism: these are pleasures belonging to the activities productive of wealth, honor, and victory. Ultimately, the distinction between pleasures on the basis of the kinds of activities they accompany culminates in the argument that the pleasure attached to the activity "belonging to a complete and blessed man" (*NE* 1176a27) is the highest. This, then, is the standard by which the pleasures are ranked: the better the activity, the better one is fitted

to it and disposed to carry it out, and the better the object of that activity, the higher the quality of the corresponding pleasure.

On the basis of this second account of pleasure, the genus of pleasure as *energeia* becomes clear. By ordering pleasures hierarchically according to the quality of the activity they accompany, Aristotle binds pleasure and activity together, while indicating that they are nonetheless distinct. Pleasure emerges as something that *accompanies* a given activity, but which is not itself an activity. The activity is thus the primary and fundamental thing, as it informs pleasure.[24] Since Aristotle ranks the various pleasures by determining the worth of the activities to which they correspond, the primacy of the activity to pleasure becomes uncontested.[25] So, what exactly does it mean for pleasure to be an *energeia* that *accompanies* an activity?

4.4.3 Pleasure Supervenes Activity

In Book X, Aristotle presents pleasure as the added grace to the activity of a living being when it is in its natural state, or at its best: when we are doing something really well, then pleasure supervenes "like the bloom of youth" (*NE* 1174b35). Therefore, in characterizing pleasure as *energeia,* Aristotle does not, in fact, seem to argue that it is an *energeia* capable of standing on its own. Instead, it always attaches itself to an activity; in this sense, "pleasure is the grace note" (Burger 2008, 195) on that activity. To put it in slightly different terms, pleasure is not one thing but many, as different pleasures correspond to different activities and adding pleasure to a good activity makes it even better. It is, therefore, not enough to say that pleasure is *what happens* when we are in a good condition and are active; one must add to this point

24. The ethical bearing of the distinction between pleasure and activity becomes explicit in Chapter 5 of Book X (*NE* 1176b24-29). There, Aristotle contends that since pleasure comes from, or belongs to, an activity, the supreme good cannot be pleasure; it can only be the best activity. To put this in context, we should note that in this final discussion of pleasure Aristotle mediates a debate between two extreme positions. On one extreme is Eudoxus, who claims that pleasure is the good, the supreme good. On the other is Speussipus who holds that pleasure is entirely base—a position often adopted for pedagogical purposes, in order to have a good effect, not because it is believed to be true.

25. It is due to the primacy of the activity to pleasure that Aristotle finds himself unable to answer the question "is pleasure good?" This question cannot be answered, because there are only pleasures; there is no "pleasure" as such. Which pleasures are good, which are bad, and which is best is not established according to *how pleasant* the pleasure in question is, but by the rank of the activity it accompanies.

the further idea that pleasure plays a role in complementing something other than itself. Singing well and the pleasure of singing well always occur together, where the latter is a product of the former. This makes the two not only inextricable, but also easy to confuse with one another. Aristotle seeks to avoid precisely such confusion: when he says that pleasure completes an activity by supervening it, he suggests that the activity complemented by pleasure is already perfect, where the pleasure is an added bonus that serves no further purpose. Taking pleasure in an activity does help to improve the performance of that activity, but enjoyment does not cease when perfection is achieved; on the contrary, at this point pleasure is at its peak.[26]

But just how does all this bear on my argument that exercises in courage are, above all, pleasant to the courageous man? To recap: since pleasure is neither a *genesis* nor a *kinesis*, but instead an *energeia* that always attaches itself to an activity—and intensifies in accordance with both the intrinsic worth of the activity and the quality of its execution—then one's experience of pleasure and pain must be derivative of the activities one performs. When one either engages in bad activities or in good activities poorly, or both, he experiences pain; when the opposite is the case, he experiences pleasure. Pleasure and pain could then be the product of education or habituation: when one is habituated into performing choiceworthy activities he begins to experience them as increasingly pleasant the better he gets at executing them. It is thus not inconceivable that courageous exercises are pleasant to the courageous man, since a noble deed is an activity higher than comfortable self-preservation and as we know, the higher the activity, the higher the pleasure affixed to it. Moreover, and this seems crucial for Aristotle, the repeated performance of courageous deeds improves the quality of their execution and this, in turn, increases the pleasure that hovers over them.

In the next two sections of this chapter I address this phenomenon in a less abstract and more systematic way: what is the effect of habit on pleasure and how can the pleasures and pains human beings experience be molded, so that the pursuit of the noble is pleasant?

26. Aristide Tessitore puts this very nicely in *Reading Aristotle's Ethics*: "The activities of both sense perception and thought have corresponding pleasures that become most acute when the activity is executed in the best possible way. The pleasures do not inhere in the activities themselves, but rather 'come to be in addition' " (Tessitore 1996, 99; *NE* 1174b31-33).

4.5 Habit Cultivates Pleasure

4.5.1 The Purpose of Moral Education

The purpose of Aristotelian moral education proves to be quite comprehensive: the morally virtuous person is not he who merely performs the deeds that accord with moral virtue, but he who enjoys performing virtuous deeds and is pained by performing base ones. Pleasure and pain thus act as the litmus test for ethical virtue. When observing exercises in virtue from without, a spectator is unable to determine whether the subject is truly virtuous, because his behavior would be identical to that of the person of self-restraint. The real test for the presence of moral virtue is the way in which the agent experiences his virtuous deeds, whether as pleasant or as painful (*NE* 1104b5-9). Therefore, the objective of moral education must be dual: to cultivate persons who not merely behave ethically, but who also take pleasure in so behaving.

Proper action and proper feeling are the two essential goals of moral education, which, according to Aristotle, can only be accomplished by habituation. L. A. Kosman articulates this argument very well when he says that "Aristotle's moral theory must be seen as a theory not only of how to *act* well but also of how to *feel* well; for the moral virtues are states of character that enable a person to exhibit the right kinds of emotions as well as the right kinds of actions. The art of proper living, we should say, includes the art of feeling well as the correlative discipline to the art of acting well" (Kosman 1980, 105). Educating man's pleasures and pains—sentimental education— is a difficult objective to fulfill, for it seeks to control not what a person does, but what is being done to him by his passions: the way in which one is affected must be brought into harmony with the way in which one acts upon the world.[27]

Human psychology is such, Aristotle establishes by his emphasis on sentimental education,[28] that a certain disposition is required in order to feel pleasure in some things (*NE* 1173b30-33). In particular, each person finds pleasure in that which he is a lover of: "...there is pleasure for each person in connection

27. Unlike Rousseau, Aristotle sees virtue as effortless. Self-restraint requires effort and a kind of self-overcoming, whereas virtue is not characterized by an internal struggle. Through habituation, the virtuous man ought to internalize virtue to such an extent that he longs for it. He chooses virtue not in spite of himself, but because it pleases him.

28. "Thus one must be brought up in a certain way straight from childhood, as Plato asserts, so as to enjoy as well as to be pained by what one ought, for this is correct education" (*NE* 1104b11-13).

with whatever he is said to be a lover of—for example, a horse is pleasant to the horse lover, a play to the theater lover" (*NE* 1099a9-10). Furthermore, I will go on to argue that there is a discernible connection between taking pleasure in what one loves and taking pleasure in what one perceives as good. Though the two do not necessarily overlap—the person who lacks self-restraint is a testament to this—they can be in agreement: upon being properly habituated from a young age, one invariably comes to love and thus find pleasant that which he has come to perceive as good. Ultimately, then, I believe that Aristotle's example of the pleasure of the horse lover points to the following conclusion: the perception of *x* as good leads to one's loving of *x* and subsequently to one taking pleasure in *x* provided one is properly habituated.

This causal link between goodness, love, and pleasure also seems to follow from Aristotle's characterization of pleasure as an *energeia*. There are many human activities of various goodness; when one perceives the goodness of an activity, whether correctly or incorrectly, he begins to delight in its performance—his pleasure increasing the better he performs. In saying that pleasure always accompanies an activity, Aristotle seems to suggest that it only accompanies certain activities and not others: if the agent believes his activity to be good he will be pleased by it, and if he believes it to be bad he will be pained by it. For example, the devout Christian feels pleasure in being charitable because he believes charity to be a divinely sanctioned good; similarly, he is pained by feeling prideful because he sees pride as the crown jewel of the seven deadly sins. If the pleasantness or painfulness that accompanies various activities is related to one's awareness of their goodness, then pleasure and pain (of the non-bodily type, since we are not hard-wired with respect to it) can be influenced by moral education.[29]

29. There are a number of scholars who agree with the argument made here, namely that moral valuations inform the experience of pleasure and pain. Erik Wilenberg (2000, 4; 34), for instance, divides pleasures into "sensory" and "propositional," the latter of which are influenced by one's values. Thus, a courageous man takes pleasure in facing danger in battle because he sees such activity as good, whereas a coward is pained by it since he sees self-preservation as a greater good than nobility. Similarly, Julia Annas insists that "the pleasantness of some virtuous actions cannot be appreciated in a way that makes no reference to the viewpoint of the agent, or to his conception of the good life and what it demands of him, or to what is seen by him as valuable" (Annas 1980, 290). This insight seems to be particularly pertinent to courage, for the act of remaining steadfast in the face of fear of death cannot be assessed for pleasure in a way that appeals to virtuous and vicious men alike. The act cannot be made appealing, let alone pleasant, to one who does not love nobility. Ultimately, then, one's conception of the good can influence what counts as being pleasant.

4.5.2 Sentimental Education

The relationship between goodness and pleasure is more complex than a strict correspondence between one's belief in what is good[30] and a consequent feeling of pleasure. While I maintain the importance of this link, the very existence of the person of self-restraint challenges it, or at least exposes its ambiguity: one can sincerely believe that excessive drinking is bad and still find it pleasant, in which case his temperance would be an indication of self-restraint rather than of the genuine virtue of moderation. If, as I suggest, this example does not amount to a refutation of the causal link between valuation and pleasure, then it must at least qualify it in some way. Aristotle's concept of moral education seems to entail more than the straightforward phenomenon of correct pleasures naturally springing from correct beliefs. The missing ingredient is habit.

In agreement with Plato (1988, 653a), the Philosopher insists that "one must be brought up in a certain way straight from childhood...so as to enjoy as well as be pained by what one ought, for this is correct education" (*NE* 1104b11-13). In the absence of this education, one grows up to be a man of self-restraint in the best case, a man who lacks self-restraint in the second best case, and a vicious man in the worst case. Sentimental education is particularly crucial for the young, because youth is the time when pleasures and pains are most susceptible to manipulation. Human youth carries with it an unparalleled intensity of passions, but also an impermanence of feelings and desires (*R* 78-79). Most importantly, the young have impulses and desires that are not deep-seated; they are whimsical and changeable and what is changeable can be changed. It is thus the fickleness of youth that makes this stage of human life most appropriate for sentimental education; desires and appetites can be directed, intensified, and moderated without much resistance, since entrenched habits and views are not yet formed.

30. Here and hereafter I use the terms "good" and "goodness" to connote not "the useful," as Aristotle's distinction between the good, the noble, and the pleasant does, but rather "the noble." In other words, I take a person's belief in what is good to capture his belief in what is praiseworthy, in what the end of his actions should be; in the case of the morally virtuous person, the good is "the noble" rather than "the useful." So, as I go on to argue that upon proper habituation "the good" and "the pleasant" converge, I mean to stress the connection between "the noble" and "the pleasant" rather than that between "the useful" and "the pleasant." "The good" is thus the ultimate good that man consciously aims for. While this good may be "the useful" in the case of utilitarians, it is "the noble" for the man of moral virtue.

Once youth passes, one becomes more resistant to change: as man's character is settled, it becomes less malleable; even the most cogent reasoning becomes inadequate for changing one's matured inclinations, or the status quo of the irrational part of man's soul. Intellectual education alone—an education of limited effectiveness— is suitable for mature persons: it can, in the best of circumstances, produce a man of self-restraint. Thus far, this much is clear: the proper pupils of sentimental education are the young, and so the cultivation of morally virtuous individuals must begin from childhood. What still remains unclear—and what will ultimately expose the inadequacy of "correct belief" for "correct pleasure"—is the design of the curriculum for sentimental education. By what means are the pleasures and pains of the young steered in the right direction? Aristotle's answer to this question is *habit*.

One can hardly overemphasize the role of habit in Aristotle's moral teaching. Among other things, habit is responsible for bridging the aforementioned gap between the things one sees as good and the things one experiences as pleasant. As I argued earlier, the *Ethics* provides ample evidence that man's experience of pleasure and pain is largely informed by his perception of good and bad. One is pleased by that which he loves; one's awareness of the goodness of an activity determines whether or not he will be pleased by it. At the same time, however, the existence of self-restraint and lack of self-restraint show a discrepancy between man's values and his pleasures: rather than the former informing the latter, the two can be in tension, thus producing an internal struggle the outcome of which is the victory of reason over pleasure (self-restraint) or of pleasure over reason (lack of self-restraint). This failure of harmonizing one's values with one's pleasures is, ultimately, a failure of education. More precisely, it is a failure of habituation: it is not that these men have not been *taught* what is good and, in turn, what ought to be pleasant, but rather that they have not been *habituated* into finding the good pleasant and the base painful. Since correct habituation is the means by which to avert both continence and incontinence, then it must have an important dual function: it shapes one's experiences of pleasure and pain and it simultaneously forms one's ideas of good and bad. The act of habituating someone into something involves countless repetitions of a given action; this, in turn, improves and eventually perfects one's performance of that action; the more one does something, the more he sees it as his own—as an expression of his character—and thus, as dear to him. At the same time, the more he does something, the more expert at it he becomes and thus the more he begins to experience it as

pleasant. Habituation aligns the good with the pleasant, which produces an individual characterized by internal cohesion; the inner struggles of both the continent and incontinent are foreign to him.

At this stage of the argument, it is worth noting that since habituation is the educational tool for the young, the ideas of good and bad instilled in them through it must be sub-rational. Since children's reason is not fully developed, their perception of right and wrong rests solely on what they see as their own: the activities they perform and the specific way in which they perform them are conceived of as good because they are theirs; they have a strong tendency to prefer the familiar to the foreign. In favoring the proverbial, they naturally begin to attach moral worth to it, where mere habit becomes an ethical conviction. It is at this stage, in youth, that the aforementioned link between what one sees as good and what one experiences as pleasant is formed and the two poles mutually reinforce one another: upon doing the same thing many times, children begin to see it as good and thus to find it pleasant. Likewise, as repetition increases their proficiency in a given activity, they begin to delight in its performance and thus perceive the pleasant activity as ethically good. Only upon reaching the age of reason can they examine the morality in which they have been habituated, though few people possess the capability and daring to do that; most simply reject it as false if the education has been bad or accept it as true if the education has been good. In the words of Aristotle, "education through habits must come earlier than education through reason, and education connected with the body earlier than education connected with the mind" (*Pol.* 1338b4-6).

The Philosopher addresses the habituation process on numerous occasions throughout his writings. In particular, he shows that the young can be steered to experience a given activity as pleasant by means of habitual exercise. In the *Politics*, Aristotle contends that the pleasure of playing a musical instrument is a thing acquired through practice. As musical training cultivates musical taste, pleasure becomes the natural response to good music. Ultimately, musical adults "enjoy in correct fashion through the learning that occurred in their youth" (*Pol.* 1340b38-39). This statement points to two different characteristics of the man who, as a child, has been habituated into the art of music: he comes to take delight in it and he comes to take delight in it *properly*, which is to say that he becomes an apt judge of what is fine music and what is not. The moral analogy to musical education is education in nobility: by habituating the young into moral

action, they become both experts and lovers of it, where pleasure supervenes its excellent performance as an added bonus.

The moral virtue of moderation provides the clearest example of sentimental education; due to its similarity to courage as a virtue of the irrational part of the soul, we can treat the two as roughly analogous. To live a moderate and controlled life is not pleasant to the young, the Philosopher says (*NE* 1179b33-35); hence, human beings are not drawn to this virtue by nature.[31] At the onset of the habituation process, the rule of thumb by which to cultivate moderation is to resists one's natural inclination, or stated differently, to resist that which is by nature pleasant: "we must drag ourselves away from it toward its contrary" (*NE* 1109b5). In more concrete terms, habituation into moderation entails the ongoing practice of measured eating and drinking; likewise, habituation into courage entails the practice of facing fearful things. These two processes, Aristotle argues, gradually but definitively discipline the pleasures and pains of young people. Then, once habit is firmly formed, moderate behavior "will not be painful" (*NE* 1179b37) and similarly for exercises in courage. Ultimately, then, habituation has the power to redefine pleasure and pain for human beings: when we habituate a child to act moderately or bravely, he initially feels some pain in doing it, as his natural inclinations run contrary to it; once moderation or bravery becomes a habit, however, he begins to take pleasure in them, since acting in accordance with habit is pleasant; when the habit becomes rigorous enough, he delights in acting bravely and is pained by acting cowardly.

Strangely, Aristotle is most explicit about the influence of habit on pleasure not in his ethical works, where the passions belong, but in the *Rhetoric*. It is there that he most unequivocally shows the formative power of habituation: "habits are also pleasant; for as soon as a thing becomes habitual, it is virtually natural; habit is a thing not unlike nature; what happens often is akin to what happens always, natural events happening always, habitual events often" (*R*, 38). According to this statement, habituation defines man's pleasures in an extremely powerful way: his habits become his "second nature," so to speak, in the sense that he takes effortless delight in performing the activities he is habituated into; without consciously willing himself to perform them, he is "naturally" drawn to them because they please him; habituation thus constitutes a kind of re-naturing of men, where the end result is a graceful harmony between what

31. Virtue, or being good, is only present by nature "through certain divine causes for those who are truly fortunate" (*NE* 1179b24), which is to say in virtually no one.

one sees as good and what one experiences as pleasant. In the case of courage, the repeated practice of facing danger becomes pleasant the more it is perfected; at the same time, because one does it for the sake of the noble[32] and perceives it as his own, he begins to see it as good and praiseworthy.

4.6 The Convergence of Pleasure and Goodness

As I argued earlier, habit serves the dual function of molding one's idea of the good and shaping one's experience of pleasure and pain. Education thus harmonizes the good and the pleasant: the courageous man finds his activity to be both praiseworthy because it is good and delightful because pleasure accompanies its excellent performance. Ultimately then, despite the undisputable pains associated with courage—the gravest of which stems from the fear of losing one's life—courage is nonetheless pleasant to the courageous man: he takes pleasure in standing his ground for the sake of the noble because habit has made him both value and delight in the noble. While courage draws our attention to the apparent tension between virtuous action and happiness—since it carries the prospect of death—this tension is not experienced by the courageous: while death guarantees the end of one's happiness, the *eudaimonia* of the courageous person is not hampered by this realization; he remains happy while alive despite knowing the risk his activity poses. Aristotle's man of courage, if he is to be happy, must necessarily understand his actions in the following way: he who fails to display courage on the battlefield fails to be virtuous and thus, abandons the condition for his own happiness. He cannot be happy with a life preserved at the expense of courage. At the same time, the courageous person cannot be happy if dead, but in circumstances where death and cowardice are the only available options, he would choose dying over the greater evil of having to live a base life. He chooses death over giving up his greatest good—his virtue—and so his apparent sacrifice is not, strictly speaking, a sacrifice but a measured choice of the lesser of two evils (Dempsey 2007, 41). A short statement in Aristotle's *Virtues and Vices* succinctly captures the psychology of the courageous person: "to courage it belongs...to prefer a fine death to base security" (Aristotle 1935, 1250a44-45). In short, he takes

32. The other-directedness of exercises in courage imposed on the young is crucial, otherwise they risk becoming mere lovers of danger rather than properly courageous. In effect, when habituating children in courage, the exercises they perform must have a clear justifiable external end; they must be performed on account of something other than oneself and, of course, on account of something good.

baseness to be lower than death and his happiness depends on this conviction: while he may have to part with *eudaimonia* upon dying, he is certain to part with it upon abandoning his virtue; moreover, in the first case he would be dead and merely incapable of experiencing happiness, while in the second case he would be wretched—a condition far worse than death, for it is characterized by one's experience of one's wretchedness. Thus, despite lacking "the good," the absence of "the bad" makes death superior to cowardly flight from battle; this, then, is why death is preferable to cowardice.

Death is, for the courageous man, the mere absence of life, whereas life is much more than the avoidance of death: he experiences life in terms of being "fully alive" and this is the ultimate source of his happiness. What it means to be fully alive is to be fully engaged in moral action. It is only in being fully alive that the virtuous man experiences happiness: his happiness thus hinges not so much, or merely, on avoiding the bad but on seeking the good. In effect, the avoidance of death simply does not make sense as the leading principle of life; the attainment of the noble takes natural priority over it, which explains why he risks his life in battle without compromising his happiness. He does not obsess with the obstacles at the expense of the goal: he does not permit fear of death, and the painfulness it entails, to distort life.

In addition to seeing moral vice as an evil far greater than death, the courageous man takes genuine pleasure in the excellent performance of courageous acts because his habit is his second nature. This is why, just as the temperate take pleasure in abstaining from drinking, the courageous take pleasure in remaining steadfast in the face of danger.[33] These two poles—the good and the pleasant—are synchronized

33. Some commentators find that the only way to reconcile Aristotle's identification of exercises in courage as painful and his insistence that virtue is pleasant is to attribute pleasure not to the exercises themselves, but to their end—nobility. This view seems to be supported by the Philosopher's analogy of the courageous warrior to the professional boxer: both are engaged in essentially painful activities, and both experience pleasure once their respective activities are successfully completed. Though this seems like a sensible interpretation of the relationship of Aristotelian courage to pleasure, I argue that it cannot be true on the grounds that it is inconsistent with the Philosopher's rejection of pleasure as a process of coming-into-being. Those who hold the view that pleasure is a process of coming-into-being implicitly identify pleasure as the end, not the process of becoming (*NE* 1153a7-9). As discussed earlier in this chapter, the view of pleasure as a *genesis* is rejected by Aristotle. To explain the relationship of pleasure to courage in these terms is to attribute to Aristotle the precise view that he labors to refute. In effect, the analogy of the courageous warrior to the boxer should not be taken as Aristotle's last word on that relationship. Yes, exercises in courage involve pains, and yet to admit of this is not to conclude that they are *purely* painful or that pleasure only belongs to the end: the end-means dichotomy is not the correct way to understand Aristotelian courage as it pertains to pleasure. Instead, one ought to search for pleasure and pain within the exercises of courage themselves, since they are ends in themselves.

by habituation and they continuously reinforce one another: the act of facing danger for the sake of the noble is enjoyed both because it is a habit and because "the agent delights in his achievement of something fine" (Burnyeat 1980, 77). The challenge to the pleasure of courage posed by the painful fear of death is thus surmounted in the following way: while the pain belonging to courage is not cleanly eliminated by the pleasure contained in it, that pain is offset and ultimately exceeded by the pleasure. Though there is pain in one's wounds and fear of death, the courageous man endures it without the slightest reluctance—the pleasure he feels in the exercise of his moral virtue trumps the pain. It outstrips it because courageous deeds are his "second nature." He has come to love them and thus to experience them as delightful. In Aristotle's view then, the man of courage takes pleasure in his virtuous activity and this is consistent with his being pained by doing what he might have to do in the course of exercising it; the end result is that courage is primarily pleasant to him, for the combination of pleasure and goodness outweighs the pain accompanied by the conviction that cowardice is base. In other words, while the downside of courage is that it is painful only in this one respect and otherwise both pleasant and good, its alternative, cowardice, is only painless insofar as it purges the fear of death; otherwise it is both base and unpleasant, since it is contrary to habit.

Aristotle's observation that different things are pleasant and painful to different people, or that pleasure and pain are products of habit, must not be taken as an indication of relativism. Instead, it testifies to his belief that not all human souls are healthy: the absolutely pleasant things, or the things "pleasant in fact" (*NE* 1176a16-20) are those in which the virtuous person finds delight. He is the mark of what is truly pleasant, rather than falsely pleasant as is the case with the base or corrupt person. He is a "complete and blessed man" and thus his pleasures are the authoritative pleasures, as his pains are the authoritative pains. Aristotle says that with regard to the noble, advantageous, and pleasant "the good person is apt to be correct [and] the bad person to err, but especially as regards pleasure" (*NE* 1104b33-34). The good person arrives at this correct experience of pleasure and pain by means of education or more precisely, by means of habituation. As one is habituated into finding the correct things pleasant to the correct extent and the same with pain, and provided he also aims at the noble, his pleasures will encourage him to continue performing virtuous acts and will thus confirm the cultivation of virtue within him. On the flip side,

as Julia Annas points out, incorrect pleasures, or pleasures in the wrong things, have the effect of "confirm[ing] the deplorable tendencies of the bad man since [they] will strengthen his habits of wickedness and weakness" (Annas 1980, 285-286). Ultimately, then, one's taking pleasure in the correct things is both a reward for and a confirmation of moral virtue.

4.7 Conclusion

I have attempted to show that the *eudaimonism* of courage in Aristotle's theory of moral virtue is not encumbered by the concepts of pleasure and pain. Despite the undeniable pains associated with courageous acts—the obvious physical pains and more importantly, the pain caused by fear of death—Aristotle maintains that the courageous person takes genuine delight in his activity. Since pleasure is neither a *genesis* nor a *kinesis*, but is instead an *energeia*, it accompanies and hovers over well-executed activities that are also perceived as good in themselves. The end is thus the activity and not pleasure: for instance, though pleasure always accompanies virtuous activity—and thus augments and enhances that activity—the pleasure is only a testament to the goodness of the activity rather than the motivation behind the activity. In other words, Aristotle maintains that the good, or virtuous activity, is pleasant and not that pleasure itself is the good. Pleasure is thus an invaluable supplement to moral virtue, but not its *telos*. The harmony between that which one values and that which one experiences as pleasant is established and buttressed by habituation: beginning at a young age, one's repeated exercises in courage make courageous activity both good and pleasant; the courageous man thus finds his activity both praiseworthy because good and pleasant because well-performed. Aristotle deems it necessary for courage to not only aim at the noble, but to also be pleasant (*NE* 1104b7-8). Nobility alone does not amount to virtue, but to mere self-restraint. The requirement that pleasure be a component of virtuous acts is born out of the very *eudaimonism* of moral virtue: if the life of moral virtue is man's path to happiness, then it must contain all of the chief human goods, including pleasure. Without being pleasant, moral virtue becomes defensible only on the grounds that it is noble and thus good in itself; it loses its luster as a means to happiness, since it deprives man of a crucial good and subjects him to a life of pain. It is, therefore, the *eudaimonism* of moral virtue that demands the presence of pleasure within ethical life. I have argued, hopefully not without merit, that Aris-

totle successfully meets this latter requirement—the pleasantness of moral virtue—by identifying moral education as habituation: man takes delight in that which he is accustomed to doing and in that which he does well; when it is noble acts that have been ingrained in him, it is in noble acts that he takes pleasure. Aristotelian *eudaimonia*—moral happiness—is therefore both compatible with pleasure and pleasurable. The account of pleasure in the *Ethics*, and especially in Book X of the *Ethics*, focuses on the pleasures that are inherent in, and not merely consequent to, virtuous activity. The self-contained activities belonging to the virtues possess their appropriate self-contained pleasures, where the agreement between the good and the pleasant is the product of correct habituation.

