THE PERFECT HAPPINESS OF VIRTUOUS FRIENDS:
THE NATURE AND PLACE OF PERFECT FRIENDSHIP IN THE HAPPY LIFE OF
THE VIRTUOUS IN ARISTOTLE'S PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY

by

Thomas P. Sherman, S. J.

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Department of Philosophy
University of Toronto

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Abstract
One part of Aristotle's overall philosophy is his study of ethics and politics which
together form what Aristotle calls a 'philosophy of human concerns'. This practical
philosophy has as its subject the human good of happiness, which, for the virtuous man, is
a life of virtuous activity. In Book X of his Nicomachean Ethics Aristotle appears to divide
this life in two with the life of contemplation described as 'final' or 'perfect' happiness and
a life of virtuous action as 'secondary'. In the first chapter of this thesis I argue that in
doing this Aristotle is understanding the human good of the virtuous man as a focal
homonym. That is, the term 'good' and indeed ultimately the term 'happiness' signify two
different kinds of lives united in a focal connection of one to the other as the one is desired
ultimately for the sake of the other. The happiness of the virtuous man's life of virtuous
activity is a life of virtuous action in focal connection to the life of contemplation as the
former is a good and final end desired ultimately for the latter as the supreme good and
most final end.
In the second chapter I argue that the virtuous man for whom this life is happy is a man who is wise, practically intelligent, and ethically virtuous, someone, in other words, who actualizes the complete human function with all its intellectual and appetitive faculties and virtues in his activity.

But if the happiness of the virtuous man consists in this life of virtuous activity as a life of virtuous action in focal connection to a life of contemplation, that happiness is enhanced when shared with others like himself in friendship. A friendship of the virtuous Aristotle calls a 'perfect' friendship. In the third chapter of the thesis I argue that in a perfect friendship, the friends are better able to live the happiness of a life of virtuous activity than if they were to live alone. By their mutual sharing of goods in justice out of love for each other's virtuous character, the friends are not only able to live a life of virtuous action better than if they were alone but by their mutual sharing of knowledge in conversation they are able to engage in the contemplative life more continuously and therefore better than if they were to engage in contemplative activity alone. As the friends are better able to practice virtue and engage in contemplation together than if they were to do these things alone, their happiness is better, or more complete, than the happiness of the virtuous man alone.

Finally in chapter four I argue that from what we can gather from Aristotle's treatment of civic friendship in the Ethics and the Politics, and from the sketch Aristotle gives us of what he considers the best polis in Book VII of the Politics, civic friendship in this best polis is a perfect friendship of its citizens.
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Finally and above all I thank God, the Source of Wisdom.
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LIFE OF THE VIRTUOUS IN ARISTOTLE’S PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY 

INTRODUCTION 

One part of Aristotle’s overall philosophy is his study of ethics and politics1 which 
together form what he calls a ‘philosophy of human concerns’ (hē peri ta anthrōpeia 
philosophia).2 This philosophy is a practical knowledge of the human good, that is, it is a 
knowledge not simply of what is good for human beings to do but the practice of that good 
by which the practical knower becomes a good human being.3 The human good 
(t'anthrōpinon agathon)4 which is the subject of practical philosophy is happiness 
(eudaimonia).5 While happiness is generally understood to consist in a happy life, different 
kinds of people consider different kinds of life happy.6 But in Aristotle’s practical 
philosophy, as indeed in all the arts and sciences for him, it is the function of that 
philosophy in examining its particular subject as a class to examine that which is the best 
(tis ariste) in that class.7 In his practical philosophy the best man is the virtuous man.8 

This man, as we shall see, is the virtuous man (ho agathos, spoudaios) one who is not only 

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1 Aristotle refers to this philosophy of human concerns in some places as ‘ethics’ e.g. Pol 1261a31; 
Meta 981b26-7, at others ‘politics’ e.g. NE 1094a26-b11. By Aristotle’s ‘ethics’ I will be referring to both 
his Eudemian and Nicomachean ethics (EE and NE) but ultimately to his Nicomachean ethics which, for 
reasons which will become apparent throughout this thesis, I understand to be his most mature ethical 
philosophy of the human good. The doctrine contained in both the EE and NE is largely the same and 
when I refer to the ‘Ethics’ it will be in reference to material which can be found in both works. In places 
where there is some variation in content the two works can mutually shed light on each other while the 
teaching found in the NE, as I shall argue below, will be finally decisive. I shall not be concerned with the 
Magna Moralia - a work whose date and authorship is disputed. While Cooper, (1973) 327-49, argues that 
the MM is Aristotle’s and roughly contemporary with the EE, other scholars think that the frequency of the 
term hommē in the MM suggests later Stoic influence and conjecture that the work is rather a Hellenistic 

2 NE 1181b15 
3 Cf. ibid. 1103b26-31, 1179a35-b2 
4 ibid. 1094b6-7, 1098a16, 1102a14-5 
5 ibid. 1095a14-20; 1097a28-b21: EE 1215a20-b14 
6 ibid. 1095b14-109610 
7 EE 1218b37-1219a39; NE 1098a7-20, 1181b20-3; Pol 1288b10-5, cf. 1254a36-9, 1260b27-9, 
1323a14-21, 1325b33-1326a13-4 
8 Cf. Pol 1333a11-5, 1338a7-9, 1279a35-7
ethically virtuous but practically intelligent (ho phronimos) and wise (ho sophos). For this sort of man the human good of happiness consists in a life of virtuous activity which in Book X of the NE Aristotle ultimately describes as the final, or perfect \(^9\) happiness of a life of contemplation and the secondarily happy life of virtuous action in the polis.\(^10\)

Friendship occupies an important place in Aristotle’s understanding of the virtuous man’s happy human life. Indeed, Aristotle opens Book VIII of his Nicomachean Ethics with the observation that no one would choose a life filled with all good things imaginable if that life were to be lived without friends,\(^11\) and he then proceeds to devote two of the ten books of the NE to friendship. In this thesis we will examine the nature and place of friendship in the happy life of the virtuous man. As Aristotle describes this happiness in terms of two lives, the contemplative and the active, we shall examine the nature and place of friendship in the virtuous man’s life of contemplation and of virtuous action in his polis. To do this we must first try to understand what Aristotle means by the human good of the happiness of virtuous activity as consisting in two lives. This has been a point of continuous controversy among his commentators. We shall argue that for Aristotle the human good of the virtuous man is the happiness of a life of virtuous activity is understood as a focal homonym. That is, the term ‘good’ and ultimately the term ‘happiness’ signify two different kinds of lives united in a focal connection of the one to the other as the one is desired ultimately for the sake of the other. The happiness of the virtuous man’s life of virtuous activity is a life of virtuous action in focal connection to the life of contemplation as the former is a good and final end which is desired ultimately for the later as the supreme and most final end of final, or perfect happiness. The virtuous man unites these two lives by striving to immortalize himself as far as he can in living the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation in contemplative activity but, in circumstances when he must, he will choose

\(^9\) Aristotle calls the happiness of the contemplative life teleia: NE 1177b24. Teleia can mean both that good which is most final and most perfect in the sense of including all other goods as the latter are desired ultimately for its sake, cf. Kraut (1989) 25 and Lawrence (1997) 33-76, pace Kenny, (1992) 23-42.

\(^10\) NE 1177a12-1178b7.

\(^11\) ibid. 1155a5-6
action for the sake of its fineness as a good and final end but one ultimately desired for the happiness of a life of contemplation as the fineness of the action in some way contributes to the life of contemplation for himself and his political community.

But if the happiness of the virtuous man consists in this life of virtuous activity as a life of virtuous action in a focal connection to a life of contemplation, that happiness is enhanced when shared with other virtuous men in friendship. This friendship of virtuous men Aristotle calls 'perfect' friendship. As we shall argue, in perfect friendship virtuous men are better able to live the happiness of a life of virtuous activity than if they were to live alone. By their mutual sharing of goods in justice out of a love for each other's virtuous character, the virtuous friends are not only able to live a life of virtuous action better than if they were alone but by their mutual sharing of knowledge in conversation they are able to engage in the contemplative life more continuously and therefore better than if they were to engage in contemplative activity alone. As virtuous men in this friendship are better able to practical virtue and engage in contemplation together than is they were to do these things alone, their happiness is better, or more complete, than if they were to live without each other. Finally, from Aristotle's description of civic friendship in the Ethics and from his presentation of the best political community in Book VII of the Politics, we can infer that for Aristotle the political community itself is a civic friendship of virtuous men, so that the polis itself is a perfect friendship of its citizens as virtuous men. The perfect friendship of virtuous men, then, constitutes the human good of the happiness of a life of virtuous activity in the fullest way.

The Argument of the Thesis

Our subject is the nature and place of friendship in the happy life of virtuous activity for the virtuous man in Aristotle’s practical philosophy, that philosophy of human concerns which has as its concern the human good of living a happy life. As Aristotle describes this human good of a happy life of virtuous activity in terms of two lives, the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation and the secondarily happy life of virtuous action we must first of
all determine the nature of that human good and the relation, if any, between those two happy lives.

Chapter I is devoted to the nature of the human good of a happy life: that good rationally desired by the virtuous man. The chapter begins with a section on the two main interpretations of Aristotle on happiness and the interpretation which we shall argue is the most adequate, that of a focal exclusivism. This interpretation sees the human good of happiness for the virtuous man as consisting in two lives focally connected to one as best and most final. This focal exclusivist interpretation makes use of Aristotle’s understanding of pros hen homonymy, or how things spoken of in many ways can nevertheless be united in a focal reference to the nature of one thing as primary. In the second section of the chapter we shall examine pros hen homonymy by studying four terms Aristotle explicitly recognizes as pros hen homonyms and isolate three main characteristics of this kind of homonymy. We shall also look at Aristotle’s understanding of analogy as another way of understanding terms with multiple yet ordered senses. Then in the third and last part of the chapter we will look at the NE itself to see how Aristotle seems to be using the terms ‘good’ and ‘happiness’. We shall argue that while the term ‘good’ as signifying the human good desired by different kinds of men can be understood according to analogy, the term is understood as a focal homonym when it signifies the different goods as ends and the supreme good and most final end desired by the virtuous man. In the case of the happiness of the two lives presented in NE X 7-8, while they could be understood according to analogy, they are better understood according to focal homonymy as the happiness of two lives united as virtuous action is focally connected to contemplation as the former is desired by the virtuous man ultimately for the sake of the latter. The fineness of virtuous action and a life of such action is desired by the virtuous man as that which preserves or promotes the conditions for his contemplative activity. The conclusion of the chapter, then, is that the human good of the virtuous man is a life of virtuous activity which consists in a life of
virtuous action focally connected to a life of contemplation as the former is desired ultimately for the sake of the latter.

In the second chapter we shall examine the virtuous man himself. In this chapter we shall argue that from what Aristotle presents us in the NE, it can be inferred that the virtuous man is wise, practically intelligent, and ethically virtuous. He is, in other words, the person who actualizes the complete human function in his virtuous activity. In order to show this we examine Aristotle’s understanding of the different kinds of knowledge and the faculties and virtues exercised in those different kinds and conclude that the human good of the happiness of a life of knowledge consists in a life of practical knowledge in a focal connection to a life of theoretical knowledge of the divine. The second part of the chapter deals with the unity of the intellectual and practical virtues that must be exercised by the virtuous man if he is to lead a happy life. This second part of the chapter will focus on Aristotle’s presentation of practical intelligence, or phronēsis, in the NE and the relation between this virtue and wisdom in the virtuous man’s life of practical knowledge. We shall argue that from the evidence of the NE, it can be inferred that the virtuous man’s exercise of the practical virtues of phronēsis and ethical virtue requires the exercise of wisdom as well if he is to be happy. The conclusion of this chapter is that as the happiness of a life of virtuous activity for the virtuous man consists in two lives of knowledge united in a focal connection to the perfect happiness of a life of theoretical knowledge of the divine, so the virtuous man is one who is wise in his theoretical knowledge of the divine and practically intelligent and ethically virtuous in his practical knowledge of the human good in his choice of action.

Chapter three has as its subject the nature and place of friendship in the virtuous man’s happy life. As presented by Aristotle in the Ethics, perfect friendship is a friendship of the virtuous whose mutual choice to share good things with each other out of love for their other’s virtuous character is for the sake of the fineness of that activity. As such, perfect friendship is a virtuous action and perfect friendship a character virtue. As this
friendship includes the practice of justice and all the other character virtues, it holds the final place in Aristotle's exposition of the character and social virtues of the virtuous man in the *NE*. And as perfect friendship is a virtuous action of friends who are virtuous, that is, men who are wise, practically intelligent, and ethically virtuous, they will desire the fineness of their friendship ultimately for the sake of the happiness of a life of contemplation which they know by their wisdom. That is, they desire the fineness of their friendship as that good and final end which supports them in their striving to immortalize themselves as far as they can in contemplative activity. And if virtuous men can better contemplate with each other than alone by themselves, they will strive to immortalize themselves by engaging in contemplation together. In this way virtuous men will value friendship in the happy life of virtuous activity. They will seek for friends like themselves to contemplate together in a life of contemplation and when they must engage in virtuous activity with others in their polis they will do so together for the sake of the contemplative life for themselves and their polis. Their virtuous action together as friends is desired as preserving or promoting the conditions for contemplative activity in the polis.

The fourth and final chapter is concerned with the nature and place of perfect friendship in the life of the polis as presented in Aristotle's *Politics*. We will examine the relation between the *Politics* and the *NE* and conclude that as Aristotle's understanding of the good of the polis and the citizen of the best polis in the *Politics* is essentially the same as his understanding the human good and the virtuous man in the *NE*, civic friendship in the best polis as presented in the *Politics*, is the perfect friendship of the virtuous in the *NE*. Civic virtue of the virtuous citizen in the *Politics*, the perfect friendship of the virtuous in the ethical life is, in the life of the polis, a civic friendship of virtuous citizens. And as the good of the polis is greater and more divine than simply the good of the individual, civic friendship in the best polis completes Aristotle's understanding of friendship in his practical philosophy. The virtuous man, then, in his choice of action for the fineness of a life of virtuous action in the polis will choose to rule the polis as a citizen with other citizens in a
civic friendship which is a perfect friendship of the virtuous and the culmination of the secondarily happy life in the polis.

The conclusion of the thesis is that, for Aristotle, perfect friendship is a virtuous activity between two or more virtuous men who share their goods with each other for the fineness of that activity out of love for their virtuous characters. As this mutual choice of action for the sake of the fineness of this exchange perfect friendship includes justice and the other character virtues in a community of virtuous action. And as these friends strive to contemplate together in their mutual exchange of knowledge in their conversation they are better able to contemplate than if they were alone. The fineness of their mutual exchange of goods out of love for each others’ virtuous character is desired ultimately for the sake of their contemplative life together, that is, they strive to share all the external goods with each other out of love for each other so that they will be able better to contemplate together in a mutual exchange of knowledge in conversation. And in the best political community the civic friendship of the citizens would be the perfect friendship of virtuous men. And as virtuous men in perfect friendship are better able to engage in virtuous activity together, whether that activity be contemplation or ethically virtuous action, the perfect friendship of virtuous men is the perfect, that is, most complete human happiness.
Chapter 1

THE HUMAN GOOD FOR THE VIRTUOUS MAN IS THE HAPPINESS OF A LIFE OF VIRTUOUS ACTIVITY WHICH CONSISTS IN A LIFE OF VIRTUOUS ACTION FOCALLY CONNECTED TO A LIFE OF CONTEMPLATION

The subject of this thesis is the nature and place of perfect friendship in Aristotle’s practical philosophy. As the subject of practical philosophy for Aristotle is the human good of happiness, or a life of happiness, understanding the nature and place of perfect friendship in his practical philosophy requires our understanding the nature and place of that kind of friendship in a life of happiness. This requires that we first of all understand what Aristotle means by happiness. Aristotle’s understanding of the human good of happiness is the subject of this first chapter. As his understanding of happiness has been a point of controversy, the chapter begins with a section on the two main interpretations of Aristotle on happiness and the interpretation that I shall argue is most adequate, that of a focal exclusivism. This interpretation sees the human good of happiness in Aristotle as consisting in two lives focally connected to one as best and most final. To justify this focal exclusivism I devote the next section of this chapter to Aristotle’s understanding of focal reference, or *pros hen* homonymy and compare this to what he means by analogy. The third and final section of the chapter consists in examining how Aristotle uses *pros hen* homonymy and analogy in his understanding the human good of happiness. The conclusion of this chapter is that for Aristotle in the *NE* the human good for the virtuous man is a life of virtuous activity which consists in a life of virtuous action focally connected to a life of contemplation.

I. Interpreting Aristotle on the Nature of Human Happiness

The nature of happiness for Aristotle has been a point of continual debate among his commentators. In this section I shall present what Aristotle presents us in the text of the
NE and then briefly examine the two main positions scholars have taken in this controversy, the so-called ‘exclusive’ and ‘inclusive’ interpretations. I will argue that of the two interpretations, it is the exclusivist position which is more faithful to the text of Aristotle and that a ‘focal exclusivism,’ or an exclusivist position which takes into account a focal connection between the happiness of contemplation and virtuous action in the NE, is the most adequate interpretation of what Aristotle means by happiness. By taking the focal connection between the happiness of contemplation and virtuous action into account, this ‘focal exclusivist’ interpretation corrects an important weakness in most exclusivist interpretations. For unlike these other exclusivist interpretations, a ‘focal exclusivism’ can more adequately account for the connection between what Aristotle in NE X 7-8 describes as the life of the perfect happiness of contemplation and the secondarily happy life of virtuous action. The life of virtuous action is focally connected to the life of contemplation as a good and penultimate end is ultimately desired for the sake of the supreme good and most final end. According to this interpretation, the secondarily happy life of virtuous action is not another kind happy life which can be desired instead of a life of contemplation, but rather a life which is desired for the sake of the happiness of contemplation as the latter is final, or perfect happiness. In presenting this ‘focal exclusivism’ I will also examine and clarify certain key points in the position, especially that of the relation between the fineness of virtuous activity as a good and end and the finest good of happiness as a life of contemplation.

1. Aristotle on Happiness: The Text of the NE

For Aristotle, the human good and end of politics is that of happiness (eudaimonia), or ‘the good life’ (to eu zên). But since what constitutes happiness is a matter of dispute, the nature of happiness needs to be determined. In his effort to determine its nature, Aristotle, at NE I 7, presents two formal requirements for happiness. First, happiness

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1 NE 1094b6-11, 1095a14-20
2 ibid. 1095a20ff
3 ibid. 1097a28-b21
must be that good which is final (teleion), or most final, (teleiotaton) that is, that good which we desire for its own sake and never as a means to anything else:

Now there do appear to be several ends at which our actions aim; but as we choose some of them - for instance wealth, or instruments generally - as a means to something else, it is clear that not all of them are final ends; whereas the supreme good (to ariston) seems to be something final. Consequently if there be some one thing which alone is a final end, this thing - or if there be several final ends, the one among them which is the most final - will be the good which we are seeking. In speaking of degrees of finality, we mean that a thing pursued as an end in itself is more final than one pursued as a means to something else, and that a thing never desired as a means to anything else is more final than things chosen both as ends in themselves and as means to that thing; and accordingly a thing desired always as an end and never as a means we call absolutely final. Now happiness above all else appears to be absolutely final in this sense, since we always desire it for its own sake and never as a means to something else; whereas honour, pleasure, intelligence, and virtue in its various forms, we desire indeed for their own sakes (since we should be glad to have each of them although no extraneous advantage resulted from it), but we also desire them for the sake of happiness, in the belief that they will be a means for our securing it. But no one desires happiness for the sake of honour, pleasure, etc., nor as a means to anything whatever other than itself.4

The second formal requirement for happiness is self-sufficiency (autarkeia); happiness is that good which is self-sufficient, that is, that good which alone renders life desirable and lacking in nothing:

... the final good must be a thing self-sufficient in itself. The term self-sufficient, however, we employ with reference not to oneself alone, living a life of isolation, but also to one's parents and children and wife, and one's friends and fellow citizens in general, since the human being is a social animal ... we take a self-sufficient thing to mean a thing which merely standing by itself alone renders life desirable and lacking in nothing, and such we deem happiness to be. Moreover, we think happiness the most desirable of all good things without being itself reckoned as one among the rest.5

As the most final and self-sufficient good, happiness is the end at which all actions aim.6 But these two criteria are not yet specific enough to determine the nature of human

4 ibid. 1097a30-4
5 ibid. 1097b7-20
6 ibid. 1097b20-1
happiness. For this, Aristotle turns to an investigation of human nature,⁷ and specifically, to what he calls the specific work (ergon), or ‘function’, of the human being.⁸

What then precisely can this function be? The mere act of living appears to be shared even by plants, whereas we are looking for the function peculiar (idion) to the human being; we must therefore set aside the vital activity of nutrition and growth. Next in scale will come some form of sentient life; but this too appears to be shared by horses, oxen, and animals generally. There remains what may be called the practical life of the rational part of the human being. (This part has two divisions, one rational as obedient to principle (logos), the other as possessing principle and exercising intelligence.) Rational life has two meanings; let us assume that we are here concerned with the active exercise of the rational faculty, since this seems to be the more proper sense of the term.⁹

The human good of happiness consists in the well-functioning, or excellent activity, of the human being:

... if then the function of the human being is the active exercise of the soul’s faculties in conformity with rational principle ... and if we acknowledge the function of an individual and a good individual of the same class ... to be generically the same, the qualification of the latter’s superiority in excellence being added to the function in his case ... if this is so, and if we declare that the function of the human being is a certain form of life, and define that form of life as the exercise of the soul’s faculties and activities in association with rational principle, and say that the function of a good human being is to perform these activities well and rightly, and if a function is well performed when it is performed in accordance with its own proper virtue, from these premises it follows that the human good (t’anthrōpinon agathon) is the active exercise (energeia) of the soul’s faculties in conformity with excellence or virtue, and if there be several

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⁷ ibid. 1097b24-8; Pol 1326a13-4. This investigation into the nature of the human function is not out of place in a practical philosophy of human concerns. For while practical knowledge of the human good, for Aristotle, is appetitive, the object of appetitive knowledge presupposes a knowledge, or understanding (noēsis) of the substantial nature of that object: Meta 1072a26-30. That which is practically known as the human good, as we shall see in the second chapter, presupposes a theoretical knowledge, a true apprehension of the thing. Besides, practical knowledge can, for the sake of knowing the good, employ theoretical knowledge of relevant aspects of a situation, cf. NE 1102a18-27, 1147b7-9. In this so-called ‘function argument’ at NE 17. Aristotle is not deducing the human good from a theoretical knowledge of human nature. Theoretical knowledge of the human function is necessary for a practical knowledge of the human good because the virtuous man needs to know in what the human good consists and he can know this only in a theoretical knowledge of the divine and human.

⁸ Aristotle thinks of the work, or function, of a thing in two ways. Since the nature of anything is manifested in what it characteristically does, what a thing is, is defined by its function, or characteristic work: Mete 390a10-2. Function not only reveals the nature of the thing but its end, for each thing’s ergon is its telos: EE 1219a8, for the ergon is the end, and the activity the ergon: Meta 1050a22, cf. DC 286a8-9; EE 1219a13-7. In both his natural and first philosophies, Aristotle explains that the form of a thing is the cause of what that thing is. For potential natures - beings which move and are moved - their final cause coincides with their formal cause: Phys 198a24-9; Meta 1032b13-4, 1044a36-b1, 1070b29-34; GC 335b6. A thing’s function, then, is its nature actualized, cf. NE 1168a6-9.