CHAPTER 5

REASON:
THE THIRD CHALLENGE TO HAPPINESS
INTERNAL TO MORAL VIRTUE

5.1 Introduction

The *eudaimonism* of Aristotelian moral virtue in general, and of political courage in particular, faces a third, less conspicuous but still considerable, challenge. Courage faces the problem of reason (*logos*) and its ambiguous place within the life of moral virtue. Before delving into the way in which reason poses a challenge to moral happiness, it is fair to say that even at first glance, its role within morality is anything but clear. Since moral virtue concerns itself with the proper state of the passions, it seems to govern the irrational part of the human soul, more specifically, the non-vegetative part, that "characterized by desire, and by longing in general" (*NE* 1102b31). Yet at the same time, this part of the soul also "shares somehow in reason inasmuch as it heeds it and is apt to be obedient to its commands" (*NE* 1102b32.33). Two distinct but related observations emerge from this early formulation of the role of reason: first, *logos* seems to somehow rule over the passionate part of the irrational soul; second, it must therefore play a crucial role in the perfected state of this same part, the state known to us as moral virtue. Since the focus of this project is Aristotelian courage, I will proceed to examine the status of reason within moral virtue alone, passing its role in the other three possible states of the desiring part of the soul—vice, self-restraint, and lack of self-restraint.

Upon deeper reflection, reason's role within moral virtue begins to look troubling. To begin, *logos* relates to the basic structure of the human soul: the Philosopher divides man's soul into two distinct but co-dependent, parts, the rational and irrational soul; reason thus defines roughly half of the human soul. No sooner than he introduces the concept of moral virtue does the Philosopher alert us to the prominence of reason within it: one of the earliest definitions of moral virtue states that it is "a characteristic defined by reason and as the prudent person would define it" (*NE* 1107a1-2). Thus, reason emerges as not only the dominant feature of the rational soul, but also as a central component of ethical virtue, whose own

place within the soul is yet to be determined. Whatever reason's role in man's psychology turns out to be, it seems to be, at least in part, linked to the operation of moral virtue. In effect, understanding the essence of ethical virtue and the happiness which it promises necessarily entails an examination of both reason's role in the rational soul and its possible involvement in the irrational: reason appears to, somehow, link the two parts of the soul.

Besides moral virtue in general, Aristotle also emphasizes the crucial role of reason within political courage: the courageous man endures frightening things "in the way that he ought and as reason commands" (*NE* 1115b13). In both of these cases, then—in ethical virtue as a whole and in courage as a particular virtue—reason performs an important function without which virtue would be impossible. The importance of its function is inferred by the fact that *logos* appears in the early definitions of both—moral virtue and courage—and yet, the evidence of its importance does little to clarify the precise role it plays in moral action. While we know that virtue must be accompanied by reason, or as Aristotle eventually specifies, "correct reason" (*NE* 1144b27) (*orthos logos)*, we know very little of what that means, aside from the fact that it somehow "commands." The task of this chapter is to dispel the fog surrounding the enigmatic role of reason in Aristotelian ethics.

While dispelling the fog is in itself a worthwhile task, it is also a means to a further end: responding to the challenge that reason poses to the *eudaimonism* of the moral realm. What we know of reason in the context of moral virtue is that it *commands*; the role of reason in ethics is thus notably authoritative. Depicted as such, reason poses a serious challenge to the self-sustained *eudaimonism* of Aristotelian morality: it implies, or may imply, the dominion of reason within moral virtue in a similar way to that asserted by the Socratic thesis that virtue is knowledge or wisdom. As reason—a genuinely extra-moral faculty—commands the passions, it may appear to rule them for its own sake. This possible relationship between *logos* and ethics is epitomized by Socrates who famously equates virtue with, or reduces virtue to, knowledge in the *Protagoras*: he oscillates between the terms "knowledge" and "wisdom" through the course of the dialogue (Plato 2004, 330a7-b1, b3-6) to essentially argue that the possession of theoretical reason guarantees all of the moral virtues. He who has proper knowledge, in effect, has proper virtues, because virtue is nothing more and nothing less than knowledge. Socrates compellingly reduces virtue

to knowledge, as he shows bad behavior to be the product of ignorance of the good; no one willingly does things he believes to be bad; wrongdoing is thus the result of erring about the good; when error is replaced with true knowledge, then good behavior (virtuous acts) naturally follows. He ultimately takes the position that virtue can be taught, for he characterizes courage as knowledge about what is terrible or frightening (Plato 2004, 361a-b). According to this logic, only ignorance of the terrible and frightening things leads one to advance toward the shameful and bad, namely toward the vices corresponding to courage (Plato 2004, 357a-e). Thus, actions that contradict virtuous behavior are always and *only* a product of ignorance of the good. Knowledge therefore, is sufficient for all of the moral virtues: knowledge of what is fearful would be courage, while knowledge of what pleasures are choiceworthy would be moderation. Similarly, in the *Meno* we see a portrayal of moral virtue whose very goodness hinges solely on the presence of reason. In particular, Socrates insists that courage is "a boldness that is as likely to be harmful as beneficial and that needs the addition of active wisdom [prudence] to be good" (Pangle 2014, 109; Plato 2004, 88b4-6).[1] What this means is that reason is the only unconditionally good thing about virtue and hence, that the choiceworthiness of virtue ultimately boils down to reason; it is both *inexistent* without reason and *exhausted* by reason. Virtue is thus no more and no less than reason. The Socratic position on the relationship between virtue and reason has notable implications in its own right and if shared by Aristotle, it poses an existential threat to the *eudaimonism* of moral virtue. Most obviously, it explains vice as a "certain failure of understanding" (Pangle 2014, 177) as opposed to an imbalance of the passions. Ultimately, if the commanding function of reason within moral virtue proves to be an affirmation of the Socratic thesis, then Aristotelian courage would have to be nothing more than "wisdom about what is to be feared and what isn't" (Plato 2004, 360d4-5). Conceived of in this way, courage, and ethical virtue as a whole, promises man a kind of happiness that it not moral but intellectual at core: by putting reason in charge of moral virtue, the Philosopher would effectively undo the self-sustained *eudaimonism* of moral virtue; he would transcend the realm of ethics and its distinctive feature, nobility, and would lodge happiness in wisdom while appearing to lodge it in moral action. This, I argue, is the challenge posed by the

1. In the context of this discussion in the *Meno*, Lorraine Pangle argues that the wisdom of which Socrates speaks is not "active" wisdom or prudence, as he explicitly says, but is instead theoretical wisdom. For her full argument, see *Virtue is Knowledge* (2014, 108-111).

apparently dominant, but ultimately unclear, role of reason in moral virtue. The murkiness of reason's role threatens to undercut the autonomy of Aristotelian morality by collapsing it into something beyond itself, into a kind of trans-morality normally associated with the contemplative or philosophical life. If reason definitively rules the passions, one gets the impression that morality is subservient to it. Reason would, then, emerge as a kind of end to moral virtue, where it commands the passions for its own sake. If reason simply rules and the passions are simply ruled, then the life of moral virtue—the life of noble acts done by properly affected persons—cannot be self-sufficient in producing human happiness: it would point beyond itself to the life of intellectual virtue. To put it somewhat differently, since reason is an integral part of moral virtue, is Aristotle's conception of moral *eudaimonia* ultimately an intellectualist one? Does the apparent primacy of reason within moral virtue not point to a demotion of the noble and a promotion of reason as the end of virtuous activity? Is this why Aristotle identifies reason—or rather a certain kind of reason—as the lynchpin of all the moral virtues (*NE* 1144b20-22)? If reason rather than nobility is the unifier of the virtues, it seems as though the collapse of moral into intellectual virtue is inevitable. This is the challenge to which I seek to respond in this chapter: the danger of having moral virtue gulped up by intellectual virtue through the apparent primacy of reason within the former. If Aristotelian moral virtue is indeed a self-sustained realm that promotes a way of life conducive to happiness, then it must be able to respond to the challenge of intellectualism.[2]

I will go on to argue that the Aristotelian conception of moral virtue employs reason in such a way as to evade the aforementioned challenge. Despite identifying reason as an integral part of ethical virtue,

2. The challenge to the *eudaimonism* of moral virtue posed by reason's seemingly dominant role within it is distinct from the challenge to moral happiness posed by the philosophical life. Although they both hinge on the centrality of reason in human life, their "locations" make them different: the former is internal to moral virtue while the latter stands outside of it. The question examined in this chapter—whether reason's commanding function within moral virtue culminates in the transcendence of morality—pertains to the inner workings of moral virtue. It challenges its independence as a self-sustained path to human happiness. It raises the question of the coherence and ultimate existence of morality as a distinct way of life. If, however, I am able to show that reason does not threaten the autonomy of moral virtue, the objection posed by reason as an *alternative* to the life of moral action remains. As I noted earlier, these two challenges are different and the overcoming of one does not imply the overcoming of the other. They must be treated separately and thus, I have devoted chapter 5 to the former and chapter 6 to the latter. In order for the life of moral virtue to be crowned a viable path to happiness it must both, resist collapsing into pure reason and persevere in the face of the contemplative life.

the Philosopher detaches the contemplative life—the life of pure reason—from the moral-political life by drawing a cleavage within reason itself. By dividing the rational soul into distinct parts with unique purposes and assigning expertise in moral virtue to one of these parts—namely *phronesis*— Aristotle manages to avoid the reduction of virtue to *logos.*[3] Ultimately, unlike the life of pure intellectual activity, the moral-political life hinges on the goodness of action, on the performance of virtuous acts for the sake of the noble. The centrality of action within moral virtue invariably results in the merely instrumental, but supremely important, role to reason. Thus, I insist that reason—prudence—is itself a means to moral action rather than its authoritative end, as its "commanding" function initially seems to suggest. As such, reason does not collapse the moral realm into intellectual virtue.

Ultimately, I will argue that Aristotle gives reason, or prudence, an instrumental role within moral virtue and thus retains the self-containment of the ethical realm; despite the seeming overlap between morality and philosophy via reason, the two spheres remain distinct due to the division of the rational soul into two disparate parts, of which only one turns out to be concerned with moral virtue. In effect, from the perspective of moral virtue, the Aristotelian soul is de facto tripartite: the vegetative part is situated at the very bottom; the existential alliance between the passions and prudence that constitutes moral virtue rests in the middle; and pure reason, or wisdom, sits at the very peak. I will go on to structure this argument in the following way: Part I addresses the Philosopher's conception of the rational soul, including its various components and their respective functions; following, Part II briefly explores the concept of "virtuous habit," which I take to be a mandatory precondition for the attainment and exercise of prudence; next, Part III looks at prudence and its precise function within the life of moral action; Part IV represents the climax of the chapter, as it argues that the fusion of prudence with the passions effectively renders the Aristotelian soul tripartite; and finally, in my concluding remarks, I try to make sense of the explicitly stated subordination of prudence to wisdom which, apparently, poses a serious challenge to my thesis and thus, to the self-containment of moral virtue as a viable path to human happiness.

3. This is indicated by his reference to the Socratic thesis. Aristotle's reflections on the Socratic position culminate in the assertion that while all of the moral virtues are not simply forms of *phronesis*, it is not possible to be good in the authoritative sense without prudence any more than it is possible to be prudent without moral virtue (*NE* 1144b30-32).

5.2 The Content of Aristotle's Rational Soul

Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics* signifies the near-completion of Aristotle's presentation of moral virtue. In it, he considers the relationship between ethical and intellectual virtue and in particular, the role of the latter within the former. The concept of reason is thus thoroughly examined only at the very end of the Philosopher's treatment of moral virtue, although the first five books of the *Ethics* contain numerous allusions to its importance for moral action: the formulation "in accord with correct reason," or "as reason commands" occurs frequently through Books I-V (*NE* 1103b32, 1114b29, 1115b11-13, 1119a20, 1119b13-15, 1125b35, 1138a10). The mystery of reason's stipulated role in moral virtue is finally resolved, or at least mostly resolved, in the treatise's sixth book, where Aristotle turns to the rational part of the human soul—or, as he often calls it, "the rational soul."

In the final chapter of Book I, the Philosopher divides the human soul into two main compartments—one rational, the other nonrational. He further subdivides the latter into two parts: the vegetative or nutritive part—"that which causes nutrition and growth" (*NE* 1102a33)—and the part "characterized by desire, and by longing in general" (*NE* 1102b30-31). These two compartments of the nonrational soul are distinguished not merely by the functions they perform but also by the relationship each has to reason. The former, Aristotle says, is not unique to human beings, as animals also posses it, and it fails to partake in reason in any discernable way. In contrast, the passionate part of the nonrational soul "does share in reason in a way" (*NE* 1102b13). One's desires share in *logos* in that they are "obedient to the commands of reason" (*NE* 1102b27), when one is virtuous. The identification of the nutritive part as bestial and the passionate part as responsive to the dictates of reason effectively draws a cleavage within the nonrational soul: it seems fair to say that according to the overarching logic of Aristotelian ethics and politics, the discrepancy between men and animals is more significant than the similarity between nutrition and desire as nonrational faculties. In other words, the fact that the desirous part of the soul obeys reason makes it radically different than the vegetative part despite their common place of "residence."[4] At any rate, in Book I of the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle presents the nonrational soul as having a dual structure that

4. As I will go on to show, the same approach—that of emphasizing differences over similarities—can be observed in Aristotle's presentation of the rational soul. There, he separates its two parts in an even more pronounced way.

hinges on the authority of *logos* and in Book VI, he moves on to address the composition of its rational counterpart.

Aristotle initially divides the rational soul into two different parts according to the essence of the thing each knows or seeks to know: "one part is that by which we contemplate all those sorts of beings whose principles do not admit of being otherwise, one part that by which we contemplate all those things that do admit of being otherwise" (*NE* 1139a7-8). In other words, one type of reason looks to that which is unchangeable and the other at matters of contingency; in effect, the two employ different kinds of thinking. The Philosopher thus effectively emphasizes the discrepancy between the two parts of the rational soul rather than their resemblance. He further stresses their divergence: "when it comes to beings that differ in kind from one another, the part of the soul that naturally relates to each is also different in kind, if in fact it is by dint of a certain similarity and kinship that knowledge is available [to the rational parts of the soul]" (*NE* 1139a9-12). This statement unambiguously underscores the difference between the two parts, as it reduces their similarity to a mere "dint." Incidentally, Aristotle's discussion of the rational soul corresponds to his aforementioned treatment of the nonrational soul, for he highlights the qualitative differences between its two parts rather than the similarities they share. Ultimately then, the kinship between the two parts—they both aim at knowledge—is overshadowed by the different object each has in sight: the things that do not admit of being otherwise are so different from the things that admit of being otherwise that they amount to an impregnable division within the rational soul. Aristotle labels its two parts "scientific" (*to epistemonikon*) and "calculative" (*to logistikon*), respectively (*NE* 1139a13).

It further turns out that the two parts also engage in different sorts of thinking (*dianoia*): the calculative part thinks practically *(dianoia praktike*), while the scientific part thinks theoretically or contemplatively (*dianoia theoretike*). In effect, the former happens to be very much concerned with choice (*proairesis*), since practical considerations invariably entail the need to choose one option among several; practical thinking deals with the here and now, with particularities on the basis of which one must discern the best course of action in a given context. Aristotle explicitly weds practical thinking to both choice and action in the following way: he says that it is "characterized by action or making" (*NE* 1139a28) and since moral action "is a characteristic marked by choice, and choice is longing marked by deliberation" (*NE* 1139a23-

24), practical thinking is the means by which one makes a correct choice about the specific way in which to act morally. Going back to the twofold division of the rational soul, it appears that the virtue of the calculative part is choosing correctly, while the virtue of the scientific part is correct theoretical thinking, which is to say finding truth for its own sake, and not for the sake of choice and action.[5]

The rough initial division of the rational soul—a division that leaves much about the respective functions of each part unclear—is soon refined, or rather, it is taken in a slightly different direction. Having stated that both practical and theoretical thinking are concerned with truth, Aristotle decides to start anew (*NE* 1139b14-15): he goes on to examine the different ways "by which the soul attains the truth" (*NE* 1139b15). Presumably, this approach will help to clarify the stipulated difference between theoretical and practical thought. The modes under which the soul attains the truth turn out to be five in number: art (*techne*), science (*episteme*), prudence (*phronesis*), wisdom (*sophia*), and intellect (*nous*).[6] Given the circumscribed character of my argument in this chapter, I will only try to determine the *kind of truth* each is concerned with—theoretical or practical—and will thus abstain from a comprehensive examination of each.

Beginning with science, the Philosopher contends that "what is knowable scientifically exists of necessity" (*NE* 1139b24), which is to say that it does not admit of being otherwise and is eternal. Sir Alexander Grant succinctly summarizes the main points of Aristotle's presentation of science in the following passage of his commentary: "It is demonstrative, starting from truths already known, and proceeding by means of induction or syllogism. Its premises are obtained by induction, but they must be more certain than the conclusion, else the knowledge of the conclusion will be not scientific, but merely accidental" (Grant 1874, 2:153). For our purposes, what emerges as decisive from Aristotle's presentation of science is that it must be situated within the theoretical part of the rational soul: it is concerned with the eternal and unchangeable, it seeks pure truth rather than correct action, and it has no relationship to the passions.

Following, Aristotle's discussion of *techne* is rather terse. He defines it as "a characteristic bound up with making that is accompanied by true reason" (*NE* 1140a11). Since *techne* is concerned with the

5. This formulation raises the following initial difficulty: Aristotle provides no explanation of the way in which theoretical thinking works beyond the statement that it affirms the true and it denies the false. The reader is left ignorant of the precise way in which it does that.

6. Note that *phronesis* is identified as the middle term of the five.

process of coming-into-being, it naturally deals with things that admit of being otherwise; it deals with things that start out as something and have the potential of becoming a number of different things. In this sense, *techne* (or that which pertains to making) is akin to practical thinking (or that which pertains to action) in that neither has a fixed object; its object admits of being otherwise. *Techne* and action thus both belong to the sphere of the contingent.

Intellect, or *nous*, pertains to "the principles of what is known scientifically" (*NE* 1140b34). In other words, intellect is tied to scientific knowledge, to its principles in particular; it is a kind of disposition that allows one to grasp scientific principles. As Claudia Baracchi points out "*nous* bespeaks the grasping of axioms and definitions—hence its role in granting principles and, subsequently, in the grounding of science...*nous* is the element of insight" (Baracchi 2008, 194). Calling it "the element of insight" is a helpful way to think of Aristotelian intellect: it is a rational agent that grasps universal principles and structures science in accordance with them. Intellect is thus the basis of science and as such, falls into the category of theoretical thinking, since it contemplates things that do not admit of being otherwise.

The remaining two intellectual virtues—wisdom and prudence—turn out to be the most crucial ones: as I will argue, they seem to subsume the other three and thus emerge as the two poles of the rational soul. To begin, wisdom is said to be "the most precise of the sciences" (*NE* 1141a16). The wise person knows what proceeds from principles but more importantly than this, he also "attain[s] the truth *about* the principles" (*NE* 1141a19). Wisdom is thus succinctly defined as the union of "intellect and science, a science of the most honorable matters that has, as it were, its capstone" (*NE* 1141a20-21). As the epitome of theoretical reason, wisdom extends beyond the realm of strictly human concerns; it deals with the things in nature that are more honorable or divine than human beings: "to take only the most manifest example, the things of which the cosmos is composed" (*NE* 1141b1).[7] Wisdom is characterized as the knowledge of the most honorable and divine things because it represents the union of *nous* and *episteme*: in wisdom,

7. As Claudia Baracchi points out, Aristotle may not be fully divorcing *sophia* from human concerns. She suggests that wisdom deals with the human things from a trans-human perspective, rather than from within the human-centered world. As such, wisdom "has to do with the situatedness of humans in what is not human, with the question of the proper place of humans in the *kosmos*...*sophia* entails the realization that human good is not the good without qualification - that what is good in human terms is not necessarily good vis-a-vis the other-than human" (Baracchi 2008, 210).

"*episteme* has been reduced to mere demonstration, with *nous* of first principles attached to it as something other—a "head" as it were" (Burger 2008, 119). In depicting wisdom as something that subsumes science and intellect, Aristotle effectively establishes it as the excellence of the theoretical part of the rational soul: *sophia* is the virtue of the part of the rational soul dealing with things that do not admit of being otherwise, with the good as such rather than with the strictly human good. The precise way in which theoretical reason is unlike its practical counterpart can only become apparent once the concept of prudence has been examined. This, then, is what I intend to do next.

Phronesis, along with *techne*, belongs to the calculative part of the rational soul (*NE* 1140a1-4). In both, reason is instrumental to an external end—its goal is not knowledge for its own sake—but while it is concerned with *making* in art, it pertains to *action* in prudence (*NE* 1139a27). The practical reason representative of prudence focuses on the truth about particular action-based circumstances. As such, prudence and wisdom differ entirely in that the content of wisdom remains the same—wisdom comprehends "the best of things in the cosmos" (*NE* 1141a22, 1141a33-b2) and those things are unchanging—while the content of prudence does not (*NE* 1141a24-25).[8] The content of prudence changes because it addresses human concerns in contingent circumstances: it looks at the specifically human truth about a specific here and now; this sense, its character is conditional in a dual way, since it deals with both the uniquely *human* condition and uniquely *circumstantial* conditions. Prudence is man's deliberative faculty: through it, one thinks about the actions that are good for him and for other human beings (*NE* 1140b7-9, 1141a27-28, 1141b12-14). Thus, prudence is concerned with the things than enable man to live well;[9] it is holistic knowledge of a particular thing—the human being. The work of a prudent person is "[to] deliberat[e] well" (*NE* 1141b11) about the human goods and more precisely, about the human goods "attainable through action" (*NE* 1141b13), since those are the goods that admit of being otherwise.

8. In the *Metaphysics,* Aristotle illustrates this point with the following analogy: while the content of health differs between humans and fish, the content of whiteness or straightness is always the same. Prudence is meant to be analogous to the former and wisdom to the latter (Aristotle 2004, 1074b26-27).

9. Since wisdom is indifferent to purely human concerns, it cannot be a means to attaining happiness: "For wisdom, on the one hand, will not contemplate anything as a result of which a human being will be happy (since wisdom is not concerned with anything that is coming-into-being), while prudence, on the other hand, does pertain to this" (*NE* 1143b19-22).

These introductory remarks about prudence have had a limited goal: to show how much Aristotle is at pain to distinguish it from wisdom. The Philosopher further stresses the discrepancy between *phronesis* and *sophia* by addressing the phenomenon of wise but imprudent people. In particular, Aristotle insists that Anaxagoras and Thales lacked prudence despite the fact that they knew the truth about things "that are extraordinary, wondrous, difficult, and daimonic" (*NE* 1141b8). They were imprudent because they were "ignorant of the things advantageous to themselves" (*NE* 1141b6-7) and were thus, ultimately, incapable of leading good lives. In contrast, Pericles is said to have been prudent since he was "able to observe the good things for [himself] and those for human beings" (*NE* 1140b8-9). The factual possibility of imprudent but wise, and also of prudent but unwise, persons underlines the cleavage within the rational soul, where the perfection of one part is not dependent on the perfection of the other. *Phronesis* and *sophia* are thus capable of functioning and even flourishing in the absence of one another. Though they are both kinds or parts of reason, they seem to be neatly autonomous and unresponsive, or at least not necessarily responsive, to one another.

Overall, by incorporating science and intellect into wisdom, Aristotle effectively establishes *sophia* and *phronesis* as the respective perfections of the two parts of the rational soul—the practical and the theoretical. As Ronna Burger notes, it is interesting that instead of asking how these two types of knowledge may be related to one another, Aristotle sets them in strict opposition, and even competition, with each other (Burger 2008, 116). As I will go on to show, he weds prudence to moral virtue and wisdom to philosophy, where each claims to produce happiness. In effect, the Philosopher highlights the separation between theoretical and practical wisdom by positing them as rivals.[10]

5.3 Virtuous Habit: a Precondition for Prudence

Before delving deeper into the function of prudence within the life of moral virtue, it is fitting to first show that the exercise of *phronesis* is itself preconditioned by something else: morally virtuous habit or habitual virtue. Aristotle insists that in order to be prudent, rather than merely clever, one must be habituated into

10. It is worth pointing out that unlike Aristotle, in the *Meno* Socrates identifies all of the virtues, moral and intellectual, as forms of prudence. He says that there is no genuine virtue without *phronesis* (Plato 2004, 88c-d).

performing morally virtuous acts.[11] I must now take a small step back in order to fully flesh out prudence's dependence on moral habit. The Philosopher says that prudence is the virtue of that part of the rational soul which is "involved in the formation of opinions. For both opinion and prudence are concerned with what admits of being otherwise" (*NE* 1140b27-28). Yet, while prudence is involved in the formation of opinions or beliefs, it is not itself a type of belief. A belief is something that "is already a specific assertion" rather than something being investigated and calculated, which is to say *deliberated* (*NE* 1142b13-16). In other words, while a belief is a foregone conclusion in the mind of the person espousing it, prudence is the *process* of deliberation on the basis of which that belief is formed. Now, while prudence may appear to generate the formation of beliefs through reason alone, Aristotle insists that it "is not solely a characteristic accompanied by reason" (*NE* 1140b28-29). It entails more than reason, and as proof of this he points to the fact that while things nested in reason alone can be forgotten, prudence cannot be (*NE* 1140b29-30). Hence, I argue that prudence presupposes the existence of habitual virtue in the desiring part of the soul. (*NE* 1144a29-32). As St. Thomas Aquinas points out, prudence cannot be forgotten by disuse but it can be destroyed "by the cession of right desire which, while remaining, is continually engaged with the things belonging to prudence, so that oblivion cannot come along unawares" (Aquinas 1993, 372). In other words, prudence must be preceded by, and act in concord with, correct desire in order not to degenerate into mere cleverness. Correct desire, as I argued in the previous chapter, is the product of ethical education or habituation: the expected result of habituation is "to feel delight and hatred in a noble way, just as must land that will nourish the seed" (*NE* 1179b26-28). Therefore, before one can be prudent as opposed to merely clever, one's passions must be properly cultivated; this makes *phronesis* inextricably linked to moral virtue, at least insofar as the former depends on the habituation of the latter.