⁹ NE 1097b33-1098a7
human excellences or virtues, in conformity with the best and most perfect among them. Moreover this activity must occupy a complete lifetime (bios teletos).\(^\text{10}\)

At NE I 8 Aristotle recognizes a division of goods into the three classes of soul, body, and the external goods, and sees happiness as a good of soul.\(^\text{11}\) But as virtuous activity requires external goods as instruments for its practice, such as friends, wealth, or political power, and as generally advantageous, such as good birth, personal beauty, and prosperity, happiness requires a sufficient amount of bodily and external goods.\(^\text{12}\) Happiness, accordingly, is a lifetime of the exercise of the soul’s faculties in virtuous activity with a sufficient amount of the bodily and external goods for such activity.\(^\text{13}\)

If Book I of the NE concludes with an understanding of happiness as a lifetime of the activity of soul in accordance with virtue, supplied with a sufficient amount of bodily and external goods, Aristotle does leave open the possibility that happiness can be identified with one virtuous activity. At NE I 7 Aristotle stated that the human good of happiness is the activity of soul accordance with virtue with the addendum that if there are several virtues, then the human good is the activity of soul in accordance with the best and most final.\(^\text{14}\) There are, of course, many human virtues, as we see throughout the NE,\(^\text{15}\) and at NE X 7 happiness is identified as the activity of soul in accordance with that best virtue:

If happiness consists in activity in accordance with virtue, it is reasonable that it should be the activity in accordance with the highest virtue; and this will be the virtue of the best part of us. Whether then this be the intellect (nous), or whatever else it be that is thought to rule and lead us by nature, and to have cognizance of what is noble and divine, either as being itself divine, or as being relatively the divinest part of us, it is the activity of

\(^{10}\) ibid. 1098a16-8. In so defining the human function, Aristotle is presenting us with a non-evaluative description of the human ergon which leaves open the possibility that activity according to, or with, reason, can be done either well or badly. For the virtuous man (ho spoudaios) will perform these activities well (eu) and nobly (kalôs) so that the human good will be the active exercise of the soul’s faculties in accordance with virtue. The human good would then be activity in accordance with right reason (orthos logos). Cf. Gomez-Lobo, (1989) 170-84.

\(^{11}\) ibid. 1098b12-20

\(^{12}\) ibid. 1099a29-b9

\(^{13}\) ibid. 1101a14-21

\(^{14}\) ibid. 1098a16-8, supra note 10

\(^{15}\) ibid. 1103a1-10, cf. 1138b35-1139a3
this part of us in accordance with the virtue proper to it that will constitute final, or perfect (teleietā) happiness.\textsuperscript{16}

That which is best in us is the faculty of intellect (nosts),\textsuperscript{17} its virtue, wisdom (sophia),\textsuperscript{18} and its activity contemplation (theōria).\textsuperscript{19} This activity of contemplation is the best, most continuous and durable, the most pleasant; the most self-sufficient good which is loved for its own sake without regard for any result beyond it.\textsuperscript{20} A life of such activity is more divine than human and superior to a life of the other human virtues:

Such a life as this however will be higher (kreitōn) than the human level: not in virtue of his humanity will a human being achieve it, but in virtue of something within him that is divine; and by as much as this something is superior to his composite nature (sunthetōn), by so much is its activity superior to the exercise of the other forms of virtue. If then the intellect is something divine in comparison with the human, so is the life of the intellect divine in comparison with human life.\textsuperscript{21}

For this reason we are encouraged to strive to live such a life as far as this is possible:

We ought not to obey those who enjoin that a human being should have human thoughts and a mortal the thoughts of mortality, but we ought so far as possible to achieve immortality, and do all that a human being may to live in accordance with the highest in him.\textsuperscript{22}

But if the human good of the happiness of virtuous activity is the final, or perfect happiness of contemplation as the activity of intellect in conformity with wisdom, Aristotle does, at NE X 8, allow that a life of ethically virtuous action can be 'secondarily' (deuterōs) happy:

The life of the other virtue, on the other hand, is happy secondarily. For the activity of this virtue is human: justice, I mean, and courage, and the

\textsuperscript{16} ibid. 1177a12-17
\textsuperscript{17} ibid. 1177b16-1178b8
\textsuperscript{18} ibid. 1177a24
\textsuperscript{19} ibid. 1177a17-8
\textsuperscript{20} ibid. 1177a19-24
\textsuperscript{21} ibid. 1177b26-31
\textsuperscript{22} ibid. 1177b31-4. For Aristotle the divine is characterized by a life of activity which is most permanent and self-sufficient: Dc 279a17-33; cf. DA 415a26-b7. The divine activity is eternal and supremely good: Meta 1072b13-30, as well as self-sufficient: ibid. 1091b16-8. Although all things may be divine by nature to the extent that their best state is activity (energeia) and therefore pleasant, cf. NE 1153b29-1154a7, final, or perfect happiness is open only to beings capable of the intellectual life of contemplation: ibid. 1178b7-32; cf. EE 1217a21-9. For the virtuous man to rationally desire to be as divine, or immortal as possible, is to desire to be as good and self-sufficient as possible.
other virtues we display in our intercourse with our fellows ... moreover practical intelligence (phronēsis) is intimately connected with ethical virtue (ēthikē aretē), and this with practical intelligence ... but these being also connected with the passions are related to our composite nature; now the virtues of our composite nature are purely human; so therefore also is the life that manifests these virtues, and the happiness which belongs to it. Whereas the happiness that belongs to the intellect is separate.23

Aristotle's presentation of happiness in the NE has proved vexing to his commentators in three ways. First, many scholars have considered Aristotle's two formal requirements for happiness, especially the second, that of self-sufficiency, at odds with his subsequent formulation of the human good from an analysis of the human function. If happiness is that good which as self-sufficient is understood to be that which alone renders life desirable and lacking in nothing, then defining the human good as activity of soul in accordance with virtue appears to restrict happiness to a good which can lack certain intrinsic human goods which contribute to making life desirable and lacking in nothing.

Second, Aristotle's formulation of what constitutes human happiness as the conclusion to his analysis of the human function in Book I appears to differ from his final formulation of happiness in Book X. If the formulation of the nature of happiness in Book I, that of the activity of soul in conformity with virtue, is understood to include the exercise of all the human virtues, then this formulation appears at odds with that of Book X where Aristotle identifies the activity of one virtue with perfect happiness. Finally, at NE 7-8, Aristotle's description of a life of contemplation as perfect and the life of the ethical virtues in the polis as secondarily happy has puzzled scholars. What does Aristotle mean by describing human happiness in terms of two lives? Are these two lives to be understood as simply different and mutually exclusive so that one must lead either a contemplative life or a political life of ethical virtue,24 or is there a certain connection between the two such that human happiness consists in the goods of both?25

23 NE 1178a9-22
In the attempt to resolve these three major issues, there have arisen among Aristotle’s commentators two general interpretations of Aristotle’s presentation of happiness in the *NE*. In the following section we shall briefly examine each interpretation, note its strengths and weakness, and finally offer a third interpretation.

2. Aristotle on Happiness: The Interpretations

   a. The Exclusivist Interpretation

   Aristotle’s description of happiness in the *NE* has given rise to an ongoing debate among his commentators. This debate has been generally understood as, and conveniently divided into, two basic positions, or interpretations, termed the ‘exclusivist’ and ‘inclusivist’.  

   The ‘exclusivist’ position begins with Aristotle’s first formal requirement for happiness, that of finality, and argues that as happiness for Aristotle is activity, happiness as the most final good, that good which is desired for itself and never for anything more final, is virtuous activity.  

   All the other human goods, whether desired as means to other goods as ends or as ends themselves, are desired ultimately for the sake of the happiness of virtuous activity. As the most final good, that of the sake of which all other goods are desired, happiness is exclusively the good of virtuous activity. Aristotle’s function argument at *NE* 17 is cited as confirming this interpretation.  

   Aristotle’s conclusion to the function argument is that the human good is activity of soul in conformity with virtue, and, if there are many virtues, with the best and most final. This identification of the human good of happiness with virtuous activity is understood by the exclusivist to support his claim that happiness for Aristotle is one good exclusively: the activity of virtue.

   According to the exclusivist interpretation, it is because virtuous activity is the most final human good that it is also self-sufficient, that is, it is that good which renders life...
desirable and lacking in nothing. Virtuous activity is the human good that makes for human happiness; all other human goods are either instrumental to, or advantageous for, its exercise. These other human goods, to the extent that they are desired for the sake of the human good of virtuous activity, are included within the happiness of such activity. In this way the human good of virtuous activity as the most final good is also that good which is self-sufficient. All other human goods are included within the happiness of virtuous activity as they are desired as variously instrumental to, or advantageous for, that happiness. In this way the exclusivist understands Aristotle’s description of the self-sufficiency requirement that happiness is that good which is most desirable without being counted among the rest of the goods and which makes life worthwhile and lacking in nothing.

But if the human good of happiness is virtuous activity, as there are many human virtues, that good is the activity of the best and most final virtue. Again invoking Aristotle’s first formal requirement of happiness, its finality among all other goods, the exclusivist argues that the happiness of contemplation can include other goods, even

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31 Cf. Kraut. (1989) 267-311. ‘Necessary’ goods for virtuous activity are, for example, are the basic physical human needs of life itself, food, and clothing, cf. NE 1178a25-7.
32 For proponents of the exclusivist position, contemplation as the supreme good and most final end can include virtuous actions to the extent that the latter are performed for the sake of contemplation, cf. Kraut, (1989) 25. Lawrence, (1997) 33-76. As Kraut explains, a life in accordance with x and not y does not mean that it is a life with x and no y: a life that is in accordance with x can have lots of goods besides x ... and so we should not assume that Aristotle’s consistency can be preserved only if we take him to be urging his readers to lead a life that is both in accordance with understanding and in accordance with ethical virtue. A life can contain ethical activity without giving primacy to that activity - that is, without being a life in accordance with ethical virtue... this talk of primacy can be made more precise. A good has primacy in a life, and that life is in accordance with that good, when it is the ultimate end of that life; and the ultimate end of a life has three features: (a) all other ends in that life are desired for its own sake; (b) it is desired for itself; and (c) it is not desired for the sake of any other good in that life. On my reading, contemplation is the ultimate end of the philosophical life, and activity in accordance with ethical virtue is the ultimate end of the political life. The philosopher will engage in ethical activity, but will do so for the sake of contemplation, therefore, his life is ‘in accordance with understanding’ and not in accordance with practical virtue. By contrast, the political life is one that omits contemplation: the politician always acts for the sake of moral activity, and since contemplation is not desirable for the sake of any further good, it plays no role in the second-best life.” The exclusivist position has been criticized as presenting a view of happiness that would justify the contemplative neglecting virtuous activities so as not to disrupt his contemplative activity, cf. Cooper, (1975) 164. Devereaux, cf. Kenny (1978) 214, has argued that on Cooper’s interpretation there is nothing to prevent the contemplative from even being quite ruthless in pursuing his goal, perhaps betraying his friends to secure the means of philosophical leisure. But this objection can be
goods as ends like the good of virtuous activities, to the extent that those goods are desired ultimately for the sake of that supreme and most final good. It is then because it is most final that the happiness of contemplation is also the most self-sufficient good as inclusive of all else. Textual confirmation of this interpretation comes at NE 1097b where, in a comparison with political activity, Aristotle affirms that contemplation is both the most final, or perfect, happiness and that human activity which is most self-sufficient:

Now the practical virtues are exercised in politics or in warfare; but the pursuits of politics and war are unleisured ... the activity of the politician is also unleisured and aims at securing something beyond the mere participation of politics - positions of authority and honour, or, if the happiness of the politician himself and of his fellow citizens, this happiness is conceived of as something distinct from political activity (indeed we are clearly investigating it as so distinct). If then among practical pursuits displaying the virtues, politics and war stand out pre- eminent in fineness and grandeur, and yet they are unleisured, and directed to some further end, not desired for their own sakes: whereas the activity of intellect is felt to excel in serious worth, consisting as it does in contemplation, and to aim at no end beyond itself ... and if accordingly the attributes of this activity are found to be self-sufficiency, leisuredness, such freedom from fatigue as is possible for human beings, and all the other attributes of blessedness: it follows that it is the activity of intellect that constitutes final, or perfect happiness - provided it be granted a complete span of life, for nothing that belongs to happiness can be incomplete.

met by an axclusivist position like Kraut's. supra. op. cit., where the contemplative life can include the good of virtuous activity. If the contemplative is wise, this does not exclude his being capable of exercising the practical virtues even though he need not exercise those virtues in contemplative activity, cf. Stewart. (1892) I. 59-62, ii. 443-5. Keyt (1978) 145-6, 8. Heinaman ((1988) 32-3. Kenny (1992) 38, 90-2, and in the right circumstances should he be called upon to exercise the practical virtues for the sake of the fineness of an action, if the good of that action be done ultimately for the sake of contemplation, his contemplative life would include the good of those virtuous actions. Thus, if virtuous activity is done ultimately for the sake of contemplation, a contemplative life need not exclude the exercise of those virtues if and when their performance is necessary.

33 This argument is based on what Aristotle says about goods desired for themselves (di' auta), goods such as every virtue (pasan aretēn) which are also desired for the sake of happiness: NE 1097b-6. Thus, while the good of virtuous activity is described as kalon: ibid. 1115b11-3, 19-24, 1119b15-7,1120a11-3, 23-25, happiness is described as kallistōn: ibid. 1099a24, 27, cf. 1099b22-4, 1101a2-5 and happiness is ultimately that of the perfect happiness of contemplation: ibid. 1177a12-8.

34 Against an inclusivist position like that of Ackrill's (1980) 15-30, which reads what Aristotle says of virtue at NE 1098a16-8 as that which is kata tēn aristēn kai teleiotatēn as 'according to the best and most complete ' virtue so as to include all the virtues within it, Kenny, (1992) 23-42, argues that teleios cannot mean 'complete' in the sense of inclusive, but rather 'final' in the sense of being the summit of a hierarchy of choice. But there is no disjunction for Aristotle between teleios as 'final' and 'perfect' if Kraut (1989) 25 and Lawrence (1997) 33-76, are right, supra note 32.

35 NE 1177b16-26
Contemplative activity is identified as *teleia* happiness: self-sufficient, leisured, and enjoying all the other attributes of blessedness because it is *final*: an activity which is an end directed to no other end beyond itself. The politician’s virtuous activity, in contrast, is not happy precisely because it is an activity directed to some further end. Nevertheless, Aristotle’s description of the fineness of the politician’s activity and the happiness which is distinct from that activity leaves open the possibility that should the politician’s virtuous activity have the happiness of contemplative activity as his further end, then that happiness could include the politician’s virtuous activity as a good and final end includes a good less final. In this way, as the exclusivist position maintains, the activity of contemplation perfect happiness is self-sufficient and able to include the activities of the other virtues precisely because it is that supreme good which is most final.

There is, however, a difficulty with the exclusivist interpretation of Aristotle on happiness. While the exclusivist recognizes contemplation as the life of perfect happiness and is able to give an account of how that supreme good by its finality is able to include the goods of virtuous activity and all other goods, the nature of what Aristotle describes as the ‘secondarily’ happy life of virtuous action is often either left unexamined\(^36\) or dismissed altogether as merely ‘second best’.\(^37\) This presents a problem. If the life of virtuous action is termed ‘happy’ - even ‘secondarily’ - it must be a good and final end for the sake of which one could choose to act. If this is so, what is the nature of this life *vis a vis* contemplation and how can it make its appeal to the virtuous man? For, according to Aristotle, the virtuous man rightly judges and rationally desires that which is truly to be wished for,\(^38\) that is, the better goal,\(^39\) or that which is best.\(^40\) If, as the exclusivist position

\(^{36}\) Kraut. (1989) 5-9, 345-57. for instance, seems simply to accept a distinction between the two lives as Aristotle’s best and second best answer to the question ‘what is happiness?’ Kraut thinks that contemplation as the most final good can include the goods of the ethically virtuous life, but he does not probe the relation between the secondarily happy life of ethically virtuous action and the perfect happiness of contemplation. the finality of without probing the possible relation between the two lives.

\(^{37}\) Kenny (1992) 31, for instance, in comparison to ‘first-class, perfect happiness’, likens what Aristotle at *NE* X 8 calls the ‘secondarily’ happy life to ‘an alternative, second-class career’.

\(^{38}\) *NE* 1113a23-31, cf. ibid. 1176a15-8, b24-7

\(^{39}\) *Pol* 1324a229-35. Or the better of two things: *Top III.*
rightly holds, a life of contemplation can include virtuous actions to the extent that those actions are done ultimately for the sake of contemplation, what becomes of the secondarily happy life of virtuous action? If that life is happy, it must in some way, qua happy, be a good and final end. If this good and final end is not ultimately desired for the sake of contemplation, how can the virtuous man, who always desires that which is best or the better of two things, desire that kind of life at all? On the face of it, for the virtuous man to desire what is only second best is irrational. How could such a man ever desire the secondary happiness of virtuous activity unless that happiness has some ultimate reference to perfect happiness? Or is this secondarily happy life, for Aristotle, simply a life for those who are inferior to the virtuous man, those who are less than virtuous? The nature of this secondarily happy life of the 'other virtue' as Aristotle puts it, is not made clear in the exclusivist position as that position has been articulated by most of its proponents, and in this respect, the position has a weakness which, if corrected, could deepen our appreciation of Aristotle's understanding of the life of contemplation as the final happiness by clarifying the nature of the secondarily happy life of virtuous action and its connection to contemplation.

b. The Inclusivist Interpretation

Many scholars have found the exclusivist interpretation of Aristotle on happiness difficult to accept. Identifying that happiness exclusively with a single activity, as the exclusivist interpretation does, seems to reduce the many different goods of a happy human life, goods of soul such as the many different virtuous and their activities, external goods such as honour, friendship, and the bodily goods of health and good fortune, to a monolithic, if not fanatical, insistence on the final importance of one activity alone. The inclusivist interpretation of Aristotle on happiness rejects the teleological ordering of the many different human goods to a happiness identified exclusively with one good as most

[40] NE 1169a16-8
[41] With the exception of commentators like Lawrence, (1997) 33-76.
final, the view which characterizes the exclusivist interpretation. Instead, the inclusivist interpretation understands the many different human goods as comprising an irreducible plurality. Happiness, according to this interpretation, is not to be identified exclusively with one good, that of virtuous activity, but rather with all the many different human goods, or at least all those goods which are intrinsically good. Intrinsic human goods include not only the goods of soul like virtuous activity but any other good which is desirable as a good in itself rather than simply as a means to some further good as end. Such goods include thinking and certain pleasures, goods of body like sight, and external goods like friendship and honour.

An inclusivist reads Aristotle's first formal requirement of happiness, its teleion, as that good which is most perfect, or complete. Happiness as absolutely final is never sought for the sake of anything else because it includes all final ends.

But the inclusivist interpretation finds Aristotle's second requirement for happiness - its self-sufficiency, or 'that which on its own makes life desirable and lacking in nothing' - the interpretive key to understanding what Aristotle means by happiness. The inclusivist considers it plain that by this second requirement Aristotle cannot possibly be referring to any one good exclusively but rather to a comprehensive whole which includes all the human goods people consider worthwhile in a happy life. In understanding this second requirement of the self-sufficiency of happiness in this way, the inclusivist also emphasizes Aristotle's attendant observation that:

... 'we think it [happiness] most desirable of all things, without being counted as one good thing among other - if it were so counted it would clearly be made more desirable by the addition of even the least of goods among the rest, for if it were so reckoned, we should consider it more desirable when even the smallest of other good things were combined with it, since this addition would result in ; for that which is added becomes an excess of goods, and of goods the greater is always more desirable.'

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42 I take Ackrill, (1980) 15-33 as representative of the inclusivist interpretation of Aristotle.
43 Cf. Crisp, (1994), 113
44 Cf. NE 1096b13-9
45 ibid. 1096b16-8, 1169b17-21, 1170b17-8
47 ibid. 1097b16-20
Happiness as a comprehensive whole of the different human goods cannot be improved by the addition of a further good precisely because it already includes all the goods that make for happiness. How one interprets this (non) aggregatability of happiness, though, divides the proponents of the inclusivist interpretation in two. One wing of the position understands happiness as simply comprehensive, that is, as comprehending not only all the virtuous activities of human life, including contemplation, but all the bodily and external goods as well so that no good could be added to happiness to make it a better good. The other wing understands happiness to include all the virtuous activities of the human being, including contemplation, but not as including certain bodily and external goods, so that further good things could be added to happiness without compromising its self-sufficiency.

Aristotle's function argument concluded the human good is the active exercise of the soul's faculties in conformity with virtue, or if there are several virtues, in conformity with the best and most final. The inclusivist reads this conclusion as stating that the human good consists in the activity of not one but all the human virtues. Aristotle's proviso that if there are several virtues, then the human good consists in the activity of the best and teleiotaen virtue, is read as the best and 'most complete', or 'most perfect' virtue so that Aristotle is taken to be arguing that 'if there are more than one virtue, then in accordance

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48 Cf. Ackrill. (1980), Irwin. (1985) 89-124, Cooper. (1985) 173-96. Irwin, op. cit. thinks that if happiness is nonaggregatable it must already include all the goods - including bodily and external goods - and criticizes the exclusivist position precisely for failing in this regard. But the exclusivist position is able to give an account of the nonaggregatability of happiness according to finality that does not resort to the extreme comprehensive view of Irwin. As the good as final end and the goods as means are not commensurable, the end can include goods as means without it being counted along with those other things: Top a16-21; Rhet 1363b18-21. As Lawrence (1997) 56-7, explains, ..."if x is for the sake of y, then x+y does not make a good greater than y is alone. So if there is some thing z, which is what everything else is for the sake of, but it itself is not for the sake of anything else, the z+ the rest does not make a good greater than z alone... [if z embraces everything else] that does not mean that the possessor of z has to engage with, or use, any of the other goods that are by their nature and position for the sake of z. We humans actually need other things which are for the sake of eudaimonia, both as constituents and as enabling conditions. But these things which we need to do or pursue or obtain do not add to eudaimonia in the sense of making a good greater than eudaimonia itself." Cf. Kraut, op. cit. 283-4, Kenny, (1992) 25, Lawrence, (1997) 45, 56-9.

49 Cf. White, (1990) 103-44.
with all of them’. In support of this reading some cite Aristotle’s description of virtuous activities as ‘fine’ (kalon), that is, as practical goods as ends desired for themselves (di autous), (kath’ hautas), and not for the sake of anything other than their fineness. The fineness of the many virtuous activities is understood as an ‘intrinsic value’, that is, goods are ends in themselves which cannot be understood as a means to contemplation as a more final end. These commentators argue that in NE I and perhaps even in NE X, ethical virtue is not just a necessary condition for, but an actual constituent of, happiness and that the good of virtuous activity as a final end cannot be desired for anything more final. The good of virtuous activities other than contemplation must be somehow on par with contemplative activity in a happy life. Happiness must therefore include contemplation and virtuous activities in a way different from the exclusivist account.

The inclusivist account, then, has it that happiness for Aristotle includes either all the intrinsic human goods, including all the virtuous activities, of which contemplation is one, or all human goods whatever in a comprehensive sense.

At NE X 7-8 Aristotle finally identifies contemplative activity and a life of such activity with perfect happiness and describes a life of ethically virtuous activity as ‘secondarily’ happy. According to the inclusivist, Aristotle is here simply setting up these two lives as the two worthiest ‘ideals’, ranking the former higher than the latter, but

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50 Cf. Ackrill, (1980) 27
51 NE 1176b8-9
52 ibid. 1176b6-7
53 ibid. 1176b9-10, 5. Those who are fine and good, practice virtue for the sake of its fineness: EE 1248b8-16, 34-7, 1249a10-7; cf. 1228a5-7, 1236a4-7; NE 1115b21-4, 1116b2-3, 30-1, 1119b16, 1120a23-4, etc., an action performed not for the sake of its fineness or justice but for some other reason or good can only be accidentally (to kata sumbebêkos) fine or just, cf. NE 1135b2-6.
54 Cf. Cooper, (1975) 2, articulates this objection: “Moral reasoning, as some of [Aristotle’s] critics bluntly put the matter, must consist, at least in part, in the recognition of the rightness of certain courses of action not as a means to some end of ends. For where actions are undertaken as means their value is completely derivative, being a function of the value of the end being pursued; whereas actions done on moral grounds - because courage, or justice, or temperance, or some other moral virtue requires them - are, as such, regarded as possessed of ‘intrinsic value.’ The assimilation of moral reasoning to technical deliberation, with its means-end structure, seems to preclude Aristotle’s recognition of this distinctive feature of moral thinking.”
providing no elucidation as to their mutual relation. According to an inclusivist account, both ideal lives are happy to the extent that they include either all the human goods or all the intrinsic human goods of life, though why Aristotle should consider contemplation a greater good than political virtue so that a life of the former is perfect happiness while that of the latter is secondary happiness is not taken up by the inclusivist.

There are fundamental difficulties with the inclusivist interpretation. First, the attempt to interpret happiness as an irreducible plurality of the different human goods and specifically the different virtuous activities appears to be at odds with Aristotle’s indisputable hierarchical ordering of goods according to finality in crucial texts in the NE. Let us consider these texts.

The first formal requirement for happiness, as noted, is its being teleion. Teleion here is clearly to be understood as final since happiness is described as desired for its own sake and never for anything else; it is never desired for the sake of honour, or pleasure, or understanding, or virtue. It is more teleion than things like wealth which is always desired for the sake of something else, or for things like honour which are desired for their own sake, but also for the sake of something else. Moreover, in giving his own definition of happiness as the conclusion to the function argument, Aristotle states that the human good is activity of soul in accordance with virtue, and if there are several virtues, according to the best and most final. Following as it does the presentation of the finality requirement, the phrase kata tén aristén kai teleiotatén must mean ‘the best and most final virtue’.

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56 Cf. Ackrill, (1980) 31-3
57 NE 1097a30-4
58 ibid. 1097b1-6
59 ibid. 1098a16-8
60 Some inclusivists, however, have argued that by teleiotatén Aristotle rather means ‘most complete’ since in the very next line in the text Aristotle speaks of a bios teleios, which can only means ‘complete life’, cf. Ackrill, (1980) 15-30, supra note 34. Inclusivists like Ackrill think that there is nothing here to warrant identifying the ‘most perfect’ virtue with contemplation exclusively, cf. Roche, (1988) 183. According to the inclusivist reading, ‘the best and most complete’ is rather to be understood as virtue as a whole, of which the individual virtues are parts. But there are decisive difficulties with this interpretation of kata tén aristén kai teleiotatén. Besides the unusual translation of the phrase as ‘the best and most perfect’ as proponents of inclusivism such as Ackrill favor (cf. Cooper (1975) 100n), the inclusivist reading employs two different senses of aretē within the space of ten words. As Kenny (1992) 30, explains, ‘it is
Aristotle defines the human good here, as the activity of soul in accordance with virtue, and if there are several virtues, according to the best and most final, appears either to identify the human good with the best and most final virtue, or to leave open the possibility of such identification. While the latter is a possibility, from the perspective of X 7, this best and most final virtue can only be the perfect happiness of contemplation.

In addition, at NE 1.8 Aristotle describes happiness as 'the best, the finest, and the most pleasant of things and (contrary to the Delian inscription), 'the best activities, or one activity which is the best of all'. Here, depending on how the 'or' is understood, whether disjunctive or epexegetical, Aristotle is either presenting two alternative views of happiness or he is simply identifying happiness with the best activity. That is, if 'or' is understood as disjunctive, Aristotle is saying that 'happiness is the best activities or one activity which is best of all' and is thus presenting us with two alternative views of happiness, one being a sum-total of the best activities, the other, one activity which is best

true that the Greek word areté, like the English word 'virtue', can be used as a mass-noun (as in 'a man of great virtue') or as a count-noun (as in 'a man of many virtues') but on Ackrill's view Aristotle is made to switch from the mass-noun to the count-noun use and back again to the mass-noun use within a space of ten words. But Cooper, (1987) 199-200, notes the explicitly philosophical difficulty with this interpretation: "Ackrill is wrong to think that the explanation of completeness given in this passage supports his construction of the phrase 'the most complete virtue' as meaning the sum of all the particular virtues... if on Aristotle's view the most complete good is also a comprehensive end, including other goods somehow in it, that does not show that the most complete virtue must similarly be a complex construction out of particular virtues like justice, courage, practical wisdom, philosophical wisdom, and so on. Aristotle says quite plainly (1097a30-4) that the predicate 'the most complete' means chosen always for itself alone and never for the sake of anything else. The most complete virtue will therefore be the virtue that is chosen always for itself alone and never for the sake of anything else. And in Book X, when he returns to take up the topic of happiness again, Aristotle does precisely argue at some length (1177b1-4, 12-8) that the single virtue of philosophical wisdom is chosen for its own sake alone, and not, like the practical virtues, chosen also for further goods it brings us. To be sure, Aristotle does not compare philosophical wisdom and the other virtues in Book I with respect to completeness in this sense, but there seems no possibility for doubt either that it is this comparison which he is anticipating when he speaks of the activity of the best and most complete virtue, or that he expects his reader, having been told explicitly what 'most complete' means, to recognize that the virtues may vary in respect of completeness in this special sense, and that if they do, then happiness requires the most complete of them.

63 NE 1099a24-31
If, however, the 'or' is epexegetical, the passage reads: 'these best activities, or - to speak more precisely - one among them, the best, we identify with happiness,' and Aristotle is identifying happiness as that one activity as best simpliciter. The fact that this passage follows that of the function argument at NE I 7 and the subsequent identification of happiness with contemplation at NE X 7, makes the epexegetical reading of 'or' the more natural. And so here, as at NE I 7, Aristotle can be understood as either identifying this best activity with contemplation or leaving this open as a possibility to be fulfilled at NE X 7.

It is at NE X 7-8, however, where Aristotle identifies final, or perfect happiness, or that which is happiest (eudaimonestatos) with the life of contemplation and describes the life of the 'other virtue' as secondarily happy that the inclusivist position is directly challenged. Aristotle clearly considers contemplation as a greater good than ethically virtuous activity and the life of contemplation happier than that of a life of ethically virtuous activity. Furthermore, he describes intellect and the contemplative life as divine in comparison with the composite human nature and its life and exhorts his students to strive to immortalize themselves as far as they can by living the life of contemplation. The inclusivist response to NE X 7-8 varies. Some inclusivists attempt to explain away the intellectualism of these chapters, others accept the exclusivist interpretation here but

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64 As Kenny, (1992) 30, comments, "the most an inclusive interpreter can claim here is that the inclusive view is offered here as one alternative ... it is certainly impossible for an inclusive interpreter to say that the dominant interpretation is ruled out by this passage."

65 Again, Kenny, (1992) 30
66 NE 1177b24-6
67 ibid. 1178a4-8
68 ibid. 1177b31-4, supra note 22
69 E.g. Roche, (1988) 194, who writes: "The first book, as I have argued, presents a concept of the ergon and nature of man which involves practical (and moral) elements no less than theoretical ones. So if the tenth book identifies man with his theoretical intellect, we must attribute to Aristotle a contradiction so evident that he could not possibly have failed to see it. It appears that unless one is willing to accept the idea that NE 10. 7-8 is a textual anomaly, the traditional intellectualist interpretation of these passages must be abandoned. The rejection of this view will require the development of a plausible inclusive end interpretation of Aristotle's discussion of the good in these chapters of the Ethics."
attempt to explain these passages as out of harmony with the rest of the NE.\textsuperscript{70} while others concede the ultimate importance of contemplation but argue that happiness must, nevertheless, include the activity of all the other virtues and goods as well.\textsuperscript{71} None of these inclusivist attempts to interpret NE X 7-8, however, is convincing. Aristotle's clear valuation of virtuous intellectual activity and a life of such activity over ethically virtuous activity and its life contradicts the inclusivist assumption of an egalitarian pluralism of goods.

The inclusivist interpretation cites Aristotle's description of the fineness of virtuous activities as final ends, desired for themselves and not for the sake of anything other than their fineness, as evidence that these fine activities cannot be desired for the sake of happiness as a more final end but rather as constitutive elements of a human happiness which includes them. But Aristotle's description of fine virtuous activities as final ends does not preclude their being desired ultimately for something which is the supreme good and most final end. As we have seen, at NE I 7 Aristotle distinguishes the various kinds of goods as ends:

Now there do appear to be several ends at which our actions aim; but as we desire some of them - for instance wealth, or flutes, and instruments generally - as a means to something else, it is clear that not all of them are final ends; whereas the supreme good seems to be something final. Consequently if there be some one among them which is the most final - this will be the good we are seeking. In speaking of degrees of finality, we mean that a thing pursued as an end in itself is more final than one pursued as a means to something else, and that a thing never desired for anything else is more final than things desired as ends in themselves and as means to that thing; and accordingly a thing desired always as an end and never as a

\textsuperscript{70} E.g. Nussbaum, (1986) 403, who writes: "Throughout books 1-10 Aristotle has indicated that the human good is an inclusive plurality of actions according to excellence, in which intellectual activity will be one component, side by side with other constituents of intrinsic worth, such as activity according to excellences of character and activity benefiting friends. Most of book 10 develops this view. But 10.7 abruptly shifts to the defense of a life single-mindedly devoted to theoretical contemplation, seeking to maximize this as the single intrinsic good. Interpreters have tried in various ways to minimize this problem but it remains. According to the view expressed in 10.7 friendship and excellence of character could not have intrinsic value; if they chose to pursue them, it would only be because, and insofar as, they seek to maximize contemplation. But their intrinsic worth is clearly defended in the other books..."

\textsuperscript{71} E.g. Cooper, (1987) 187-216, in his reconsidered view and Urmson, (1988) 66, who writes, "It is perhaps not unreasonably charitable to Aristotle to take his verbal identification of contemplation with eudaimonia in the later chapters of book X to be the selection of a dominant feature within a life containing other elements necessary to full eudaimonia."
means we call absolutely final. Now happiness above all else appears to be absolutely final in this sense, since we always desire it for its own sake and never as a means to something else...

The first kind of good is one desired simply for the sake of another end, the second kind of good as end is that which is desired as an end in itself but also for the sake of a further end, and finally the supreme good and most final end which is always desired for itself and never for the sake of something else. The fineness of virtuous activities is the second kind of good. That these activities are desired for themselves does not preclude their being desired ultimately for the sake of the supreme good and most final end of happiness. Furthermore, the notion of the fineness of virtuous activities as of 'intrinsic value' which cannot be desired for the more ultimate end of happiness, uses terminology and suppositions that are not Aristotelian.

Aristotle’s clear hierarchical ordering of goods as means to ends, and of ends to the most final end of happiness and his ultimate identification of final happiness with contemplation resists an inclusivist understanding of happiness which would include all the virtuous activities without any such hierarchical ordering.

Finally, the inclusivist interpretation of Aristotle’s second formal requirement, that of self-sufficiency, fails precisely because it rejects Aristotle’s teleological ordering of the different goods of human life. By rejecting this teleological ordering of the different goods to that supreme good which is most final as desired for itself alone and not for any other further end, the inclusivist in effect reduces these radically different goods to an egalitarian plurality that is simply unaristotelian. Aristotle’s conclusion to the function argument clearly identifies the human good of happiness as virtuous activity at NE I 7 and ultimately the activity of contemplation at NE X 7. Virtuous activity is a good of soul, not a good of body, nor an external good. While virtuous activity requires bodily and external goods as instrumental to, or advantageous for, its exercise, as a good of soul, virtuous activity is

\[72\] NE 1097a25-b1
\[74\] NE 1099a29-1099b9

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clearly distinct from those required goods. The latter, while required for happiness, cannot be understood as constituting happiness as if they were goods on par with virtuous activity.\(^{76}\)

But there is a further difficulty with the inclusivist understanding of happiness as inclusive of all, or all the intrinsic human goods.\(^{77}\) If happiness understood as including all human goods is even conceptually coherent, it would render happiness impossible practically. Who could ever attain happiness if that meant attaining \textit{all} human goods in a lifetime? And if happiness were restricted to all the intrinsic human goods, besides the activities of all the virtues, these goods include such things as honour, certain pleasures, and friendship, does this mean that happiness consists in the activity of \textit{all} the virtues, the attainment of \textit{all} honours, the enjoyment of \textit{all} of those pleasures, the making of \textit{all} the kinds of friendship (with \textit{all} people of one’s polis?). In response to this problem, some inclusivists devise a strategy of token activities representative of a type of an intrinsic good.\(^{78}\) Apart from the fact that such a strategy finds no basis in Aristotle’s text, this leads into yet another problem with the inclusivist interpretation. That problem is, if happiness consists in all the intrinsic goods, what precisely are those goods? Inclusivists do not say. Besides intellectual and ethically virtuous activities, Aristotle mentions honour, pleasure, and friendship. But is this a complete list? How are we to tell whether a certain activity is something Aristotle would take to be desirable in itself? Is the fulfillment of any human capacity an intrinsic good? And if so, does this mean that happiness consists in the fulfillment of \textit{all} those capacities? Or how about craft activities? And so forth. Aristotle does not address himself to these issues because he does not need to, for he does not understand happiness to include all or all the intrinsic human goods.

\(^{75}\) ibid. 1098b18-20
\(^{76}\) Cf. \textit{EE} 1214b10-25
\(^{78}\) Cf. Irwin, (1985) 99, suggests this. He writes, “Aristotle probably believes that the complete good is composed of a sufficient number of tokens of some determinate types of each of the determinable types of good ... it may not matter which determinate type I prefer, as long as I include the right number of tokens of the right determinable types.”
In summary, then, the exclusivist and inclusivist interpretations are the two main scholarly attempts to come make sense of three main issues in Aristotle’s understanding of happiness, the two formal requirements of happiness and their relation to the conclusion of the function argument, the relation between that conclusion in Book I and Aristotle’s final identification of happiness with the activity of the one best virtue in Book X, and in the same book, the nature and relation between the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation and the secondarily happy life of virtuous ethical activity.

The exclusivist interpretation recognizes in Aristotle’s first requirement for happiness, its finality, the teleological ordering of goods to happiness as that supreme good and most final end. The exclusivist understands this happiness to consist in virtuous activity. The self-sufficiency of happiness is virtuous activity as the human good, which can include the other goods as desired for its sake, either as instrumental to, or advantageous for, its exercise. The exclusivist sees no conflict between these two requirements and Aristotle’s conclusion to the function argument that the human good consists in activity according to virtue, and if there are several virtues, in the best and most final of them. And just as all other goods are ordered to virtuous activity as their final end, so the exclusivist understands Aristotle’s ultimate identification of happiness with contemplation as consistent with his formulation of the human good at the conclusion of the function argument in Book I. The virtuous activities are good and final ends, desired for the sake of their fineness and yet ultimately desired for the sake of contemplation as the supreme good and most final end. The weakness of the exclusivist interpretation is its neglect of the explaining Aristotle’s description of the happiness of contemplation and the secondary happiness of a life of ethically virtuous activity and their relation to each other. If happiness is contemplation as that good which is most final and self-sufficient, how can Aristotle understand a life of the ethical virtues as happy? Is he offering two different kinds of happiness, and if so, are they mutually exclusive so that one can desire either one of the other as the supreme good and final end of one’s actions, or does the perfect happiness of a
life of contemplation include the secondarily happy life of ethically virtuous action in such a way that the latter can be lived for the sake of the former as a further end? The exclusivist interpretation of Aristotle on happiness as it has been generally presented by its proponents, has yet to address this issue.

The inclusivist interpretation of Aristotle on happiness follows an intuition that his understanding of human happiness must in some way include all or at least all the intrinsic goods of human living if it is to be most final, that is, desired for its own sake and not for any further good as end, and if it is to be self-sufficient, that is, if it is to make life desirable and lacking in nothing. This understanding of the two formal requirements of happiness is difficult to reconcile with Aristotle's conclusion to the function argument since the latter restricts the human good to the intrinsic good of virtuous activity alone. The inclusivist reading of the conclusion to the function argument is that the human good consists in the activity of all the human virtues, and if there are several, in the best or most complete, which is taken to mean that if there are several virtues then happiness consists in the activity of all of them. This interpretation of the human good in Book I is in conflict with Book X where Aristotle identifies happiness with the activity of the intellectual virtue of wisdom. Like the exclusivist, the inclusivist interpretation does not attempt to explain the nature of the two happy lives at NE X 7-8.

I shall argue in the following section that the correct way of understanding Aristotle on happiness is an exclusivist interpretation which takes into account the good and ultimately happiness as pros hen homonyms signifying a focal connection between goods and virtuous activity and between a life of ethically virtuous activity and the life of contemplation. In so doing I shall address myself to the key issue of the nature of the good of virtuous activity and a life of such activity and how that good and a life constituted by that good are focally connected to the activity of contemplation and a life of contemplation.


c. Happiness Understood According to a Focal Exclusivism
At *NE* I 5 Aristotle looks at what people commonly think happiness consists in. Different people will think of happiness in different ways, but these differences can be summarized in the happiness of the three lives (*bioi*), a life of pleasure, politics, and contemplation. As mere enjoyment, honour, and political virtue are disqualified as incomplete ends, Aristotle rules out first two lives as really happy. Only the life of contemplation remains, although its discussion is postponed until *NE* X 7. Aristotle's disqualification of two of the three lives commonly considered happy is significant. The human good of happiness, for him, is ultimately *one* life - the life of contemplation. This is finally confirmed at *NE* X 7 where Aristotle identifies contemplation as final, or perfect happiness. Since he has already disqualified the life of politics at *NE* I 5 as truly happy, his recognition that a life of ethically virtuous activity in the polis at X 8 is 'secondarily' happy does not mean that Aristotle is reinstating the political life as a second-best alternative to the life of contemplation. Rather, his term for the life of ethically virtuous activity suggests that this life is connected in such a way to the happiness of contemplation that this life of ethical virtue is an aspect of a life of contemplation. Aristotle's term for the life of the 'other virtue' as happy 'secondarily' suggests that he is understanding the term 'happiness' as a *pros hen*, or focal homonym, signifying a focal connection between the happiness of ethically virtuous action and the final or perfect happiness of contemplation, analogous to his understanding the term 'being' in the *Metaphysics*. In Aristotle's first philosophy 'being' is a focal homonym which signifies a focal connection between being and substance, and, within substance itself, a focal connection between sensible substance and the simple substance of the unmoved mover. As focally connected to the happiness of a life of contemplation, the secondarily happy life of ethically virtuous action is not a life that can be lived separately from a life of contemplation. In effect, by treating 'happiness' as a focal homonym, Aristotle understands that there is a focal connection between the life

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79 *NE* 1095b14-1096a5
of virtuous action and that of contemplation as the further and final level to the focal connection of goods as means to goods as ends and of goods as ends to happiness as the supreme good and most final end.\textsuperscript{81} ‘Happiness’ understood as focal homonym signifying this focal connection of the two lives is basically an exclusivist position qualified by the recognition that the finality of the good is the basis for a focal connection between virtuous ethical action and contemplation. In so far as it recognizes this focal connection of the secondarily happy life of ethically virtuous action to that of the perfect happiness life of contemplation, this ‘focal exclusivism’ is an exclusivist position which remedies the weakness of exclusivist views which have interpreted the ‘secondarily’ happy life of ethically virtuous action as a distinct and alternative life; a mere ‘second best’ life. As an exclusivist position, focal exclusivism understands the life of virtuous action as included in a life of contemplation as a final end is included in a most final end so that when the virtuous man engages in virtuous action, in circumstances where such action is necessary, he does so not \textit{instead of} contemplation but ultimately \textit{for the sake of} contemplation. But as specifically ‘focal’, focal exclusivism sees this relation between the secondarily happy life of virtuous activity and the final, or perfect happiness of contemplation according to finality as the basis for understanding ‘happiness’ as a focal homonym whose primary sense signifies the happiness of contemplation as the supreme good and most final end and whose secondary sense signifies the happiness of virtuous activity which as that good and end desired ultimately for the sake of the happiness of contemplation. The happiness of fine virtuous activity is desired as that good and end which either preserves or promotes the happiness of the life of contemplation for the virtuous man and his polis.

In order to justify this ‘focal exclusivism’, certain key items must be first be considered and clarified.


\textsuperscript{81} This is what Lawrence, (1997) 68-76, argues (rightly I think).
First, Aristotle understands ‘life’ (bios) in different contexts as signifying either a total lifetime or an activity within that total lifetime. At NE 1.5, in considering the three lives (bioi) which are generally considered happy, Aristotle uses the term bios to refer to the total life of a human being. However, Aristotle can also use the term bios to signify not a total life but rather an activity. In the Politics, for example, Aristotle suggests that a man may have more than one bios at the same time. This use of the term bios could only make sense if it were being understood here as signifying an activity that makes up a total life, rather than a total life itself. In the NE, first at I 7, Aristotle states that the human good of virtuous activity must occupy a complete lifetime (en bioi teleiôi) and then at X 7 he states that it is the activity of intellect that constitutes final, or perfect happiness - provided it be granted a complete span of life (labousa mēkos biou teleion). By recognizing a complete life, the implication is that there is another kind of life which is a part of the whole of a total life, the activity which makes up that total life. At X 7 that activity is identified as the activity of intellect, which, if extended over a total, or complete bios, would be final, or perfect happiness. That the bios of the intellect is described as more divine than human by virtue of that part of the human being that is the dominant and better part, nous, suggests that bios here is being understood as an activity, for if nous is a part of, rather than identical with, the human being and function, it would make more sense understanding bios here as an intellectual activity comprising a part of a total life rather than as referring to the total life itself.

Thus, bios, for Aristotle can signify either life as an activity, or life as a total life, or lifetime. With this distinction in mind, we can distinguish what Aristotle tells us about the

83 Crisp, (1994) 133, and n. 22, sees a distinction at NE 1177b26, 30, and 31 between what he calls bios as a total, or ‘biographical’ sense and bios as an activity which is a part of a biographical life.
84 Pol 1256b3ff. Cf. also the reference to the ‘private lives’ (idius bioi) of citizens at Pol 1308b20; cf. Newman 91902) iv. 392. Rist, (1989) 186, also points to Plato’s Laws 733d7-734e2 as evidence that when the Greeks talk of a choice of bioi, they can mean phases or areas of a man’s (total) life.
85 NE 1098a16-8
86 ibid. 1177b26
87 ibid. 1177b27-1178a8
bios of contemplation as, on one hand, an activity and, on another, a total life. First, Aristotle describes the bios of contemplation as an activity as that which is best, most pleasurable, most loved for itself, and self-sufficient. And because the bios of contemplation as an activity is such, the bios of contemplation as a total life, that is, a lifetime of contemplation, is the best and most final, or perfect happiness. As a bios (lifetime), of contemplation would consist in contemplative activities, the virtuous man would desire, as far as he could, to engage in continual acts of contemplation throughout his life. However, because no human being can engage in such activity continuously, and the virtuous man as a human being is essentially social, and so must live with family, friends, and fellow citizens in a political community, the virtuous man must, at times, engage in a bios of 'the other virtue'. But he will do so not as the bios of a total life but rather as an activity which comprises a total life. Such a life as an activity, described as 'secondarily' happy, is a good and end desirable in itself but ultimately desired for the sake of the most final end: the happiness of contemplation, as an activity, which, extended throughout a complete life would be the final, or perfect happiness of contemplation as the bios of a total life. In this way the bios of virtuous activity as secondarily happy can be included in the happiness of contemplation as an activity and in the perfect happiness of a bios - the total life of happiness which was first introduced at NE I 5 as the happiness of the third of the three bioi. Thus, the bios of contemplation is, of the three total lives generally understood as happy at NE I 5, the one total life of happiness which nevertheless can include the secondarily happy life of practical virtuous activity as a good and most final end can include activities as ends but desired ultimately for its sake.