To repeat, Aristotle's account of prudence establishes *phronesis'* dependence on morally virtuous habit: in light of this condition, I will proceed to argue that prudence derives its ends not from a comprehensive analysis of the good, but from habitual moral virtue. As Susan Collins points out, "Aristotle's account of moral virtue suggests that action issues from the proper disposition of the desires and longings

11. This assertion, or even a slight intimation of it, is nowhere made in reference to theoretical wisdom. Therefore, one can safely assume that the attainment of the latter is in no way dependent on morality or moral education.

and therefore that habituation is primary" (Collins 2006, 93). To put it somewhat differently, since prudence deliberates the human things, it needs to have a standard by which to deliberate them: while one possibility is that theoretical wisdom supplies knowledge of the correct end, Aristotle adamantly refuses to go in that direction. As I argued earlier, he divorces theoretical from practical wisdom by assigning them to two radically different ways of life—the philosophical and the moral-political. Thus, the possibility of theoretical wisdom supplying the end of prudence can be dismissed.[12] What remains, and what the Philosopher suggests must be the case, is that virtuous habit fulfills that role. Given that prudence must act in concord with correct desire, and given that correct desire, as we know, is the product of moral education, then prudence itself depends on this same education. Furthermore, since one of the chief objectives of moral habituation is to arouse love of the noble and hatred of the base, nobility must be the end to which prudence deliberates the means.

5.4 *Phronesis*: What it is, What it does, and its Relationship to Habitual Virtue

5.4.1 The *Ergon* of Prudence

Unlike the other "things by which the soul attains the truth" (*NE* 1139b15), such as science and art, Aristotle approaches the question of prudence by "contemplating whom we say to be prudent" (*NE* 1140a24-25). While science and art are each described by direct examination of the thing itself, the discussion of *phronesis* rests on what Claudia Baracchi calls an "inductive-dialectical foundation" (Baracchi 2008, 205). Having decided to examine prudence in this particular way—which is, incidentally, also the way in which he examines courage—Aristotle goes on to show the characteristics of the prudent person. The man of prudence is he who is "skilled in deliberating" (*NE* 1140a32). Deliberation is thus his primary *ergon* and the object of this deliberation is the things that admit of being otherwise—the human things.

Now, in deliberating what admits of being otherwise, the prudent person focuses on two different kinds of things: the general and particular things that pertain to human life. Regarding the former, Aristo-

12. This dismissal is recognizably premature, as the last chapter of Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics* suggests that prudence exists, and acts, for the sake of wisdom. I address the difficulty raised by this statement in the conclusion of this chapter.

tle says that the prudent are skilled in deliberating not merely "partial," but holistic things: they deliberate "the sorts of things conducive to living well in general" (*NE* 1140a28-29). It is not incidental that the Philosopher's first substantive remark about prudence stresses the general or holistic character of deliberation. He effectively paints *phronesis* as the virtue through which man grasps the truth about human action in its entirety: the means by which one can live well. As "the characteristically prudent act" (Dempsey 2007, 102), deliberation seeks to determine what is good for one's life *as a whole*. Aristotle then goes on to distinguish the holistic deliberation characteristic of prudence from the deliberation of those things which are good in a partial way: it does not belong to prudence to know how one can become healthy or strong; it belongs to prudence to know that health and strength are desirable human goods. The prudent person is able to place health in its proper place in life, and he can thus determine just how much time and effort one ought to expend on one's health. Dempsey correctly points out that we might even go as far as saying that the prudent person knows what truly constitutes health: "for instance, he would be the one who would be able to determine whether the really 'healthy' person is the one who is able to perform physically at the highest level even if that performance cannot be sustained, or whether a healthy body is one which is able to maintain its condition" (Dempsey 2007, 102-103). The holistic knowledge of the prudent person (what constitutes human health) is qualitatively distinct from the partial knowledge of the health expert (how to achieve a specified state of health). The ability to see what is required for a good life belongs exclusively to the former.

Aristotle goes still further in stressing the general deliberation with which the prudent are concerned: they are able to calculate not merely their own good, but also the good of others. The example he employs here is Pericles: "On account of this, we suppose Pericles and those of that sort to be prudent—because they are able to observe the good things for themselves and those for human beings. We hold that skilled household managers and politicians are of this sort too" (*NE* 1140b7-10). In other words, those who deliberate the good of others—whether it be family members or fellow citizens—are prudent on account

of knowing what is good for others.[13] This, then, describes the character of prudent deliberation as it pertains to general things.[14]

Aside from deliberating the generalities of life, whether for oneself or for others, the man of prudence is also concerned with particulars pertaining to human action. These particulars are not the same thing as the "partial knowledge" that Aristotle previously established as belonging to the health expert. Partial knowledge is knowledge of one part of the human good without a comprehensive understanding of the whole. It is the specialized knowledge of the health expert: rather than being able to evaluate the proper place of health in human life, he merely knows how to produce it. By contrast, deliberation of particulars is tied to *context* rather than to *a part* of the whole. The distinction is important: deliberation of particulars

13. It is not altogether clear whether the characterization of politicians and household managers as prudent men is meant to only expand the scope of prudence or add something new to it. Is the good of others an expansion of the good for oneself, or is it something altogether different? In the *Politics,* Aristotle argues that the individual, the household, and the city are qualitatively different and this would mean that they possess distinct ends. If the good of the individual is different from the good of the household and the good of the city, then a different kind of skills must be required for the attainment of each. The skill of recognizing the good of the city cannot be the same as the skill of recognizing the good of the individual, since the latter is not a mere microcosm of the former, but something altogether different. Whether these various *facets of* prudence, or these various *kinds of* prudence, are all simultaneously present in the prudent individual, or whether he can have one but not the others, is unclear. It is, however, conceivable that one can recognize his own good but be oblivious of the good of the city, and vice-versa.

14. In addition to the aforementioned expansion of prudence, an expansion which I argued effectively constitutes a distinction, Aristotle establishes yet another distinction within prudence. He speaks of two different "kinds" of prudence. Both fall within the sphere of politics and as such, look to the good of others: one of these he calls "architectonic prudence" (*NE* 1141b26) and he describes it as pertaining to "the legislative art" (*NE* 1141b27), while another is identified as "the political art." This second kind of political prudence is "concerned with particulars [and] bound up with action and deliberation" (*NE* 1141b27-28). Then, there is the kind of prudence discussed earlier: the one pertaining to the individual that consists in "knowing about what concerns oneself" (*NE* 1141b35). It is interesting that this third kind of prudence, self-oriented prudence, is said to be incapable of existing in a vacuum: while pertaining to the good of the individual, it is nonetheless situated within the political regime and it is always on the basis of the character of that regime that one can be truly prudent, that one can "do well for oneself" (*NE* 1142a9). In other words, the individual's good is itself contingent on the political regime in which it exists: the good for oneself takes a different form in different regimes, since the regime determines the scope of what is possible for the individual. Aristide Tessitore makes the following interesting suggestion regarding the relationship between political and self-oriented prudence: despite Aristotle's identification of political prudence as most comprehensive, supreme, and encompassing of the prudence associated with the good of the individual, there is a very important sense in which the prudent individual is primary to the prudently run city, which is to say to the prudent statesman. He insists that the former is responsible for the inception and continued success of the latter: the excellence of the city's laws presupposes an excellent founder and prudence is also the individual virtue that enables men to correct the deficiencies of existing laws (Tessitore 1996, 44).

begins from the basic premise that the whole is determined (for instance, that one knows health's proper place in life); then, on the basis of this knowledge, one deliberates the particular circumstances of a specific context (for example, how to best to secure one's health in the context of a prolonged famine). Thus, the subject of deliberation of particulars is how to secure a given end in a variety of contingent circumstances. By contrast, partial knowledge is the knowledge of one aspect of human life unconnected to the whole. The former is prudence, understood as the calculator of means, and the latter is subject expertise, understood as detailed knowledge of a detached segment of life.

Unlike the general deliberation of prudence, its particular counterpart is anything but constant. In other words, while one's good—and thus the proper content and ordering of the parts of one's life—tends to remain the same, the content of the particulars with which prudence is concerned is always bound to a specific case in time and cannot be extrapolated beyond the present. Time, place, and circumstance are of crucial importance and they change one's calculation in a way that they do not when one deliberates his life as a whole. In effect, in addition to knowing human life holistically, *phronesis* "must also be acquainted with the particulars" (*NE* 1141b15-16). Prudence must know particulars because it is bound up with human action, and action always concerns behavior in particular situations. What does it mean to *know* particulars? The knowledge of particulars is not unlike the possession of experience: it is having been exposed to, or in some other way knowing about, a variety of contingencies; to know particulars is to know different combinations of time, place, and circumstance. Aristotle uses the example of light meats to illustrate particular knowledge: "if someone should know that light meats are easily digestible and healthful, but is ignorant of what sorts are light, he will not produce health; rather, he who does know that poultry is light and healthful will to a greater degree produce health" (*NE* 1141b18-21). This example contrasts two kinds of people: one who possesses expert knowledge about human health, and the other who knows that poultry produces good health without knowing what makes it healthful. The prudent person, or at least the partially prudent person (since he possesses only particular knowledge), is identified as the latter of these two. Despite being ignorant of health's proper place in life, he is nonetheless capable of producing it "to a greater degree" than the man of expert knowledge: he knows how to tell what particular tokens of bird meat are tokens of. Stated differently, what prudence knows in knowing particulars are things of

the sort that figure in the minor premise of a practical syllogism—"bird meats are healthful." In this sense, prudence usually requires experience and the sort of "an experienced eye" (*NE* 1143b14) that typically comes only with age and enables one to see correctly.[15]

Ultimately, it is Aristotle's position that knowledge of particulars is a more important component of prudence than general knowledge (Reeve 2012, 148), for it is more conducive to living well. Those who only know particulars are better at acting than those who know the universals, but are ignorant of their particular manifestations and applications. Knowledge of particulars is the fundamental component of prudence primarily on the grounds that practical wisdom is an intellectual quality concerned with action. Even when we conceive of prudence as that which manages one's life as a whole, general decisions always require particular actions in particular circumstances.[16]

Finally, it is not incidental that as soon as Aristotle makes the argument about the primacy of particulars to universals in prudence, he goes on to stress that the former, by itself, is insufficient for practical wisdom: "...one ought to have [knowledge of] both [universals and particulars], but more so of the latter. But here too there would be a certain architectonic [art of knowledge]" (*NE* 1141b22-23). What is missing from prudence when it only deliberates particulars is the thing that otherwise makes it "architectonic:" its ability to situate the particular within the universal. For example, knowing that poultry is good for one's health neither tells you what good health truly is, nor what its proper place in life is, nor the

15. With respect to its knowledge of particulars, prudence looks very much like an inductive process in which one moves from perception of particulars to universals, albeit unanalyzed universals. In other words, the prudent person knows particular cases, or manifestations, of something general or universal, and on the basis of this knowledge he goes on to discern the universals toward which these particulars point. Yet, what experience alone cannot provide is full knowledge of universal demonstrative explanations, since these involve abstract universals that are far removed from experience. In this vein, Aristotle notes that a scientist who knows universal explanations may simultaneously "not know some of the particular cases through lack of observation." On the flip side, the prudent man knows the particular cases of a universal explanation and is able to faintly infer the universal explanation; what he lacks is the scientist's knowledge of abstract universals.

16. It is on account of its knowledge of particulars that prudence is unteachable. Because *phronesis* is the kind of wisdom that enables one to act well in situations that are always different, it is not the kind of wisdom one could gain simply through learning a set of general axioms. As "practical," *phronesis* is the kind of wisdom one gains through acting correctly over and over again so that one gains insight into the kind of action that is called for in an entirely new situation. One of the constituents of practical wisdom, then, is "the correctness of the reasoning of the deliberative part" (Sim 1995, 62). In this vein, what makes prudence like experience is not merely its familiarity with many possible scenarios. More importantly than that, the two are alike in their ability to adapt to the new on the basis of knowing *how to adapt* and in being able to deliberate about situations not previously encountered.

precise thing that makes poultry healthful. Therefore, despite Aristotle's emphasis on particulars over universals, it would be a mistake to suppose that knowledge of universals is not an integral part of prudence simply because it is less important than knowledge of particulars.[17]

In order to avoid being potentially misinterpreted by the reader, I feel compelled to stress the circumscribed character of the argument I have made in this section: in saying that Aristotelian prudence pertains to deliberating both particulars and universals, I do not mean to suggest that prudence contemplates and determines the end of human life. That, as I will proceed to show, is the work of moral virtue. Prudence, in both its universal and particular manifestations, is only an instrumental calculator of means. In Book III of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle contends that deliberation is solely concerned with the means to a predetermined end.[18] As such, the task of deliberation is not to identify what one ought to pursue, but to figure out how one ought to pursue it in order to attain it. Formulated as such, the *work* of prudence raises the following question: if it calculates the means to a predetermined end, then what is meant by its ability to deliberate holistically? What does prudence deliberate about when deliberating universals if not the end of life? On the basis of Aristotle's light meats example, I propose the following answer: having its end provided externally, prudence goes on to deliberate the general things conducive to it; this includes different human goods, like wealth, health, family, occupation, and sleep as they relate to the given end; prudence considers both, what they properly consist of and how they ought to be ranked in accordance with the predetermined end. In other words, in deliberating general things, the prudent person determines the *general* means conducive to the end: for instance, how much health, wealth, and power are needed to achieve a given goal. This, then, is what I take Aristotle to mean when he says that prudence is concerned not only with particulars pertaining to human action but also with general deliberation. Unlike the latter, the former prove crucial for the exercise of moral virtue in general, and courage in particular.

17. Aristotle explicitly confirms this in *NE* 1180b11-28 when discusses good education.

18. "We deliberate not about ends but about things conducive to the ends. For a doctor does not deliberate about whether he is to make someone healthy, an orator whether he is to persuade, or a politician whether he is too produce good order...Rather, having set down the end, they examine how and through what things it will exist" (*NE* 1112b11-17). He also says that "Deliberation is concerned with actions that happen through one's own doing, and the actions are for the sake of something else. For not the end, but rather the things conducive to the end, would be the object of deliberation" (*NE* 1112b32-35).

5.4.2 *Phronesis* in Moral Virtue

The role of prudence in moral action is fundamental. From the two functions of practical wisdom discussed above—deliberating universals and deliberating particulars—it is the latter that most neatly pertains to moral virtue. Once habituation establishes virtue as the end of life, prudence comes in to play a decisive role: it evaluates different contexts of morally virtuous action and in response, brings the passions in accordance with the mean and devises the proper course of action.

While Aristotle makes it clear that courageous action should be done for the sake of the noble, he is not very precise about what that means to the courageous individual: how does one determined to act nobly discern the correct behavior in particular situations. Where does he obtain the knowledge that enables him to *hit the target* of the appropriate noble action each time? David Pears argues that habituation fulfills this role: the moral education of the courageous man serves as a practical manual for virtuous action (Pears 2004, 3). Pears insists that the man of courage knows how to act nobly because he has received proper training. In the same vein, he holds that habituation is also responsible for cultivating one's love of nobility: in being trained from childhood "to act according to the precepts of morality" (Pears 2004, 3), one grows to revere the nobility of such actions. While I fully agree with Pears' position on the question of loving the noble, I find his first argument—that discerning the noble course of action is a matter of habit—to be inaccurate. While the Philosopher insists that the moral virtues arise from habit, he is equally adamant that they are impossible without the intellectual virtue of prudence: "virtue in the authoritative sense does not arise in the absence of prudence" (*NE* 1144b17). As Stephen Salkever puts it, "all the habituation in the world cannot turn into virtue of character" (Salkever 2007, 202); prudence is required to complete the equation, as it is responsible for one's ability to act correctly in different situations.

Prudence completes moral virtue by discerning the relative mean of the passions involved in a particular virtue. This, then, is what practical wisdom *does* in moral virtue: it finds the mean and orders the passions accordingly. It is thus not incidental that Aristotle's discussion of the intellectual virtues is introduced by a reference to *orthos logos*, or correct reason, for *orthos logos* names the ability to reckon with the mean:

> Now, since we happen to have said previously that one ought to choose the middle term-not the excess and not the deficiency-and that the middle term is what correct reason states it to be, let us define this. For in all the characteristics mentioned (just as in the others as well), there is a certain target that he who possesses reason looks to and so tightens or loosens; and there is a certain defining boundary of the middle, which middle, we assert, is between the excess and the deficiency, since it is in accord with correct reason (*NE* 1138b18-24; see also 1106b36-1107a2)

As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, the mean is of paramount importance for the development and maintenance of the moral virtues. Without wishing to sounds repetitive, I will point the reader to a succinct passage in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that emphasizes its importance: "Moderation and courage are indeed destroyed by excess and deficiency, but they are preserved by the mean. But not only do the coming-into-being and increase [of the virtues], as well as their destruction, occur as a result of the same things, but the activities [associated with the virtues] too will be found in the same things [as are responsible for their coming-into-being and increase]" (*NE* 1104a25-30). The mean is thus the thing that not only births and maintains a virtue, but also enables the performance of virtuous activity. In other words, there is no virtue without the mean, and as it turns out, there is no better way to determine the mean than through prudence.

Since the mean state of the passions is always relative to both subject and context, it proves very difficult to define: the middle term between excess of fear and deficiency of fear fluctuates both from person to person and from context to context. The same amount of fear is not appropriate across different situations: it must always be determined anew. Failure to do so runs the risk of undercutting the work of virtue, and consequently the prospect of human happiness. A certain keen calculative skill is required to find the mean on each occasion and Aristotle identifies that "skill" as the intellectual virtue of *phronesis.* He explains that the prudent person always has a given target (*skopos*) in sight—a target established by habitual virtue—and he adjusts the passions with an eye to hitting it. This process of finding the relative mean is compared to that of tightening and loosening the tension of a bowstring.[19] Like the adjustment of

19. Reeve observes that Aristotle employs the concept of tightening and loosening "in cases when a tripartite structure is thought to exist, consisting of a continuous underlying subject, often referred to as 'the more and the less', a pair of opposes attributes that can vary in degree, and a target, typically a mean condition of some sort, that can be achieved by increasing (tightening) or decreasing (loosening) the underlying subject to change the degree of attributes" (Reeve 2012, 131-132). As confirmation of this observation, Reeve points to wide range of phenomena with respect to which the metaphor is employed. See *History of Animals*, 486a25-b17 (parts of the human body, like a straight nose); *Politics* 1309b18-31 (political constitutions); *Rhetoric*

a bowstring, moral action is a matter of utmost precision, where a slight move to the "right" or "left" results in either deficiency or excess. To compound this difficulty, virtuous action is not merely one right among many wrongs, but it also corresponds to a mean that fluctuates: the mean "relative to us" rather than the mean "as such" (*NE* 1106b7). The mean relative to us refers to the middle term of a given passion with respect to both a particular situation and a particular person. For instance, the right amount of fear one ought to feel when facing death in battle would depend on both whether the battle is defensive or offensive in nature (that is, whether conquest or the survival of the *polis* is at stake) and also on the constitution of that person (whether he is by nature fearful or bold). Since, then, there can be no pre-set formula for arriving at the mean, practical wisdom needs to calculate it every time.

In sum, Aristotelian prudence determines the means to virtue within the confines of nobility: it establishes how afraid or confident one ought to be in a particular situation. The role of prudence within moral virtue can be succinctly described as the ordering of the passions in accordance with the relative mean, where the end product is a well-ordered human soul engaged in noble action. Thus, there cannot be moral virtue without prudence, for despite having the right goal, one would find oneself incapable of reaching it. Ultimately, despite the fact that prudence is an intellectual rather than a moral virtue, it turns out to be more closely related to ethics than to theoretical wisdom. I maintain, and will go on to argue, that despite its intellectual genus, prudence does not point to philosophy and therefore does not collapse the moral realm into the theoretical. Instead, Aristotle pins it as strictly subordinate to an end other than that of pure reason, to a moral end.

5.4.3 A Frustrating Circularity

It would appear that the worth of prudence is tied to the quality of its work: "...the relevant work is completed in accord with prudence and moral virtue. For virtue makes the target correct, prudence the things conducive to that target" (*NE* 1144a6-9). It is helpful to think of *phronesis* as a kind of "good sense" that determines what virtue requires in each particular instance. Presented as such, however, the partnership

1360a23-30 (political constitutions); *Nicomachean Ethics* 1173a23-28 (health of body); *Sense and Sensibilia* 439b30 (colors).

between moral virtue and prudence seems to contain a troublesome circularity: while *phronesis* needs moral virtue to provide its end, Aristotle fails to provide an account of moral virtue that does not depend on prudence. Without moral virtue there is no prudence, only cleverness;[20] similarly, without prudence there is no moral virtue, since the latter cannot make its much-needed calculation of particulars. This Aristotelian account of *phronesis* thus poses a theoretical problem since prudence and moral virtue are each defined in terms of the other, thus creating a seemingly insoluble circular interdependence.[21]

In an attempt to illuminate this problematic circularity, I would point to the following two statements in the *Nicomachean Ethics*: 1) "virtue makes the target correct, prudence the things conducive to the target" (*NE* 1144a9) and 2) "virtue in the authoritative sense does not arise in the absence of prudence" (*NE* 1144b17, 1144b30-31). The first statement shows that prudence is impossible without virtue: its target would be incorrect and it would thus descend into mere cleverness. Then, the second statement stresses moral virtue's dependence on prudence: without *phronesis*, there can only be morally virtuous habit, which although important, is only the intermediate stage between *thumos* and courage, and thus not a full-fledged virtue. Hence, neither prudence nor virtue is sufficiently defined, for the description of each encompasses the other: while cleverness, or partial prudence and likewise, virtuous habit, or partial virtue, are states capable of existing apart from one another, the perfection of each—*phronesis* and moral virtue—requires the other.

20. Aristotle insists that prudence exists only in the context of moral virtue, when the target at which it aims is a noble one. Thus, its merely calculative capacity, while important, does not exhaust the totality of prudence. That capacity by itself is known as *cleverness*: "There is indeed a capacity that people call 'cleverness,' and that is of such a character as to be capable of doing what is conducive to the target posited and so of hitting it...Prudence is not the capacity in question, though it does not exist without this capacity, and this 'eye of the soul' does not acquire the characteristic [of prudence] in the absence of virtue" (*NE* 1144a24-32).

21. I call the problem posed by the circular relationship between prudence and virtue "theoretical" because it exists in theory alone. The inability to definitionally separate prudence from virtue does not inhibit the practical actions of the virtuous, or the courageous, man. He remains capable of making correct determinations about how to act because his orientation toward virtue is solidified by a certain kind of education. Established habit enables him to understand his actions as being done for the sake of the noble and thus, as being good. In turn, he engages his practical wisdom in devising the proper means to nobility in the various contexts he encounters. Thus, the aforementioned circularity does not pose a practical problem for virtuous action, if we understand virtuous action as action from the perspective of the virtuous person (Dempsey 2007, 126-127). This renders the problem of the circularity a purely theoretical one: the character of the virtuous man's actions is unclear to those attempting to understand it from without and for that matter, the gentleman himself is unclear about the character of his actions despite the fact that he is nonetheless able to perform them uninhibitedly.

Despite acknowledging the circular character of the relationship between virtue and prudence, I would argue that it need not be as problematic as it first appears. In particular, the circularity seems to be chiefly *definitional*, by which I mean that it is *pedagogically* resolved. While prudence *par excellence* and virtue *par excellence* cannot be comprehended without reference to one another, the coming-into-being of each is wholly intelligible in its own right. To begin, the experience of morality normally begins with a child's natural proclivity toward a particular virtue. In chapter thirteen of Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle introduces the term "natural virtue" (*NE* 1144b17). Though this concept remains undeveloped and thus largely obscured, I believe that in the context of the Philosopher's ethical theory it must refer to the natural seed of a particular moral virtue. In the case of courage for instance, natural virtue must be *thumos*. In light of this interpretation of natural virtue, I believe that Aristotelian morality ultimately contains a threefold distinction, or can be characterized as a three-step pedagogical process: with natural virtue—a natural proclivity toward a specific moral virtue—serving as the basis for habitual virtue; through habitual virtue as the product of a rigorous moral education; and finally, onto authoritative virtue which adds cleverness to habitual virtue and thus perfects both moral virtue and practical reason. I thus take the elusive term "natural virtue" very literally and believe that it refers to only that part, or stage, of moral virtue which man possesses by nature; a number of textual clues provide support for this interpretation. For instance, when he discusses the five semblances of courage in Book III, Aristotle identifies *thumos* as "the most natural kind" (*NE* 1117a4-5) of courage. Since it is the most natural kind of courage, is it not fair to say that it is thus "natural courage" or "natural virtue?" If natural virtue is simply a lower but necessary stage of authoritative virtue, and if *thumos* is simply a lower but necessary stage of courage, and if both are natural in the sense of being present in man's soul by nature, then is it not reasonable to equate them with one another? I would argue that given Aristotle's conception of the development and perfection of moral virtue, natural virtue in the context of courage cannot be anything other than *thumos*. The place of *thumos* in courage appears to be identical with the implied place of natural virtue in authoritative virtue: it exists by nature, it acts as a prerequisite to authoritative virtue, and it needs reason (and, I would add, habit) for its perfection.[22]

22. My argument that in the context of courage natural virtue must be *thumos* is further supported by the Philosopher's claim that both children and beasts possess natural virtue (*NE* 1144b8-9). Putting children

Thumos must be what Aristotle means by "natural virtue" for the further reason that he explicitly distinguishes natural from habitual virtue in Book VII of the *Ethics*: the "principle" of moderation, he says, by which he means "that for the sake of which one acts" (*NE* 1151a16) is established not by reason, but by virtue "either natural or habitual" (*NE* 1151a19). In other words, there are two types of virtue in addition to "authoritative virtue," "natural" and "habitual," and it is one of these—the Philosopher's moral pedagogy suggests that it is habitual virtue—that sets the principle of moral action. Since natural virtue is, then, neither habitual virtue nor authoritative virtue, *thumos* (in the context of courage) remains the only viable option.[23] Consequently, one's moral development requires that *thumos* be educated or trained: it

aside, the admission of beasts' possession of natural virtue is parallel to the admission of beasts' possession of *thumos* in Book III of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Is not the sub-rational instinctive drive to face danger, then, what Aristotle means by natural virtue? I believe that it must be, for there is not another candidate that would satisfy this criterion—the criterion of being both by nature and common to men and beasts alike.