According to this exclusivist view, then, there is, for the virtuous man, no life of the practical virtues apart from the perfect happiness of contemplation as a total life. The

88 Cf. ibid. 1175a3-10, 1154b20-31. [This argument is based on what Aristotle says about goods desired for themselves (di' auta), goods such as every virtue (pasan aretēn) which are also desired for the sake of happiness: ibid. 1097b2-6. Thus, while the good of virtuous activity is described as kalon: ibid. 1115b11-3, 19-24, 1119b15-7, 1120a11-3, 23-25, happiness is described as kalliston: ibid. 1099a24, 27, cf.
virtuous man will strive to immortalize himself as far as he can by engaging in contemplative activity as that activity comprises a total life of such activity, but when he must, in choosing to act for the sake of the good of virtuous activity, he does not desire a life of such activity instead of the contemplative life, as a second best total life, but rather ultimately for the sake of the contemplative life.

The next important issue to clarify is how virtuous activities can be desired for themselves and yet ultimately for the sake of the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation. Here the focal character of the focal exclusivist position comes to the fore.

In the EE Aristotle observes that 'good' has many meanings, as many as 'being'. Practical goods have to do with action, either as ends for the sake of which we act or as means to those ends. Happiness is the best of practical human goods, that supreme good for the sake of which we act. Aristotle calls the good of happiness 'primary' (prōton) as the end and cause of the goodness of other things as means, or what is desired 'for the sake of' the end.

In the NE Aristotle also maintains that 'good' is said in as many ways as is 'being.' The many different kinds of goods are divisible into those of the soul, the body, and the external goods. Of these different kinds of goods, those of the soul are called good most properly and truly. These goods of soul are the action and activities of the soul, and finally, the activities of the soul in conformity with virtue. Happiness consists in activity in conformity with virtue, or if there be several human virtues, in activity in

1099b22-4, 1101a2-5 and happiness is ultimately that of the perfect happiness of contemplation: ibid. 1177a12-8.

89 EE 1217b25-6, 1218b4
90 'Practical' has two meanings: the end for the sake of which we act and the actions we do as means to the end: EE 1217a35-7.
91 EE 1217a29-40, 1218bff
92 ibid. 1218b10-2
93 NE 1096a23-4
94 ibid. 1098b12-4
95 ibid. 1098b14
96 ibid. 1098b14-30
conformity with the best and most final among them and for a complete lifetime. All the other goods, of whatever kind, are for the sake of this happiness as the practical human good. This supreme good is something final so that if there be some one thing which alone is the final end, or if there be several final ends, the one among them which is most final. Happiness, then, is that supreme good which is the one final end, or the one most final end among final ends. In this way happiness is the first principle (archê) and cause of all things done or in any way desired.

Because all other goods people have considered desirable, of whatever kind, can be desired for the sake of the happiness of virtuous activity, they can be included in that happiness, though in variously different ways:

Therefore our account must be sound, at least according to this view, which is an old one and agreed on by philosophers. It is correct also in that we identify the end with certain actions and activities; for thus it falls among goods of the soul and not among external goods. Another belief which harmonizes with our account is that the happy man lives well and fares well; for we have practically defined happiness as a sort of living and faring well. The characteristics that are looked for in happiness seem also, all of excellence, some from practical wisdom, others with a kind of philosophical wisdom, others with these, or one of these, accompanied by pleasure or not without pleasure, while others include also external prosperity. Now some of these views have been held by men and men of old, others by a few persons; and it is not probable that either of these should be entirely mistaken, but rather that they should be right in at least some one respect or even in most respects.

The exclusivist position, as we have seen, understands happiness as the final end which can include all other goods to the extent that those goods are desired for its sake. In NE I Aristotle defines happiness as activity in conformity with virtue, or the activity of the best and most final virtue, over a complete lifetime, and as we see from the previously quoted passage, this happiness can include all the various human goods, whether goods or soul, body, or external goods. The hierarchical ordering of all these goods of soul, body, and external goods to happiness is that of things desired, in different ways, for the sake of

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97 ibid. 1098a16-8
98 ibid. 1097a27-30
99 ibid. 1102a2-4
100 ibid. 1098b15-29
this end. This hierarchical ordering of different goods in different ways to happiness as the supreme good and final end, can be understood according to proš hen or focal homonymy.

Now in both his Ethics, Aristotle maintains that things are said to be ‘good’ in as many ways as they are said to ‘be’.\(^1\) As we shall see, there is evidence in both Ethics to suggest that Aristotle is understanding the human good in his practical philosophy as he understands being in his theoretical philosophy as a proš hen, of focal homonym signifying a focal connection between the many different kinds of things said to be ‘good’ and one thing which is said to be ‘good’ primarily. Understood as a focal homonym, ‘good’ signifies the many different kinds of goods recognized in Book I of the NE, whether goods of soul, body, or the external goods, as they are focally connected to happiness as the primary, or core good, for the sake of which they all are desired. But ‘good’ as a focal homonym can also enable us to understand the human good of ‘happiness’ itself as a focal homonym signifying a focal connection between a secondary and primary, or perfect, happiness as the former is hierarchically ordered to the latter as a good as final but penultimate end is desired for the sake of the supreme good as most final end.

In Book I of the NE, the function argument led Aristotle to conclude that happiness is activity in conformity with virtue, or, if there are many virtues, with the best and most final virtue for a complete lifetime. As words, for Aristotle, signify an understanding of things,\(^2\) if ‘good’ is a focal homonym, it signifies a focal connection between the many different goods desired as ends and happiness as that supreme good and most final end for the sake of which they are all ultimately desired. Happiness, as the focal good, is activity in conformity with virtue. The good of activity in conformity with virtue is described as that which is ‘fine’ (to kalon) or ‘fine and just’ (ta kala kai ta dikaia).\(^3\) The fineness of virtuous activity is described by Aristotle in many of the same terms as happiness. That is,

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\(^1\) **EE** 1217b25-6; **NE** 1096a23-4

\(^2\) **DI** 16a1-18

\(^3\) *ta kala kai ta dikaia* are the aim of the practical philosophy of *politikê*: **NE** 109414-5, 1095b4-6
as happiness is described as what is 'most fine' (kalliston),\textsuperscript{104} an activity (energeia),\textsuperscript{105} a practical good and end (telos),\textsuperscript{106} something final that is desired for itself (\textit{di' autēn}),\textsuperscript{107} (\textit{kath' hauta})\textsuperscript{108} and never for anything else (\textit{to de mēdepote di' allo, oudepote di' allo}), so virtuous activities are described as 'fine' (kalon) activities (energeia),\textsuperscript{109} and practical goods as an end (telos), desired for themselves (\textit{di autous}),\textsuperscript{110} (\textit{kath' hautas})\textsuperscript{111} and not for the sake of anything other (\textit{ou gar di' hetera autas hairountai})\textsuperscript{112} (\textit{di' allo})\textsuperscript{113} than their fineness.\textsuperscript{114} Further, virtuous actions are described as good 'for the sake of their fineness' (\textit{tou kalou heneka}),\textsuperscript{115} or 'because of' (\textit{hoti, dia}) their fineness,\textsuperscript{116} and are the 'aim' (skopos) of action,\textsuperscript{117} the object of rational appetite, or wish (boulēsis),\textsuperscript{118} or hairesis.\textsuperscript{119} All these expressions Aristotle also uses to refer to happiness.\textsuperscript{120} That the fineness of virtuous activity and happiness share the same, or nearly the same, terms suggests that at \textit{NE} I and indeed throughout most of the \textit{NE}, Aristotle is understanding the human good as a focal homonym which in its primary sense signifies the happiness of the fineness of virtuous activities and in its secondary sense all other goods desired for the sake of happiness as their final end. If this is correct, then the fineness of the various activities can

\textsuperscript{104} \textit{NE} 1099a24, 27, cf. 1099b22-4, 1101a2-5
\textsuperscript{105} \textit{ibid.} 1176a35-b1
\textsuperscript{106} \textit{ibid.} 1176b31, cf. 1097a22-4
\textsuperscript{107} \textit{ibid.} 1097b1
\textsuperscript{108} \textit{ibid.} 1097a32
\textsuperscript{109} \textit{ibid.} 1176b2-5
\textsuperscript{110} \textit{ibid.} 1176b8-9
\textsuperscript{111} \textit{ibid.} 1176b6-7
\textsuperscript{112} \textit{ibid.} 1176b9-10
\textsuperscript{113} \textit{ibid.} 1176b5
\textsuperscript{114} \textit{EE} 1248b8-16, 34-7, 1249a10-7; cf. 1228a5-7, 1236a4-7; \textit{NE} 1115b21-4, 1116b2-3, 30-1, 1119b16, 1120a23-4, etc.
\textsuperscript{115} \textit{NE} 1115b12-3, 21-4, 1116b30-1, 1120a23-5, 28, b4-5, 1122b6-7, 1123a24-5
\textsuperscript{116} \textit{ibid.} 1116a11-2, 15, 28, b3, 1117a7-10, 17, b14, 1121b1
\textsuperscript{117} \textit{ibid.} 1119b16
\textsuperscript{118} \textit{ibid.} 1129a6-9, 1162b34-1163a1, 1167b6-9
\textsuperscript{119} \textit{ibid.} 1169a32, 1176b6-9
\textsuperscript{120} \textit{ibid.} 1094a24, 1097b2-6
be understood to be constitutive of happiness as described at NE I 7. That is, the fineness of virtuous activity, over a complete lifetime, is happiness.121

However, at the conclusion of the function argument at I 7 Aristotle left open the possibility that, if there are many virtues, then the activity of the best and most final of them is happiness. At NE X 7, Aristotle decides the issue he left open there. There are indeed many human virtues the activity of the one that is best and most final is identified as happiness.122 The fineness of the activities of the other virtues are now understood to be part of a life, which, with respect to the happiness of the activity of the best and most final virtue, are desired not for themselves but for it. This is plain in the passage we have seen before:

Now the practical virtues are exercised in politics or in warfare; but the pursuits of politics and war seem to be unleisured - those of war indeed entirely so, for no one desires to be at war for the sake of being at war, nor deliberately takes steps to cause a war ... but the activity of the politician also is unleisured, and aims at securing something beyond the mere participation in politics - positions of authority and honour, or, if the happiness of the politician himself and of his fellow citizens, this happiness conceived as something distinct from political activity (indeed we are clearly investigating it as so distinct). If then among practical pursuits displaying the virtues, politics and war stand out pre-eminent in fineness and grandeur, and yet they are unleisured, and directed to some further end, not desired for their own sakes: whereas the activity of the intellect is felt to excel in serious worth, consisting as it does in contemplation, and to aim at no end beyond itself, and also to contain a pleasure peculiar to itself, and therefore augmenting its activity; and if accordingly the attributes of this activity are found to be self-sufficiency, leisuredness, such freedom from fatigue as is possible for a human being, and all the other attributes of blessedness: it follows that it is the activity of intellect that constitutes final, or perfect human happiness - provided it be granted a complete span of life, for nothing that belongs to happiness can be incomplete.123

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121 Cf. 1098a16-20. However, even early in the NE there is some distinction evident between the fineness of virtuous activity and happiness. Happiness, but not the fineness of virtuous activity, for example, is described as the best or supreme good (to ariston), that good and end which is absolutely final (haplos teleion), which is always desirable in itself (to kath' hauto hairton aei) and never for something else (medepote di' allo): ibid. 1097a32-4. Aristotle also restricts the designation 'most fine' (kalliston) for happiness: ibid. 1099a24. 27, cf. 1099b22-4. 1101a2-5
122 NE 1177a12-25
123 ibid. 1177b12-26
The activity of intellect and its virtue is happiness, while the virtuous activities of the politician, since they are for the sake of some further end, are not, although they could be included in the happiness of the intellect if they were to be done for that further end. At X 8 the life of the rest of the activities in conformity with virtue, the fine activities, those activities he has just described as comprising a life of politics, is termed happy "secondarily". Aristotle is not presenting another, or alternatively happy life here. A life of fine activities in the polis is happy "secondarily", that is, happy with respect to contemplation as a good and penultimate end is ultimately desired for the sake of the supreme good and most final end. True to Aristotle's hierarchical ordering of goods as means to ends and of ends to that end which is most final, happiness itself at NE 7-8 is being understood as a hierarchy of ends ordered to that happiness which is final, or perfect. The secondarily happy life of the fineness of virtuous activities is happy as a good ultimately desired for the sake of that final, or perfect happiness of contemplation.

There is, then, for Aristotle in the NE, a double focality in the human good as there are two levels of finality in that good. On the first level, all goods are desired for the sake of happiness as that is understood to be activity in conformity with virtue. The activities which make up the happiness on this level are the fine activities of virtue. The second level of focality is that within happiness itself, the focal connection between the secondary happiness of the fineness of activities in conformity with virtues and the perfect happiness of contemplation. This double focality of the good in the NE is analogous to Aristotle's understanding of the double focality of being in the Metaphysics in connection with his solution to the problem of universal and special metaphysics, where, as some scholars have argued, Aristotle offers not only a focality of the being of the other categories to that of substance, but also a further focality within the category of substance to the simple substance of the divine unmoved mover.125

124 ibid. 1177b24-6
125 Supra note 80
If this is right, how does our understanding the fineness of virtuous activity as focally connected to the happiness of a life of contemplation remedy the weakness of the general exclusivist interpretation?

If ‘happiness’ is a focal homonym for Aristotle, it is a term whose various senses signify a focal connection between the fineness of virtuous activity and contemplation. The primary instance of the term signifies the happiness of contemplation as final, or perfect, that of the sake of which the fineness of virtuous activity is ultimately desired, and the secondary instance of the term, that of the fineness of virtuous activity. As in all *pros hen legomena*, so here in ‘happiness’, the sense of the primary instance of the term is implicit in that of the secondary sense because the nature of that which the primary instance of the term signifies is ontologically prior to the nature of that which the secondary instance signifies. In this case, as happiness is a good, and good things are of many natures but united in a focal connection to a supreme good as their final end, as that good for the sake of which they are all ultimately desired, the focal connection between the happiness of virtuous activity and that of contemplation is that of a good and end ultimately desired for the sake of the supreme good and most final end, the ontological priority of the final or perfect happiness of contemplation is that of the final cause of the happiness of a life of virtuous activity. This means that the happiness of the fineness of virtuous activity is focally connected to the perfect happiness of contemplation as a good and end desired ultimately for the sake of the latter as its supreme good and final end. As we shall see in our excursus on *pros hen* homonymy, in each case of *pros hen legomena* the sense of the primary instance of the term is implicit in the different senses of the secondary instances in ways peculiar to the nature of that which the *pros hen legomena* signify. In this case of ‘happiness’ as a *pros hen legomenon*, the fineness of virtuous activity is focally connected to the happiness of contemplation as a good and end is desired for the sake of that supreme good which is most final. We can get a more exact sense of what this means if we consider one of Aristotle’s favorite examples of *pros hen legomena*, ‘health’ (*to hugeinon*) and use
this example as our guide. At Meta IV 2 in illustrating how ‘being’ can be understood as a focal homonym, Aristotle cites the example of health:

Everything which is healthy is related to health, one thing in the sense that it preserves health, another in the sense that it produces health in the sense that it is a symptom of health, another because it is capable of it.\(^{126}\)

If the primary sense of health as a \textit{pros hen legomenon} is a well functioning organism, this sense is implicit in the other senses of the term in different ways, one sense being that which preserves the health of the organism, another sense being that which is a symptom of a healthy organism, and so forth. If ‘happiness’ is a \textit{pros hen legomenon}, the primary sense of the term is the happiness of contemplation and the other, or secondary sense, that of the happiness of virtuous activity. \textit{How} the sense of the happiness of contemplation is implicit in that of the happiness of virtuous activity is as the final end for the sake of which the happiness of virtuous activity is desired. If we look at the different ways the secondary senses of health have the primary sense of the term implicit in theirs we might say that in the case of ‘happiness’ the primary sense of the term, that of contemplation, is implicit in the sense of the secondary instance of the term as the latter either preserves, produces, is a symptom of, or is capable of contemplation. As ‘happiness’ as a \textit{pros hen legomenon} signifies the focal connection between virtuous activity and contemplation we could say that the virtuous man when he does desire virtuous activity for the sake of its fineness, does so ultimately because he desires the happiness of contemplation, that is to say, he desires the fineness of virtuous activity as that good and end which preserves or promotes the happiness of contemplation for himself and his polis.

Two examples may illustrate this. A virtuous man will strive to immortalize himself as far as he can in contemplative activity, but in a situation, say, where his polis is under attack, he will engage in defending his polis because this activity is fine, that is, it is a good and end which preserves a life of contemplation for himself and his polis. The activity of defending the polis is not contemplative activity but as contemplative activity depends upon

\(^{126}\textit{Meta} 1003a34-b1\)
the virtuous leisure that a good polis can provide, defense of the polis is fine as preserving or maintaining the virtuous leisure for contemplative activity. While the good life, and not mere life, is the good and end of the polis, nevertheless the good life depends upon preservation of life. So as the good and end of the (best) polis is ultimately the best life of contemplation, the virtuous man's defense of the polis is not simply a defense of life but the defense of the good life of the polis, which is a life of contemplation. Thus the virtuous man desires to defend his polis when necessary for the fineness of preserving a life of contemplation for himself and his polis.

A second example of the focal connection between the fineness of virtuous activity and contemplation as the former is desired for the sake of the latter is this. The virtuous man as a citizen of his polis will be required to share in the rule his polis. The activity of ruling one's polis is not contemplative activity, but as the contemplative activity of the citizens depends on and flourishes only in a community of virtue where the young can be trained in the virtues so as to become capable of such activity and the citizens have the opportunity for that activity as they are preserved in virtue by just laws, so that the virtuous man, when it is required of him, will desire the fineness of ruling his polis as that good and end which promotes a virtuous life for the sake of a life of contemplation for himself and his polis.

Aristotle, as we have seen, considers the fineness of virtuous activity a good and end in itself; an activity desired for its own sake.\textsuperscript{127} The virtuous man's desire for the fineness of virtuous activity ultimately for the sake of contemplation does not, for Aristotle, compromise the goodness of the activity as an end, for while the fineness of virtuous activity is a penultimate end, this does not mean that the fineness of virtuous activity is simply a means to the perfect happiness of contemplation as the end as some instrumental good is desired for the sake of a further end. First, an instrumental good is an external

\textsuperscript{127} Supra notes 109-19
good, not a good of soul as an activity, whereas the fineness of virtuous activity is good of soul as an activity. Second, Aristotle distinguishes between *hairesis* and *proairesis*, or 'choice' for a good. *Hairesis* can be for goods as ends, while choice is restricted to goods as means to ends. In virtuous activity, the fineness of the action as an end is the object of *hairesis*, whereas the fineness of virtuous activity is good of soul as an activity. Second, Aristotle distinguishes between *hairesis* and *proairesis*, or 'choice' for a good. *Hairesis* can be for goods as ends, while choice is restricted to goods as means to ends. The fineness of an action as an end can be the object of *hairesis* for the sake of the most final end of the perfect happiness of contemplation, but the fineness of the action cannot be the object of *proairesis* as something chosen as a mere means to contemplation. The fineness of an action as an end can be the object of *hairesis* for the sake of the most final end of the perfect happiness of contemplation, but the fineness of the action cannot be the object of *proairesis* as something chosen as a mere means to contemplation. The fineness of the activity as object of *hairesis* is not instrumental to, but rather constitutive of a life of virtuous activity desired ultimately for the sake of the perfect happiness of contemplation. As the fineness of activity is ultimately desired for the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation, this activity is included in the contemplative life as that life is the ultimate end of everything the virtuous man does.

Finally, we might say that for Aristotle the necessary and sufficient conditions of the *kalon* of virtuous activity are (i) it must be the end and object of the virtuous man's rational desire (*boulésis*) in his choice (*proairesis*) of an action. (ii) As the *kalon* is the object of the virtuous man's rational desire and choice, this rational desire and choice will spring from knowledge of the act and the deliberate desire which can only arise from his fixed and permanent virtuous disposition of character. (iii) The *kalon* of the virtuous

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128 Instrumental goods are the external goods required for the performance of activities in conformity with virtue, cf. *NE* 1097a25-8, 1099a31-b8

129 Proairesis denotes something chosen before other things: *NE* 1112a15-7. In the *NE proairesis* as the desire for a good as means to an end (*pros to telos*) is distinguished from the rational desire, or wish (*boulésis*) for the good as end: ibid. 1111b26-30, 1113a9-16, while *hairesis* and its cognates are not restricted to a prohairetic desire for goods as means to a further end, e.g. ibid. 1097a25-7, 30-b5, 1110a30, 1116b20, 1126b30-1127a5, 1140b17-9, 1151b1-2, but can refer to the good as end, especially the supreme good and final end of happiness: ibid. 1094a18-22, 1097a28-b6, 1169a32, 1176b6-9.

130 Action (*praxis*) is not, for Aristotle, the end itself, cf. *NE* 1111a18-9, but rather the means to an end: ibid. 1112b33-4, 1140b16-7. Because a thing is defined by its end: ibid. 1115b20-2, when the virtuous man chooses the action for the sake of what is fine, the action becomes virtuous: ibid. 1122b6-7, the end in itself as *eupraxis*: ibid. 1140b6-7.

131 Cf. *NE* 1105a26-b18, 1144a13-22.
activity is desired by the virtuous man for its fineness as that good and end which preserves or promotes the *kalliston* of the perfect happiness of contemplation.

According to focal exclusivism, then, the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation comprises as much contemplative activity as the virtuous man can engage in and includes the fineness of the other virtuous activities as secondarily happy, that is, as those activities are focally connected to the perfect happiness of contemplation as they are desired ultimately for the sake of it as either preserving or promoting that which is finest in desiring that which is fine.

II. *Pros Hen* Homonymy and Analogy

A focal exclusivist interpretation of Aristotle on happiness reads Aristotle as using the term ‘good’ as a *pros hen*, or focal homonym which signifies a focal connection between the many different goods of human life and one supreme good, the perfect happiness of contemplation, as those many goods are ultimately desired for the sake of that supreme good as their final end. This reading, naturally, depends on understanding the nature of *pros hen* homonymy and its use in the *NE*, especially with regard to ‘good’ and ultimately, the good of ‘happiness’. In this second section I will examine the nature of *pros hen* homonymy and the nature of analogy.

1. *Pros Hen* Homonymy

Although Aristotle makes use of *pros hen* homonymy in many of his philosophical investigations, nowhere does he present any kind of formal examination of this kind of homonymy. What he does think about *pros hen* homonymy has to be pieced together from certain works in his corpus. In some of these philosophical works Aristotle clearly recognizes certain terms as homonyms *pros hen*: ‘healthy’ (*to hugieinon*), ‘medical’ (*to iatrikon*), ‘being’ (*to on*), ‘one’ (*to hen*) and ‘friendship’ (*héphilia*), while recognizing

132 While ‘friendship’ in the *EE* is acknowledged by Aristotle to be a focal homonym, it is anomalous when set beside the clearly acknowledged *pros hen* legomena of the *Metaphysics*. As my understanding ‘good’ and ‘happiness’ as *pros hen* legomena in the *NE* is based on the general characteristics of *pros hen* homonymy as emerge from an analysis of the clearly acknowledged *pros hen* legomena of the *Metaphysics*, setting aside the case of friendship should not threaten my argument.
that there are other terms used similarly to these.\textsuperscript{133} In this excursus on \textit{pros hen} homonymy I will examine certain texts which reveal certain basic characteristics of this kind of homonymy. In examining these texts I will especially focus on terms Aristotle clearly presents as \textit{pros hen} homonyms. These \textit{pros hen} legomena and the things they signify will be especially important in understanding \textit{pros hen} homonymy in Aristotle. This section on \textit{pros hen} homonymy will be divided into two parts. The first part will be devoted to Aristotle’s understanding of meaning and signification as a preliminary study of \textit{pros hen} homonymy. The second part will be devoted to \textit{pros hen} homonymy itself and will be subdivided as a presentation and examination of what can be understood as three general characteristics of this kind of homonymy.