23. My interpretation of "natural virtue" as *thumos*, as opposed to some kind of moral intuition, makes Aristotelian ethics open to the lethal charge of conventionalism. If the end of moral virtue is established neither by reason, as the Philosopher explicitly states, nor by nature, as my equation of natural virtue with mere *thumos* implies, but by habit, then where do the habituators get the end to which they educate the young if not convention in the form of ancestral wisdom? Is the whole ground of Aristotelian morality simply conventional since it is habit based? Furthermore, if moral virtue is simply rooted in convention, why would it make us happy? To this charge of conventionalism, I would offer the following tentative response: while Aristotelian moral virtue can in a certain sense be characterized as conventional, its conventionality is largely curbed by the primacy of politics to morality. To begin, virtue's rootedness in habit cannot be denied: at the end of Book IV of the *Ethics,* the Philosopher explicitly says that disgraceful things ought never to be done, regardless of whether they are disgraceful in truth or only according to common opinion (*NE* 1128b23). The positive equivalent of this assertion must be that one ought to do what is held to be good even it its goodness is not based on truth, but on societal opinion. Convention is thus important and serves as the basis for human action in the city. Yet, in stressing the importance of common opinion or convention, Aristotle simultaneously reveals his conviction that certain things are disgraceful as well as good *in truth*. As Jaffa points out, "behind [Aristotle's] regard for common opinion is the principle that certain things are indeed decent and honorable and noble, and that to act indecently or dishonorably or ignobly is in itself, and *in truth* a vice, a deficiency, and an imperfection" (Jaffa 1973, 145). In other words, while morality does seem to rest on opinion, there may nonetheless be an objective truth behind it: the moral good can be the human good, and thus "proper to human nature as such" (Jaffa 1973, 145). If this is indeed the case, then who or what supplies man with the knowledge of the human good, on the basis of which one can then devise the appropriate moral code? Is there some faculty in us that enables us to know what the true human virtues are? I would argue that rather than a specific faculty, a particular art seems to accomplish this task—the political art, which is the "most authoritative and architectonic [science or art of the human good]" (*NE* 1094a26). The Philosopher identifies the political art as the most likely place to discover the human good, because all other arts—including morality—are subfields of it. How does politics salvage morality from the charge of conventionalism? By what means does politics discover the objective good and what does it say it is? The *Politics* shows us that the idea of the human good varies from a regime to a regime; politics seems as conventional as morality. This appearance, however, is misleading: while the characters of regimes are

begins to take shape as nascent courage by means of habitual action that brings the passions into proper accordance with the mean. The kind of "courage" present at this stage is habitual courage, which is to say that while it contains the correct principle—the noble—and is thus higher than mere *thumos* or natural courage, it remains devoid of reason. As Harry Jaffa succinctly puts it, "natural virtue is not really virtue at all, is only a particular kind of propensity toward virtue (or, in the case of brutes, a resemblance of a propensity toward virtue). The virtue produced by habituation is a development of the natural potentiality for virtue, in the direction of true virtue. It becomes true virtue in the strict sense only at the moment when practical wisdom is added" (Jaffa 1973, 92). At the stage of habitual virtue, the mean is determined by *orthos logos*, but not by the *orthos logos* of the pupil since he does not yet posses practical reason. Instead, it is defined by the *orthos logos* of the educator who instructs the young man how to act correctly in various circumstances. Thus, it is important to stress that while the performance of virtuous actions always requires prudence, at the habituation stage of virtue's development, the prudence employed is not that of the student, but that of the teacher. Prudence and moral virtue are not yet in cooperation inside the young man's soul and, therefore neither is fully developed. Virtue in the authoritative sense requires more than the pupil possesses: what he lacks is cleverness, which becomes, when it is united with habitual virtue, practical wisdom. "It is only when *orthos logos* becomes a source of moral vision that emanates from *within* the individual, that one is truly or fully virtuous" (Tessitore, 1996, 46; my emphasis).[24] Ultimately, at the

different, they are not equal, as Aristotle not only holds that some political orders are better than others but more importantly, that there is a best among them. The closer a regime happens to be to the best regime—the regime most conducive to the common good—the more "objective" or "truth-based" its morality would be. Since the common good is the end of the political community, the regime that secures it best is the best regime, the best regime according to nature, and the best regime in truth. This political order thus becomes the standard by which we are to judge all political orders and, in turn, all moral codes: the merit of a moral code is derivative of its approximation to the moral code of the simply best constitution. This is how, I believe, Aristotelian morality escapes the deadly charge of conventionalism: by rooting its validity in the zenith of politics that informs all else, the best regime. The way in which the Philosopher arrives at the best regime as the objective standard for all political orders and moral codes is long and winding; a thorough examination of it would take me too far astray from my topic. I will only say this much about it: the "discovery" of the best regime is ultimately the result of a painstaking rational investigation into human nature and its perfectibility, which it to say, the result of *reason*.

24. The necessity for the virtuous man's possession of prudence raises the following question: why does the agent need to be practically wise himself instead of merely following the prudential guidance of another? Why is delegation not a viable solution for him, since what matters is the end, not who guides him there? Reeve argues that while delegation works with respect to "productive" problems, it does not in "practical problems:" "an agent who delegated the problem would commit the Victorian error of letting his servants

peak of morality prudence and virtue become inextricably linked, where the latter dictates one's love of nobility and the former instructs him how to behave nobly in this or that particular situation.[25] While ethical virtue and *phronesis* are each perfections of different parts of the human soul, the performance of the uniquely human *ergon*—virtuous action—requires their synchronization. This is how, I believe, the aforementioned circularity can be resolved: not by breaking the circle of dependence but by making pedagogical sense of it in tracing the maturation of virtue from mere *thumos* to courage in the authoritative sense. Just as cleverness can be turned into prudence by being combined with habitual virtue, so too can habitual virtue be turned into authoritative virtue by being combined with cleverness. This means that moral virtue and prudence are attained simultaneously; each brings the other into existence as their respective bases—habitual virtue and cleverness—come together.[26]

Failure to discover, or accept, the pedagogical solution to the circularity problem has compelled some scholars to wed prudence to wisdom rather than to moral virtue. It is this same wedding that also produces the misconception I seek to dispel in this chapter, namely, that prudence destroys the autonomy of the moral realm by pointing to intellectual virtue as the ultimate source of morality. There is one particular passage in the *Nicomachean Ethics* on which this mistaken interpretation of Aristotelian prudence hinges:

---

do his living for him. For to enjoy virtuous actions—to achieve the happiness they constitute—we must do them virtuously, out of appetites, desires, and wishes that are in a mean. We must do then, as Aristotle puts it, not only 'with correct reason...but [also with the accompaniment] of correct reason'—that is to say, we must do them from the correct reason that we ourselves generate and possess" (Reeve 2012, 188-189). Reeve's argument, that prudence cannot be delegated because it is a constitutive part of moral virtue and thus of happiness, seems entirely sensible: after all, as I have argued in Chapter III, Aristotle characterizes moral virtue and even its most self-sacrificial aspect—the noble—as primarily self-directed, as pointing to the good of the individual. The goodness of moral virtue is thus primarily internal, resting in the soul of the virtuous man. The quality of his soul is primary to that of his actions: he performs virtuous deeds not for the sake of their external consequences, but for the sake of uplifting and perfecting his own soul, albeit without knowing it. Delegating the work of prudence to another is thus counter-productive, since the moral character of the virtuous man—and ultimately his happiness—hinges on what he has inside of him.

25. Richard Bodéüs makes the interesting observation that Aristotle's presentation of the relationship between virtue and prudence can be seen as an inversion of the Socratic thesis: "knowledge is no longer the condition of virtue but virtue is the condition of knowledge (i.e., knowledge of the proper end to human life)" (Bodéüs 1993, 51).

26. The question of whether the prudent person depends on moral virtue to provide the ends of action is settled by the realization that what he desires *is* what virtue requires; a person of practical wisdom has the same desires as a virtuous person because his desires have been habituated in this way; to describe someone as practically wise and to describe him as morally virtuous is to focus on independently identifiable, but interdependent, aspects of the same character (Rorty 1980, 383-384).

the second last paragraph of Book VI, Chapter 12. There, the Philosopher makes the following statement: "As for the choice involved, then, virtue makes it correct; but as for doing all that is naturally done for the sake of that choice, this belongs not to virtue but to another capacity" (*NE* 1144a21-24). Aristotle goes on to identify that other capacity as prudence. Some scholars, like Ronna Burger, insist that the *virtue* of which Aristotle speaks here—the virtue responsible for making the target correct—is not ethical, but intellectual, or more precisely, theoretical wisdom. Burger correctly notes that the Philosopher strangely drops the word "ethical" or "moral" from "virtue" when he says that "virtue makes the choice correct." She, then, takes this omission to imply that Aristotle means to identify wisdom as the selector of the end (Burger 2008, 125-126). While I agree that the exclusion of the word "ethical" is indeed strange, I offer a different interpretation of it and see no reason to go as far as Burger does in bringing wisdom to the foreground.

I believe that Aristotle says "virtue" as opposed to "moral virtue" because he is not discussing moral virtue *par excellence* but rather its intermediate stage, habitual virtue. Virtuous habit, since it includes the desire to perform virtuous acts for their own sake, is sufficient for making the target correct. Yet, because it is devoid of prudence, it is cannot properly be labelled as "moral" virtue. This is why, I believe, Aristotle drops the word "ethical:" not because he is speaking of a different kind of virtue—wisdom—but because he is speaking of a lower stage of moral virtue and so does not use authoritative virtue's full name. There is some textual evidence in support of this interpretation: at the beginning of the paragraph in which the contentious sentence occurs, Aristotle invites his readers "to begin from a point a little further back" (*NE* 1144a13). This cryptic statement is elucidated in the next sentence, as the Philosopher specifies the place to which he wishes to return: "...some people who do just things are not yet just...though they *do* do what they should, namely, all of the things that the serious human being ought to do" (*NE* 1144a14-18). It seems hard to deny that Aristotle here refers to a state in which one mimics virtuous behaviour without yet possessing moral virtue; this is not unlike the state of being a student and a practitioner-in-training of virtue. On account of this, the virtue to which he alludes in the controversial sentence may be moral-in-kind, though not yet moral in the authoritative sense. It certainly does not seem to be intellectual given the theme of the paragraph in which it is situated. Therefore, the way to make sense of the apparent circularity

between prudence and virtue is not to wed prudence to wisdom; the passage in question does not seem to provide textual basis for this wedding. Instead, I believe that the circularity, while it cannot be broken, can nonetheless be made intelligible in the way that I have suggested: by understanding the pedagogical process of the maturation of virtue. Ultimately then, the interpretation that intellectual virtue makes the target of prudence correct is mistaken; moral virtue fulfills that role even at the level of habituation when it has not yet ascended to fully authoritative moral virtue. Since it is mistaken, this interpretation cannot provide the basis for the argument that prudence threatens the autonomy of the moral realm by having an extra-moral end. On the contrary, Aristotle's characterization of prudence, albeit complex and often fuzzy, retains the wall of separation between the moral and the intellectual realms, each of which seeks to assert its superiority in producing *eudaimonia*.

5.5 The Tripartite Aristotelian Soul

Since prudence is both dependent on and perfective of habitual virtue, I argue that the Aristotelian soul is best understood as tripartite. By splitting both the nonrational and rational souls into two and by wedding the higher part of the former to the lower part of the latter, the Philosopher effectively divides the soul into three conceptual compartments, each of which bears little to no relation to the others: the lowest part is that which man shares with beasts, as it holds the most basic level of biological functions; above it rests what I call "the realm of moral virtue" which is defined by the existential union between the passions and practical wisdom; finally, theoretical wisdom is situated at the top. Only the central part of the soul contains a duality—a fusion of passion and reason—while the remaining two are unitary or homogeneous in their composition. The compartment of moral virtue blends two faculties which, when kept apart, look very different than when united. The passions without prudence are chaotic expressions of man's reactions to the outside world; they rule him by jolting his action from one arbitrary extreme to another; he may fear too little or too much and always does so in spite of himself, since he lacks the ability to rein in his passions. Even when one's desires are constituted correctly—the result of proper moral education—one finds oneself unable to guide them in particular situations without the help of prudence; in other words, even when wishing to fear in the correct manner for the sake of behaving nobly, one is unable

to fulfil that wish without a calculator of practical circumstances, without practical wisdom. Similarly, prudence divorced from properly educated passions is nothing more than mere cleverness: it is a value-neutral calculator of means to any end.[27] Ultimately, since neither prudence nor moral virtue can truly be itself without the other, their union forms a distinct part of the human soul, divorced from both its lower and higher counterparts.

In sum, the investigation of intellectual virtue in Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics* has the effect of transforming moral virtue in a very important sense: ethical virtue no longer appears to constitute an independent unitary sphere. By both perfecting and being perfected by moral virtue, prudence becomes the rational component of morality responsible for sound ethical actions. Since the relation it bears is to moral virtue rather than to wisdom, it should be conceived as an integral part not of the rational soul, but of the soul's middle compartment. This heterogeneous compartment is the means by which Aristotle resists the collapse of moral virtue into intellectual virtue. He retains the autonomy of the moral sphere by sub-dividing the rational part of the soul into two specialized and seemingly unrelated parts: theoretical and practical reason. In a way, the rational-nonrational dichotomy of the human soul begins to fade away when we focus on its central part: prudence has a way of rationalizing the passions so that in the case of the morally virtuous person, his desires cannot be characterized as purely irrational; similarly, *phronesis* is not strictly a part of the rational soul, for it constitutes a kind of interface between character and *logos*. Aristotle thus "moralizes" prudence in the same way that he "rationalizes" the passions—the two are interchangeable parts of the whole that is moral virtue.[28]

27. Despite apparently disagreeing with my interpretation of "natural virtue," Ronna Burger makes the sound observation that moral virtue and prudence can themselves be internally divided by virtue of being different things together than when separated: "cleverness in practical wisdom, when separated from virtue of character, has its counterpart in natural virtue of character, when separated from *phronesis*, and the two natural conditions both stand over against the unitary condition now designated as virtue in the sovereign sense" (Burger 2008, 126).

28. Unsurprisingly, since this has proven to be the case several times thus far, there is an apparent disjunction between the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Rhetoric* on the question of prudence and its relationship to moral virtue. In Book II of the *Rhetoric* Aristotle identifies *phronesis* as one of the things, alongside virtue and goodwill, that enables an orator to *appear* trustworthy whether or not he really is (*R* 55). What is particularly striking about this formulation is the sudden separation of *phronesis* from *arete*: Aristotle implies that, in contrast to the conception of prudence elaborated in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, a person may possess prudence without virtue. In fact, *phronesis* here seems to represent an orator's calculative rational capacity wholly independent from any ethical ends. Prudence thus becomes precisely what Aristotle argued it is not

While I believe to have shown that by virtue of its designated *ergon*, prudence does not threaten the self-sustainability of the moral realm, an important question remains unanswered: what is the precise nature of the cooperation between prudence and the passions in the context of moral virtue? Granted that virtue makes the target correct, how exactly does *phronesis* bring the passions in accordance with the mean? Does it compel them to move in a certain direction in the way that a master compels a slave or does it guide them in the way that a map guides a traveller toward a destination of his choice?

In Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle explicitly says that "prudence is characterized by the giving of commands" (*NE* 1143a8-9). What prudence commands, as discussed at length, are the various passions: the passions obey *phronesis* and are thus brought to their relative mean. Yet, the precise character of this obedience is not altogether clear. A quick look at the *Politics* may be helpful here: the Philosopher contends that within the properly ordered human soul intellect rules appetite not as a master—the way in which the soul rules the body—but instead, "with political and kingly rule" (*Pol.* 1254b5-6). In effect, reason could rule the passions in one of two ways: either as a king rules over his subjects, or as equal citizens rule over one another. The former of these two seems to refer to the relationship between reason and desire in the context of the self-restrained person: unlike the person lacking self-restraint, the continent man heeds the commands of reason (*NE* 1151a34-35), but he does so in spite of himself, in spite of what his passions long for. In this sense, he is in the position of a subject obeying a king, in whose infinite wisdom he trusts, but whose desires he does not share; the subject knows that his king knows best and thus, unconditionally follows his commands.

By contrast, the case of the morally virtuous person resembles political rather than kingly rule. As Aristotle repeatedly stresses, the reason and desires of the virtuous man are in internal concord: they both seek the noble and the latter heeds the command of the former only insofar as it needs guidance to reach its desired end. In effect, the passions have the sort of share in moral virtue that analogizes them to free male citizens and distinguishes them from subjects: they have a direct input in virtue since they yearn for

in the *Nicomachean Ethics*—value-neutral cleverness capable of supplying the means to any ends. Without being able to account for the discrepancy between the *Rhetoric* and the *Nicomachean Ethics* on the question of prudence, I would like to point the reader to Stephen Halliwell's (1996, 180) explanation of it: he argues that unlike his ethical works, Aristotle's *Rhetoric* employs a popular rather than a philosophical conception of prudence.

the noble. Passion permits prudence to navigate it, where the two are in full agreement on what the goal is and on the choiceworthiness of the journey. These, then, are the terms in which we should understand the relationship between reason and passion in the context of moral virtue: not as the kingly rule characteristic of self-restraint, and certainly not as the coercive rule that a master exercises over a slave, but as political rule, in which equal but differently specialized members pursue a single cause (*Pol.* 1260a31-39, 1277b25-30).[29]

Ultimately, ethical virtue represents the convergence of thought and desire: "For acting well is an end, and one's longing is for this end. Hence choice is either intellect marked by a certain longing or longing marked by thinking" (*NE* 1139b4-5). It is thus not accidental that Aristotle calls moral choice—the choice to engage in moral action—either *desiderative thought* or *deliberative longing* (*NE* 1113a11-12, 1139a23), since reason and passion are always in harmony. As I have previously argued, the practical workings of this relationship can be described in the following way: desire and thought both wish to attain the noble and while reason specifies a particular action in a particular context, desire happily accepts the specification. The two act together to "affirm a prescription: thought affirms it in response to the need for guidance on the part of the desiderative side, and desire affirms it by way of [eager] acceptance" (Broadie 1991, 220).[30]

5.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, I have argued that the presence of reason in Aristotelian moral virtue does not prove subversive to the autonomy of the ethical realm. From the very beginning, Aristotle severs practical from theoretical reason by assigning each to a different part of the soul: the former to the calculative and the latter to the scientific. He then further segregates them by giving them different objects: while the sci-

29. Aristotle is explicit that especially in the case of the courageous and moderate persons, passion "is in all respects in harmony with reason" (*NE* 1102b28).

30. Interestingly, L. H. G. Greenwood notes that the harmony between reason and desire is not uniquely characteristic of moral virtue. It also exists in the case of the wicked man who chooses an effective means to a depraved end (Aristotle 1909, 175-176). Thus, reason and desire are like-minded allies in the case of the highest and the lowest manifestations of morality alike. They are only at odds, in the two middle states—self-restraint and lack of self-restraint—where one rules the other by means of coercion.

entific or theoretical component of the rational soul contemplates the things that do not admit of being otherwise, the calculative or practical component deliberates about the things that admit of being otherwise and in particular, the human things. The Philosopher then takes the additional step of definitively wedding the latter to ethical virtue; simultaneously, theoretical wisdom is nowhere to be seen in the moral life. By establishing a symbiotic relationship between prudence and the moral virtues, so much so that neither can be itself without the other, he effectively renders the human soul tripartite. This tripartite soul consists of the following distinct components: an entirely irrational lowest one; a purely rational highest one; and a heterogeneous middle one representing the fusion of *phronesis* and *arete*. Morality does not collapse into philosophy, because the reason it employs is different in kind from that characteristic of the contemplative realm. Moreover, it is virtuous habit rather than reason—either in the form of *sophia* or in the form of *prudence*—that determines the end of moral virtue. In effect, I maintain that moral *eudaimonia* is indeed self-sustained, for it is lodged entirely within the confines of moral virtue without needing an external faculty for its full realization.

Having tried to make the case for moral virtue's independence from theoretical wisdom, I find it necessary to address a prominent objection to it. There is a powerfully authoritative intellectualist interpretation of Aristotelian prudence, on the basis of which the moral realm is shown to be dependent on the theoretical. This interpretation is founded on a dense and perplexing passage located in the last paragraph of Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics:*

> And yet prudence does not exercise authoritative control over wisdom or the better part [of the soul], just as the art of medicine does not do so over health either, for it does not make use of health but rather sees how it comes into being; it is for the sake of health, then, that medicine issues commands, but it does not issue them to health. Furthermore, it would be just as if someone should assert that the political art rules over the gods because it issues commands about all things in the city. (*NE* 1145a6-11)

Proponents of the intellectualist interpretation take this passage to indicate the subordination of prudence—and consequently of moral virtue—to *sophia*. When Aristotle says that prudence does not exercise control over wisdom, but operates for the sake of wisdom, he employs two different metaphors: that of the relationship between medicine and health and that of the relationship between politics and the gods. Both the doctor and the statesmen are said to place their practical wisdom at the service of theoretical wisdom:

health in the case of the former and the divine in the case of the latter. While I admit that this passage poses a difficulty for my argument about the tripartite Aristotelian soul by suddenly making prudence subservient to wisdom, I do not believe that this difficulty is insurmountable. For one, as John M. Cooper observes, the passage "does not say that *all* directives of practical intelligence are ultimately aimed at the production of *sophia* and its free exercise; strictly, it says only that at least some part of its activity has this aim" (Cooper 1986, 104). In other words, the statement made in this passage does not automatically negate all that Aristotle has said thus far about prudence's service to moral virtue. Instead, it merely adds another function to the *ergon* of prudence—to somehow serve the dictates of wisdom. Unfortunately, this newly revealed function of *phronesis*, unlike the work that it does for moral virtue, is not specified any further in any of the Philosopher's ethical works. In effect, the precise way in which prudence serves the ends of wisdom remains unclear.

Though seemingly supported by the argument made in the aforementioned passage, the intellectualist interpretation of prudence must be rejected, because it is impossible to reconcile with all the other—wholly unambiguous—statements Aristotle makes about practical wisdom and its service to moral virtue. This is not to say that the passage in question ought to be simply dismissed as an outlier, an intellectual error, or a scribal mistake. Yet, it is to say that it should not be taken to nullify the Philosopher's overarching theory of moral reasoning. John M. Cooper sees two sets of passages as ultimately refuting the intellectualist interpretation of prudence: first, the places in which Aristotle says that the man of moral virtue "acts for the sake of the noble" (*NE* 1115b12-13, 1119b6-7, 1122b6-7) and second, the two instances in Book VI where the prudent person is said to aim at the "goodness of action itself" (*NE* 1140b7, 1139b3-4), which is to say at the end established by moral virtue and not wisdom (Cooper 1986, 105).[31] This textual evidence indeed suggests that the life of moral action does not have an intellectual end and instead, it contains an inherent goodness and self-fulfillment. Since nobility is not an end subordinate to wisdom, in serving moral virtue prudence cannot be serving theoretical reason. The thing that ultimately withstands the absorption of moral virtue into reason is the defined *telos* of virtue—the noble—because nobility springs not from contemplation, but from virtuous habit.

31. For Cooper's full argument against the intellectualist interpretation of *phronesis* see *Reason and Human Good in Aristotle* (1986, 103-114).

In response to this argument, scholars like Ronna Burger may ask the following question: is "the harnessing of *phronesis* to ethical virtue compatible with its subordination to *sophia?* Can both these roles be fulfilled together" (Burger 2008, 111). I answer her question in the negative: the two roles are representative of two distinct lives. If *phronesis* is indeed subordinate to *sophia*, as the monumental passage seems to suggest, then it must be so outside the life of moral virtue. Articulated differently, while prudence may not be exclusive to moral virtue, it can be subordinate to wisdom only in the contemplative life, where the end is pure knowledge rather than nobility. Now, from this perspective—from the perspective of the philosophical life in which *phronesis* serves *sophia*—the tripartite Aristotelian soul seems to vanish: reason becomes a unified whole in which wisdom rules and prudence obeys and the irrational soul remains undivided. It is only when observed from the standpoint of moral virtue that the human soul contains this middle compartment in which practical reason and the passions are united into a coherent whole and bear no connection to theoretical wisdom. While the philosopher may lead a life in which *sophia* is the ultimate end and *phronesis* acts in its service,[32] for the morally virtuous person *arete ethike* determines the goal and prudence supplies the means. While prudence may be the common element of these two lives, its role in each is very different; the man of moral virtue is unconcerned with theoretical wisdom in the same way that the philosopher is unconcerned with moral action.

32. If the philosophical life is indeed characterized by the service of prudence to wisdom, then are we still strictly speaking of *phronesis*, since Aristotle insists that its existence is dependent on the presence of moral virtue? If we answer this question in the affirmative, then the contemplative life must subsume the moral, as the philosopher must possess the virtues of the gentleman in addition to his own. This, however, as I argue in the last chapter of the dissertation, does not seem to be the case since the two kinds of virtues—moral and intellectual—are in tension with one another as ends. So, it remains puzzling why Aristotle uses the loaded term *phronesis* to indicate practical wisdom's service to theoretical wisdom.

CHAPTER 6

THE *EUDAIMONISM* OF MORAL VIRTUE VIS-À-VIS INTELLECTUAL VIRTUE

6.1 Introduction

Having reached the end of our inquiry into the *eudaimonism* of Aristotelian moral virtue, we are finally in a position to ask the lingering question directly: is the courageous person ultimately happy? Unlike the question, the answer proves to be anything but direct: the character of Aristotle's ethical theory, the complexity of *eudaimonia*, and the presence of the philosophical life as a rival to the moral must all be taken into account. If pressed to provide a direct answer, however, I would have to say that as an inextricable part of the moral-political life, courage is fundamental to the happiness of most men This chapter will examine the relationship between moral virtue and happiness and will seek to defend the latter's dependence on the former The defense, however, will prove to be conditional and, at times, even cautious.

Before laying out the structure of the chapter, it is first fitting to discuss the concept of *eudaimonia* since it is not straightforward. The term *eudaimonia* is peculiar as both a conventional Greek word and an Aristotelian concept of the ultimate good. In both of these senses it does not neatly correspond to the English word "happiness" understood in its day-to-day manifestations. Beginning with its linguistic properties, the Greek term is a compound noun consisting of the words *eu* and *daimon*. The prefix *eu* connotes an adverbial meaning and it expresses that something is being done well; as such, it signifies excellence and goodness. Following, the word *daimon* normally constitutes a figure of the divine. It need not refer to a particular god or goddess and instead, may simply capture some phenomenon that signifies the work of the divine or conversely, something extraordinary and godlike. Taken as a whole, then, the word *eudaimonia* "evokes the benevolent and beneficial sway of the *daimon*, and, hence, the sense of harmonious connection with or attunement to the daimonic" (Baracchi 2008, 81). Thus, to possess *eudaimonia* is to have a good and benevolent spirit dwelling inside one's soul or to be positively affected by a *daimon*. To translate *eudaimonia* as happiness makes sense only insofar as happiness is the state of being that results from one being affected in such a way—as the natural outcome of being positively affected by a divine

sprit. Translations of *eudaimonia* like "faring-well" can thus often capture the term's meaning better than "happiness" can, if by happiness we mean mere contentment or joy.

Etymology aside, the Philosopher endows the word *eudaimonia* with a very particular, and often difficult to discern, meaning.[1] For instance, in Book I of the *Rhetoric* he says the following*:* "We may define happiness as prosperity combined with virtue; or as independence of life; or as the secure enjoyment of the maximum of pleasure; or as a good condition of property and body, together with the power of guarding one's property and body and making use of them. That happiness is one or more of these things, pretty well everybody agrees" (*R* 17). This definition of happiness is obviously equivocal, since it presents *eudaimonia* as either "one *or* more of these things." Is happiness an inclusive concept that combines all of the above-mentioned qualities or is it only one or several of them to the exclusion of the others? Similarly, in the *Magna Moralia* Aristotle provides a definition of happiness that leaves much clarity to be desired: "Happiness, which we all say and believe is the End of all good things and the most complete, we may now proceed to identify it with 'living well and doing well"' (*MM* 1184b7-10). This definition of *eudaimonia* is narrower than that of the *Rhetoric,* as it expresses certainty about two aspects of happiness: it is the end of all good things and it is the thing that is most complete. Both the primacy and completeness of happiness are emphasized, where the former stresses that *eudaimonia* is always and only chosen for its own sake and the latter connotes an inclusiveness of some obscure sort. What does "living well and doing well" consists of; what kind of life does it point to and what goods are included under it? In the *Eudemian Ethics,* Aristotle further refines the meaning of the term: "happiness is the activity of a good spirit. And since we saw that happiness is something perfect, and life is either perfect or imperfect, and the same with goodness (for some goodness is a whole and some a part), but the activity of imperfect things is imperfect, it would follow that happiness is an activity of perfect life in accordance with perfect goodness" (*EE* 1219a38-39). Alternatively, the last clause can be translated as "an activity of a complete life in accordance with complete excellence." While this definition of *eudaimonia* answers crucial questions about its essence—it is both complete and perfect—it points to a further complexity: does "perfect goodness" or "complete

1. There is much debate on what precisely Aristotle's understanding of happiness entails, and whether it comes in several sorts. For some notable examples of the interpretive possibilities, see Hardie (1965, 277-95), Cooper (1986), Kraut (1989), Kenny (1992), Purinton (1998, 259-97), and Yu (2001, 115-38).

excellence" imply the sum of all excellent things or the *most* complete or perfect excellence apart from lower forms? Unfortunately, this question cannot be answered within the context of the *Eudemian Ethics* and it requires us to turn to Aristotle's treatment of happiness in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Even there, however, the ambiguity about the character of *eudaimonia* persists and proves difficult to dispel.

The *Nicomachean Ethics* identifies *eudaimonia* as "the simply complete thing" (*NE* 1097a34), as the thing always chosen for its own sake and never on account of something else. Moreover, happiness is deficient in nothing: once attained, it terminates all desire, "for the complete good is held to be self-sufficient" (*NE* 1097b7). Finally, it is "the most choiceworthy of all things" (*NE* 1097b17) on account of it always being an end, never a means, to our actions. Defined in such terms, human happiness meets three criteria: completeness of some sort, self-sufficiency, and choiceworthiness on account of its completeness. While there is some ambiguity surrounding the question of its self-sufficiency—what is meant by it and just how literally are we to take it—the main scholarly debate surrounding Aristotelian *eudaimonia* revolves around the question of its completeness. At the end of his *ergon* argument—the argument that human happiness must belong to the activity that is both unique to human beings and perfective of their constitution—Aristotle reaches the conclusion that happiness "becomes an activity of soul in accord with virtue, and if there are several virtues, then in accord with the best and most complete one" (*NE* 1098a16-18). In its own right, the *ergon* of a human being, or human virtue, is identified as "an activity of soul in accord with reason" (*NE* 1098a7). Thus, happiness is not the outcome of an action, or as we tend to think of it today, the feeling of pleasure and contentment, but essentially a form of activity. Of this activity we know that it must be in accord with reason—rational activity—but beyond this, very little is certain. There are two rival conceptions of what the activity in question may be: on the one hand, we have the moral virtues in which prudence guides the passions toward the noble and on the other hand, we have theoretical wisdom and its corresponding life of contemplation where reason is not subservient to a non-rational end. Both are activities of soul in accordance with reason, so which one are we to understand as the path to *eudaimonia*? Is it the moral life, the contemplative life, or a life inclusive of both moral action and theoretical contemplation? At times, the Philosopher seems to tie happiness to moral virtue, at other times,

he unequivocally weds it to theoretical wisdom (*NE* 1177a12-18), and at still other times he implies that *eudaimonia* requires the presence and exercise of both (*NE* 1098a16-18).

This apparent lack of certainty has produced a longstanding debate about the relation of virtue to happiness in Aristotle's ethical theory. The Philosopher seems to hold two contradictory positions. One is found in Book I, chapter 7, where happiness is an activity of soul in conformity with virtue. In context, this seems to imply human virtue as a whole, involving both the moral and intellectual virtues. The other position is expressed in Book X, chapter 6-8, where happiness is identified with wisdom alone. One group of commentators takes Book X as determinative and thus tortures the text in Book I to say the same thing; these are the proponents of the so-called "intellectualist," or "dominant," or "exclusive" interpretation of Aristotelian *eudaimonia*.[2] The other group takes Book I, chapter 7 as determinative and its task is to explain how Book X fits into Aristotle's general ethical teaching; theirs is the "inclusive" or "comprehensive" interpretation of happiness.[3]

These two groups of interpreters take the *ergon* passage of Book I, where the distinction between some practice in accordance with reason or reason simply is established, to be decisive: if the human *ergon* is some kind of practical rationality, then its virtue would be prudence and hence, the moral virtues; if, however, it is theoretical or pure rationality, then its virtue would be wisdom. While the debate between the inclusive and dominant camps proves central to my argument in this chapter, it is not something that can be settled at this time but only gradually, as the argument unfolds. My examination of moral virtue's conduciveness to happiness contains three interrelated parts. The first addresses the specification that happiness must be self-sufficient: does moral virtue prove sufficient for human happiness or are external supplements required? In the context of this question, I will address the rivalry between the dominant and inclusive interpretations: if moral virtue is self-sufficient for happiness, then *eudaimonia* cannot be an inclusive concept. Once I discuss moral virtue's self-sufficiency, I will move on to fully explicate my

2. Many scholars support the view that Aristotle presents an intellectualist theory of the human good. This theory specifies theoretical activity as the sole component of the best life and it implies that all other goods, including moral virtue, have value only as means to *sophia*. This position is defended by scholars including Kenny (1978, 203-214; 1965, 93-102), Adkins (1978, 297-313), and Sullivan (1977, 129-38).

3. See Cooper (1986, 121-122), Cooper (1981, 384), Ackrill (1980, 21-23), Whiting (1986, 74-93), Keyt (1978, 139), Irwin (1985b, 93-94; 1986, 207-208), Hardie (1968, 22), Devereux (1981, 249f.), and Price (1980, 346).

position on the dominant-inclusive debate: Part II will *rank* the happiness of the philosopher to that of the man of moral virtue and in doing so, it will both assess the dominant and inclusive interpretations and discuss the possibility of each of the two lives. Finally, Part III will conclude the chapter with a reflection on the pathologies inherent in the life of moral virtue and in particular, in the life of the courageous man. This is an important aspect of the presentation of moral virtue, since Aristotle raises doubts about the *eudaimonism* of the moral life not only by elevating philosophy above ethical virtue, but also by demoting moral virtue in notable ways—by insinuating that it may not be as unqualifiedly *good* as he had been previously indicating. My ultimate position, or the final argument to which all the others are a means, is the following: the *eudaimonism* of courage, and especially of moral virtue as a whole, is self-sufficient in a qualified but still meaningful way; the happiness belonging to the morally virtuous man is of a secondary degree to that experienced by the philosopher, but it is nonetheless the highest kind of happiness available to the vast majority of persons; finally, while this happiness may have certain self-defeating, and politically dangerous, tendencies, Aristotle may, in turn, provide adequate remedies for them.

6.2 Is the Life of Moral Virtue Self-Sufficient for Happiness?

The question of the self-sufficiency of moral virtue rests on the premise that not only courage, but all eleven ethical virtues are present in the individual: so, does the morally virtuous person require anything outside the moral realm in order to attain happiness?

Before answering this question, I feel the need to, at least preliminarily, state my position on the inclusive-dominant debate, since it bears some relevance to it. The notion of things "external to moral virtue" presupposes an understanding of the contents of ethical life: these, however, are different under the inclusive interpretation of Aristotelian happiness than they are under the dominant. Thus, before examining the need for externalities in moral happiness, I must briefly explain my position on this issue, provided that I will not, at this point, present a full-fledged defense of that position.

The reader may already suspect that I reject the inclusive interpretation of Aristotelian *eudaimonia.* This interpretation holds that Aristotelian happiness includes all of the virtues, moral and intellectual,[4] and thus effectively destroys the independence of the moral realm: if happiness consists of the sum of moral and intellectual virtues, there can be no self-sustained happiness in the life of ethical virtue. The Aristotelian gentleman is thus not a happy person since he lacks the virtues of the philosopher.[5] On the other hand, I also find the dominant interpretation of *eudaimonia* to be mistaken insofar as some of its proponents hold that moral virtue is a necessary means—and *only* as a means—to intellectual virtue. They argue that there is only one basic good—*sophia*—which is most effectively realized by the exercise of moral virtue. I do not believe that Aristotle conceives of morality as a mere stepping stone to philosophy. After all, he repeatedly insists that men engage in moral actions because those actions are good in themselves, not for the sake of something else. This said, I agree with the dominant interpretation if what it says—as it often does—is that intellectual virtue is dominant in that it makes possible the highest kind of human happiness; correspondingly, the life of moral virtue provides men with a secondary form of happiness. According to this interpretive approach, the virtues of the mind and the virtues of character belong to two different lives, where each produces its own happiness. Ultimately then, I support the dominant approach insofar as it holds that the life of theoretical virtue is superior—happier—to the life of moral virtue, but not insofar as it merges the two lives together into one in which the moral and intellectual virtues are hierarchically ordered. In effect, when I pose the question about the self-sufficiency of moral virtue for happiness, I mean the happiness belonging exclusively to the moral life: is the gentleman's morality exhaustive of his happiness?

4. Proponents of the inclusive interpretation, like John Cooper, maintain that Aristotelian happiness consists of "a plurality of independent values" or that Aristotle espouses a "bipartite conception of *eudaimonia*" (Cooper 1986, 114). This interpretation is heavily indebted to the *Eudemian Ethics* where Aristotle defines happiness in the following way: "an activity of a perfect life in accordance with perfect goodness" (*EE* 1219a38-39). Cooper takes this to mean "with all of the soul's excellences taken together as making up a whole" (Cooper 1986, 116-117).

5. The inclusive interpretation, which I will discuss at length later in the chapter, overlooks the prominent tension between the moral and philosophical lives. Risking one's life in battle is incompatible with seeking a long leisurely life for contemplation; one must be compromised for the sake of the other. Likewise, wisdom may, in certain cases, be best pursued by acts that go against the dictates of moral virtue. In effect, combining the two lives into a single all-inclusive way of life is practically suspect, if not theoretically unsound.

Aristotle provides the very first hint of the insufficiency of moral virtue in Chapter 5 of Book I, as he says that virtue cannot be equivalent to happiness on account of it being "incomplete" (*NE* 1095b32). The Philosopher has the following incompleteness in mind: "it seems to be possible for someone to possess virtue even while asleep or while being inactive throughout life and, in addition to these, while suffering badly and undergoing the greatest misfortunes" (*NE* 1095b33-1096a1). This statement brings to light two separate obstacles to the completeness of moral *eudaimonia*: inactivity and malignity of fortune. Regarding the first, the problem is remedied by the Philosopher's persistent emphasis on virtuous *action* or *activity* as over and above mere virtuous *disposition.*[6] The firm insistence that moral virtue must be exercised rather than merely possessed does away with the problem of sleeping or inactive virtue: inactivity cannot be an impediment to virtue's conduciveness to happiness, since inactivity is foreign to virtue; to be virtuous means to act virtuously. The second problem, however—the malignity of fortune—is a much more serious one. It undeniably indicates that virtue is insufficient for happiness, for *eudaimonia* also requires good fortune. As the example of King Priam shows, a sudden reversal of good fortune can irreparably ruin a virtuous man's happiness, especially if it takes place at an old age (*NE* 1100a5-9). If even the most virtuous are always exposed to chance, then how can we confidently assert that moral virtue is conducive to happiness?[7] In response to the capricious role of chance in human life, I would like to make two separate arguments.

First, malignities of fortune threaten the *eudaimonism* of any human life, not just that of the morally virtuous. The happiness of the gentleman is as incomplete as the happiness of the philosopher if chance is the deciding factor of completeness: if the latter were afflicted by a debilitating mental illness, his happiness would be compromised just like that of Priam. Bad fortune does not discriminate between disparate ways of life and is capable of destroying all of them alike. In this sense, the life of moral virtue is no less complete than any other human life and so, it cannot be rejected as conducive to happiness on these grounds.

The second argument I wish to make about the compromising role of chance is this: Aristotle denies that human happiness consists in good fortune and instead, maintains that it stems from the exercise of

6. To only point out a few: *NE* 1098a14; 1098b18; 1099a14, 18, 20, 21; 1101b15; 1103b30; 1104b14; 1106b17, 25; 1107a5; 1108b18; 1109a23; 1109b30.

7. Indeed, the problem of chance is insoluble in the absence of revelation or at least a certain conception of the afterlife, which Aristotle refuses to endorse.

virtue provided one's fortune is not so malignant as to destroy it. In other words, the gentleman's very morality enables him to face misfortunes without falling victim to them. The character of the moral man is such that he will bear up "altogether nobly and suitably in every way" (*NE* 1100b21-22) whatever it is that fortune has in store for him. Even in the midst of misfortunes his "nobility shines through [as he] bears up calmly" (*NE* 1100b30). His virtue is so authoritative that he derives happiness from it even in bad times. If, however, his bad fortune proves to be as great as Priam's and he loses everything that is dear to him, his happiness would surely be compromised. Yet, even a misfortune of this magnitude would not be as damning to the virtuous person as it would be to those who lack virtue: he would still never "become wretched, since he will never do things that are hateful of base" (*NE* 1100b35-36). His stellar character secures him against wretchedness even in the context of life's greatest misfortunes. Calamities like Priam's would surely subvert his happiness but to a lesser extent than they would most other people's. Ultimately, chance poses a threat to the *eudaimonia* of the morally virtuous man but not a unique one; in fact, chance affects him less than most.[8] Thus, malignities of fortune cannot indicate that the moral-political life is less happy than other lives.

Aside from needing to avoid bad fortune, are there other externalities to moral virtue that the gentleman requires for happiness? Aristotle answers this question in the affirmative, as he indicates that *eudaimonia* "requires external goods in addition" (*NE* 1099a31). It turns out that it is impossible, "or not easy" (*NE* 1099a32), for the virtuous man to do what is noble without "friends, wealth, and political power" (*NE* 1099b2). Not unlike the liberal, magnificent, magnanimous, gentle, friendly, truthful, witty, just, and even moderate person, the courageous man too needs external equipment which, in his case, means other human beings with whom and on behalf of whom to act courageously; he may even need a moderate amount of wealth in order to leave his home and engage in battle. Moral happiness thus seems to involve more than noble activity. The need for external equipment should be understood in terms of that equipment providing the necessary conditions for virtue, rather than in terms of that equipment being needed alongside virtue. The distinction is important, as it signifies that virtue, once attained, is not insufficient for happiness: the liberal man, for instance, needs wealth in order to exercise his liberality; he does

8. "He would not be unstable and subject to reversals either, for he will not be easily moved from happiness, and then not by any random misfortunes but only by great and numerous ones" (*NE* 1101a8-11).

not need it as a supplement to his liberality; similarly, the courageous man needs other people in order to exercise his courage; he does not need them outside his courageous activity (*NE* 1178a29-33, 1177a32, 1178a12).[9] The fact that morality requires external equipment questions its self-sufficiency in a unique way: while malignities of fortune threaten all human lives, requirements such as wealth, power, and friends appear to burden the moral-political life exclusively. In particular, Aristotle contrasts the gentleman's dependence on external goods with the relative self-sufficiency of the philosopher. It is this contrast that I will turn to next.

While the moral man requires wealth, power, and friends in order to exercise his virtue effectively, the philosopher's virtue seems more self-sufficient. Indeed, a wise person does not need more than the basic necessities of life in order to carry out his defining activity. He needs neither wealth, nor power, nor necessarily others with whom to contemplate. He can theorize effectively when poor, when powerless, and even by himself, and the wiser he is, the more capable he is of doing so. Though it is perhaps better to have friends with whom to contemplate, he is nonetheless able to do it alone (*NE* 1177a33-36). This said, Aristotle significantly curbs the relative self-sufficiency of the philosopher with the following statement: "insofar as he is a human being and lives together with a number of others, he chooses to do what accords with [moral] virtue. He will need such things, then, with a view to living as a human being" (*NE* 1178b5-

9. Aristotle identifies "a complete life" (*NE* 1100a5) as yet another external good necessary for a happy life. The notion of a complete life brings to mind the longevity of life that is particularly relevant to the virtue of political courage. The courageous man constantly risks his life, as he faces death on the battlefield. In effect, his virtue appears self-defeating, or at least self-undermining. How, then, can courageous activity be conducive to happiness if it risks one of the conditions for happiness, a complete life? An analogy to Socrates' position in the *Crito* may be useful in answering this question. Socrates recognizes the fact that all other things being equal, dying at the hands of unjust accusers would, of course, be worse for a man than living and engaging in philosophical activity. Yet, all other things are not equal and this effectively changes the calculation. The terms under which Socrates would have to live were he to avoid punishment for his crimes—like receiving dishonor—would not, in his view, be any more compatible with his happiness as willingly accepting the jury's verdict would be. In fact, they would be worse than death (Rogers 1994, 303). Similarly, although the courageous person's activity may potentially destroy his life and thus foreclose the possibility for happiness, he takes that chance, because the alternative—avoiding danger—would most certainly prove destructive of his happiness. In other words, he chooses the potential loss of life over the certain loss of happiness. By dying in battle, he would fail to meet the "complete life" requirement for happiness, while by fleeing noble danger, he would continue to live but in shame and thus, in misery. In this sense, the dead courageous man ranks higher than the alive but wretched one who turns his back on courage. Needless to say, neither scenario is ideal and it is only by risking and preserving his life that the courageous would be truly happy.

8). This qualification proves to be of great consequence: because the philosopher inhabits the city, a degree of sociality is expected of him; in effect, he must act in accordance with moral virtue at least towards others; the need to act in such a way makes him dependent on the external equipment of the moral man, though perhaps to a lesser extent (*NE* 1179a29). In other words, although the wise man does not pursue the noble, he has to behave in a noble-like way if he is to avoid dishonor and persecution. In having to behave like the virtuous, he becomes similarly dependent on external goods, and thus no longer self-sufficient.

In short, the wise needs external equipment in order to live safely and respectably among others.[10] Insofar as the philosopher resides in, and especially if he is a member of, the *polis*, he is in a needy position. His neediness, moreover, unlike that of the moral man, stems from outside his primary activity: the required external equipment does not enhance his contemplation or contribute to his happiness; it merely makes him safer. Because of this, the philosopher's *needs* are impediments rather than preconditions to his activity: time spent on appearing to be moral is time spent away from philosophy. His life, since burdened by things irrelevant to his activity, is less coherent than the moral man's. Ultimately then, while the happiness of the philosopher is indeed more self-sufficient than that of the gentleman on account of his primary activity being more self-sufficient, his life is less synchronized with that primary activity: the wise man is forced to waste his time. The moral man's life is more purpose-oriented, for his external goods are preconditions for his virtue, while the philosopher's are for the sake of an activity that actually pulls him away from his virtue. The wise man is forced to act virtuously without finding his happiness in moral action and in effect, the relative self-sufficiency of his activity proves of little practical value: he has less time to devote to it than the morally virtuous person whose entire life is exhausted by moral action and the things constitutive of it.

10. As a citizen, Socrates was required to participate in Athenian wars. He thus had to simulate the behavior of the courageous man for the sake of his well-being. This shows that without being central to the activity of contemplation, the need for external goods nonetheless arises in the life of the philosopher; the city and his fellow citizens make demands of him as a member of the community. A philosopher who does not obey the laws risks incarceration, ostracism, or execution. If he cleverly circumvents the laws, he still risks a degree of dishonor. Moreover, "such a philosopher also risks the reputation of all philosophers and philosophy...[he thus must at the very least] appear morally virtuous without being so" (Swanson 1992, 199). The need for this appearance creates a dependence on external goods, not unlike that of morally virtuous person.

Furthermore, while Aristotle's statement that "the greater and nobler the actions are, the more things [as conditions for them] would be needed" (*NE* 1178b1-2) creates the impression that moral virtue requires a great amount of external goods, this impression is soon shown to be false. It turns out that morally virtuous action can be effectively carried out with only a moderate amount of external equipment. "One ought not to suppose," Aristotle says,

> that he who will be happy will need many or great things, just because it is not possible to be blessed in the absence of external goods. For self-sufficiency does not consist in excess, and neither does action, it being possible even for someone who does not rule land and sea to do noble things. In fact, someone would be able to act in accord with virtue even from measured means. (It is possible to see this plainly, since private persons seem to act decently no less than those in positions of power.) (*NE* 1179a1-8)

This important passage of the *Nicomachean Ethics* effectively shows that virtue's dependence on external goods is so low that even private persons, which is to say most people, can meet it. A moderate amount of wealth and power suffices for moral action; this is a fact to which not only Aristotle, but also Solon and Anaxagoras—the wise—testify (*NE* 1179a10-18).[11] The moral life's lack of self-sufficiency is considerably curtailed by this admission: yes, the gentleman needs wealth, friends, and power in order to exercise his virtue, but the required amount is small and thus not difficult to secure.

Thus far, I have argued that both the role of chance in human life and the need for external equipment do not pose a great obstacle to the *eudaimonism* of the moral life. Yet, there is another respect in which moral happiness may be difficult to attain: moral virtue requires a specific kind of city. Aristotle insists that ethical action ensues from the proper disposition of the passions and therefore, from proper habituation. Now, "[t]he authoritative character of the political community and especially the law, which is this community's voice of command" (Collins 2006, 94) is decisive in making habituation in moral virtue possible. For instance, if one's *polis* does not affirm the virtue of moderation and instead, even discourages it by either laws or unwritten convention, one would have to be habituated to moderation in opposition to his environment; this is extremely difficult to do and it requires a wholly private and even secluded education. The same goes for courage: if the act of risking one's life in battle for the sake of the noble is

11. "Solon and Anaxagoras, pre-Socratic representatives of the contest between the political and theoretical life, now speak in one voice, and Aristotle with them, if only to agree that moderate resources are sufficient for the happy life (Burger 1995, 91).

deemed foolish, irrational, or somehow in conflict with other conventional virtues like comfort and personal prosperity, then to habituate one in courage would mean to reject the authoritative principles of the *polis*. Aside from being difficult to carry out, such education would be wholly unpatriotic and thus, an enemy to the *polis*. The gentleman would thus be in existential conflict with his environment and in effect, an unlikely candidate for the title "a happy person." The character of the city is, therefore, decisive for both the possibility of moral virtue and for the *eudaimonism* associated with it. In the absence of virtue-oriented laws, which were rare even in Aristotle's time but are especially so in our own, the link between moral virtue and human happiness becomes very unstable. At the very least, it makes the need for private education inescapable: "but when cities utterly neglect the public care, it would seem appropriate for each individual to contribute to the virtue of his own offspring and friends, or at least to make the choice to do so" (*NE* 1180a30-33). On the bright side, the recipients of private education in moral virtue, in turn, represent the greatest hope for the character of the *polis:* it is conceivable that they could, either through political reforms or by means of a violent revolution, bring the laws of the city in concord with ethical virtue. Consequently, public education in moral virtue can become a real possibility (*NE* 1180a34-35). The glaring problem posed by the character of the *polis* is thus not entirely insurmountable: a great reformer, who is himself the product of a meticulous private moral upbringing, can alter the regime with an eye to ethical virtue for the generations to come.

In sum, while moral virtue cannot be seen as self-sufficient—good fortune, external equipment, and a certain kind of city are also required—it cannot be rejected as conducive to happiness on account of that. First, the moral life is no more exposed to chance than other lives and is better equipped to face malignities of fortune better than its non-moral counterparts. Second, the gentleman's need for external equipment is moderate and as such, it is easily satisfied. Moreover, the philosopher too is dependent on external equipment insofar as he needs to *appear* virtuous as a member of the *polis*. Third, while the cultivation of moral virtue requires a certain kind of city, either legislative reform or a regime change can make that possible. Ultimately then, the moral man has good hope to be happy since the various ways in which his virtue proves insufficient can be remedied, some with less and some with more effort.

6.2.1 The Highest Form of Human Happiness

How does the happiness derived from morality compare to that of other lives and in particular, to the happiness contained in philosophy? I have decided to divide this part of the chapter into three thematic portions, which, when taken together, offer an answer to the question at hand. The first section explores the essence of the contemplative life, which Aristotle abruptly crowns as the happy life *per excellence* in Book X of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Next, I discuss my position on the rivalry between the inclusive and dominant interpretations of Aristotelian *eudaimonia*: in order to adequately compare the moral to the philosophical life, this question must be settled. Finally, the last section investigates the *eudaimonia* specific to the life of moral virtue: what does it consist of, in what ways is it lower than the happiness of the philosopher, and how accessible is it compared to contemplative happiness? Ultimately, Part II of this chapter seeks to compare the happiness of the gentleman to that of the philosopher, both qualitatively and practicably.