\textbf{a. \textit{Pros Hen} Homonymy Signifies An Understanding of A Group of Things United By A Focal Connection to the Nature of One Thing Among Them}

\textit{Pros hen} homonymy, for Aristotle, is not simply a semantic theory of the way the multiple senses of a particular type of homonymous term are ordered to one primary, or focal sense, what is often called ‘focal meaning’,\textsuperscript{134} but the signification of an

\textsuperscript{133} Cf. \textit{Meta} 1003b4

\textsuperscript{134} The term ‘focal meaning’ originated with Owen, (1979) 13-32. Owen understands Aristotle as saying that all the \textit{senses} of this particular, or \textit{pros hen} homonymous term ‘have one focus, one common element’ \textit{op. cit.} 31. Owen has been criticized for what amounts to reducing Aristotle’s account of \textit{pros hen} homonymy to the senses of the term, cf. Ferejohn, (1980) 117-28, Irwin, (1981) 523-44, Shields, (1999) 49. As Ferejohn (1980) 118, 127, asks, “What, first of all, is the \textit{sort} of the things that are supposed to ‘point towards a one’ in the case of a \textit{pros hen} term? Owen infuses a distinctly intensional character into this condition when he paraphrases Aristotle as saying that all the \textit{senses} of a \textit{pros hen} term ‘have one focus, one common element’ (Owen 1979, 31). But this is to impart an alien ontology into a philosophical system where it has no place. Aristotle’s usual manner of theorizing about language proceeds without reference to such intensional entities as meanings and senses. Instead, his style of analysis characteristically makes do with a relatively lean ontology containing nothing more than pieces of language (words and phrases) and the extra-linguistic entities they \textit{signify} [\textit{sêmaino}] (i.e. \textit{stand for}, or denote - the sorts of things that can serve as significata include (1) primary substances (concrete individuals), (2) non-substantial particulars (individual qualities, quantities, times, places, etc.) and (3) the genera and species which contain things of these sorts ... as well as even more bizarre ‘entities’ such as (4) differentiae (e.g. \textit{two-footed}) and (5) ‘compounds [\textit{sunduaizomena}] such as \textit{white man}'). Hence, an explication of the \textit{pros hen} condition which is framed in this limited ontology will be considerably truer to Aristotle than the intensional reading given to it by Owen.”
considers the misleading suggestion that
express the difference
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of things. Shields
understanding of a group of things united by a focal connection\(^{135}\) to the nature of one thing
among them.

At the beginning of the *Categories*, Aristotle explains how things are named:

When things have only a name in common and the definition of being
corresponds to the name is different, they are called homonymous. Thus,
for example, both a man and a picture are animals. These have only a name
in common and the definition of being which corresponds to the name is
different; for if one is to say what being an animal is for each of them, one
give two distinct definitions.

When things have the name in common and the definition of being which
corresponds to the name is the same, they are called synonymous. Thus,
for example, both a man and an ox are animals. Each of these is called, by
a common name, an animal, and the definition of each - what being an
animal is for each of them - one will give the same definition.

When things get their name from something, with a difference of ending,
they are called paronymous. Thus, for example, the grammarian gets his
name from grammar, the brave gets theirs from bravery.\(^{136}\)

The terms 'homonymous' and synonymous', as defined here by Aristotle apply not
to words but to things.\(^{137}\) Things are homonymous, or equivocally named, when they
have a common name but differing definitions, as when a man and a portrait are both called

\(^{135}\) I use the term ‘focal connection’ to signify the real connection between things united in a specific
way to the nature of one thing as that connection is signified by a *pros hen* or focally homonymous term. I
borrow the term from Irwin (1981) 531, n. 12, who prefers it as an alternative to Owen’s semantic or
linguistic conception of homonymy as ‘focal meaning’. Irwin alters Owen’s term to avoid what he
considers the misleading suggestion that by a word as a focal homonym Aristotle means to indicate a
relation between senses of a word (Owen speaks of “*to on* and other cognate expressions”) rather than
between the things the word applies to. As Irwin explains, “If Fs are focally connected, then the focus F1
has the definition ‘G,’ and subordinate Fs have the definition ‘G+H,’ ‘G+I’ etc. F1 is primary and the
focus because other Fs include its definition in theirs.” Shields, (1999) 59, adopts this terminology to
express the difference between homonymy as merely a linguistic meaning and one expressing a real relation
of things. Shields writes: “To begin, linguistic intuitions are apt to come up short in the very contexts in
which we have difficulty settling on non-univocity or association. Although perfectly adequate for ‘bank’,
our intuitions about correct applications of the word ‘good’ will hardly decide the issue of whether goodness
admits of a univocal account. Nor, indeed, should linguistic intuition suffice in such contexts. Presumably
a dispute between Aristotle and the Platonists about whether goodness is homonymous concerns the
question of whether there is some one universal, goodness, common to all good things. This is surely how
Aristotle conceives the issue himself: he claims, against the Platonists, that ‘the good is not some common
thing, universal and one’: NE 1096a27-8. In urging this conclusion Aristotle seems indifferent to matter of
linguistic use or intuition. If so, then the core-dependency homonymy he sees in goodness is not focal
meaning, but another form of focal connection.”

\(^{136}\) *Cat* 1a1-11 (I shall use the Revised Oxford Trans. in quotations unless otherwise indicated)

\(^{137}\) As Ackrill (1963), 71, observes. Although Aristotle sometimes describes words as homonymous:
*Top* 106b29-107a12; *GC* 322b29-32, he quite regularly refers to entities, rather than words, as
'animals', and things are synonymous, or univocally named, when they share the same name and definition, as when a man and an ox are both called 'animals'.

In the first book of the Topics, Aristotle makes a division according as things 'are said in many ways or in one way according to differences in form (pollachōs ἐ monachōs tōi eidei) form'. Here in the Topics 'form' is evidently playing the same role as 'definition' in the formulae of the Categories. The definition expresses the form, and is different according as the form differs. The name is identical in all instances. If the form or definition of the things is different, the name is applied in various ways. If the definition or form in each instance is the same, the name is used in an identical way. This division corresponds exactly with things as homonymous and synonymous in the Categories. In fact, Aristotle uses the later terms as equivalents for the pollachōs and monachōs, respectively, throughout this section of the Topics.

In both these works, Aristotle is interested in how things are named because he is interested in understanding what things are. Homonymy and synonymy, or equivocality and univocality, and their semantic meanings are of concern to Aristotle because he is interested in understanding things. The semantic nature and importance of words is derived from

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138 Top 106a9-10
139 Cat 1a3-4
140 Top 106a19-22, b4, 8, 107a5, 39, b7, 16, 25, 31. In the Topics the 'equivocals' and the 'multivocals' or 'things expressed in various ways' are being formally treated as such, and not in particular applications. The two are identified, though in certain particular applications, Aristotle contrasts the 'things expressed in various ways' with things said homonymously. e.g. Top 110b16ff, cf. Owens (1978) 115, 121-2. Aristotle's dominant practice, however, is to use homonymy and multivocity interchangeably, as in the whole of Top I 15, as well as at Top 129b31, 148a23; PrA 32a18-21 with 25a37-b2; Phys 186a25-b12.
141 As Owens, (1978) 112, advises, attention should be given to the way in which the problem of what Aristotle means by this classification of things as equivocals or univocals is approached, for, 'Today 'synonym' and 'homonym' - the literal equivalents of the Greek words rendered by 'univocal' and 'equivocal' - designate terms. Only words are now called synonyms and homonyms, at least in the primary sense of the designation: Shorter Oxford Dictionary, I, 916bc; II. 2113c. Paronyms today are also just words: Shorter Oxford Dictionary, II. 1435c. With Aristotle, on the contrary, these are all defined as things, in the opening chapter of the Categories. In equivocality, according to the definition, the things are equivocal, the name is identical and the definitions (as denoted by the name) are different. So little is a classification of terms implied that Aristotle uses the same word zoon as his example in the case of both univocals and equivocals. The prior application of the term to things does not prevent the Stagirite from saying that a word is used 'equivocally': Top 130a1-4, but it is things that are formally defined as equivocal.' Among scholars who prefer the translation 'homonymous' and 'synonymous' for Aristotle's
their significance in understanding the nature of things. In order to make this clear we need to examine in some detail Aristotle’s views on signification, especially, his understanding of words, thoughts, and things.\textsuperscript{142}

The most important passage for evidence concerning semantic meaning and signification in Aristotle is that of the first chapter of the \textit{De Interpretatione}:

First we must settle what a name is and what a verb is, and then what a negation, an affirmation, a statement and a sentence are.

Now spoken sounds are symbols of affections (\textit{pathêmatôn}) in the soul, and written marks symbols of spoken sounds. And just as written marks are not the same for all men, neither are spoken sounds. But what these are in the first place signs of - affections of the soul - are the same for all; and what these affections are likenesses of - actual things - are also the same. These matters have been discussed in the work on the soul and do not belong to the present subject.

Just as some thoughts (\textit{noêma}) in the soul are neither true nor false while some are necessarily one of the other, so also with spoken sounds. For

\textit{homonuma} and \textit{sunomuma}, there is a controversy precisely over whether Aristotle intends homonymy to mark different senses of words or rather as a doctrine about properties. Owen, (1979), Leszl. (1970), Barnes, (1971), Hintikka, (1971, 1973, ch. 1), and Hamlyn, (1977-8), for example, treat homonymy as a semantic phenomenon pertaining to word meaning. Ackrill, (1963), Charlton, (1970) and Irwin, (1981), among others, on the other hand, hold that Aristotle’s primary concern is with things not words. Irwin (1981) 535, argues that homonymy is indicated by difference of definition, where Aristotelian definitions signify essences, and: “an essence is not a meaning; it is a real property, a real feature of the world, an Aristotelian universal. A homonymous name can be replaced by many definitions because it signifies many real properties, not because it has different meanings.” Irwin argues that if Aristotle’s appeal to homonymy were merely an appeal to difference in sense, he would be content to appeal "to what is accessible to the normal competent speaker of language", but Aristotle “is not primarily concerned with the ordinary competent speaker’s judgments of different senses, but with how things really are", \textit{op. cit.} (543). Shields, (1999) 75-102, takes something of a middle position between the two opposing sides of the controversy. He thinks that the former view is right to suppose that Aristotle has a concern about the senses of words, but wrong if it takes this to entail that Aristotle is \textit{merely} interested in common usage and that Irwin is right to criticize this tendency but wrong to infer that homonymy is not “intended to mark different senses of words.” Shields thinks that for Aristotle there is no hard and fast distinction between the sense of words and essences or real features of the world: meanings will be for natural kinds, essences.

But Aristotle’s theory of signification is neither a theory of sense nor of reference. I shall argue in this excursus that Aristotle’s theory of meaning is a triadic theory of signification: that names are the signs of thoughts and mediately the signs of things; \textit{DL} 16a3-8. This means that for Aristotle our words are used to express how we understand things, and in a philosophy of being and good, where the things understood are existent, or can exist. Aristotle is concerned with the senses of words as those senses are determined by how we understand these really existing things. Thus, Aristotle’s theory of \textit{pros hen} homonymy can be understood as a semantic theory which signifies our understanding the focal connection of things.

\textsuperscript{142}In this section I follow Whitaker, (1996) 9-25. While considering Aristotle’s views on signification here, it is important also to note that signification is not the only semantic function which words may fulfill. In the \textit{Poetics}, only four of the eight parts of speech defined are significant: \textit{Poet} 1456b20ff. The other four include letters and syllables, but also conjunctions and prepositions, which do not stand for things, as significant words do, but perform other functions, such as joining two assertions into one. Further, in the \textit{DL}, we see that verbs not only signify, but have ‘an additional signification’ which does not involve pointing to a thing, but indicating that the thing pointed to holds of a subject, when it holds.
falsity and truth have to do with combination and separation. Thus names and verbs themselves - for instance 'man' or 'white' when nothing further is added - are like the thoughts that are without combination and separation; for so far they are neither true or false. A sign of this is that even 'goat-stag' signifies something but not as yet, anything true or false - unless 'is' or 'is not' is added (either simply or with reference to time).\(^1\)

Partly in virtue of Aristotle's analogy between thoughts and spoken sounds, this passage has been understood to contain the basis of four Aristotelian semantic theses, each of which is developed throughout Aristotle's philosophy: (1) **compositionality**: the semantic value of compound thoughts in assertoric sentences is a function of their sub-sentential or sub-propositional semantically relevant parts; (2) **conventionality**: the written and spoken symbols used to stand for thoughts are conventional, whereas the thoughts themselves and that for which they stand are not; (3) **relationalism**: conventional semantic units (written marks and spoken sounds) receive their semantic significance from those things of which they are symbols; and finally and of decisive importance, (4) **signification**: the relationship in virtue of which words and sentences receive their semantic significance consists in what Aristotle calls signification (sēmainein).\(^2\) As semantic significance for Aristotle depends upon signification, it will be necessary to examine his triadic theory of signification: how words signify our understanding of things.

As we have seen, in the first chapter of the *De Interpretatione*, Aristotle explains that spoken words are symbols of our common mental experience of things and written words are the symbols of spoken words. Aristotle first tells us that spoken utterances are 'symbols' of affections in the soul. The Greek word used by Aristotle (*symbolon*) is that from which the English 'symbol' is directly derived. However, the English word has acquired senses which the Greek word lacked, so that 'symbol' may be a misleading translation. The normal use of the Greek word was for a tally or token. A contract or other agreement might be marked by breaking a knucklebone or other object in two, one portion being taken by each of the parties to the agreement. Each person kept his piece, and could identify the person who

\(^1\) *De Interpretatione* 16a1-18  
\(^2\) Shields, (1999) 78-9
presented the other piece by matching it with his own. The word came to denote any
token, for instance, for admission to the theater. Accordingly, then, something becomes
a token by convention. Just as a tally, ticket, or token depends upon convention, so
Aristotle at DI 2 states as part of his definition of a name that it is a sound significant by
convention and explains that nothing is a name by nature; something only becomes a
name, or ceases to become a name, by the adoption or abandoning of a convention.

Aristotle also speaks of words as tokens at the beginning of the Sophistici Elenchi.
There words are seen as tokens not for thoughts, but for things. He explains that since we
cannot carry about with us the objects which we wish to talk about, we use words instead
of things as tokens (symbola) for them. In the DI, words are tokens for thoughts, which
are, in turn, likenesses of things; in the SE, on the other hand, words are tokens for things.
That these two apparently inconsistent formulations are actually consistent will become
clear when we come to consider the relation between thought and its objects.

According to the view put forward at DI 1, then, words are conventional and not
natural; they are not the same for everyone, and stand as tokens for thoughts. But there are
also items in our language which have a fixed nature and are the same for all, namely
thoughts and the things of which thoughts are likenesses. In order to understand the
relationship between thought and things envisaged here, we need to consider what Aristotle
means by the term ‘likeness’ (homoioêma). To do this we need to turn to the De Anima, the
work Aristotle himself refers us to at the conclusion of the first section of DI 1 where he
says ‘these things have been discussed in the writings on the soul and belong to another
inquiry’. Aristotle’s reference to his writings on the soul at DI 1 appears to pertain to the
topic Aristotle most recently introduced there, namely the point that thoughts are likenesses

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146 DI 16a19
147 The same point is made in the NE with regard to money. Money, like words, came into being by
convention: ibid. 1133a29; it is not by nature, but by convention, and it is within our power to change it
or render it useless: ibid. 1133a31
148 SE 165a6ff
149 DI 16a6-8
The relation between thought and things is not discussed in the *DI*, and clearly belongs to the concerns of the *DA*.

The theory of how thoughts match things is developed at *DA* III along similar lines to the theory of perception Aristotle advanced in book II. At *DA* II he tells us that an organ of perception is potentially what the thing perceived already is actually, and becomes like it when it perceives it.\(^{152}\) In book III thought is said to work in an analogous way.\(^{153}\) Before conceiving of any object of thought, the mind is blank, that is, it is not actually anything until it begins to think.\(^{154}\) It is capable of taking on the form of an object of thought, and so that which thinks and that which is thought about are the same, and knowledge is the same as the thing known.\(^{155}\) The theory concerns the process of conceiving a thought of some intelligible thing. In this process, the intelligible form of the object of thought is taken on by the thinker, so that this same form is common both to the object and to the thinker. In this way, a likeness of the object of thought is present in the mind.

But Aristotle does not mean that the affections in the soul are mental images or pictures; they are rather thoughts (*noêmata*), and a thought is like its object, since both share the same form. In the *DA*, Aristotle distinguishes thoughts and images, the crucial difference being that images (*phantasmata*) cannot be combined into complex thoughts which have a truth value, whereas simple thoughts can. Imagination takes perception as its starting point, and cannot take place without it.\(^{156}\) Animals are guided by imagination either because they lack rationality or because their intellect is temporarily veiled, through sleep or disease.\(^{157}\) So, while images may accompany thoughts, they are clearly not the same as thoughts themselves.\(^{158}\) To say that a thought is a likeness, then, is not to say that it is an

\(^{150}\) Ibid. 16a8  
\(^{151}\) Ibid. 16a7. Whitaker. (1996) 13  
\(^{152}\) *DA* 418a3ff  
\(^{153}\) Ibid. 429a13-8  
\(^{154}\) Ibid. 429a23ff  
\(^{155}\) Ibid. 430a3-5, 431a1ff  
\(^{156}\) Ibid. 428b11-6  
\(^{157}\) Ibid. 429a5-8  
\(^{158}\) Ibid. 432a10-4. To say that a thought is a likeness, then, is not to say that it is an image or picture.
image or picture. If, at DI 1 Aristotle meant by 'affections in the soul' mental images and not thoughts, then he would be claiming that spoken utterances are tokens for images, and not thoughts. This would be in direct opposition to what he says immediately after: that simple thoughts correspond to names and verbs, and in the third chapter when he observes that both speaker and hearer register in thought the utterance of a word. But there is no opposition, for Aristotle is clearly interested in the relation between words and thoughts, and not between words and mental images. The analysis of thought in the DA is concerned with thinking about things which have a formal and material aspect; to think of such a thing is for the thinker to take on its form.

Thus we see how the reference to the De Anima at DI 1 elucidates what Aristotle means by calling thoughts likenesses of things. 'Affections in the soul' are thoughts of anything that is intelligible. Thoughts, like things, are, as Aristotle puts it, 'the same for all' just as a dog is always a dog, since every dog shares the same form so that there is no difference between the thought of a dog conceived by a Greek and a Persian. Thinking of a dog means conceiving a formal likeness of dog in one's mind: this likeness is determined by what a dog is, and must therefore be the same no matter who the thinker is. Thoughts differ, then, from words. While the spoken sound 'horse' could be adopted just as well in place of the sound 'dog', it would be impossible for the thought of a horse to be used in place of a dog. Unlike words, thoughts of things are not tokens adopted by convention.

159 DI 16a13ff
160 ibid. 16b20ff
161 The notion of form is often broadened to include items which belong to categories other than that of substance, and even items which do not exist: Meta 1030a17-27. The goat-stag, in a sense, is something, and so has an intelligible form which can be conceived in the mind. For every name there is a phrase which sets out what the name signifies: ibid. 1030a7-9; PoA 92b26-34; this phrase in a broad sense can also be called a definition (horismos): Meta 1030a17ff. In the case of 'goat-stag', it might state what a goat-stag would be, were it to exist. This, as Whitaker, (1996) 17, remarks, is better than the image theory attributed to Aristotle by some, which could not extend beyond those objects of thought which can be pictured.
Finally, to complete our understanding of the relation between words, thoughts, and things, we must consider a third term which Aristotle uses in addition to 'token' and 'likeness' - that of sign (σημεῖον).\(^{162}\)

Aristotle defines sign in the Prior Analytics as something from which the existence of something else may be inferred: if it is a sign, then there is some object of which it is a sign.\(^{163}\) This view of sign fits well with how words are understood to function in the DI. At DI 3 we read that when a word signifies (σημαίναι), something is uttered and both speaker and hearer register a thought in their minds to accompany the utterance of the word.\(^{164}\) This thought, as we learned in chapter one, is a likeness of a thing. The utterance of the word, then, makes a rational being who is familiar with the language aware in his mind of the thing which the word signifies. If an utterance is significant, then there must be a thought which it arouses, and, since that thought must be a thought of some thing, there must be a thing for which the word stands.\(^{165}\)

In the sentence in which Aristotle uses the term 'sign' at DI 1 he is making the point that writing and utterances are not the same for all, whereas thoughts and things are.\(^{166}\) He describes affections of soul as being the 'primary things of which spoken utterances are signs' (ὅν μεντοί ταύτα σημεῖα πρῶτον).\(^{167}\) Despite the number of interpretations of the meaning of this phrase, there is general agreement among scholars that Aristotle is saying that 'words are primarily signs of affections in the soul'. The disagreement is rather over whether 'primarily' qualifies 'words', 'signs', or 'affections.'\(^{168}\)

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\(^{162}\) DI 16a6
\(^{163}\) PrA 70a7-9
\(^{164}\) DI 16b20ff
\(^{165}\) Since a word signifies being something, cf. Meta 1006b29ff
\(^{166}\) DI 16a5-8
\(^{167}\) ibid. 16a6
\(^{168}\) According to Ammonius, 'primarily' qualifies 'affections in the soul'. Words are signs, primarily of thoughts, and secondarily of something else, that is, of things: Ammonius, In Aristotelis De Interpretatione Commentarius, A. Busse (ed.), Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca, iv (Berlin) 1897. According to the second interpretation, adopted by Kretzmann, (1974) 3-21, 'primarily' is to be taken with 'signs'. Words are primarily signs of thoughts, and secondarily something else, that is symbols of them. 'Sign' for Kretzmann is the spoken utterance which he considers a natural sign, or symptom, of mental impressions. Signs are also, secondarily, conventional signs or tokens and for this, the word 'symbol' is used. The third
As previously noted, thoughts are likenesses, that is, formal copies of things. If words are signs of thoughts, and thoughts are exact copies of things, it follows that words also signify things. Of course, they are only signs of things by virtue of the fact that the words are already in the first place signs of thoughts and then things. But this does not mean that words for Aristotle signify thoughts immediately and directly, and signify things only indirectly, through thoughts as intermediaries.\textsuperscript{169} Thoughts are not intermediaries standing between the words and things. Rather, they are identical in form with things. Words express our thoughts, which are in turn likenesses of things. It is for this reason, and not because thoughts stand as intermediaries, that words are signs first of thought and second of things.

This conclusion makes Aristotle consistent in his use of ‘token’ in the \textit{DI} and the \textit{SE}. In the former work, words are said to be tokens for thoughts, while in the latter they are tokens for things. The two positions are consistent, for words stand for thoughts and also for things; since words are arbitrary tokens whose meaning is assigned by rational beings, they will be tokens both for thoughts of those rational beings and for the things of which their thoughts are the likenesses. Thus, just as words are signs of things, so they may be said to be tokens for both.

The relation between signs and tokens may now be clarified. The term ‘token’ is used to point to the fact that a word is adopted by convention to stand for a thought of a thing, and so for the thing itself. The term sign, on the other hand, does not convey anything about whether words are conventional or not. To say that a word is a sign of a thought and a sign of a thing simply means that there is some thought and some thing corresponding to the word.

That utterances are signs of thoughts and of things is fundamental to the rest of the \textit{DI}. The definitions of the name and verb rely on this statement: names are defined as

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\item interpretation of \textit{DI} 16a6-8 is that of Belardi, (1981) 79-83, who takes ‘primarily' to qualify words: it is primarily words which are signs of thoughts; secondarily, some other items are signs of them, and these other items are written marks: Belardi, (1975) 1975) 106-9. Cf. Whitaker, (1996) 18-22
\end{itemize}
\normalsize
significant utterances, and verbs as signs of something which is said of something else.\textsuperscript{170} These two types of words are the basic components of assertions, and assertions are therefore, in turn, significant.\textsuperscript{171} It is the relation between words and things, rather than words and thoughts, which is most often exploited in the \textit{DI}. In chapter 7, assertions are classified according to the kind of thing which the assertion takes as its subject.\textsuperscript{172} An assertion claims that something holds of something,\textsuperscript{173} and so language is true according to the way things (\textit{pragmata}) are.\textsuperscript{174} A significant word, then, designates a thing,\textsuperscript{175} or a 'this',\textsuperscript{176} and an assertion indicates that one thing holds or does not hold of another. It follows, then, that the things signified by words must be carefully considered if the workings of assertions are to be understood. The relation between words and thoughts, in contrast, is exploited less in the \textit{DI}, although in chapter 14, Aristotle does say that since words stand for thoughts as well as for things, contradictory assertions may be investigated by examining the beliefs which they express, as well as the things which they talk about.\textsuperscript{177}

Having said that for a word to be significant means that it stands for a thing, we must finally consider what Aristotle means by 'thing'. The scope of the term is very broad. Aristotle says that we use words instead of things and that there are a boundless number of things, all of which may be signified by words.\textsuperscript{178} There is, first, the individual named by a proper name as distinct from other individuals: 'Callias', 'Socrates', and so forth. There is also the nature that individuals have in common, and so we have names that signify these natures: 'human being', 'dog', 'horse'. Attributes of individuals or of natures are signified by such words as 'white', 'rational', 'biped'. Things as known are also named by the human intellect. Aristotle has, therefore, words that refer to, or signify, these things:

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\begin{itemize}
\item As Ammonius seems to have thought, \textit{supra note 37}
\item \textit{DI} 16a19, b7
\item ibid. 16b33ff. 17a23, 17b17, 18a14, 19b5
\item ibid. 17a38
\item ibid. 17a21, 18a12, 19b5ff, 20b31ff
\item ibid. 19a33
\item ibid. 16b22ff
\item ibid. 16a16
\item ibid. 23a32ff
\end{itemize}

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'noun', 'verb', 'article', 'homonymous', 'synonymous'. Things can also be concepts of things or things as known are related by the intellect. Such relations are referred to by the terms 'genus', 'species', 'difference', 'subject', 'predicate'. Lastly, things can be fictitious entities to which terms like 'goat-stag' can refer, for if a word like 'goat-stag' is significant, and not a mere jumble of meaningless syllables, there must be a thing to correspond to it. The thing is a fabulous one and not a real one, but it is a thing for all that. We see, then, that the things to which our words can refer are individuals, natures, attributes of these, names themselves, relations of our concepts of things, mental accidents, and fictitious entities.179

Whatever its nature, however, one restriction must inevitably hold of any 'thing' which can be signified by language. This is that the thing must be a single unity.180 Signification must be definite, not vague, and must come in distinct units: a word must signify one thing or a limited number of things, for not to signify a single thing is not to signify anything at all.181 So, whether the thing in question is a substance, a quality, quantity, or anything else, it must be a single thing, to which a single word can be assigned. Even the goat-stag would have to be a single thing in order to be an object of signification. Non-existence does not disqualify it from being signified, whereas vagueness and indefiniteness would.

At DI 4 Aristotle goes on to define a sentence and a proposition. A sentence (logos) is a significant portion of speech, some parts of which have an independent meaning. A

178 SE 165a6-13
179 Cf. Larkin. (1971) 34-5
180 Meta 1006a34ff. "... if 'man' has one meaning, let this be 'two-footed animal'; by having one meaning I understand this: if such and such is a man, then if anything is a man, that will be what being a man is. And it makes no difference even if one were to say a word has several meanings, if only they are limited in number; for to each formula there might be assigned a different word ... if however they are not limited but one were to say that the word has an infinite number of meanings, obviously reasoning would be impossible; for not to have one meaning is to have no meaning ... for it is impossible to think of anything if we do not think of one thing'.
181 ibid. 1006b7; Top 129b15-130a5. In the DI we see that an assertion must assert, or as Aristotle says, signify, a single thing about a single thing: ibid. 18a12ff, 19b6ff
sentence is an utterance, though not an expression of any judgment, while a simple assertion (apophasis) or denial (kataphasis) is a statement or proposition possessing a meaning, affirming or denying the presence of some other thing in a subject in time. Although predications and non-predicative phrases are composite sounds, they signify something one or unified. A definition is one because the combination of terms signifies and stands for one thing in the same way that a name does. A predication is one because the combination of terms describes a single fact and admits of only one assertion and denial.

Every sentence is significant (not as a tool but, as we said, by convention), but not every sentence is a statement-making sentence, but only those in which there is truth or falsity. There is not truth or falsity in all sentences: a prayer is a sentence but is neither true or false. The present investigation deals with the statement-making sentence; the others we can dismiss, since consideration of them belongs rather to the study of rhetoric or poetry.

The statement-making sentence - the proposition or predicative sentence - signifies truth or falsity in contrast to non-predicative sentences - prayers, commands, questions, poetical sentences - which signify in the sense that they refer to some definite thing but do not assert the truth or falsity of what things are. As the study of the non-predicative sentences more properly belongs to the province of rhetoric or poetry, Aristotle recommends that we pass these over. Thus, although signification for Aristotle is broader than the logical significance of propositions signifying truth and falsity (and the nouns and verbs as they are subjects and predicated of these propositions), it is only the proposition with which Aristotle is concerned here and in the method of science.

Now philosophy, Aristotle tells us, is a knowledge of the causes of things, and this knowledge employs what he calls a language of ‘proof’ (apodeixis). The language

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18² DI 16b26ff
18³ ibid. 17a23-4
18⁴ On the unity of definition: DI 17a8, 21a29; PoA 93b35; Meta 1029b19-20, 1045a12
18⁵ DI 17a16
18⁶ ibid. 16b33-17a4
18⁷ Phys 184a9-16; Meta 982a5-7
18⁸ Meta 1000a18-22
of proof is strictly that of exact scientific demonstration by syllogism, leading from universal and necessary truths to universal and necessary conclusions. But demonstrative knowledge presupposes knowledge of the essence of a thing and the essence of the thing is expressed in its definition. In the Posterior Analytics Aristotle tells us that by the definition, or essence of something, we know not only what it is (τι ἐστί) but that it is (ὅτι). This is in contrast to the name ‘goat-stag’ which signifies something non-existent. Thus words can signify our understanding of existing things, or things that can exist, when we understand their essences in definitions, and our understanding of non-existent things in a non-definitional grasp of what they are.

There are different definitions according to the different spheres of inquiry. Thus in the De Anima Aristotle notes:

Hence a physicist would define an affection of soul differently from a dialectician; the latter would define, e.g. anger as the appetite for returning pain for pain, or something like that, while the former would define it as boiling of the blood or warm substance surrounding the heart. The one assigns the material conditions, the other the form or account; for what he states is the account of the fact, though its actual existence there must be embodiment of it in a material such as is described by the other.

There are, then, dialectical and physical definitions. Aristotle also recognizes the different scientific domains of the physicist, the mathematician, and the first philosopher in terms of whether they treat attributes separated from matter. The kinds of definitions appropriate to these various inquiries do not uniformly make reference to material realizations, even while it is acknowledged that the forms do not exist unless realized.

What can we conclude from this examination of signification in Aristotle? Words signify our understanding of things and the things to which our words can refer are individuals, natures, attributes of these, names themselves, relations of our concepts of

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189 PoA 71b18-89. Aristotle also uses apodeixis in a broader sense as referring to ‘analytic science’ (analutikός epistēmēs) which includes not only the product of strict demonstration but dialectic and the practical knowledge of ethics as well: Rhet 1359b9-11
190 Top 101b38. PoA 90b30-1
191 PoA 92b4-8
192 DA 403a29-b3
193 ibid. 403b9-16
things, mental accidents, and fictitious entities. But if we restrict ourselves to words and propositions with which philosophy makes use, we see that the semantic meaning of those words and propositions depends upon their signifying the definition, that is, the essence of things which exist, or can exist. And as there is a formal identity between our understanding a thing and the thing itself, our understanding the essence or form of a thing is our understanding the way the existing thing really is. The language of philosophy, then, its semantic meaning, correlates with the philosopher's understanding of the essence of things which is identical with the way things really are. A prime example of this is in the *Metaphysics* where Aristotle's description of the different senses of the term 'being' signifies his understanding of the nature of the being of the categories.

At *Meta IV 1* Aristotle states that there is a science which investigates being as being and the attributes which belong to this in virtue of its own nature. At IV 2 he then observes:

> There are many senses in which a thing may be said to 'be', but they are related to one central point, one definite kind of thing, and are not homonymous ... there are many senses in which a thing is said to be, but they all refer to one starting point, or principle (arche)."\(^{196}\)

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\(^{194}\) Although Aristotle thinks that the definition of a thing according to a knowledge of its genus and difference through what is prior by nature is a knowledge of the essence of the thing, he does acknowledge that for pedagogical purposes definitions of things can be formed through what is prior relative to us or to our pupils. The latter kind of definition, however, does not state the essence of the thing: *Top 141b15-142a13, b17-9, 23-4*. Shields, (1999) 100-2, sees this as an important distinction between what he calls 'deep' and 'shallow' meaning. He writes, "Shallow meaning is, roughly, what a competent speaker of natural language requires for her competence. Deep meaning, by contrast, is the meaning revealed by investigation - whether conceptual analysis or empirical study - which permits us to grasp the essence... for investigation moves us from shallow meanings, from things signified as they appear to us, to deep meanings, to things signified as they are in nature. This explains why competent speakers can disagree about homonymy. Competent speakers can share shallow meanings without agreeing about what analysis may reveal about deep meanings... in many cases, shallow meaning suffices for establishing non-univocity; in interesting cases it never does. Interesting cases require investigation and analysis." Shields cites what Aristotle says at *Meta 1004b1-4* as confirmation of this. In this passage Aristotle points out that it belongs to the philosopher alone to determine how many ways something is spoken, that is, to determine cases of homonymy. Shields argues, "Since he cannot have trite cases in mind, Aristotle evidently intends the philosopher to be an investigator (*episkepsomenos*) who determines whether a given disputed or controversial philosophical term counts as homonymous."

\(^{195}\) *Meta* 1003a23-4

\(^{196}\) ibid. 1003a33-b6
This is not just a description of the semantic meaning of the term 'being', as we see from Aristotle's examination of the being of the categories.197

At *Meta* V 7 Aristotle gives four meanings of 'being' or the 'is' of a predicate:

1. accidental being: 'is' means 'happens to be'
2. essential being: the meanings of 'is' correspond to the figures of predication
3. true being: 'is' or 'being' signifies the truth of a proposition
4. 'is' signifies actual or potential being198

First philosophy is not concerned with either accidental or true being. Of accidental being there can be no science, for every science is concerned with what is always or normally so.199 A systematic account of the extraordinary - what does not happen always or normally - is impossible since the extraordinary has an indeterminate cause; hence a science of the accidental is impossible.200 Of true being, 'being' signifies the composition of a proposition which the intellect makes by composing and dividing. As signifying a mental affection 'is' in this sense must be dismissed from first philosophy because its cause is an affection of mind and does not pertain to the subject of the science of all beings.201

The meaning of 'being' Aristotle does identify as referring to the subject matter of first philosophy is 'being' indicated by the categories. Corresponding to the signification of the predicates are the meanings of 'being':

Those things are said in their own right to be that are indicated by the figures of predication; for the senses of 'being' are just as many as these figures. Since some predicates indicate what the subject is, others its quality, others quantity, others relation, others activity or passivity, others its place, others its time, 'being' has a meaning answering to each of these.202

In this text of the *Metaphysics* Aristotle does not explicitly show how he arrives at the categories by examining predicates, but his resume of this passage at *Meta* VII 1 indicates that he begins by examining predications made of individual things:

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197 *PrA* 48b2-4, 49a6-10, *Meta* 1017a22-7
198 *Meta* 1017a7-b9
199 ibid. 1017a20
200 ibid. 1017b30
201 ibid. 1017a30-5
202 ibid. 1017a22-8
There are several senses in which a thing may be said to be, as we pointed out previously in our book on the various senses of words; for in one sense it means what a thing is or a 'this', and in another sense it means that a thing is of a certain quality or quantity or has some such predicate asserted of it. While 'being' has all these senses, obviously that which is primarily is the 'what' which indicates the substance of a thing. For when we say of what a quality a thing is, we say that it is good or beautiful, but not that it is three cubits long or that it is a man; but when we say what it is, we do not say 'white' or 'hot' or 'three cubits long', but 'man' or 'God'. And all other things are said to be because they are, some of them, quantities of that which is in this primary sense, others qualities of it, others affections of it, and others some other determination of it. And so one might raise the question whether 'to walk' and 'to be healthy' and 'to sit' signify in each case something that is, and similarly in any case of this sort; for none of them is self-subsistent or capable of being separated from substance, but rather, if anything, it is that which walks or is seated or is healthy that is an existent thing. Now these are seen to be more real because there is something definite which underlies them; and this is the substance or individual, which is implied in such a predicate; for 'good' or 'sitting' are not used without it. Clearly then it is in virtue of this category that each of the others is. Therefore that which is primarily and is simply (haplōs) (not is something) must be substance. 203

To schematize the figures of predication and to determine the meanings of 'being' one must examine the phrases that are predicates in each proposition to determine what they express about a subject. 204 In the predicate 'is a man', 'is' expresses substance or what the subject is; in 'is white', 'is' expresses quality; in 'is three cubits long', 'is' expresses quantity, and so on through all the categories.

What we know, then, about things can be expressed by predicates categorized in these ten figures of predication. 205 This determination of the meanings of 'being'

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203 ibid. 1028a10-31

204 Aristotle indicates that 'is' is part of the predicate when he says, "for there is no difference between the man is getting well', and 'the man gets well'; or between 'the man is walking or 'cutting' and 'the man walks' or 'cuts'". and so forth: Meta 1017a28-30.

205 Trendelenburg (1963) 23-4, holds that the distinctions of categories are derived from grammatical distinctions. According to Larkin (1971) 87, this is mistaken for a number of reasons. First, the noun, verb, conjunction and article were the only parts of speech recognized by Aristotle. Second, the categories cut across the grammatical distinctions: quantity and quality both include nouns and adjectives; the categories of time and place are both expressed by adverbs. Aristotle himself was aware of the lack of correlation between the forms of expression and the grammatical categories" "for it is possible for something which is of the nature of an action to signify by the language used something which is of the nature of an action; for example, to 'flourish' is a form of expression like to 'cut' or to 'build', yet the former denotes a quality and a certain disposition, the latter an action. So too with the other possibilities: SR 166b16-20.

That Aristotle is asking 'what is' about the predicates is apparent from his treatment of the categories in the Topics: "It is clear, too, on the face of it that the man who signifies something's essence signifies
by means of the figures of predication leads to the conclusion that substance is
‘being’ primarily - in every sense of the term ‘primary’.

It is because of substance that each of the things referred to exists, and so what is
primarily (to prótós on), that is, what is not in a qualified sense but absolutely (ou ti on all’
on haplós) will be substance.

Priority, according to Aristotle, is said in many ways. Besides logical priority,
Aristotle recognizes many other kinds, among them, priorities of nature and time. At Meta
VII 1 Aristotle states that substance is primary in definition, knowledge, and time because it
alone is separate (chôriston):

Now ‘primary’ has several meanings; but nevertheless substance is
primary in all senses, both in definition and in knowledge and in time. For
none of the other categories can exist separately, but substance alone; and it
is primary also in definition, because the in the formula of each thing the
formula of substance must be inherent; and we assume that we know each
particular thing most truly when we know what ‘man’ or ‘fire’ is - rather
than its quality or quantity or position; because we know each of these
points too when we know what the quantity of quality is.

sometimes a substance, sometimes a quality, sometimes some one of the other types of predicate. For
when a man is set before him and he says that what is set before him is ‘a man’ or ‘an animal’, he states its
essence and signifies a substance; but when a white color is set before him and he says that what is set there
is ‘white’ or is ‘a color’, he states its essence and signifies a quality. Likewise, also, if a magnitude of a
cubit be set before him and he says that describing its essence and signifying a quantity. Likewise, also, in
the other cases: for each of these kinds of predicate, if either it be asserted of itself, or its genus be asserted
of it, signifies an essence: if, on the other hand, one kind of predicate is asserted of another, it does not
signify an essence, but a quantity or a quality or one of the other kinds of predicate": Top 103b27-104a1.

206 If the being of the categories is the subject of metaphysics, then to what does this ‘being’ refer?
How can it be said to refer to real things? By an examination of predication, Aristotle notes that some
predicates express that the subject is what it is and is not a modification of anything else. For example,
‘Socrates is a man’. Here the predicate is included under ‘is a substance’. But in this proposition the
concept in the subject place refers to the extra-mental/linguistic reality; it expresses what we understand
about the subject, that it is a man. The predicate refers to some grasp of the subject; it can refer to several
grasps of the same subject inasmuch as the intellect is capable of grasping the subject in many ways: as
man, as animal, as white, as good, etc. In ‘Socrates is a man’ ‘man’ refers to the humanity of Socrates and
‘is’ refers to the subject’s being independent of all other things, to his being a particular something by
reason of himself; it expresses his substance as what is. On the other hand, in ‘Socrates is white’, ‘white’
refers to the modification of color attributed to the substance which is the subject; ‘is’ here refers to the

207 Meta 1028a32-b3
208 ibid. 1028a28-31
209 ibid. V 11, IX 8; Cat XII
210 ibid. 1028a31-b2
Aristotle is stating here that substance is primary in definition, that is, substance is logically prior to its accidents, because it alone is separate. 'Separate' is not explained; but at *Meta* V 11 he writes that 'a thing is prior in respect of its nature and substance when it is possible for it to be without other things, but not them without it; this division was used by Plato.'

Substance, then, is prior in nature and substance because it is separate, that is, it has the capacity for independent existence. Aristotle defines priority by nature (*phusei*) as the priority of an independently existing thing with respect to that which exists dependent upon it and he defines substantial (*ousia*) priority as the priority of a thing which is more fully developed or realized (*teleioteros*) than the other. What is posterior in generation, for instance, is prior essentially, because everything which is generated moves towards a principle, i.e., its end. For the object of a thing is its principle; and generation has as its object the end.

Returning to *Meta* IV 2 we see that Aristotle's description of the many senses in which a thing may be said to be as related to one central point or principle signifies his understanding of the being of the categories and how the different things which comprise the categories exist as dependent on substance as ontologically prior to them. This is confirmed in the following lines of IV 2:

Some things are said to be because they are substances, others because they are affections of substances, others because they are a process of substance, or destructions or privations or qualities of substance, or productive or generative of substance, or of things which are relative to substance, or negations of some of these things or of substance itself. It is for this reason that we say even of non-being that it is non-being. As, then, there is one science which deals with all healthy things, the same applies in the other cases also. For not only in the case of things which have one common notion does the investigation belong to one science, but also in the

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212 Fine (1984) 35-6. Fine explains: A is separate from B just in case A can exist without, independently of, B. This capacity for independent existence is the relevant sort of separation in connection with the natural priority of substance; it is associated with Plato: *Meta* 1019a4, and it is said to be the fundamental sort of priority: ibid. 1019a11-2. Aristotle sometimes indicates that he has it in view by speaking of separation *haploos* - separation without qualification: ibid. 1042a28-32.
213 *Meta* 1019a2-4; cf. *Cat* 14a29-35; *Phys* 260b17-9
214 *GA* 742a19-22; *Meta* 1050a4-b6; *Rhet* 1392a20-3
215 *Meta* 1050a4-9
216 ibid. 1003a33-b6, supra note 65
case of things which are related to one common nature; for even these in a sense have one common notion. It is clear then that it is the work of one science also to study all things that are qua being. But everywhere science deals chiefly with that which is primary, and on which the other things depend, and in virtue of which they get their names. If, then, this is substance, it is of substances that the philosopher must grasp the principles and causes.217

Thus, Aristotle's description of being as said in many ways but in reference to the nature of one definite kind of thing is not simply a description of the semantic meaning of a term and a certain unity of its many senses, but the signification of his understanding of the nature of the being of the categories and how different things exist as causally dependent on the nature of the being of substance.

In the first chapter of the Categories, then, where Aristotle refers to things as homonymous or synonymous and in the Topics where he writes about things 'spoken of in many ways' according to whether their forms are the same or different, he is using language to signify his understanding of the way certain things are and the way they relate with one another. Because different things have different essences known in their different definitions and yet they share the same name, they are understood to be, and are spoken of, by the philosopher as homonymous. In the same way, as different things have the same essence known in their definitions and share the same name, they are understood to be, and spoken of, by him as synonymous. Words and propositions can be understood as homonymous or synonymous, or 'said in many ways', precisely because they signify the essence, or form, of the things as expressed in their definition. And because the semantic meaning of those words correlates with his understanding of the essence of things, the philosopher also can examine their meaning, the way they are (correctly) used, and can draw conclusions as to the essence of that which they signify.218 We see this, for example,
in Aristotle’s discussion of causes in Book V of the *Metaphysics*. There Aristotle describes how causes are said in many ways, as formal, material, efficient, and final and concludes that things really are caused in these ways:

These, then, are practically all the senses in which causes are spoken of, and as they are spoken of in several senses it follows that there are several causes of the same thing, and in no accidental sense, e.g., both the art of sculpture and the bronze are causes of the statue not in virtue of anything but *qua* statue; not however, in the same way, but the one as matter and the other as source of movement. And things can be causes of one another, e.g. exercise of good condition, and the latter of exercise; not however, in the same way, but the one as end and the other as source of movement.

Aristotle moves from a recognition of how words like ‘cause’ are spoken of to an understanding of how things are signified by those words. This is of great importance not only for our understanding of homonymy and synonymy, but of a special kind of homonymy in Aristotle’s philosophy - *pros hen* homonymy, for this kind of homonymy is a way of signifying Aristotle’s understanding of an order in a group of different things as focally connected to the nature of one among them.

b. Three Characteristics of *Pros Hen* Homonymy

b.1 The First Characteristic

(I) *Pros hen* homonymy is a kind of signification which makes use of a term with multiple senses in focal reference to one sense which is primary. This primary sense of the term is definitionally prior to the other senses as its definition is found non-reciprocally in theirs.

In the *Topics*, after dividing things into the homonymous and the synonymous, Aristotle recognizes that some words can be ‘spoken of in many ways’ (*legetai polluchos*), without being simply homonymous. In *Generation and Corruption*, Aristotle continues in the same vein:

Now no doubt, just as every other name is used in many senses (*legetai pollachōs*) (in some cases homonymously, in others one use being derived
from other and prior uses), so too is it with contact. Nevertheless contact in the proper sense (kuriōs) belongs only to things which have position... 221

In this passage, names ‘used in many senses’ are either simply homonymous, or homonymous ‘because the different senses are derived from other and prior uses.’