6.2.2 The Contemplative Life

Aristotle's identification of happiness with wisdom in Book X of the *Nicomachean Ethics* takes the reader by abrupt surprise (*NE* 1177a18).[12] What is most surprising about it, as Tessitore notes, is the fact that his sudden assertion "is incompatible with the earlier and dominant teaching of the *Ethics*, one that emphasized the intrinsic value of...moral virtue...for a flourishing human life" (Tessitore 1996, 105). Yet, the careful reader will note that the argument about the primacy of philosophy to morality "has been kept in the background as an alternative to the dominant teaching of the *Ethics*" (Tessitore 1996, 105) all along. To begin, the Philosopher clearly identifies wisdom with happiness as early as Book VI: "...just as health produces health, so wisdom produces happiness" (*NE* 1144a4-5). Despite Aristotle's refusal to elaborate on the association between wisdom and happiness expressed here, he expects us to keep it in mind until Book X where he fully spells it out. In addition to the remark in Book VI, the Philosopher leaves certain other clues that should lessen the "surprise" in Book X. For instance, the very last para-

12. As Claudia Baracchi notices, Aristotle's discussion of happiness in Book I is unlike that in Book X in one immediate sense: there is "a shift from the language of *logos* to the language of *nous*, *theorein*, and *sophia* (intellect or intuition, contemplation, and wisdom)" (Baracchi 2008, 299).

graph of Book VI—the one on which the dominant interpretation of *eudaimonia* often rests—suggests that prudence is instrumental to the attainment of wisdom (*NE* 1145a7-11). As I argued in the previous chapter, I believe that this argument means to refer to a life other than that of moral virtue, in which prudence plays a role different than that in morality; nonetheless, the Philosopher seems to order these two intellectual virtues—prudence and wisdom—hierarchically. Ultimately then, Book X's "seemingly Platonic exhortation" (Tessitore 1996, 105) that happiness is contained in the most divine aspect of our souls—wisdom—should not come as a complete surprise to the reader. It is nonetheless strange that after having spoken at painstaking length about the life of moral virtue—and with an eye to making his readers virtuous—Aristotle now delivers a disorienting blow by raising the theoretical life above it.

The Philosopher attributes *eudaimonia* to contemplation because it is the only thing never chosen for the sake of something else (*NE* 1176b1-9). Now, being the only thing never chosen for the sake of something else is not the same thing as being the only thing which is desirable for its own sake. The distinction is subtle but important: one can choose an activity both for its own sake and because it leads to some further good, where the fact that it produces some further good need not take away from its internal goodness. For example, activities which manifest moral virtue are desired for their own sake, in addition to also being desired for the sake of happiness. This means that contemplation is not the only activity chosen for its own sake, despite being superior to other activities insofar as it is never chosen for the sake of something else. Moreover, being the only thing never chosen for the sake of something else does not mean that everything else is chosen for its sake: if the gods provide a fitting model for contemplation, it is not because they do everything for the sake of contemplation, but because they should not be imagined to do anything else at all (*NE* 1178b7-28; Burger 2008, 199-200). In other words, the fact that contemplation is superior to other activities need not imply that all other activities are, in one way or another, a means to contemplation. Instead, it only necessarily implies that when compared to one another, the various human activities are unequal. Therefore, Aristotle's identification of contemplation as the highest human activity cannot suggest that intellectual virtue is superior to moral virtue because the latter is a means to the former. Instead, its superiority rests on six specific criteria and they are what I will turn to next.

First, the Philosopher considers contemplation higher than morality because of its object: "the intellect is the most excellent of the things in us, and the things with which the intellect is concerned are the most excellent of the things that can be known" (*NE* 1177a21-23). Aristotle is here referring to the objects of contemplation described in Book VI of the *Ethics* and in the Chapter 5 of this dissertation: the things that do not admit of being otherwise, such as the eternal and heavenly things. The things of the heavens, by virtue of their unchageability and longevity, are superior to the human things which, since tied to choice, are always prone to being otherwise. In effect, the faculty that specializes in the former—wisdom—must be superior to the faculty specializing in the latter, prudence and hence, moral virtue. A life led in accordance with wisdom must therefore be loftier and, ultimately, happier than the moral-political life.

The second criterion on which Aristotle bases the preeminence of the theoretical life is the continuity of its defining activity: "we are more able to contemplate continuously than we are to do anything else whatever" (*NE* 1177a23-24). This point is made in passing and is not fully developed, which makes it unclear just how much and on what grounds Aristotle sees the continuity of an activity as its virtue: it is not immediately obvious, why a long-lasting activity is superior to a short-lasting but more intense one; how does the duration of an activity reflect its intrinsic worth; can the moral virtues be ranked among themselves on the basis of this same criteria; can one really contemplate longer than one can be just and how do we measure that? Aristotle's point about the greater continuity of contemplation is something which I do not claim to either understand very well or see the relevance of; yet, this is the second of his six criteria.

The third is the inequality in pleasure of the two lives: the philosophical life, it "is agreed" (*NE* 1177a24), is the most pleasant life, since it is founded on the most pleasant activity. This conclusion is hardly surprising, since Aristotle has been paving the way for it all along. The sections on pleasure in both the *Nicomachean* and *Eudemian Ethics* unambiguously show that the various human pleasures are unequal on account of their corresponding activities being unequal.[13] The pleasures are hierarchically ordered where the highest ones accompany the highest activities. Thus, it should be of little surprise that Aristotle

13. See Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

identifies the life of wisdom as more pleasant than that of moral virtue, given the superiority of its defining activity—reasoning about the things that do not admit of being otherwise. Indeed, "philosophy seems to have pleasures that are wondrous in purity and stability" (*NE* 1177a26) because wisdom investigates the things in the universe that are both purest and most stable. The pleasure felt by him who spends his life contemplating is thus bound to be superior to that of the moral man, whose pleasure stems from activities with lower objects.

The fourth factor according to which philosophy trumps morality is *leisure*, for happiness "is held to reside in leisure" (*NE* 1177b4).[14] "Leisure" is how we customarily translate the Greek noun *schole*, which is derived from the word *school*: the place where one goes when one is free from having to work. Thus, we should understand the term as connoting "freedom from necessity" or "freedom not to do work." Though the concept of "play" also satisfies this condition, it is quite unlike leisure in that it is devoid of seriousness. Moreover, play, like rest, is normally done for the sake of recuperating from work and thus, for the sake of going back to work. Leisure is unlike both rest and play in that it is done for its own sake, rather than for the sake of work. In addition, as I noted above, leisure is a pastime defined by seriousness, while play is not. Aristotle argues that unlike the moral-political life, the philosophical life is leisured and superior on account of that. While it is not hard to see how theoretical activity—the activity of contemplating the eternal things—is a leisurely one, it is not immediately obvious why the exercise of the moral virtues is not. After all, engaging in courageous acts is not work, strictly speaking, nor is it rest or play and it is certainly a very serious activity. Why, then, does Aristotle insist that moral virtue is "without leisure" (*NE* 1177b17)? The answer seems to be that that the gentleman's activity deals not with his highest potential—with what is godlike in him—but with his elemental needs and incessant flaws. The ethical virtues represent the good state of our passions; they depict the harmonization of our passions with reason. Without virtue, or without some sort of mechanism through which to instill order into the passionate part of the soul, man is doomed to servitude; he is a servant to his capricious desires. Therefore, moral virtue stems primarily

14. It is unclear precisely *who* holds that happiness resides in leisure or whether we are to take this opinion as Aristotle's own. At the very least, we can presume that the Philosopher agrees with it, as he does not challenge it and moreover, treats it as authoritative and common-sensical. Furthermore, in Books VII and VIII of *The Politics*, Aristotle unequivocally expresses his own esteem for, and even commitment to, leisurely activities in the city.

from our weakness and neediness; virtue responds to a unique deficiency in human nature: the tyranny of the passions. This explains why it would be foolish to attribute morality to the gods: unlike men, they cannot be consumed by their passions; they thus lack the human *need* for morality. It is precisely because man *needs* it as a means to ruling over his otherwise destructive tendencies that moral virtue lacks leisure: to contemplate is to engage what is highest in us, while to perform moral deeds is to display mastery over our weaknesses.

The fifth criterion is contemplation's proximity to the divine. The superior happiness of the life of theoretical activity stems from its imitation of the gods: "we have supposed that the gods especially are blessed and happy—but what sort of actions ought we to assign to them" (*NE* 1178b9-10)? Aristotle's answer is structured in the following way: upon finding the happiest of beings—the gods—we must discern the activity that defines their lives, for that must be the activity responsible for their happiness; following, it is when humans engage in this same activity that they must be happiest, since they are, then, closest to divine happiness. Following, the defining activity of divine beings is shown to be not moral virtue, but contemplation: since they are divine and thus apolitical, without bad desires, and without concern for the noble, the gods cannot exercise moral virtue; if they did, they would "appear laughable" (*NE* 1178b11). They display neither courage, nor liberality, nor moderation, for "all that pertains to action would appear...petty and unworthy of the gods" (*NE* 1178b17-18). Since they are, by nature, not burdened by the cornucopia of stormy passions that threaten to lead humans astray, the gods neither possess nor practice the moral virtues; they are beneath them. The sole activity in which they engage is contemplation, and their sole virtue is wisdom: "happiness, then, is coextensive with contemplation" (*NE* 1178b30). By extension of this argument, the philosopher is also dearest to the gods, for they love that which is most like them, since it represents the loftiest form of existence: "for if there is a certain care for human things on the part of the gods, as in fact there is held to be, it would also be reasonable for gods to delight in what is best and most akin to them—this would be the intellect—and to benefit in return those who cherish this above all and honor it" (*NE* 1179a25-28). So, it seems that the philosopher is not only happiest because he imitates the activity of the happiest beings, but also because he is dearest to the gods, *if* we can assume that

the gods care for human beings.[15] Though not theoretically incoherent in its own right, this argument about the superiority of wisdom to morality is problematic in the following ways: it seems to neglect the uniqueness of man's constitution and it drastically restricts the possibility of happiness for human beings. Regarding the first problem, the equation of human with divine happiness glosses over man's peculiarly *human* features and their bearing on his happiness. Unlike the gods, men run the risk of being ruined by their passions: undesirable things like vice and lack of self-restraint are real possibilities for them and so, the attainment of happiness depends on their avoidance. Thus, human nature cannot be self-sufficient in contemplation the way that divine nature is. Since the gods do not possess the deficiencies of human beings, they have the luxury of being happy on the basis of a single activity to the exclusion of all others; man lacks this luxury. He seems to need something like moral virtue, or at least self-restraint, in order to prevent harm to himself, which is always a basic precondition for happiness.

The second way in which Aristotle's aforementioned argument is problematic is not unrelated to the first: in restricting human happiness to the single godlike activity of contemplation, he drastically limits the number of people who can hope to attain it. If happiness belongs to those engaged in contemplation, then it is only available to men capable of theoretical reasoning and in possession of leisure—such men are even less rare today than they were in Aristotle's time. Such an exclusive account of happiness, while theoretically sensible, is troubling insofar as it leaves out the vast majority of mankind. Are those incapable of engaging in contemplation doomed to unhappiness? Moreover, what insight into leading a good life is everyone besides the philosopher to take from the *Nicomachean Ethics*? It turns out, as I will argue later in this chapter, that there is a secondary type of happiness—found in the life of moral virtue—of much wider accessibility.

The sixth and final argument about philosophy's superiority to morality is also the most compelling one: the wise person is more self-sufficient and thus happier. As we saw in the previous section, the life of moral virtue requires a moderate amount of external equipment. What about the contemplative life? While I showed that the philosopher also needs external equipment insofar as the *polis* requires him to

15. This assumption is thoroughly supported by the drama in Homer's *Illiad*, where virtually all of the Olympic gods actively support either the Achaeans or Trojans and repeatedly intervene in their conflict. On the other hand, see Plato's *Republic* (1991, 376c-383c) for Socrates' argument that the gods could not possibly care for human beings and their affairs.

appear virtuous, what about his need for other people? The wise person, Aristotle says, "is capable of contemplating even when by himself, and the wiser he is, the more capable of doing so he will be" (*NE* 1177a33-35). Unlike the morally virtuous man, who needs others toward whom to exercise his virtue, the man of wisdom can engage in his activity in isolation of other people and is, therefore, more self-sufficient. Yet, Aristotle implies there are "degrees" of wisdom that correspond to degrees of self-sufficiency: there are those who are less wise and those who are wiser; the latter appear to be "more capable" of contemplating by themselves than the former. Hence, it is the perfectly wise person who is most self-sufficient, while those on their way to wisdom would still need others, co-workers so to speak, with whom to engage in contemplation. Moreover, Aristotle says, it is better even for the wise "to have those with whom [they] may work" (*NE* 1177a35-36). Philosophical friendship is an important impediment to the self-sufficiency of philosophy and as Ronna Burger puts it, the wise man is therefore only "so-called self-sufficien[t]" (Burger 2008, 200).

Furthermore, wisdom's self-sufficiency may be compromised by its developmental dependence on prudence: as he likens wisdom to health and prudence to the medical art, Aristotle says that medicine "sees how [health] comes into being" (NE 1145a7-8). Eric Salem argues that by logical extension, this must mean that wisdom depends on prudence for its perfection: while wisdom is characterized by divine self-sufficiency *once* it has come into being, prudence is somehow responsible for its coming into being (Salem 2003, 40). The precise way in which this happens is a subject Aristotle says, and Salem speculates, nothing about. As such, the argument remains no more than a conjecture, albeit a very interesting one.[16]

Overall, Aristotle's presentation of the contemplative life and its relationship to happiness can be summed up in the following way: the happiness produced by philosophy is superior to that produced by morality because its defining activity is higher and thus more pleasant, more continuous, characterized by leisure, more divine and thus dearer to the gods, and especially more self-sufficient.[17] Yet, the rivalry

16. This conjecture invites further investigation into the relationship between wisdom and prudence. In particular, it may be the case that the latter is a precondition for the former—necessary or not—in the sense that the gentleman may, under certain circumstances, become a philosopher. Scholars like May Sim (1995, 52) explore this possibility by means of superimposing the *Metaphysics* onto the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

17. As Amélie Rorty acutely observes, the superior self-sufficiency of contemplation also consists in that the "independence of the intellectual from the moral virtues [she here means wisdom rather than prudence] allows contemplation to continue in the midst of political disaster and practical blindness" (Rorty 1980, 392).

between morality and philosophy over the title "the happy human life" is not yet settled: it remains to be seen how the two lives compare to one another. What is the essence of the professed secondary happiness of the life of moral virtue: just how inferior is it; what does it mean to be happy in a moral way; and how accessible is moral *eudaimonia*? Yet, before turning to the subject of moral happiness, I must first give the debate between the inclusive and dominant interpretations of *eudaimonia* its due. This is a necessary preliminary step, since my taking of morality and philosophy as characteristic of two disparate lives hinges on it.

6.2.3 The Inclusive and Dominant Interpretations of *Eudaimonia*

As I explained earlier, the dominant and inclusive interpreters of Aristotelian *eudaimonia* vie over whether the Philosopher presents human happiness as dependent on one supreme activity—contemplation—for the sake of which all other virtues are practiced or whether it instead consists of the union of moral and intellectual virtue with the presumption that the two are on equal footing.[18] The comprehensive view of *eudaimonia* tends to focus on the argument about human self-sufficiency: it argues that in Chapter 7 of Book I Aristotle lays down self-sufficiency as a formal requirement of *eudaimonia*, and defines it as "that which by itself makes life choiceworthy and in need of nothing" (*NE* 1097b15-16). On the basis of this passage, they ultimately conclude that since *eudaimonia* is self-sufficient, then it cannot be restricted to contemplation: the contemplative life neither cultivates nor exercises the moral virtues as moral virtues, which is to say for the sake of the noble. In effect, the highest kind of human happiness must embrace moral action in addition to contemplation. This argument seems to be further reinforced by the following passage in Book I:

In other words, while things like tyranny, civil war, or a plague prove detrimental to the exercise of moral virtue (of some virtues more than others), they do not inhibit philosophy to nearly the same extern: "the stars and the divine remain unaffected by the absence of *phronesis*" (Rorty 1980, 392). Thucydides presents a compelling illustration of the fact that when political order collapses, not only moral virtue, but even basic human decency suffers irreparably (Thucydides 1998, 2.47-2.53).

18. Burger argues that the tension between the inclusive and exclusive conceptions of happiness "recurs in *sophia* itself, which was defined in Book VI as either knowledge of the whole or knowledge of the highest things in the cosmos. In the latter case, 'the human things' would be too contemptible to be of utmost importance, in the former that would be homogenous with everything else and hence the subject of a more comprehensive science" (Burger 1995, 82-83).

> [H]appiness is the most choiceworthy of all things because it is not just one among them—and it is clear that, were it included as one among many things, it would be more choiceworthy with the least addition of the good things; for the good that is added to it results in a superabundance of goods, and the greater number of goods is always more choiceworthy. So happiness appears to be something complete and self-sufficient. (*NE* 1097b17-21)

Thus, if completeness is a formal requirement of happiness, then contemplation cannot be its sole defining activity (Ackrill 1980, 352-354; Keyt 1978, 365-368).

In response to the most explicit passage in which Aristotle identifies happiness with contemplation—the first paragraph of Chapter 7, Book X of the *Nicomachean Ethics*—inclusive interpreters devise an interesting solution. The passage in question says that the activity proper to *complete* happiness is contemplation (*NE* 1177a17-19). Now, the word translated as "complete" is *teleiotate*, which scholars like Ackrill argue should be taken to imply the sum of a number of things; *teleiotate* virtue, therefore, must refer to the combination of all the virtues, moral and intellectual. This interpretation is based on parallel passage in the *Eudemian Ethics* where Aristotle uses the adjective *teleian* in the sense of "complete" or "inclusive:" "And since we saw that happiness is something perfect, and life is either perfect or imperfect, and the same with goodness (for some goodness is a whole and some a part), but the activity of imperfect things is imperfect, it would follow that happiness is an activity of perfect life in accordance with perfect [*teleian*] goodness" (*EE* 1219a35-39). Ackrill points out that the reference to whole and part makes it clear that by "perfect goodness," Aristotle here means "all the virtues." Therefore, he could not have meant to present *sophia* as exhaustive of human happiness (Roche 1988, 185), since contemplative activity is only a partial or limited exercise of human virtue as a whole.

In opposition to the inclusive interpretation of Aristotelian *eudaimonia*, dominant interpreters, like Robert Heinaman, insist that *teleion* or *teleiotate* is an ambiguous Greek term that need not necessarily connote "completeness." Heinaman (1988, 36) argues that it could mean either "complete" in the inclusive sense, or "perfect" in the sense of being the best specimen of its kind. The second reading of *teleion* supports the argument that Aristotle effectively identifies *eudaimonia* with the best and most excellent of all virtues—wisdom—rather than with their sum. Ultimately, when we translate the word *teleion* as "perfect," rather than "complete," we are compelled to side with the dominant interpretation of happiness.

And yet, when examining *teleion* in the various contexts in which it is used, we initially become less willing to do so.

When Aristotle speaks of something as being *teleion*, he often means that it is *part-whole* complete, rather than most excellent. In the *Eudemian Ethics*, for instance, he identifies *teleion* virtue with virtue as a whole, and its opposite with its parts: "life is either perfect [*telea*] or imperfect [*ateleis*], and the same with goodness (for some goodness is a whole and some a part)" (*EE* 1219a36-37). Here, he clearly identifies completeness as a totality. The same thing can be observed in the *Magna Moralia*, where the Philosopher describes complete moral virtue as the amalgam of practical wisdom and the virtues of character; he calls that amalgam *kalokagathia* of noble-goodness (*MM* 1207b20-27). In both of these instances, Aristotle uses *teleion* to suggest part-whole completeness. Moreover, in both the *Eudemian Ethics* and *Magna Moralia*, he seems to describe happiness as an activity in accord with complete virtue in this very same sense of *teleion* (*MM* 1184a35-b9; *EE* 1219a38-39). At the same time, in the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle explicitly states that contemplation produces *eudaimonia*. How are these claims consistent with one another and can *teleion* really be read as "perfect" rather than "complete" as dominant interpreters insist? Could the Greek term hold different meanings at different times? This, Reeve argues, is precisely the case. He insists, and reasonably so, that while seemingly presenting happiness as complete in the *part-whole* sense, Aristotle is ultimately doing something else. In all three ethical treatises, Reeve points out, he divides the virtues into moral and intellectual. Yet, once he explicitly weds prudence to ethical virtue, "this distinction fades in prominence" (Reeve 2012, 245) and is replaced by the more consequential distinction of merely human virtue (moral virtue consisting of the passions and prudence) and divine virtue (the intellectual virtue of wisdom).[19] This new distinction takes center stage in Book X of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and according to it, happiness becomes activity in accord not with complete virtue, but with the best and most perfect virtue— the divine virtue of theoretical wisdom (*NE* 1098a16-18, 1177a12-17). Yet, Reeve argues, the sense in which wisdom is more perfect than moral virtue cannot be a matter of *part-whole* completeness, since virtue of character is not part of theoretical wisdom. Instead, it seems that the perfection it possesses "is something more akin to *value* completeness, so that theoretical wisdom is

19. This new distinction is made explicit in *NE* 1178a16-22.

more value complete than full virtue of character because...it cannot be surpassed in value" (Reeve 2012, 245-246). Ultimately, then, Aristotle seems to move away from thinking of virtue's completeness in *part-whole* terms and toward thinking of it in telic terms. When he says that the human good or happiness "is an activity in soul in accord with virtue, and if there are several virtues, then in accord with the best and most complete one [*ariste kai teleiotate*]," he must be identifying that best and most complete virtue as *sophia*. *Sophia* is most complete because it is of higher value, not because it includes all of the other virtues. Thus, despite the Philosopher's use of the adjective *teleian* to mean "whole" in certain passages of the *Eudemian Ethics* and *Magna Moralia*, he cannot and does not mean that *sophia* is the most complete virtue in this same sense: the *part-whole* connotation of *teleain* is replaced with a *value-centered* one based on the distinction between purely human and divine virtue. Moreover, the Philosopher does not merely say that *eudaimonia* is an activity with *teleiotate* virtue, but that it is an activity in accordance with the *best* and *teleiotate* virtue; the condition of value pre-eminence that the word "best" (*ariste*) implies can only be satisfied by contemplation.

In agreement with the dominant interpretation of Aristotelian *eudaimonia*, I hold that the Philosopher identifies perfect human happiness as excellent theoretical activity. If one orders his life in accordance with theoretical activity, he will lead the best life possible for a human being for the six reasons described earlier. The dominant interpretation of happiness is correct, provided that it sees the philosophical and moral lives as separate.[20] If we consider Aristotle's *ergon* argument (*NE* 1097b22-25), we see that it reaches the following conclusion: "the human good becomes an activity of soul in accord with virtue, and if there are several virtues, then in accord with the best and most complete one" (*NE* 1098a16-18). I, in concord with dominant interpreters like Kraut, take this to mean that "our function consists in contemplation or more fully, that contemplation perfectly fulfills our function, and ethical activity fulfills our function to a secondary degree" (Kraut 1989, 313). Since contemplation is the highest form of activity in accordance with reason, it must be equated with the human function, and thus with human happiness.

20. The problem of the internal coherence of the inclusive approach will be discussed a few paragraphs down, where I argue that moral and philosophical virtue are invariably in tension with one another, and thus cannot be effectively harmonized in a single life.

In the same vein, since moral virtue is a lower form of activity in accordance with reason, it must fulfill our function to a secondary degree, thus producing a subordinate form of happiness.

One of the main textual reasons for the discrepancy between the theoretical and moral lives lies in a passage at the beginning of Book I Chapter 2: man's *eudaimonia* is desired for its own sake, not desired for the sake of anything else, and is such that all other goods are desired because of it (*NE* 1094a18-20). According to this formulation, it would seem that the ethical virtues promote philosophical activity; yet, we find no argument, anywhere in Aristotle's ethical works, that purports to show that. On the contrary, he repeatedly says that men engage in morally virtuous actions for the sake of the noble. Even in Book X, the place of his most adamant defense of the theoretical life, the Philosopher does not so much as intimate that all other goods—the moral virtues in particular—are desired for the sake of *theoria.* Thus, the only way to make the statement in Book I Chapter 2 consistent with the supreme happiness of the contemplative life is to regard that life as wholly separate from the life of moral virtue. Once we do that, the pieces fit into their proper places: in the context of the philosophical life, one does all that one does for the sake of contemplation; one even engages in moral-like behavior for the sake of making his life-defining activity safe;[21] in this sense, the "good" that is moral virtue is indeed practiced in the service of intellectual virtue and so the formulation in Book I Chapter 2 remains true.[22] In the context of the life of moral virtue, however, the ethical virtues are self-contained and do not point beyond themselves; they do not aim at contemplation but at the noble. Accordingly, in the best life, all other goods are pursued for the sake of contemplation, while in the second best life, they are pursued for the sake of moral virtue. Ultimately

21. "But insofar as he is a human being and lives together with a number of others, he chooses to do what accords with [moral] virtue" (*NE* 1178b5-7). The philosopher's status of a member of *polis* requires him to appear honorable, or at least not contemptible, in the eyes of his fellow citizens. This means that he needs to partake, at least minimally, in the activities that they deem proper and decent. As such, the philosopher finds himself having to mimic the moral virtues. Yet, in appearing morally virtuous, he merely satisfies the expectations of his fellow citizens, not those of moral virtue: his apparent ethical virtue is not real virtue, for it is practiced for the sake of intellectual virtue, rather than for the sake of the noble.

22. While the philosopher may need to engage the ethical virtues, he does so in such a way that they cease to be real virtues and become mere means to contemplation: courage on the battlefield may be required so that one is not prosecuted for cowardice; and moderation may be required so that one's capacity to philosophize is no impeded by excess of food, drink or sex. So, while moral virtue *par excellence* is not pursued for the sake of *theoria*, mimics of it are, but only in the context of the contemplative life where wisdom is the ultimate end of all other subordinate goals; to the philosopher, courage and moderation are not *moral virtues* but rather *amoral necessitates* that enable the uninhibited practice of contemplation.

then, in order to reconcile Aristotle's defence of contemplation with his insistence on all goods being in the service of one supreme good, we must see him as discussing two separate lives conducive to two unequal kinds of happiness. As I will proceed to show, wisdom and nobility cannot be ends of a single life, for there are inherent tensions between them and so, human happiness is contained not in one life, but in two. This conclusion should not be frustrating to those looking for clarity on the question of Aristotelian happiness. As Richard Kraut says, "there is no waffling in Aristotle's thesis that the happiest life has contemplation as its ultimate end, and that the second-best life has excellent practical activity as its ultimate end. Surely, it would be unfair for us to protest that by giving us two models of human happiness...he has somehow failed to given an answer to the question 'What is happiness"' (Kraut 1995, 146). Instead, Aristotle has merely discerned between two unequal kinds of human happiness that we, as unequal beings, are capable of achieving.[23]

As I noted above, moral virtue and contemplation cannot belong to a single life: as ends, the intellectual virtues are in sharp tension with the virtues of character. To being, in his final discussion of happiness Aristotle suggests that the external equipment necessary for great and noble actions poses an obstacle to the life of *theoria*: "but for the person who contemplates...such things [the external goods needed as preconditions for noble action] are even impediments" (*NE* 1178b2-5). The problem alluded to here can be further spelled out in the following way: a moral virtue, such as magnificence, requires wealth, which, in turn, requires attentiveness to the economic and political circumstances that make wealth possible; moreover, in the case of *all* the moral virtues, the need for external goods requires attentiveness to the economic and political circumstances that make these virtues both possible and appropriate. Tessitore correctly observes that "a preoccupation with these concerns and with the constantly shifting circumstances from which they arise reduces the suitability and appreciation for a life given over to the contemplation of

23. The two questions—"What life contains the highest kind of *eudaimonia*?" and "What life counts as *eudaimonia*?—have different answers. The highest form of happiness is contemplation, while both contemplation and moral action count as happiness. If effect, *eudaimonia* exists in individuals to greater and lesser degrees, where contemplation contains a kind of happiness superior to moral action. Also, among the happy persons who engage in contemplation some are better at it and thus closer to wisdom than others. They experience greater *eudaimonia* (*NE* 1177a32-34, 1178b28-30). Equally, among the morally virtuous some are happier than others depending on the degree to which they engage in moral action (*NE* 1117b9-11, 1173a20-22; *Pol.* 1328a39).

the unchanging beings of nature" (Tessitore 1996, 111). In other words, the philosopher's time devoted to moral virtue and its preconditions, would be time spent away from contemplation. In the same vein, theoretical and practical matters are in competition for the attention of the rational faculty: human beings can either concentrate their minds on eternal or contingent things, but not both at the same time; the application of reason to practical matters makes human life the primary object of rational attention, while its application to theoretical matters makes loftier-than-man-concerns the primary object of rational attention. Ultimately, the demand that moral virtue makes on one's time and mental energy is the first, the most basic, reason why it is in tension with intellectual virtue: moral action impedes one's ability to philosophize.[24]

Since one cannot contemplate while performing noble deeds and since the simulation of moral virtue necessary for philosophy is not real moral virtue, the two lives must be separate. Yet, there seems to be one particular way in which they may coincide: in the case of the moral person who ascends to philosophy; for him, the moral life acts as a stepping stone to the philosophical. This phenomenon, however, entails consecutive, not simultaneous, devotion to moral and intellectual virtue. As Thomas Pangle observes, "the potentially philosophic must somehow be given a difficult and trying second spiritual education in what we may call *intellectual*-moral virtue, an education presupposing but transcending the education in moral virtue acquired by habituation. Plato's Socrates forbade such 'dialectic' to his potential philosopher-kings until they were in middle age" (Plato 1991, 537d-539e; Pangle 2013, 23). In other words, the morally virtuous man—provided he has a potentially philosophical nature—can become a philosopher if he receives a new kind of education that persuades him to abandon his conviction about the preeminence of morality. A suitable individual can thus be "turned" from morality to philosophy, so to speak, and it is only

24. Susanne Hill denies the tension between contemplative and moral activity and argue that the life whose end is *theoria* will not be devoid of the practical *aretai*. She insists that the philosopher will never "be forced to sacrifice the practical *aretai* to engage in *theoria*" (Hill 1995, 111). I will address Hill's argument and discuss the precise way in which the act of contemplating, as an end, proves destructive of moral virtue, strictly speaking at a later point in the chapter. So far, I have argued, and hopefully not without merit, that the reverse is evident and true: moral acts are inhibitive of contemplative activity insofar as they are time-consuming distractions from it and insofar as they allocate rational activity away from theory.

in this sense that the two lives can be said to intercept.[25] In intercepting, however, they ultimately part ways rather than share a common path and hence, their virtues are separate. Some scholars, like May Sim, further argue that the moral life is not only a possible but a *necessary* stepping stone to the contemplative life. Her position is founded on the belief that the *Nicomachean Ethics* rests upon the *Metaphysics* in the sense that the Philosopher's morality is founded on his understanding on the nature of human substance. In short, she contends that "just as metaphysical form presupposes the matter it informs, contemplation, which is the act of the human form, presupposes *phronesis*, which is the activity of form-and-matter" (Sim 1995, 52). While I would not go as far as insisting that the philosopher ought to have initially been a moral man—the example of men like Socrates, Machiavelli, and Rousseau disproves this claim—I do believe in that such a progression of lives is indeed possible; moreover, it is the only way in which the two lives intercept, albeit without overlapping.

The tension I have unreservedly highlighted between the two lives is approached by Aristotle with extreme caution and indirection; in fact, he skillfully downplays this tension and misleadingly presents the two lives as harmonious. The motive behind the Philosopher's concealment of this conflict seems to be, as Aristide Tessitore argues, his commitment to making the city safe for philosophy. Aristotle deliberately presents contemplation as a godlike activity that does not threaten decent sensibilities, since it is indifferent to the things that constrain civil life (Tessitore, 1996, 106-107). The wise man, we are told, partakes in the moral virtues, lives harmoniously with others, and engages in a kind of ethereal activity that bothers no one; he is thus merely eccentric without being unproductive, and most certainly, without threatening the *polis*. While this is the picture of philosophy painted on the surface of Book X, there is a cornucopia of hints that the opposite is true. In order to make sense of Aristotle's "strategy," we must remember who his implied audience is: "we are conducting an examination, not so that we may know what virtue is, but so that we may become good" (*NE* 1103b27-28). The Philosopher examines moral virtue not for the sake of contemplation, but for the sake of moral action, which is to say for the sake of cultivating gentlemen. It follows that the book is a kind of educational treatise for the youths who already predisposed

25. It is not inconceivable that this may be the exact trajectory of the life of Plato who, in the absence of his teacher Socrates and as a great-souled Athenian aristocrat, may have very well pursued a political—a moral-political—path in life, as his brother Glaucon did.

toward moral virtue.[26] Keeping Aristotle's intended audience in mind, we must also recognize that as a philosopher, he has a strong "class interest" in ensuring the safety of philosophy in the Greek *polis*. In effect, we can begin to see why he may have downplayed the tension between the philosophical and the moral life. He protects the former by depicting it as complementary to the latter. Even his most explicit argument about the surpassing value of contemplation "extols a domesticated version of philosophy, one in which philosophical activity is reduced to a largely private or academic enterprise, shorn of the unwieldy and disruptive political consequences that inevitably attend a life of radical inquiry" (Tessitore 1996, 106-107). In other words, while Aristotle contends that the philosophical life is higher than the moral, he makes that point in a wholly non-threatening way: the philosopher is just as moral as the gentleman and just as valuable to the city. Despite engaging in godlike behavior, then, he is shown to appreciate the excellence of morality; he is thus made safe. This, I believe, explains Aristotle's marked refusal to be explicit about the tension, the virtual incompatibility, between the practical and theoretical lives.

In conclusion to the argument laid out in this section, I hold that the dominant interpretation of *eudaimonia* is truer than its inclusive counterpart: supreme happiness is derivative solely of theoretical activity rather than of the sum of morality and contemplation. Furthermore, the moral and intellectual virtues, strictly speaking, define two wholly disparate lives; they are not hierarchically ordered within the life of the philosopher such that he is moral for the sake of theorizing; he can merely *appear* to be moral for the sake of theorizing. The life of moral action is thus itself a kind of *eudaimonia,* albeit a second-order one, and he who engages in it is happy irrespective of whether he possesses wisdom or not. Likewise, contemplation is a kind of *eudaimonia*, the highest kind, and as long as the philosopher does not develop the moral vices and thus become wretched, he will be happy apart from moral action. There is no evidence to support the view that moral action and contemplation are necessary conditions for one another (with the exception of the scenario discussed above in which morality acts as a stepping stone to philosophy) or that either one counts as *eudaimonia* only if the other is present. In sum, while theoretical wisdom defines the happiest life for human beings, moral virtue defines the second happiest. Now, having examined the

26. In identifying these men as the *Ethics'* intended audience, I do not mean to suggest that they are its *only* intended audience, for there is compelling textual evidence that the book contains an alternative teaching designed for the potentially philosophical.

supreme happiness contained in philosophy, I will next address the *eudaimonia* contained in the life of moral action.

6.2.4 The Moral-Political Life

Moral virtue provides uniquely human happiness that is concerned with what is composite in us. This happiness is characteristically human, because it represents the perfection of many aspects of the human constitution (*NE* 1178a9-23): we are characterized by a delicate balance of passions and reason, where both need to be "in good working order" for our constitution to be perfected. Now, Aristotle is adamant that the life of moral virtue is choiceworthy because it makes us happy, even if to a secondary degree (*NE* 1178a9-10). How are we to understand this happiness? Why and how is the moral man happy? The popular superiority of Pericles to Thales and Anaxagoras (*NE* 1141b2-10, 1140b8-10) adequately captures the perspective of moral-political happiness. From the point of view of the morally virtuous person, the prudence of Pericles is superior to the wisdom of Thales because despite the profound character of the latter, its neglect for human affairs renders it useless in contingent situations that call for action. Thales and Anaxagoras are imprudent and their imprudence diminishes their status as happy human beings: the moral man, by virtue of his correctly ordered passions and stellar practical wisdom, always reacts appropriately in different circumstances; he not only has a goal that makes his life fulfilling and pleasant, but he knows how to secure that goal in each and every situation. He always fears to the precise degree he should, at the precise time he should, and the precise thing he should and similarly with the other passions. His happiness is derivative of primarily two things: his lofty target—the noble, which as I argued in Chapter 3 ultimately points to the nobility of his own soul—and the correctness of his reason in guiding him toward it.[27]

27. Although the life of contemplation is happiest, the examples of Thales and Anaxagoras point to a serious problem with it: it is possible for one to possess supreme wisdom and lack prudence altogether. It is difficult to see how such a person—the natural philosopher comes to mind here—can ever be happy given the fact that knows neither what is advantageous for human beings nor how to attain it. This person is detached from his uniquely human condition by being wholly preoccupied with matters that transcend it: he lacks the ability to act well, for he possesses neither practical wisdom nor properly oriented passions. He must, therefore, be unhappy despite the divine activity that defines his life. And yet, a different kind of philosopher may be immune to this problem: the political philosopher occupies an unarticulated by Aristotle middle

The outlook, the very worldview, of the gentleman is fundamentally different than that of the philosopher. From the point of view of the wise person, and in truth, contemplation is the highest activity that a human being is capable of. Accordingly, Aristotle identifies *nous* is the divine element in human life (*NE* 1177b26-31) and recommends that we make ourselves immortal, insofar as that is possible, by perfecting what is most excellent in us (*NE* 1177b31-1178a2). Therefore, in emulating divine activity, the philosopher is happy in the loftiest of senses and he knows it. This, however, is not the view of the morally virtuous person. The two lives represent two different worldviews about the human good which, in turn, produce two different kinds of *eudaimonia*: a higher godlike one and a lower one that is more reflective of the human condition. Now, one can raise the following objection against the superior humanness of moral virtue to contemplation: while man is a composite being whose constitution includes the complex interplay of his powers of nutrition, passion, and reason, what is unique to him as a human being is his reason. Why, then, is theoretical activity not *the* characteristically human *ergon*?

While it is indeed man's defining faculty, reason falls into two categories: practical, which is inextricably linked to the passions and theoretical, which though man contains a hint of, properly belongs to the gods. The one thing that a human being shares with neither beasts nor gods is *phronesis* and thus, practical wisdom must be what is uniquely human and the foundation of a uniquely human kind of happiness. This is what Aristotle seems to characterize the life of moral virtue as—a uniquely human life conducive to a uniquely human kind of *eudaimonia*. While it may not be the highest happiness that man is capable of achieving, it is the kind of happiness that he *alone* is capable of achieving: despite their overarching superiority, the gods can never feel the bliss that the gentleman feels upon performing noble deeds. His is a happiness unknown and unknowable to them. Thus, from one perspective, moral happiness could be regarded as primary among the goods achievable *by man as man*. The morally virtuous person is happy in a strictly human sense: he is capable of experiencing something unknown to both beasts and gods. This is most certainly a happiness worth living for—for it perfects his unique constitution—and, in the case of the courageous man, a happiness worth dying for.

---

ground, where he possesses both wisdom and prudence. As Aristide Tessitore claims, "political philosophy is an activity that is neither indifferent to nor walled in by the vicissitudes of political life" (Tessitore 1996, 50) and as such, its practitioner would escape the unhappy fate of Thales and Anaxagoras.

Granted that the philosophical life is superior—and happier—to the life of moral virtue, there is a crucial way in which the latter is more appealing than the former: aside from the fact that moral *eudaimonia* is blissful, fulfilling, and choiceworthy, it is far more accessible to the vast majority of human beings. The *Nicomachean Ethics* can be characterized by Aristotle's oscillation between the highest good attainable by most human beings and the highest good without qualification, the good belonging to the divine.[28] The Philosopher's approach to morality is practical not only in the sense that it seeks to cultivate moral virtue, but also in the sense that it endorses morality on the basis of its accessibility. In other words, morality's "marketing angle," so to speak, is not that it constitutes the highest life that men are capable of, but rather that it is a *viable possibility* for most men, in contrast to the exclusivity of the ethereal life of contemplation.

While man may be happiest when he is most godlike, this standard seems unreachable for most of us. When Aristotle says that we should strive to imitate divine activity "insofar as that is possible" (*NE* 1177b35), he is silent on the extent of that possibility. I would argue that this extent is very small. While it is true that man is the only rational animal, the capacity of most men for theory—the higher of the two forms of reason—is very small. What is common to virtually all people is rationality in the general sense rather than the specialized way of being rational that is theoretical insight. In the words of W. F. R. Hardie, "man differs from other animals not primarily in being a natural metaphysician, but rather in being able to plan his life consciously for the attainment of an...end" (Hardie 1965, 280). Thus, while many rational men are incapable of reaching the heights of abstract contemplation, most are certainly capable of navigating their lives through exigent circumstances. Among the latter, those having been habituated in moral virtue are capable of attaining the second best kind of *eudaimonia*. Though Aristotle never explicitly

28. Ronna Burger engages in a fascinating discussion about the difference between Aristotle's and Solon's conceptions of happiness, given the fact that the former employs the authority of the latter to attest to his own position. In Book X, Aristotle argues that a truly blessed life only requires a moderate amount of external equipment. He says that on this, Solon and Anaxagoras—the statesman and the philosopher—agree with him. However, Burger observes, the agreement may not be as unequivocal as Aristotle makes it out to be. In particular, Solon's conception of the happiest kind of life is quite unlike Aristotle's. From the writings of Herodotus (2007, I:30-32) we know that when Solon visits Croesus, the tyrant of Lydia, and is asked to identify the happiest human being he has ever heard of, Solon makes the following observation: the happiest man is Tellus, an Athenian who lived in moderate prosperity, enjoyed a familial life, and finally died in battle on behalf of his city and was honored for that. By contrast, Aristotle presents the life of the theoretical man as best and assigns a secondary happiness to the moderate life Solon judged best (Burger 2008, 204-205).

says it, it is hardly objectionable for me to claim that practical reason is much more common than its theoretical counterpart, or that prudence is easier to cultivate than wisdom, insofar as the latter is a product of cultivation at all. Both common sense and historical experience testify to the fact that the wise are fewer than the prudent and what is possible for the very few is unattainable by the many. The life of moral virtue is superior to the life of contemplation in the way that the life of Pericles is superior to that of Moses: it does not require the divine and is, therefore, a greater possibility toward which to strive.

This argument of mine is in concord with Tessitore's conviction that the *Nicomachean Ethics* is written for two distinct audiences: a small philosophically-inclined one and a larger morally-inclined one. For the majority of Aristotle's decent but un-philosophical readers, moral virtue is presented as a path to happiness in its own right. Despite that fact that the Philosopher notes the existence of a life higher than the moral, the overarching teaching of the *Ethics* is that the man of noble action is truly happy: in his critique of the pleasures of play, the Philosopher points to the great satisfaction to be derived from the practice of moral virtue. Yet, in contrast to his assertive moral teaching, Aristotle offers another, more subtle and terser teaching to those who are in a position to receive it. The way in which he does so is by leaving numerous nuggets of doubt, delicate enough to be ignored by moral men, about the inherent problems with the life of moral virtue.[29] Esoterically, then, the *Ethics* "urges attentiveness to the practice of moral virtue, not as an end in itself or as something that provides the greatest happiness but as a means to the end of contemplation" (Tessitore 1996, 115). It "walks" them through the life of moral virtue not in order to make them moral, but in order to make them philosophical. This teaching, however, is intended for very few readers. It is useless for the majority of moral men and worse, it is destructive of the majority of moral men whom it cannot make wise but only immoral. On the other hand, the genuine happiness contained in the life of moral virtue is a real possibility for most Aristotelian readers and so he explicitly writes his treatise for them: he restricts the argument about the superiority of philosophy to only three chapters of the whole work; also, he understates the preeminence of contemplation and strips it from any allure. In contrast, the life of moral virtue is discussed at length and furnished with attractive examples and poetic praises.

29. This—the problems stemming from morality that ultimately render the life of moral virtue suspect—is a topic I will address in the final section of this chapter.

6.3 Inherent Problems with the Life of Moral Virtue

The *eudaimonism* of moral virtue in general, and of courage in particular, is inhibited neither by the apparent other-directedness of the noble; nor by the seeming painfulness of courageous actions; nor by the role of reason in moral virtue; nor by the evident lack of self-sufficiency of the moral-political life; nor by the admitted superiority of the philosophical to the moral life. And yet, there is a very real way in which Aristotle undercuts the *eudaimonism* of morality: from within its own principles. He leaves subtle but poignant clues that reveal two dangerous tendencies inherent in moral virtue: it produces lethargy and dissatisfaction, and it threatens to create nobility-obsessed tyrants and imperialists; in both of these cases the *eudaimonia* of the morally virtuous appears self-defeating. How and why is the magnanimous man unhappy and how and why does moral virtue lead to tyranny?

6.3.1 The Problem of Magnanimity

Aristotle's discussion of the great-souled man (*megalophsychos*) is crucial to any interpretation of the life of moral virtue and the happiness it promises to produce. We encounter the figure of the magnanimous man in Book IV, Chapter 3 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*: "he who is truly great souled...must be good, and what is great in each virtue would seem to belong to the great-souled man" (*NE* 1123b28-30). Greatness of soul is thus "a kind of ornament of the virtues, for it makes them greater and does not arise without them" (*NE* 1124a1-2). The magnanimous man possesses moral excellence of a supreme kind—for he possesses the perfect form of the eleven ethical virtues—and everything about him is great: he faces the greatest of risks in order to perform the noblest of deeds (*NE* 1123b19, 1124b8-9); his actions, though few, are worthy of the greatest honors and rewards (*NE* 1123b15-16, 1124b24-26); he is eager to aid another, but typically declines aid because it belongs to him "to need nothing, or scarcely anything" (*NE* 1124b17-18); he does not dwell on past evils or hold grudges; he is only moderately disposed toward external goods and is thus, largely undisturbed by the caprices of fortune (*NE* 1124a13-16); he is not moved by either flattery or complaints; he shows virtually no concern with profit or necessity (*NE* 1125a9-12); his supreme self-possession is reflected in the very way he moves and talks, slowly and with a deep and steady voice, "for

he who is serious about few things is not given to hastiness" (*NE* 1125a15). Ultimately, self-sufficiency and admirable beneficence are the most apparent consequences of his moral virtue (Collins 2006, 62). The magnanimous man represents the highest non-philosophical human type, the man of perfect moral virtue.

The things with which the magnanimous man is especially concerned "are matters of honor and dishonor" (*NE* 1124a5). He is concerned with being honored for his supreme virtue, while for all smaller honors, "he will have complete contempt" (*NE* 1124a10-11). In being concerned with honor, however, the great-souled man is not primarily concerned with the opinion of others. Instead, he cares for honor only insofar as he cares for his own virtue. The distinction is important: as a man of moral virtue, the magnanimous man aims at the noble, not at honor; his concern with honor is limited to the extent that honor reflects or affirms his nobility. After all, Aristotle explicitly says that though "there would be no honor worthy of complete virtue...[the great-souled man] will nevertheless accept it inasmuch as [people] have nothing greater to assign to him" (*NE* 1124a7-9). In other words, he accepts honor—great honor—simply because it is the best available means by which his virtue can be affirmed. The magnanimous man is thus not a mere honor lover, and the Philosopher emphasizes this twice: "he is not disposed even toward honor as though it were a very great thing" (*NE* 1124a17-18); "to him for whom honor is a small thing, so also are these other concerns" (*NE* 1124a19-20). The initial suggestion of the magnanimous man's concern with honor is thus put into perspective: he is, in fact, not particularly moved by honor and praise,[30] but they are the greatest gifts others can bestow upon him for his nobility.

So, is the great-souled man, whose happiness must be the epitome of moral happiness, ultimately happy? In knowing himself to be worthy of the greatest things, he is justifiably prideful because he possesses self-knowledge of his moral excellence; such a man must surely be happy. Yet, there seems to be an inevitable staleness and idleness to his life. Aristotle shows us the very strong sense in which nothing is great to the great-souled man: in only caring for nobility of the greatest proportions, he is not moved to

30. While it is unclear whether by *receiving great honor* Aristotle means *being honored by the greatest number of people* or *being honored by the greatest of people*, one may reasonably infer—an inference based on the Philosopher's overall aristocratic approach to both ethics and politics—that it is the latter. In fact, it is even possible—though I cannot supply textual evidence for it—that the *great honor* which the magnanimous man is concerned with is the honor bestowed by others like him, by morally virtuous persons.

exercise his virtue on account of much. Because the nobility he seeks is of the highest kind and because he has no other longings outside of this one, he tends to overlook most pursuits. In reserving his virtue for only the greatest of deeds, he must spend his time mostly waiting for grand opportunities to present themselves. In this sense, he displays a kind of disinterest, or even apathy, towards ordinary noble causes: he "is not one to hazard trifling dangers...but he will hazard great dangers" (*NE* 1124b7-9); these are few in number since his standard for greatness is especially high. Magnanimity thus produces idleness: "he is idle and a procrastinator, except wherever either a great honor or a great deed is at stake; he is disposed to act in few affairs, namely, in great an notable ones" (*NE* 1124b24-26). So, he who is the epitome of the life of moral action looks largely inactive. In being aware of the greatness of his own virtue, he proves extremely picky about the occasions worthy of its exercise.

The life of moral virtue thus contains a pathology bound to undercut its *eudaimonia*: the closer man gets to attaining perfect virtue, the less willing he becomes to exercise it: the great-souled man primarily waits for grand opportunities to present themselves and haughtily dismisses all others. Consequently, the peak of moral *eudaimonia* contains feelings of emptiness and dissatisfaction. Given that his happiness ought to stem from moral action, the magnanimous man must be primarily unhappy since he is largely inactive. Very little rouses him and moves him to act, and thus his very greatness leads him to idleness. Ultimately, the portrait of the great-souled man reveals an inherent problem with the life of moral virtue: it culminates in a kind of stony existence, where one achieves unsatisfactory transcendence. I call it "unsatisfactory" because in rising above the life of the senses and in having the noblest of goals, the magnanimous man is a prisoner of his own virtue: its loftiness stifles his desire to act and in effect, prevents him from being happy.

6.3.2 The Problem of Tyranny and Imperialism

In addition to the idleness of the magnanimous man, Aristotle reveals a fundamental problem with the character of moral virtue: the devotion to nobility produces strong temptations to tyranny and imperialism. We are meant to realize that the means to the greatest scope of noble action are open only to the tyrant—to the one who possesses supreme political power and is thus able to control the course of polit-

ical action. Aristotle explicitly confronts this problem in the initial chapters of Book VII of *The Politics*: "one might perhaps conceive that having authority over all [persons] is best, for in this way one would have authority over the greatest number and the noblest of actions" (*Pol.* 1325a34-37). The lover of the noble, in his very obsession with nobility, desires to consolidate supreme power as a means to exercising his virtue. As Susan Collins puts it, "obtaining the conditions of his own activity will require deviations from virtue that he could never make up for later" (Collins 2006, 65). The deviations that Collins has in mind are deviations from justice: justice dictates both that the most capable is owed rule (distributive justice) and that rule must aim at the common good.[31] Tyranny is especially incompatible with the second requirement of justice: while the lover of the noble may *deserves* rule on account of his excellence, he does not serve the common good when seeking the greatest scope of noble action. Thus, his fanaticism about nobility invariably renders him unjust, since tyranny becomes the means to noble action. In deviating from justice, the gentleman degrades his own virtue. Ultimately, the tension between nobility and justice exposes a grave theoretical problem at the very heart of Aristotelian moral virtue: the conditions for some virtues seem to corrupt and destroy the possibility for other virtues.