In the Metaphysics, ‘being’ is introduced as ‘said in many ways’ (pollachōs legomenon) with the immediate qualification that this does not mean that the term is (simply) homonymous, but rather, related pros hen, ‘in reference to one thing’. 222 ‘Being’, then, is an example of this second kind of homonymous term, a term homonymous pros hen, or a pros hen legomenon. But if a term like ‘being’ has multiple senses which nevertheless are united in focal reference to the sense of one primary instance of the term, what is the nature of that focal reference, that is, how are the other senses of the term focally related to that primary sense?

At EE VII 2, Aristotle describes how the primary sense of a pros hen legomenon is related to the other things denominated by the same name:

The primary is that of which the definition is contained in the definition of all; e.g. a medical instrument is one that a medical man would use, but the definition of the contained is not implied in that of ‘medical man’. 223

In the example of the term ‘medical’, the definition of the primary sense of the term, here identified as the medical man, or physician, is contained in the definition of something else, like a medical instrument, as the latter is that which a medical man would use. In this way the definition of the medical instrument contains within it the definition of the primary sense of the term, the medical man. In the Metaphysics Aristotle offers a slightly fuller list of the different senses of ‘medical’ as a pros hen legomenon:

That which is medical is relative to the medical art (iatrīkē), one thing in the sense that it possesses it, another in the sense that it is naturally adapted to it, another that it is a function of medical art. 224

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221 GC 322b29-323a1
222 Meta 1003a33-4, supra note 65
223 EE 1236a20–3
224 Meta 1003b1-4

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Here the primary sense of ‘medical’ is the habit of the medical art. The definition of ‘medical’ in this primary sense is then contained in the definitions of the other senses of the terms as they variously refer to it. For instance, the definition of the physician as one who possesses the habit of medical art contains the definition of medical art in its own. In the same way, something naturally adapted to the medical art as something usable by that art, like a knife, is defined in reference to that art. And an activity such as surgery contains the definition of medical art in its definition as a function of the art. In this way, the definitions of the other senses of the term ‘medical’, each in their own way, contain the definition of the primary sense of the term. The reverse, however is not true; the primary sense of ‘medical’ can be defined without reference to the definitions of the other senses of the term.

At Meta XIII 2 Aristotle describes this feature of the primary sense of a pros hen legomenon::

Things are prior in formula from whose formula the formulae of other things are compounded.225

The primary sense of a pros hen legomenon is prior in formula, or definitionally prior, to the other senses of the term as its formula or definition is found non-reciprocally in their definitions. This non-reciprocal relation between the primary sense of a pros hen legomenon and the other senses of the term is basic feature of this kind of term.226 We might then state this as the first general characteristic of pros hen homonymy: (I) Pros hen homonymy is a kind of signification which makes use of a pros hen legomenon - a term with multiple senses in focal reference to one sense which is primary. This primary sense

225 ibid. 1077b3-4
226 Aristotle does not always mention logical priority as the criterion of pros hen legomena every time he refers to it. Particularly in the Topics reference to the criterion is lacking, cf. Top 106b33-9, 107a5-12. Owen, (1979) argues from this that Aristotle, at the time of composing the Topics, had not yet recognized the significance of focal meaning and had not yet formulated its formal characteristic of logical priority of the primary meaning of the word. But as Larkin (1971) 69-70, has pointed out, this is not necessarily the conclusion to be drawn here since the purpose of the Topics (as well as other works such as the Sophistical Refutations where the ambiguity of ‘being’ and ‘unity’ is noted, cf. 182b22-8), is not that of an exposition of the formal characteristics of focal meaning, but rather that of establishing the importance of clarity in a definite reference which entails the avoidance of ambiguity or confusion of definitions and words that are used in several senses whether by chance or by reference (pros hen) are capable of such ambiguity if their definitions are not precisely given.
of the term is definitionally prior to the other senses as its definition is found non-reciprocally in theirs.\textsuperscript{227}

b.2 A Second Characteristic

(II) The things signified by a \textit{pros hen legomenon} are focally connected to the nature of the one thing signified by the primary sense of the term. This focal connection is based on a causal connection between the things signified by the secondary sense of the term and the nature of the thing signified by the primary sense of the term. The nature of the thing signified by the primary sense of the term is the principle, or prior as separate, while the things signified by the secondary senses of the term are focally connected to it as they in various ways are causally related to it.

If the primary sense of a \textit{pros hen legomenon} is definitionally prior to the other senses of the term as it is found non-reciprocally in their definitions, this does not limit the meaning of that term to its various senses, for as we have seen, for Aristotle words signify our understanding of things.\textsuperscript{228} And in philosophy, as words signify our understanding of existent things, so our understanding of a \textit{pros hen legomenon} and how the sense of the primary instance is found in the secondary instances of each term will depend on the existent natures of the things signified by those terms.\textsuperscript{229} The different senses of a \textit{pros hen legomenon} signify different things and the primary sense of the term signifies the nature of one thing to which the things signified by the secondary instances are focally connected. These things are focally connected to the nature of the one thing signified by the primary sense of the term as they are, in various ways, causally connected to it. The nature of that which is signified by the primary sense of the term is the principle, or that which is prior as separate \textit{qua} that term, whereas those things signified by the secondary senses of the term are causally related to it. This is illustrated in Aristotle's treatment of terms which he explicitly identifies as \textit{pros hen legomena}: 'health', 'medical', 'being', and 'one'.

\textsuperscript{227} Cf. Ferejohn, (1980) 119-20, defines the focal meaning of a word in this way: "A term T has focal meaning iff (I) T is 'said in many ways' and (ii) one of T's many \textit{logoi} is non-reciprocally contained in T's remaining \textit{logoi} (i.e. its significata are logically prior to theirs. He notes that the 'one' towards which the various significata of a \textit{pros hen} term all point is not something external to them, but is drawn from their own numbers and that what distinguishes the significatum which serves as the 'focus' of a \textit{pros hen} term is its \textit{priority} over the remaining parts of the term's overall extension.

\textsuperscript{228} \textit{Supra pp. 46-66}
Let us look at ‘health’ and ‘medical’ first, as Aristotle uses these terms as paradigms for understanding ‘being’ in the *Metaphysics* as a *pros hen legomenon*.

At *Meta* IV 2 and XI 3, Aristotle cites ‘health’ and ‘medical’ as examples of how to understand the *pros hen* homonymy of being:

There are many senses in which a thing may be said to ‘be’, but they are related to one central point (*pros hen*), one definite kind of thing (*mian tina phusin*), and are not homonymous. Everything which is healthy is related to *(pros)* health, one thing in the sense that it preserves *(phulattein)* health, another in the sense that it produces *(poiein)* it, another in the sense that it is a symptom *(sêmeion)* of health, another because it is capable *(dektikon)* of it. And that which is medical is related to the medical art, one thing in the sense that it possesses *(echein)* it, another in the sense that is naturally adapted *(euphues)* to it, another in the sense that it is a function *(ergon)* of medical art. And we shall find other words used similarly to these. So, too, there are many senses in which a thing is said to be, but all refer to one principle.²³⁰

The term [*‘being’*] seems to be used in the way we have mentioned, like ‘medical’ and ‘healthy’. For each of these also we use in many senses; and each is used in this way because the former refers somehow to medical science and the latter to health. Other terms refer to other things, but each term refers to some one thing. For a prescription and a knife are called ‘medical’ because the former proceeds from medical science *(apo tês iatrikês epistêmês)*, and the latter is useful *(chrēsimon)* to it. And a thing is called healthy in the same way; one thing because it is indicative *(semanthikon)* of health, another because it is productive *(poietikon)* of health.²³¹

Various things are called ‘healthy’ or ‘medical’ in reference to the nature of some one thing as to a principle *(archê)*.²³²

Things are called ‘healthy’ in reference to health. In the first passage, that of *Meta* IV 2, Aristotle describes four different ways something can be ‘healthy’ as related to *(pros)*. Something can be ‘healthy’ in reference to health as that which preserves *(phulattein)* health, another in the sense that it produces *(poiein)* it, another in the sense that it is a symptom *(sêmeion)* of health, another because it is capable *(dektikon)* of it. In the second passage, that of *Meta* XI 3, Aristotle lists things as ‘healthy’ in reference to health as that which is indicative *(semanthikon)* or productive *(poietikon)* of health. As what is

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²²⁹ *Supra* pp. 60-6
²³⁰ *Meta* 1003a33-b6
²³¹ ibid. 1060b36-1061a7
²³² Cf. ibid. 1003b5-6
indicative of health appears to be the same as what is symptomatic of health and what is productive of health the same as what produces it, we can conclude from these passages that there are four ways something can be called ‘healthy’ in reference to health: those things which preserve, produce, are symptomatic of, or capable of, health. Although Aristotle does not give examples of what he means by each of these ways something can be healthy, it appears that all four are, in one way or another, causally related to health. Things which preserve or produce health appear to be efficient causes of health, those which are symptomatic of health appear to be caused by health as an effect, and those things capable of health appear to be the material cause of health. In each of these ways something can be healthy in a causal relation to health, as the latter is the principle (archê), or prior as separate. That is, health is ‘healthy’ in itself without reference to anything else, while the other things called ‘healthy’ are such only in some causal relation to it.

At Meta IV 2 Aristotle describes three ways things can be called ‘medical’ (to iatrikon) in reference to medical art (hê iatrikê). Something is medical in the sense that it possesses (echein), another in the sense that is naturally adapted (euphues) to, and another in the sense that it is a function (ergon) of, medical art. At VII 4 Aristotle tells us that the term is applied to a body, a function, and an instrument, and at XI 3 he offers examples of two ways which something can be medical in reference to medical science. A prescription and a knife are called ‘medical’ as the former proceeds from medical science (apo têς iatrikês epistêmês), and the latter is useful (chrêsimon) to it. Here, as in the case

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233 Typically Aristotle characterizes a material substrate as receptive of a form when thinking of that substrate as a material cause: Meta 1018a23-32, 1023a12-4, 1056a25-7. In this sense muscle can be called healthy by being the material cause of a healthy organism.

234 Shields, (1999) 122-6, cites the fifth of Aristotle’s examples of priority at Cat XII, that between two things which reciprocate as regards implication of existence and yet may nevertheless ‘in some way be the cause of the existence of the other’ and so may ‘reasonably be called prior by nature’: ibid. 14b12-3, as the kind of priority which can capture the asymmetry of the core instance of pros hen legomena. Core and non-core homonyms may reciprocate as regards implication of existence, even though core homonyms are responsible for the existence of non-core homonyms in a way that non-core homonyms are not responsible for the existence of the core cases. In this way the asymmetry in core-dependence homonymy is apparently primitive: the cores are sources because they are semantically and metaphysically super-ordinate to their derivations.

235 Meta 1030b2
of health as a pros hen legomenon, different things are denominated by the term as they are in reference to the nature of one thing among them as they are causally related to that thing. What is medical is the medical art but other things are medical too as they possess, are naturally adapted to, are a function of, proceed from, or are useful for medical art or science. The one who 'possesses' the medical art is the human being as physician. As medical art or science is a quality as a habit, it is, like all qualities, causally related to substance as the being of an accident is caused by that of the being of its substance. The relation between medical art and the one who possesses that art, then is a causal relation between the being of an accident and that of the being of substance as form. Something can be 'naturally adapted to' the medical art as a material cause (as the one being healed is the recipient of the exercise of medical art or as the potential healer as the one capable of acquiring the habit of the medical art as the potential healer). The 'function' of the medical art is the active exercise of the habit and so its final cause, that for the sake of which the habit is acquired. That which 'proceeds' from medical science, like a prescription, can be understood as its caused effect and that which is medical is 'useful' for the medical art, like a knife, is related to the medical art as its final cause: that for the sake of which is it used. In each of these ways something can be medical in a causal relation to medical art, the latter is the principle (arche), or prior as separate qua medical. That is, medical art is medical without reference to anything else, while other things are medical only in some causal relation to it.

Like the pros hen legomena 'healthy' and 'medical', 'being' is said of many things but in reference to one central point (pros hen), one definite kind of thing (mian tina

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236 Cf. Cat 8b25-29
237 Cf. Meta 1041b4-9, b26, 28
238 Aristotle thinks of the work, or function, of a thing in two ways. Since the nature of anything is manifested in what it characteristically does, what a thing is, is defined by its function, or characteristic work: Mete 390a10-2. Function not only reveals the nature of the thing but its end, for each thing's ergon is its telos: EE 1219a8, for ergon is the end, and the activity the ergon: Meta 1050a22; cf. DC 286a8-9; EE 1219a13-7. The virtues are among the goods desired for their own sakes but happiness, which consists in actualization of the human function in virtuous activity is the most final end for the sake of which the virtuous are exercised, cf. NE 1098a16-8, b18-20, 30-1099a31.
phusin) as to one principle (archē). This definite kind of being as principle is substance. Things are called ‘being’ in reference to substance:

... some things are said to be because they are substances, others because they are affections (pathē) of substances, others because they are a process (hodos) of substance, or destructions (phthorai) or privations (sterēsis) or qualities (poiotētes) of substance, or productive (poietika) or generative (gennētika) of substance, or of things which are relative (pros) to substance, or negations (apophasis) of some of these things or of substance itself. It is for this reason that we say even of non-being that it is non-being.240

‘Being’, then, is a pros hen legomenon whose primary sense signifies the nature of the being of substance and whose secondary senses signify the nature of its accidents. Things which are called being as the affections (pathē) of substance are dependent upon substance as the latter is the underlying substrate of accidental change.241 Things like qualities, quantities, relations, actions or passions, and positions in place or time, are all different ways of being in reference to substance as the different ways accidents in the category of being causally depend on the being of substance.242 This causal dependence of the being of the accidents on substance is the dependence on substance as formal cause.243 Substance, then, is the principle of being, that is, substance ontologically prior as separate. Substance is being without reference to anything else whereas other things exist in some causal reference to it.

Aristotle recognizes not only ‘being’ but ‘one’ as a pros hen legomenon signifying different things denominated by the term united in reference to substance as its primary sense:

Most things are said to be ‘one’ because they produce (poiein), or possess (echein), or are affected by (paschein) or are related to (pros) some other one thing, but the things that are primarily (prōtōs) called one are those whose substance is one - and one either in continuity or in form or in formula; for we count as more than one either things that are not

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239 Meta 1003a33-4, b5-6
240 ibid. 1003b6-11
241 ibid. 983b10, cf. 1002a12-4
242 ibid. 1003a33-b19, 1003b6-11, 1017a22-8, 1028a10-31
243 ibid. 1041b4-9, b26, 28
continuous, or those whose form is not one, or those whose formula is not one.  

The primary sense of 'one' (to hen) is that of the indivisibility of substance. This primary sense admits of various forms. But like all the other examples of pros hen legomena, so too here with respect to 'one', all the other things said to be 'one' stand in some causal relation to the nature of that oneness signified by the primary sense of the term. In the case of 'one' as a pros hen legomenon, there are four ways things are said to be 'one' - as they produce, possess, are affected by, or are related to some one other thing. The primary sense of oneness as the indivisibility of substance is the principle, or ontologically prior as separate, while the things called one as they are in some causal relation to it.

So far, then, two fundamental characteristics of pros hen homonymy emerge from this analysis of 'health', 'the medical', 'being' in the Metaphysics, and 'friendship' in the EE: (I) Pros hen homonymy is a kind of signification which makes use of a term with multiple senses in focal reference to one sense which is primary. This primary sense of the term is definitionally prior to the other senses as its definition is found non-reciprocally in theirs. (II) The things signified by a pros hen legomenon are focally connected to the nature of the one thing signified by the primary sense of the term. This focal connection is based on a causal connection between the things signified by the secondary sense of the term and the nature of the thing signified by the primary sense of the term. The nature of the thing signified by the primary sense of the term is the principle (archê), or prior as separate while the things signified by the secondary senses of the term are focally connected to it as they in various ways are causally related to it.  

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244 ibid. 1016b6-9, cf. 1018a35-8, 1004a24-6, 1005a5-11
245 Shields, (1999) 109-27, thinks that Aristotle needs to specify some asymmetrical relation R, such that, necessarily, all non-core instances of a homonym bear R to the core. He thinks that according to what Aristotle does say about focal homonymy such an asymmetrical relation R can be formulated according to what he calls a 'four-causal core primacy'. FCCP. FCCP is defined as follows: Necessarily, if (i) a is F and b is F, (ii) F-ness is associatively homonymous in these applications, and (iii) a is a core instance of F-ness. the b's being F stands in one of the four causal relations to a's being F. Shields states that this FCCP does not require that the core of every homonym be the causal source of its non-core instances. That
(III) How the definitions of the secondary senses of a *pros hen legomenon* contain the definition of the primary sense of the term, that is, how the things signified by the secondary senses of the term are focally connected to the nature signified by the primary sense of that term, varies with each term and so can be determined only by examining each *pros hen legomenon*.

Each *pros hen legomenon* signifies a group of different things focally connected to the nature of one which is primary. This focal connection is based, as we have seen, on the various causal relations each thing signified by a secondary sense of the term has with the nature of that which is signified by the primary sense. But Aristotle nowhere provides a general statement or rule for determining how things signified by the secondary instances of a *pros hen legomenon* are focally connected to the nature signified by the primary instance of the term. The reason for this may be that the difference of things signified by the different *pros hen legomena* and the different way those things are focally connected with the nature of that thing signified by the primary sense of each term simply resists the formulation of a general statement or rule which would be helpful in determining the number and kinds of causal relations among the things signified by each term. Indeed, according to each *pros hen legomenon* as Aristotle describes it, e.g., 'health', 'the medical', 'being', and 'one', the focal connection between the things signified by their secondary senses and the nature of that which is signified by the primary sense of the terms vary as the causal relations between the things signified by their secondary senses and that signified by the primary sense vary with each term. Thus, beyond the general characteristic
of pros hen legomena that the different things signified by the term are focally connected to the nature signified by the primary sense of the term as they are causally related to it as their principle, the number and kinds of causal relations between the things signified by each term simply cannot be determined without examining each term and the things which it signifies. To see this we need simply to review our four pros hen legomena.

Let us again begin with ‘health’ as presented at Meta IV 2. Aristotle tells us:

Everything which is healthy is related to health, one thing in the sense that it preserves (phulattein) health, another in the sense that it produces (poiein) it, another in the sense that it is a symptom (sêmeion) of health, another because it is capable (dektikon) of it.247

The primary instance of the term ‘healthy’, is, as we have seen, signifies health, or the disposition of the well-functioning physical organism. This primary instance of the term is non-reciprocally contained in each of the definitions of the secondary instances of the term as the latter signify things which either preserve, produce, are signs of, or are capable of, the disposition of a well functioning organism. The number and way those things signified by the secondary senses of the term are related with that which is signified by the primary sense appears to be unique to health. For if we compare Aristotle’s description of the things and their causal relations signified by ‘health’ with each of the other three pros hen legomena, we note differences in the number and kinds of causal relations.

Aristotle describes ‘the medical’ at Meta IV 2 in this way:

... that which is medical is relative to (pros) the medical art, one thing in the sense that it possesses (echein) it, another in the sense that it is naturally adapted (euphues) to it, another in the sense that it is a function (ergon) of the medical art.248

The primary sense of the term ‘the medical’ signifies the habit of the medical art, and so the definition of the term in this primary sense is found in the other instances of ‘medical’ as either possessing or being the instruments for, or in some other way relating to, the medical art. The habit of the medical art is the principle or ontologically prior as

247 Meta 1003a4-6
separate while the other things denominated 'medical' are such as in different ways causally related to it. However, the kinds of causal relations between things denominated 'medical' and the nature signified by the primary sense of that term differ from the causal relations between things denominated 'healthy' and the nature of health as the primary sense of that term. This stands to reason, of course, for medical art and health are different things. As medical art, or science is an acquired habit and not a natural disposition like health, the ways things are called 'medical' as they are causally related to the medical art will differ from health which is a disposition of a well-functioning physical organism and the things called 'healthy' as they are causally related to health. One cannot, for example, 'possess' medical art as one possesses health, nor can one practice health the way one can practice medical art as an ergon.

The number and kinds of causal relations between things called 'being' in reference to substance as 'being' in the primary sense are in turn different from either 'health' or 'medical'. Substance as the primary sense of the term 'being' enters into the definitions of other instances of the term as variously modifying, becoming or destroying substances, or as the defects, qualities, producers, or sources of substance:

... other things are said to be because they are affections (pathê) of substance, others because they are a process (hodos) towards substance, or destructions (phthorai) or privations (sterêsês) or qualities (poïêtêses) of substance, or productive (poïêtika) or generative (gennêtika) of substance, or of things which are relative (pros) to substance, or negations (apophasis) of some these things or of substance itself. It is for this reason that we say even of non-being that it is non-being. 249

Everything that is, then, is said to be in this same way; each thing is said to be because it is an affection (pathos), a habit (hexis), a disposition (diathêsis), or motion (kinêsis) of being qua being or something else of the sort. 250

The number and kind of the causal relations between the things signified by the different senses of 'being' is determined by the being of the categories. Substance is the principle of being, or ontologically prior as separate, while the other things that exist, its

248 ibid. 1003b1-3; cf. EE 1236a17-22
249 ibid. 1003b6-11
accidents, exist as variously related to substance as to their formal cause. The different ways the accident of being are causally related to substance as their formal cause distinguishes ‘being’ as a pros hen legomenon from both ‘health’ and ‘medical’.

In the case of ‘one’, the number and kinds of causal relations between things signified by the term and the nature of that thing (or in this case, things) signified by the primary sense is as those things produce (poiein), possess (echein), are affected by (paschein), or are related to (pros) the oneness of substances. Some of these causal relations are described in the same terms as the causal relations among things signified by the other pros hen legomena, but not all four.

From the descriptions of these pros hen legomena it can be seen that not only does the definition of the primary sense of each term inhere in various ways in the secondary senses of the term, but how the definition of the primary sense of each term inhere in the secondary senses of the term varies as well. This because the things each pros hen legomenon signifies and the focal connection between those things and the nature of the thing signified by the primary sense of the term are unique. Beyond the general fact that the different things signified by a pros hen legomenon are focally connected, as causally related, to the nature of that thing signified by its primary sense, there is no common or universal statement which can be derived from the different pros hen legomena that can function as a rule which can be used to determine the number and the nature of the focal (and causal) connections to the nature signified by the primary sense of each and every term. Determining the number and nature of the causal (and focal) connections between the things signified by each pros hen legomenon requires individual study of each term and the things it signifies. We may summarize this by stating the third general characteristic of pros hen homonymy:

(III) How the definitions of the secondary senses of a pros hen legomenon contain the definition of the primary sense of the term, that is, how the things signified by the

251 ibid. 1061a7-10
secondary senses of the term are focally connected to the nature signified by the primary sense of that term, varies with each term and so can be determined only by examining each pros hen legomenon.

Summary

In summary, then, three fundamental characteristics of pros hen homonymy emerge from our analysis of Aristotle's understanding of signification and his use of 'health' and 'the medical' in a focal analysis of being in the Metaphysics and friendship in the EE: (I) Pros hen homonymy is a kind of signification which makes use of a pros hen legomenon - a term with multiple senses in focal reference to one sense which is primary. This primary sense of the term is definitionally prior to the other senses as its definition is found non-reciprocally in theirs. (II) The things signified by a pros hen legomenon are focally connected to the nature of the one thing signified by the primary sense of the term. This focal connection is based on a causal connection between the things signified by the secondary sense of the term and the nature of the thing signified by the primary sense of the term. The nature of the thing signified by the primary sense of the term is the principle (archē), or prior as separate, while the things signified by the secondary senses of the term are focally connected to it as they in various ways are causally related to it. (III) How the definitions of the secondary senses of a pros hen legomena contain the definition of the primary sense of the term, that is, how the things signified by the secondary senses of the term are focally connected to the nature signified by the primary sense of that term, varies with each term and so can be determined only by examining each pros hen legomenon.  