In Book VII, Chapter 2 of *The Politics* Aristotle makes his readers privy to an interesting and illuminating debate: the debate between the morally virtuous who insist that political life is most conducive to moral excellence and the morally virtuous who hold that private life is most conducive to moral excellence. The critics of political life are said to believe not in the joys of philosophizing—for that lies outside the scope of moral virtue—but in the importance of avoiding the injustices associated with political rule: "there are some who consider rule over one's neighbors, if undertaken under the fashion of a master, to be accompanied by injustice of the greatest sort, and if in political fashion, not to involve injustice but to be an impediment to one's own well-being" (*Pol.* 1324a39). Their critique of political moral virtue is thus twofold: ruling either leads to tyranny and imperialism or it entails an impediment to one's ability to flourish. In the first case, rule is unjust since it demeans the ruled by neglecting the common good. In the second case—where one rules and is ruled in turn—rule is not advantageous to the virtuous man since he has to be routinely excluded from power; powerlessness prevents him from carrying out large scale noble

31. There is an inherent tension between these two conceptions of justice, but I will abstain from addressing it, since it is unrelated to the current project.

action. Interestingly, tyrannical rule seems more consistent with the demands of moral happiness than its "political"[32] counterpart—while it is clearly bad for others, it is not apparently bad for the tyrant. In effect, the Philosopher recognizes tyranny as the more lucrative choice for the morally virtuous and drops the question of "political rule" altogether. In thus focusing solely on the question of tyranny, Aristotle implicitly affirms the concerns of apolitical moralists about unjust despotic rule. Through the use of numerous examples, he confirms that the peoples most devoted to the political virtue of courage—both in their barbaric and civilized manifestations—all end up seeking dominion over others; the imperialist drive is thus common to them (*Pol.* 1324b7-12). While Aristotle initially draws a subtle distinction between the defenders of imperialism committed to moral virtue and those convinced that imperialism is happiness (*Pol.* 1324b2-4), that distinction effectively vanishes, as the two are shown to behave in an identical manner: in ardent pursuit of dominion. In effect, we see that "a deeply rooted, limitless drive to unjust domination and imperialism lurks all too close to the noble ambition that animates those guided by the opinion of the superiority of the political life and its virtue" (Pangle 2013, 233).

Ultimately, without anything higher to tame it, moral virtue's very loftiness transforms it into moral vice in the form of tyranny and imperialism. This seems especially true of courage, since its restriction to the battlefield would lead the courageous man to pursue endless war and thus, imperialist policies. This may be why Thomas Hobbes classifies courage as a passion rather an as a virtue: he saw that "habits of overcoming fear endanger peace" (Rorty 1986, 166) by inspiring aggression in the name of a grand cause. Political courage seeks rule, whether just or unjust, in order to attain nobility "and it was perhaps for this reason that Jason said he was hungry except when he was a tyrant, as one who did not know how to be a private individual" (*Pol.* 1277a23-25). Aristotle's reference to the fourth-century tyrant exposes the lust for tyranny inherent in moral virtue: though we do not know what drove Jason to seek tyranny, we can suppose that it may have been a deep set desire to perform noble actions; if so, then it was his very morality that led him not only to establish "the hegemony of Greece" but also, "like a premature Alexander, to long to march eastward and conquer the Great King [of Persia]" (Lindsay 2000, 439). Ultimately then, Aristotle subtly but definitively points us to consider this inherent problem with nobility: the courageous

32. By *political* I do not mean ruling in general but ruling in a "political fashion"—ruling and being ruled in turn.

man becomes existentially dependent on war and thus, on securing rule for himself, which carries the propensity for great injustice toward others. Moral virtue creates temptations to both tyranny (unjust domestic rule) and imperialism (unjust foreign rule) and these temptations inhibit the very *eudaimonia* it seeks to achieve. The tyrant and the imperialist cannot be happy because they are unjust, and thus not virtuous but vicious. Moreover, in their activities, the means (tyranny and imperialism) takes precedence over the end (noble action) and this proves destructive of moral virtue and the happiness it promises to deliver.

Unlike the problem of magnanimity, the problem of tyranny and imperialism may not be without remedies. In contrast to the Spartan warrior, whose entire conception of virtue seems to revolve around the cultivation of courage, Aristotle's gentleman possesses and exercises eleven distinct ethical virtues. He is not only courageous, but also moderate, gentle, and just. Therefore, his temptation to tyranny and imperialism would be, in a crucial way, moderated or curbed by the moral virtue of justice. His virtues balance each other out. The courageous person is not simply a Spartan-like *aner* who seeks danger or material gain and the nobility that it makes possible (*Pol.* 1338b10-17). He is a well-rounded person who has also cultivated the peaceful virtues of moderation, liberality, gentleness, friendliness, truthfulness, wittiness, and justice. Since courage is not his sole virtue, its marked tendencies must be affected by the other virtues. Stewart refers to the well-roundedness of the Aristotelian gentleman as *summetria*: the proper relation of the virtues to one another whereby no single one dominates over the others (Stewart 1973, 1:200-201).

It may be useful to think of the relationship between the eleven moral virtues in the same way that the Philosopher characterizes the individual virtues—in terms of the mean. Just like each virtue is a mean with respect to a particular passion or passions, there seems to be a mean state of the virtues with respect to one another: too much courage at the expense of justice represents a deviation from that mean, and thus from the delicate balance that enables the moral virtues to "work together" as an ethical whole. Stewart argues that the ethical virtues achieve *summetria* through the faculty of practical reason: "with *phronesis*, a man is *kurios*—his own master; and conscious of the systematic unity of his nature in all its parts" (1973, 201). In other words, Stewart agrees with my argument that Aristotle extends the concept of "the mean" beyond

the scope of the individual virtues, so that it applies to the relationship the virtues have to one another: a man's prudence determines not only the relative mean of the passions, but also the mean of each virtue relative to the others. Though the Philosopher treats the moral virtues separately, he maintains that each exists in concord with all the others: the prudent man is not merely courageous or merely moderate, but possesses all the moral virtues. As Painter puts it, "virtue as a whole is itself 'divided,' that is to say, it breaks up into many kinds—e.g., courage, temperance, patience, generosity, justice—each of which is called for in a particular situation, given certain circumstances" (Painter 2004, 51). Stated differently, the various virtues are different manifestations of the same thing—moral virtue—where courage and moderation are the same thing applied in different contexts and in relation to different passions: the pursuit of the noble requires one to sometimes face danger and other times abstain from alcohol; these are but different movements of the same symphony. Prudence essentially represents a kind of moral stability, as it navigates both the individual virtues and moral virtue as a unified concept. In effect, *phronesis* resists the temptation for tyranny and imperialism inherent in courage: the exercise of one virtue does not lead to the destruction of another because *phronesis* safeguards moral virtue against the relative excess of individual virtues. As such, it preserves the balance of a one's moral character.[33] We thus have good reason to believe that practical reason is the means by which noble pursuits do not culminate into either tyranny or imperialism.[34]

6.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, Aristotelian morality can be vindicated as *eudaimonia*-inducing, but in a qualified sense. Moral virtue represents a way of life characterized by correctly ordered passions and the performance of moral acts for the sake of the noble. The gentleman's devotion to moral beauty—cultivated by habituation

33. Amélie Rorty seems to agree with this argument, as she insists that "*phronesis* balances courage with, or against, the activities of the other virtues. *Phronesis* is the master virtue, the practical and intellectual *hexis* which determines the priority and balance among the goods to be realized by the virtues" (Rorty 1986, 164).

34. While I frame the solution to the problem of tyranny/imperialism in terms of *phronesis,* Salem frames it in terms of magnanimity. The magnanimous man, he says, as a sort of *kosmos* of the virtues, is the paradigm of moral virtue. As such, he invites us "to imagine that the various ethical virtues become fully themselves only as they occupy their proper places within the spacious soul of the magnanimous man—to imagine, that is, that ethical virtue becomes one complete whole in the person of the magnanimous man" (Salem 2003, 29). Consequently, the possibility of the great-souled man being courageous but tyrannical—courageous but unjust—vanishes.

and guided by prudence—produces a self-sustained happiness which, though not of the highest kind, is deeply choiceworthy. As such, it is *good for the moral man* to be moral. The particular virtue of political courage is a constitutive part of the moral man's happiness, where neither its seeming other-directedness nor its seeming painfulness compromise that happiness. Moreover, the courageous man is not merely courageous but morally virtuous in the most comprehensive sense. Therefore, he is neither a tyrant nor an imperialist, for his peaceful virtues are on par with his warlike one. Ultimately, courage does not threaten the stability of political regimes, since it is only *one* part of the virtuous man's moral compass.

In addition, Aristotelian courage is a characteristic indispensible to man's moral perfection and thus, to his happiness. *Eudaimonia* is inaccessible to both the coward and the rash man, for each of them experiences the passions of fear and confidence incorrectly: while the coward is tortured by excessive fear, the rash person precipitates his self-destruction by being overly confident; in both cases, we see a tyranny of the passions under which happiness cannot flourish.

Admittedly, the happiness associated with moral virtue is inferior to the supreme *eudaimonia* of the philosopher who engages in the activity of the gods. Yet, this need not amount to a refutation of moral happiness, for its superior alternative proves to be available to very few human beings: to those truly capable of theoretical contemplation. For the vast majority of men, then, philosophy lies beyond the realm of possibilities. What *is* possible for them is moral perfection and the happiness associated with it: moral happiness is achievable through a moderate amount of resources and correct education, private or public. These two conditions are far less demanding than the intellectual capacity for theoretical reasoning. Ultimately, then, moral happiness is superior to its philosophical counterpart on account of its wider availability: it is a real possibility for many persons.

All of this said, there is something troubling about morality that brings serious doubts about its propensity to make men happy: at its very peak, ethical excellence seems to produce idleness, apathy, and dissatisfaction. Unfortunately, there does not seem to be a remedy for this ultimate shortcoming of moral virtue, at least not from within the moral realm. As such, the gravest obstacle to the *eudaimonism* of ethical virtue is its very perfection: magnanimity invariably points beyond itself, thus failing to produce self-sustained happiness. It seems to be the case, then, that only those on their way toward magnanimity

can truly be happy. In effect, moral virtue produces happiness only if the ascent to moral perfection characterizes moral life more accurately than moral perfection itself. Aristotle is, unfortunately, silent on this subject and we are thus left to speculate whether or not this is the case.

Even if the apathetic state of the magnanimous man is not something that most moral men risk of experiencing, there remains an additional impediment to the *eudaimonism* of moral virtue: it rests on the belief in the goodness of moral virtue, which is a belief that itself depends on the possession of moral virtue. In other words, moral virtue cannot seem to account for its own goodness to those situated outside of it: its intellectual faculty never questions or assesses the end of virtue, it merely supplies the means to it. Thus, the belief in the goodness of moral virtue—that it is good independent of its consequences—looks to be nothing more than a mere opinion entrenched by habit. As such, it cannot defend itself to those who are not well brought-up: virtuous people may have a perfect defensive argument, but they are unable to exhort others to virtue. As Dempsey points out, gentlemen are able to defend their way of life by merely insisting that others lack "the requisite knowledge at their disposal" (Dempsey 2007, 161) by virtue of being poorly brought up. This defensive argument, however, fails to persuade outsiders of the correctness of moral virtue. Unfortunately, Aristotle does not address this particular challenge to morality and instead assumes that his audience is composed of people to whom moral goodness is self-evident.

The absence of an objective account of the goodness of moral virtue poses both a theoretical and a practical problem: the former is that ethical virtue cannot be vindicated on the basis of more than entrenched opinion; the latter is that one cannot proselytize improperly brought-up adults to moral virtue. How, then, can moral virtue be defended as the path to happiness in modern liberal democracies where people are no longer brought up to instinctively recognize its appeal? How do we make moral action attractive to people devoid of admiration for the Homeric virtues of honor and glory? If we attempt to contrive some kind of a consequentialist defense of moral virtue—a defense based on the promise of happiness, for instance—we would be subverting the very morality of the moral realm: the foundation of "the virtues' choice-worthiness is not due, or at least not only due, to their function as happiness-inducers, for they are choice-worthy irrespective of this function" (Sanford 2010, 433). The very integrity of the moral realm hinges on the goodness of the virtues apart from the results they produce. It is thus difficult to see

how one "advertises" Aristotelian morality to modern men without deriving it from either happiness or utility.[35] Ultimately then, while I hope to have shown that Aristotelian courage is an indispensible part of the uniquely human *eudaimonia* produced by the life of moral virtue, its possibility under modern conditions seems slim. And yet, so long as there remain men like Chris Kyle,[36] we have cause to hope that the radiance of noble deeds "shall not perish from the earth" (Lincoln 1863).

35. To derive happiness from utility is to argue that rational control over the passions is necessary for the effective functioning of man in society.

36. I am referring to the semi-fictional protagonist of Clint Eastwood's 2014 film "American Sniper," rather than to the historical person the film is based on.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ackrill, J. L. 1980. "Aristotle on Eudaimonia." In *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics,* edited by Amélie Rorty. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Adkins, Arthur W. H. 1978. "Theoria versus Praxis in the Nicomachean Ethics and the Republic." *Classical Philology* 73 (4): 297–313.

Annas, Julia. 1980. "Aristotle on Pleasure and Goodness." In *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics,* edited by Améiie Rorty. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Aquinas, Thomas. 1948. *Summa Theologica,* translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province. New York: Benziger Brothers.

———. 1994. *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics.* Translated by C. I. Litzinger. Notre Dame: Dumb Ox Books.

Aristotle. 1877. *The Rhetoric of Aristotle with a Commentary.* Edited by Edward Meredith Cope and John Edwyn Sandys. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 1882. *The Parts of Animals.* Translated by William Ogle. London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co.

———. 1889. *The Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle.* Translated by R. W. Browne. London: George Bell / Sons.

———. 1909. *Nicomachean Ethics, Book Six, with Essays, Notes, and Translation.* Translated by L. H. G. Greenwood. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 1926. *The Nicomachean Ethics.* Translated by Harris Rackham. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

———. 1943. *Generation of Animals.* Translated by A. L. Peck. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

———. 1969. "Magna Moralia." In *Metaphysics. Oeconomica. Magna Moralia.* Edited and translated by G. Cyril Armstrong. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

———. 1984a. "Sense and Sensibilia." In *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation, Volume 1,* edited by Jonathan Barnes, translated by J. I. Beare. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

———. 1984b. *The Politics.* Translated by Carnes Lord. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

———. 1985. *Nicomachean Ethics.* Translated by Terence Irwin. Indianapolis: Hackett.

Aristotle. 1993. *History of Animals.* Translated by Arthur Leslie Peck. Suffolk: Edmundsbury Press, Ltd.

———. 2002. *Nicomachean Ethics.* Translated by Joe Sachs. Newbury, MA: Focus.

———. 2004a. *Athenian Constitution. Eudemian Ethics. Virtues and Vices.* Translated by Harris Rackham. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

———. 2004b. *Metaphysics.* Translated by Hugh Lawson-Tancred. Suffolk: Penguin Books.

———. 2011a. *Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics.* Translated by Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

———. 2011b. *Eudemian Ethics.* Translated by Anthony Kenny. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Baracchi, Claudia. 2008. *Aristotle's Ethics as First Philosophy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bartlett, Robert C, and Susan D Collins, eds. 1999. "Action and Contemplation: Studies in the Moral and Political Thought of Aristotle." Albany: SUNY Press.

Bodéüs, Richard, and Jan Edward Garrett. 1993. *The Political Dimensions of Aristotle's Ethics.* Albany: SUNY Press.

Brady, Michelle A. 2005. "The Fearlessness of Courage." *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 43:189–211.

Broadie, Sarah. 1991. *Ethics with Aristotle.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Burger, Ronna. 1995. "Aristotle's 'Exclusive' Account of Happiness: Contemplative Wisdom as a Guise of the Political Philosopher." In *The Crossroads of Norm and Nature: Essays on Aristotle's Ethics and Metaphysics,* edited by May Sim. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

———. 2008. *Aristotle's Dialogue with Socrates : on the Nicomachean Ethics.*

Burnet, John. 1900. *The Ethics of Aristotle.* London: Methuen & Co.

———. 1957. *Early Greek Philosophy.* London: Adam & Charles Black.

Burnyeat, M. F. 1980. "Aristotle on Learning to be Good." In *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics,* edited by Améiie Rorty. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Collins, Susan D. 1999. "The Moral Virtues in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics." In *Action and Contemplation: Studies in the Moral and Political Thought of Aristotle,* edited by Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins. Albany: SUNY Press.

———. 2006. *Aristotle and the Rediscovery of Citizenship.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cooper, John M. 1981. "Review of The Aristotelian Ethics, by Anthony Kenny." *Noûs* 15 (3): 381–392.

———. 1986. *Reason and Human Good in Aristotle.* Indianapolis: Hackett.

———. 1994. "Ethical-Political Theory in Aristotle's Rhetoric." In *Aristotle's Rhetoric: Philosophical Essays,* edited by David J. Furley and Alexander Nehemas. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

———. 1999. *Reason and Emotion : Essays on Ancient Moral Psychology and Ethical Theory.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Cope, Edward Meredith. 1867. *An Introduction to Aristotle's Rhetoric, with analysis, notes and appendices.* London and Cambridge: Macmillan & Co.

Dempsey, Erik. 2007. "Virtue and Prudence in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics." PhD diss., Boston College.

Devereux, Daniel T. 1981. "Aristotle on the Essence of Happiness." In *Studies in Aristotle,* edited by Dominic J. O'Meara. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press.

Edmonds, J. M., ed. and trans. 1912. *The Greek Bucolic Poets.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Engberg-Pedersen, Troels. 1996. "Is There an Ethical Dimension to Aristotelian Rhetoric?" In *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric,* edited by Amélie Rorty. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Frede, Dorothy. 1996. "Mixed Feelings in Aristotle's Rhetoric." In *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric,* edited by Amélie Rorty. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Furley, David J., and Alexander Nehamas, eds. 1994. *Aristotle's Rhetoric: Philosophical Essays.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Grant, Alexander. 1874. *The Ethics of Aristotle, Illustrated with Essays and Notes, Volume I and II.* London: Longmans, Green, / Co.

Grimaldi, William M A. 1980. *Aristotle, Rhetoric I : A Commentary.* New York: Fordham University Press.

Halliwell, Stephen G. 1994. "Popular Morality, Philosophical Ethics, and the Rhetoricle." In *Aristotle's Rhetoric: Philosophical Essays,* edited by David J. Furley and Alexander Nehemas. Princeton.

———. 1996. "The Challenge of Rhetoric to Political and Ethical Theory in Aristotle." In *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric,* edited by Amélie Rorty. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hardie, W. F. R. 1965. "The Final Good in Aristotle's Ethics." *Philosophy* 40 (154): 277–295.

———. 1968. *Aristotle's Ethical Theory.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Heinaman, Robert. 1988. "Eudaimonia and Self-Sufficiency in the Nicomachean Ethics." *Phronesis* 33 (1): 31–53.

Herodotus. 2007. *The Landmark Herodotus: the Histories.* Edited by Robert B. Strassler. Translated by Andrea L. Purvis. New York: Pantheon Books.

Hill, Susan. 1995. "Two Perspectives on the Ultimate End." In *The Crossroads of Norm and Nature: Essays on Aristotle's Ethics and Metaphysics,* edited by May Sim. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Homer. 1919. *The Odyssey.* Translated by Augustus T. Murray. Vol. 1-2. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

———. 1924. *The Iliad.* Translated by Augustus T. Murray. Vol. 1-2. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Irwin, T. H. 1985a. "Aristotle's Conception of Morality." In *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium of Ancient Philosophy,* 1:115–143.

———. 1985b. "Permanent Happiness: Aristotle and Solon." In *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy 3,* 3rd ed., edited by Julia Annas. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 1986. "Stoic and Aristotelian Conceptions of Happiness." In *The Norms of Nature: Studies in Hellenistic Ethics,* edited by Gisela Striker and Malcolm Schofield. New York: Cambridge University Press.

———. 1996. "Ethics in the Rhetoric and in the Ethics." In *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric,* edited by Amélie Rorty. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Jaffa, Harry V. 1973. *Thomism and Aristotelianism: A Study of the Commentary by Thomas Aquinas on the Nicomachean Ethics.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Jelf, William Edward. 1856. *Notes to Aristotle's Ethics.* Oxford: J. Henry.

Kenny, Anthony. 1965. "Happiness." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 66:93–102.

———. 1978. *The Aristotelian Ethics: A Study of the Relationship Between the Eudemian and Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

———. 1992. *Aristotle on the Perfect Life.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Keyt, David. 1978. "Intellectualism in Aristotle." In *Paideia, Special Aristotle Issue,* edited by George C Simmons, vol. 2. Buffalo: State University College at Buffalo.

Kosman, L. A. 1980. "Being Properly Affected: Virtues and Feelings in Aristotle's Ethics." In *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics,* edited by Amélie Rorty. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kraut, Richard. 1989. *Aristotle on the Human Good.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

———. 1995. "Reply to Roche." In *The Crossroads of Norm and Nature: Essays on Aristotle's Ethics and Metaphysics,* edited by May Sim. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Leighton, Stephen. 1996. "Aristotle on the Emotions." In *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric,* edited by Amélie Rorty. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lincoln, Abraham. 1953. "Address Delivered at the Dedication of the Cemetery at Gettysburg." In *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln,* edited by Roy P. Basler, vol. 7. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Lindsay, Thomas K. 2000. "Aristotle's Appraisal of Manly Spirit: Political and Philosophic Implications." *American Journal of Political Science* 44 (3): 433–448.

Nagel, Thomas. 1972. "Aristotle on Eudaimonia." *Phronesis* 17 (3): 252–259.

Nussbaum, Martha Craven. 1996. "Aristotle on Emotions and Rational Persuasion." In *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric,* edited by Amélie Rorty. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Oates, Whitney J. 1963. *Aristotle and the Problem of Value.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

O'Meara, Dominic J., ed. 1981. *Studies in Aristotle.* Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press.

Painter, Corrine. 2004. "What it Means to be Human: Aristotle on Virtue and Skill." *The St. John's Review* 47 (3): 43–59.

Pangle, Lorraine. 1999. "Friendship and Self-Love in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics." In *Action and Contemplation: Studies in the Moral and Political Thought of Aristotle,* edited by Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins. Albany: SUNY Press.

———. 2014. *Virtue is Knowledge: The Moral Foundations of Socratic Political Philosophy.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Pangle, Thomas L. 2013. *Aristotle's Teaching in the Politics.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Pears, David F. 1978. "Aristotle's Analysis of Courage." *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 3 (1): 273–285.

———. 1980. "Courage as a Mean." In *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics,* edited by Améiie Rorty. Berkeley: University of California Press.

———. 2004. "The Anatomy of Courage." *Social Research* 71 (1): 1–12.

Plato. 1988. *The Laws of Plato.* Translated by Thomas L. Pangle. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Plato. 1991. *The Republic of Plato.* Translated by Allan Bloom. United States: Basic Books.

———. 1995. "Laches." In *The Roots of Political Philosophy: Ten Forgotten Socratic Dialogues,* edited by Thomas L Pangle, translated by James H. Nichols. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

———. 2004a. "Meno." In *"Protagoras" and "Meno",* translated by Robert C. Bartlett. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

———. 2004b. "Protagoras." In *"Protagoras" and "Meno",* translated by Robert C. Bartlett. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Price, A. W. 1980. "Aristotle's Ethical Holism." *Mind* 89 (355): 338–352.

Purinton, Jeffrey S. 1998. "Aristotle's Definition of Happiness (NE 1.7, 1098a16-18)." In *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy,* vol. 16.

Reeve, C. D. C. 2012. *Action, Contemplation, and Happiness: An Essay on Aristotle.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Robinson, Cyril E. 1965. *A History of Greece.* New York: Thomas Y. Crowell.

Roche, Timothy Dean. 1988. "Ergon and Eudaimonia in Nicomachean Ethics I: Reconsidering the Intellectualist Interpretation." *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 26 (2): 175–194.

Rogers, Kelly. 1993. "Aristotle's Conception of τὸ καλόν." *Ancient Philosophy* 13 (2): 355–371.

———. 1994. "Aristotle on the Motive of Courage." *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 32 (3): 303–313.

Rorty, Amélie, ed. 1980a. "Essays on Aristotle's Ethics." Berkeley: University of California Press.

———. 1980b. "The Place of Contemplation in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics." In *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics,* edited by Amélie Rorty. Berkeley: University of California Press.

———. 1986. "The Two Faces of Courage." *Philosophy* 61 (236): 151–171.

———, ed. 1996. "Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric." Berkeley: University of California Press.

Salkever, Stephen. 2007. "Teaching the Questions: Aristotle's Philosophical Pedagogy in the Nicomachean Ethics and the Politics." *The Review of Politics* 69 (2): 192–214.

Sanford, J. J. 2010. "Are You Man Enough? Aristotle and Courage." *International Philosophical Quarterly* 50 (4): 431–445.

Sherman, Nancy, ed. 1999. "Aristotle's Ethics : Critical Essays." Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Sim, May. 1995a. "Senses of Being in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics." In *The Crossroads of Norm and Nature: Essays on Aristotle's Ethics and Metaphysics1,* edited by May Sim. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

———, ed. 1995b. *The Crossroads of Norm and Nature: Essays on Aristotle's Ethics and Metaphysics.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Simmons, George C, ed. 1978. "Paideia, Special Aristotle Issue," vol. 2. Buffalo: State University College at Buffalo.

Smith, Issac Gregory. 1889. *The Ethics of Aristotle.* Chief Ancient Philosophies, Aristotelianism. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

Stewart, John A. 1973. *Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle.* Vol. 1. New York: Arno Pr.

Striker, Gisela. 1996. "Emotions in Context: Aristotle's Treatment of the Passions in his Rhetoric and His Moral Psychology." In *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric,* edited by Amélie Rorty. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Striker, Gisela, and Malcolm Schofield, eds. 1986. *The Norms of Nature: Studies in Hellenistic Ethics.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sullivan, Roger J. 1977. "Some Suggestions for Interpreting Eth. Nic. 10. 7-8." *The Southern journal of philosophy* 15 (1): 129–138.

Swanson, Judith A. 1992. *The Public and the Private in Aristotle's Political Philosophy.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Tessitore, Aristide. 1996. *Reading Aristotle's Ethics : Virtue, Rhetoric, and Political Philosophy.* Albany: SUNY Press.

Thucydides. 1998. *The Landmark Thucydides: a Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War.* Edited by Robert B. Strassler. Translated by Richard Crawley. New York: Simon / Schuster.

Ward, Lee. 2001. "Nobility and Necessity: The Problem of Courage in Aristotle." *American Political Science Review* 95 (01): 71–83.

Whiting, Jennifer. 1986. "Human Nature and Intellectualism in Aristotle." *Archiv für geschichte der philosophie* 68 (1): 70–95.

Wielenberg, Erik. 2000. "Pleasure as a Sign of Moral Virtue in the Nicomachean Ethics." *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 34 (4): 439–449.

Wiggins, David. 1980. "Deliberation and Practical Reason." In *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics,* edited by Amélie Rorty. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Yu, Jiyuan. 2001. "Aristotle on *Eudaimonia*: After Plato's *Republic*." *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 18 (2): 115–138.