2. Analogy

At NE I 6, when considering how 'good' can be said in many ways, Aristotle excludes the possibility that 'good' is a simple, or 'chance' homonymy, and then considers

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251 ibid. 1016b.6-9
252 Shields, (1999) 124-5 offers this as a definition of what he calls core dependent homonymy: "a and b are homonymously F in a core-dependent way iff: (I) they have their name in common, (ii) their definitions do not completely overlap, (iii) necessarily, if a is a core instance of F-ness, then b's being F stands in one
whether it is homonymous as from one good (*aph' henos*), towards one good (*pros hen*), or rather, according to analogy (*kat' analogian*). Then an example is offered to explain what is meant by analogy: 'as sight is to the body, so is reason in the soul.' Sight and reason are different functions yet they can be understood to be united in a way by a proportion in their relation, respectively, to the body and the soul. As Aristotle appears to offer analogy as a possible way of understanding how 'good' can be said in many ways, I shall, in this section, examine what Aristotle means by analogy.

In the *Poetics* Aristotle states succinctly what he means by analogy:

> By the analogous I mean when the second is related to the first as the fourth is to the third.\(^{253}\)

As we see at *NE V*, analogy appears to be derived from mathematics and requires at least four terms:

> ... analogy is not a property of arithmetical units only, but of number in general, analogy being equality of ratios, and involving four terms at least.\(^{256}\)

Analogy is the foundation of metaphor: 'as the stone is to Sisyphus, so is the shameless man to his victim.'\(^{257}\) But analogy is present in every category of being: 'as the straight is in length, so is the level in surface, perhaps in number the odd and in color the white.'\(^{258}\) The proportion can be of actions or habits to their objects, or of forms to their subjects:

> Likeness should be studied, first, in the case of things belonging to different genera, the formula being: as one thing is to one thing, so is another to another (e.g. as knowledge stands to the object of knowledge, so of the four causal relations to *a*'s being *F*, and (iv) *a*'s being *F* is asymmetrically responsible for the existence of *b*'s being *F*.'

\(^{253}\) *NE* 1096b26-31

\(^{254}\) ibid. 1096b29-30

\(^{255}\) *Poet* 1457b16-8 (Owens' trans.) cf. Owens (1978) 123

\(^{256}\) *NE* 1131a30-2 (Loeb trans. Rackham 1975) Aristotle recognizes a discrete and a continuous analogy, both of which have four terms. The discrete analogy obviously has four terms, while the continuous treats one term as two and repeats it: e.g. as the line representing term one is to the line representing term two, so is the line representing term two to the line representing term three; here the line representing term two is mentioned twice, so that if it be counted twice, there will be four proportional terms: ibid. 1131a32-b2.

\(^{257}\) *Rhet* 1410b35-1411a1, 1412a5-6; *Poet* 1457b16-33

\(^{258}\) *Meta* 1093b18-21
is perception related to the object of perception), or: as one is in one thing, so is another in another (e.g. as sight is in the eye, so is intellect in the soul, and as is a calm in the sea, so is windlessness in the air). 259

Analogy is used frequently by Aristotle in his studies of natural history. 260 It can also be used in knowledge of what is not perceivable; through analogy, for instance, the absolutely undetermined matter of sensible things is included in our knowledge.

The underlying nature can be known by analogy. For as bronze is to the statue, the wood to the bed, or the matter and the formless before receiving form to any thing which has form, so is the underlying nature to substance, i.e. the 'this' or existent. 261

The analogous constitutes in this way classes wider than generic types. Things that differ in genus can be one by analogy. As such analogy can be a unity of many different things in the widest sense. Aristotle explains the scope of analogical unity at Meta V:

... some things are one numerically, others formally, others generically, and others by analogy; numerically those whose matter is one; formally, those whose definition is one; generically, those which belong to the same category, by analogy, those which have the same relation as a third thing is related to a fourth. In every case the latter types of unity are implied in the former: e.g., all things which are one numerically are also one formally; but such as are one generically are not all one formally, although they are one by analogy; and such as are one by analogy are not all one generically. 262

Although analogy offers the widest scope for the unity of things of at least four terms, in itself it offers no knowledge of the nature of the analogues beyond the mere fact that things analogically one have the same relationship as two other things have to one another. 263

In the Posterior Analytics Aristotle maintained that each science has its own genus and the demonstrations it aims at have their own principles. 264 These principles include especially definitions, the standard of which, for substances at least, is by way of a genus

259 Top 108a7-12
260 Meta 387b2-6: HA 486b19-21; GA 715b19-21; PA 645b21-8
261 Phys 191a7-12
262 Meta 1016b31-1017a3. cf. 1018a13
263 Owen. (1979) 25, puts it this way: "To establish a case of focal meaning is to show a particular connexion between the definitions of a polychrestic word. To find an analogy, whether between the uses of such a word or anything else, is not to engage in any such analysis of meanings: it is merely to arrange certain terms in a (supposedly) self-evident scheme of proportion".
264 PoA 71bff
and its differentia.\textsuperscript{265} For a valid deduction of any kind, the terms must be used univocally and the premises that yield demonstrative syllogisms have to be primary, immediate, better known than, prior to, and explanatory of, the conclusions.\textsuperscript{266} In such premises, the terms must be predicated \textit{per se} and \textit{qua} itself, the so-called commensurate universal.\textsuperscript{267} Things which transcend genus but are analogically one do not conform to these requirements.\textsuperscript{268} Things analogically one share neither a genus, nor proper principles which can be used in a demonstration.\textsuperscript{269} The analogical nature of the terms of the analogy make strict deduction impossible and definition, as the middle term which sets out the cause in a demonstration, requires a proper genus to be differentiated\textsuperscript{270} If the terms of the analogical relation have nothing in common but the fact that they stand in a similar relationship to one another, there can be no justification for thinking of properties following from these.\textsuperscript{271} In other words,

\textsuperscript{265} ibid. 96b36ff
\textsuperscript{266} ibid. 71b20ff
\textsuperscript{268} Cf. Lloyd, (1996) 141-8
\textsuperscript{269} Despite the requirements that the principles should be proper, Aristotle allows first, that it is possible for subordinate branches of understanding to share the starting-points of others they are subordinate to: \textit{PoA} 76a11-5, and that while some of the principles used in demonstrative understanding are special, others are common precisely by analogy: ibid. 76a37ff. Aristotle offers as an example, not a universal axiom, but one that spans several fields nevertheless, namely the equality axiom, take equals from equals and equals remain, common to both geometry and arithmetic. But the difficulty Lloyd, (1996) 143, points out is that while this provides \textit{one} good example of a principle 'common by analogy', just how many such there will be, whether among the axioms, the hypotheses, or the definitions, is not clear.
\textsuperscript{270} According to \textit{PoA} 99a15ff, in the discussion of causes, things that are the same by analogy will have middle terms that are also analogical, here opposed to terms that express a generic connection. But, as Lloyd, (1996) 147, notes, the status of these analogical middle terms between these two options is not clarified. If we are talking about middle terms that pick out essences, essences will be found if the analogical relata have more than just the relationship in common.
\textsuperscript{271} At \textit{PoA} II 4, Aristotle deals with the selection of problems of a given science: ibid. 98a1ff. In order to select the proper divisions of a science, we must first posit the genus which is common to all particulars; e.g., if the subject is animals, we must establish what attributes belong to every animal. Next, we must consider all the attributes belonging to the first of these classes; e.g., if this class is a 'bird', we must consider what attributes belong to every bird; and so on, always taking the proximate sub-genus. In this way we shall be able directly to show the reason why the attributes belong to each of the sub-genera, such as 'man' or 'horse'. Let A stand for animal, B for the attributes belonging to every animal, and C, D, E from the species of animal. That it is obvious why B applies to D, viz. through A; and similarly with C and E. The same principle holds for all the other sub-genera. Now Aristotle also mentions analogy as another method of selection: ibid. 98a20ff. It is impossible to grasp one and the same thing by which to call pounce, fish-spine, and bone: yet there are properties that follow from these 'as if there is a single nature that is suchlike'. In this case, where there is sameness by analogy, Aristotle adds 'as if there is a single nature. Lloyd, (1996) 147-8, thinks this suggests a difficulty that can be presented as a dilemma. If
analogy tells us nothing of the natures of the relata nor how they are related one to another except that one thing is related to another as a third is related to a fourth.

3. Pros Hen Homonymy and Analogy

Aristotle does not apply the term ‘analogy’ to *pros hen* homonymy as his invariable requirement of four terms would preclude the use of analogy to the two term relation between a thing signified by a secondary sense of a *pros hen* legomenon and the nature of that thing signified by its primary sense. A knife, for example, is ‘medical’ simply as an instrument useful to medical science. There is no four term relation. One of the terms cannot be used twice, as in the case of analogy, and so join the different relations in the one proportion. Each term has its own relation to that which is primary. We cannot say: ‘the knife is to medical science as medical science is to the prescription. Rather, the knife is *useful* to medical science; the prescription is the *product* of the medical science. The two relations are considered independently of each other. As a two term, not a four-term relation is involved, *pros hen* homonymy is different from analogical homonymy in Aristotle. Nor are their functions identical in his usage. *Pros hen* homonymy is not used

there is indeed a common nature (nameless though it be) between these things then there will be no problem. The case then simply falls into line with those where there is a common genus. The analogical unity is not just a matter of relationship (as A is to B, so C is to D, and E is to F) since in addition to the relationship between the pairs being the same, A, C, and E all share a common name: they fall under a higher genus. But if there is no common nature, and the pairs have nothing in common but the fact that they stand in a similar relationship to one another, there would be no justification for thinking of properties following from these, or these following from others. Unity of analogy may be called upon to capture the type of case where there is no unity of genus, but some kind of unity nonetheless, for example, certain common capacities or common functions. Yet this does not resolve the problem of whether the analogical relation *by itself* is sufficient to justify any assumptions concerning the connections between the relata. If, according to Lloyd, Aristotle thinks that his references to analogy can be incorporated into his general account of definition and demonstration in the *Posterior Analytics*, one of two things must happen. Either drastic modifications have to be made to those standard requirements to allow for definition other than through of a given genus and to permit demonstration through middle terms other than those that pick out essences that are specifications of genus, or the notion of the analogical relationships in question has to be clarified and restricted to those cases where there are essential properties shared by the relata. The alternative and much weaker line of interpretation would be that these references to sameness by analogy are intended as no more than recommendations to explore such cases, not as an alternative to the model of definition and demonstration that has been used in the body of the *Posterior Analytics*, but as a preliminary to the application of that model. Analogical relationships are worth examining in that context, since they may reveal that there are common attributes shared by the relata. But the analogical relationship by itself is no guarantee that such a common function can be found.

772 E.g. *NE* 1131a33-b3
as a means of classification, while analogy is. On the other hand, *pros hen* homonym plays a larger role in Aristotle’s first philosophy.

Although *pros hen* and analogical homonymy are distinct kinds of ways things can be said in many ways but united according to some sort of unity, there is nothing in Aristotle to preclude the same things from being homonymous in both ways, as appears to be the case in the *Metaphysics* with Aristotle’s presentation of the causes and, as we have seen, in his treatment of ‘one’. The two kinds of homonymy, though distinct, are not mutually exclusive. Just as things may be denominated synonymously or homonymously by the same word, according as the nature which they signify demands, so things may be expressed by the same term analogously or *pros hen*, according as their nature allows. As in the case of *pros hen* homonymy where determining how the definitions of the secondary senses of a *pros hen* legomenon contain the definition of the primary sense of the term, that is, how the things signified by the secondary senses of the term are focally connected to the nature signified by the primary sense of that term, varies with each term and so can be determined only by examining each *pros hen* legomenon and the things it signifies, so in the case of determining whether a term said in many ways but according to a certain unity of sense is to be understood according to *pros hen* or analogical homonymy, one must examine the term itself and the nature of the things it signifies.

III. Aristotle’s Use of *Pros Hen* Homonymy and Analogy in the NE

1. ‘Good’ in the NE as *Pros Hen Legomena*

As we have noted, in the *Metaphysics* Aristotle explicitly recognizes ‘health’, ‘medical’, ‘being’ and ‘one’ as *pros hen legomena*, though he does not claim that these are

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273 Mete 387b2-6; HA 486b19-21; GA 715b19-21; PA 645b21-8, *supra* note 129.

274 Aristotle presents the four causes as analogous at *Meta* 1070b25-6, and the formal cause as the primary ‘why’ as cause and principle at ibid. 983a28-9, cf. *Phys* 198a16-8. The efficient and final causes are ultimately identified with the formal: ibid. 1032b13-4, 1044a36-b1, 1070b29-34; *Phys* 198a24-6; *GC* 335b6.

275 Things can be one by analogy: *Meta* 1016b31-1017a3. cf. 1018a13, *supra* note 262, and in reference to the oneness of substance: ibid. 1016b6-9, cf. 1018a35-8, 1004a24-6, 1005a5-11, *supra* note 244.
the only terms that can be understood in this way.\textsuperscript{276} In his practical philosophy Aristotle is especially concerned with ‘good’ and specifically the human good of happiness. Nowhere in the \textit{NE} does Aristotle explicitly acknowledge ‘good’ or ‘happiness’ as \textit{pros hen legomena}. However, as I shall argue below, the way Aristotle understands the practical good and specifically the human good of happiness in the \textit{NE} suggests that in this work ‘good’ and ‘happiness’ are in effect being understood and employed as \textit{pros hen legomena}.

At \textit{NE} I 6, in his preliminary consideration of the nature of the human good of happiness, Aristotle observes that ‘good’ is something said in many ways, as is ‘being’.\textsuperscript{277} The question then arises:

But then in what way are things called good? They do not seem to be like the things that only chance to have the same name (\textit{apo tuchēs homōnomois}). Are goods one, then, by being derived from one good (\textit{aph' henos}) or by all contributing to one good (\textit{pros hen}), or are they rather one by analogy (\textit{kat' analogian})? Certainly as sight is in the body, so is reason in the soul, and so on in other cases. But perhaps these subjects had better be dismissed for the present; for perfect precision about them would be more appropriate to another branch of philosophy.\textsuperscript{278}

In this passage Aristotle recognizes the ‘good’ as a homonym, that is, something said in many ways, and yet not a chance homonym. ‘Good’ is not simply homonymous, that is, things are not called ‘good’ as sharing only the name in common. Rather, the different things signified by the different senses of the term must in some way be connected. Aristotle then considers whether things are called ‘good’ as their natures are derived from one good (\textit{aph' henos})\textsuperscript{279}, or as all contributing to one good, or rather, as their natures are called ‘good’ by analogy. He declines to pursue this question any further.

\textsuperscript{276} Cf. \textit{Meta} 1003b4
\textsuperscript{277} \textit{NE} 1096a25-6
\textsuperscript{278} ibid. 1096b26-31
\textsuperscript{279} Although Aristotle cites things spoken of in many ways but \textit{aph' henos} here as a possible way of understanding how things good are spoken of, he seems nowhere else to use \textit{aph' henos} as a technical phrase. Owens, (1978) 117-8, thinks that in using the ablative prepositions in describing these homonyms, Aristotle does not get outside the range of the \textit{pros hen}. Owens points to \textit{Meta} 1003b1-4 (as compared to ibid. 1061a2-5) as evidence that \textit{pros hen} can be used instead of the ablative expression. Things are often denominated \textit{from} the source which they spring. Their reference \textit{to} that source is that they proceed from it. The Greek commentators regularly combine the two designations in referring to the same type of equivocals: e.g. Alexander of Aphrodisias, \textit{In Meta} 241.9, Syranius, \textit{In Meta} 56.18, Asclepius, \textit{In Meta} 227. 2-3, 231. 12-5, 25.
because its precise treatment is more appropriate to another branch of philosophy. That branch, as has been generally recognized, is his first philosophy as we have it in the *Metaphysics*.\(^{280}\) It is in that work, of course, that being and the science of being are understood according to *pros hen* homonymy. If Aristotle is indeed referring to his first philosophy as found the *Metaphysics* in the above passage and as ‘being’ in that ‘other branch of philosophy’ is recognized as a *pros hen legomenon* - a term spoken of in many ways not as a sheer homonym but in focal reference to the nature of one definite kind of thing, that of substance, Aristotle’s allusion to this other branch of philosophy for a precise treatment of how ‘good’ is spoken of, suggests that the term ‘good’ might be understood in the *NE* as a *pros hen legomenon* analogous to the way ‘being’ is understood in his first philosophy. But is there evidence in the *NE* to substantiate this suggestion?

At the beginning of *NE* I 7 good is taken as the end (*telos*) for the sake of which everything is done.\(^{281}\) In the many different pursuits, the good of each is the end for the sake of which everything else is done. But this does not mean that the different goods as the ends of different pursuits are synonymous as though sharing a common definition, for these good as ends can differ in kind. Some, like wealth and instruments generally,\(^{282}\) are desired for some further good as end, while others are desired simply for themselves, such as honour, pleasure, intelligence, and the many virtues.\(^{283}\) The many different goods as ends differ according to whether they are more final (*teleioteran*).\(^{284}\) A good desired for itself is more final than one desired for something else, and a good desired for itself and never for some other good is more final than goods desired both for themselves and for some further good. That good as end which is desired for itself and never for any further

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\(^{281}\) *NE* 1097a18-22

\(^{282}\) ibid. 1097a25-7

\(^{283}\) ibid. 1097b2-5

\(^{284}\) ibid. 1097a30ff
good is most final \textit{(teleiotatont)}.

This supreme good and most final end is happiness.

There are, then, many kinds of goods as ends but they are all desired ultimately for the sake of the supreme good and most final end of happiness. Happiness, then, is the final cause of all the many different goods as ends. The many different goods as ends are in this way finally ordered to one good as end as their final cause. Now as a term, for Aristotle, is used to signify an understanding of something, 'good' is spoken of in many ways as it signifies these many different goods as ends. But 'good' is not thereby simply homonymous, for the things it signifies are finally ordered to the nature of one good, happiness, as to a final cause. As the many goods as ends are finally ordered to one good as most final, 'good', as the term which signifies this ordering, has multiple senses but those senses are united in a reference to the sense of 'good' as happiness. 'Good', then, can be understood as a \textit{pros hen legomenon} - a term of multiple senses united in reference to one which is primary as signifying the many different things desired ultimately for the sake of happiness as the supreme good and most final end.

Although Aristotle does not explicitly acknowledge 'good' as a \textit{pros hen legomenon} in the \textit{NE}, his use of the term in that work suggests that he does in fact understand 'good' as a \textit{pros hen legomenon}. Recall the three general characteristics of \textit{pros hen} homonymy.

\footnote{ibid. 1097a30-4}
\footnote{ibid. 1097a27-b1. 5-6}

\footnote{In the \textit{EE} we note the same thing. In that ethical work Aristotle maintains that the good has many meanings, as many as being: ibid. 1217b25-6, 1218b4. Happiness is the best of practical goods as the supreme good for the sake of which we act: ibid. 1217a29-40, 1218bff. The unity of all practical goods is causal as means is ordered to ends: ibid. 1218b16-22, and happiness is primary \textit{(prôton)} as the end and the cause of the goodness of other things as means: ibid. 1218b10-2. In this way Aristotle is understanding the human good as focally homonymous. Owen, (1979), while admitting that Aristotle uses focal reference in his analysis of friendship at \textit{EE VII} 2, argued nevertheless that Aristotle in the \textit{EE} has not yet understood that the good could be understood in that way as well. Owen based this argument on Aristotle's denial of a science of good or being at \textit{EE} I. But Berti, (1971) 159-72, argues that Aristotle's denial of a science of good or being at \textit{EE} I is in the context of a polemic against the Academic understanding of a knowledge of good as either an idea or a common predicate. By denying that there is a science of good (and being) in this context Aristotle is denying that there is a science of good (or being) in that sense. He is not thereby denying that good, like being, can be focally homonymous. Owen, \textit{op. cit.}, furthermore thought that the good as end as presented in the \textit{EE} entailed a natural priority but not a logical priority necessary for focal reference. But Berti, \textit{op. cit.}, counters that there is a 'logical priority' in the relation between the primary good as end and goods as means in so far as the latter are denominated 'good' in reference to the end for the sake of which they are desired.}

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derived in large part from Aristotle's understanding of 'health', 'the medical' and 'being in the *Metaphysics*: (I) *Pros hen* homonymy is a kind of signification which makes use of a *pros hen legomenon* - a term with multiple senses in focal reference to one sense which is primary. This primary sense of the term is definitionally prior to the other senses as its definition is found non-reciprocally in theirs. (II) The things signified by a *pros hen legomenon* are focally connected to the nature of the one thing signified by the primary sense of the term. This focal connection is based on a causal connection between the things signified by the secondary sense of the term and the nature of the thing signified by the primary sense of the term. The nature of the thing signified by the primary sense of the term is the principle (*archê*) as that which the term signifies without reference to anything else, while the things signified by the secondary senses of the term are focally connected to it as they in various ways are causally related to it. (III) How the definitions of the secondary senses of a *pros hen legomenon* contain the definition of the primary sense of the term, that is, how the things signified by the secondary senses of the term are focally connected to the nature signified by the primary sense of that term, varies with each term and so can be determined only by examining each *pros hen legomenon*.

As such, 'good' as the end for the sake of which everything is done exhibits these three general characteristics: (I) If the definition of 'good' is the end for the sake of which everything is done, the term signifies happiness without qualification. Happiness simply *is* that end for the sake of which everything is done. If the term signifies other things as well, their definitions must include the definition of happiness as those things are ultimately desired for its sake. Otherwise those things simply are *not* 'good' as the end for the sake of which *everything else* is done. Happiness *is* the good as end for the sake of which everything else is done - without reference to the other goods as ends, whereas the latter are 'good' as they are ultimately desired for the sake of happiness. In this way the definition of the primary sense of the term 'good' is definitionally prior to the other senses of the term as its definition is found non-reciprocally in theirs. (II) As a term signifies an
understanding of something, 'good' as a *pros hen legomenon* signifies different things focally connected to the good of happiness as those things are causally connected to it as to their final cause. Happiness, then, is the principle (*archê*) as the nature signified by the term 'good', whereas the things signified by the other senses of the term are 'good' as they are focally connected to it as to their final cause. (III) While goods as ends are focally connected to the supreme good of happiness as they are causally connected to that supreme good as their final cause, how they are focally connected to happiness varies as their causal connection to that supreme good and most final end varies. Goods as ends desired for some further good, such as external or bodily goods instrumental to, or advantageous for, happiness are causally connected to happiness as their final cause in a way different from goods of soul like virtuous actions which are desired for themselves as final ends. How the definitions of the secondary senses of 'good' contain the definition of the primary sense of the term, that is, how things signified by the secondary senses of the term are focally connected to the nature of happiness as signified by the primary sense of that term, can only be determined by examining the human good signified by term 'good' in the *NE*. This Aristotle does at *NE* I 7 in his examination of the human function.²⁸⁸ By examining the human function he concludes that the human good of happiness is the actualization of that function in a life of virtuous activity. Happiness, then, as signified by 'good' in the *NE*, is a life of activity according to virtue, and if there are several virtues, a life of the activity according to the best and most final virtue.²⁸⁹ Happiness is the best, most pleasant, and finest of all goods.²⁹⁰ All other goods signified by the secondary senses of the term, whether goods as ends or goods as final ends, are ultimately, though in different ways, desired for the sake of that good as their most final end.

2. ‘Happiness’ in the *NE* as a *Pros Hen Legomenon*

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²⁸⁸ ibid. 1097b22-1098a20
²⁸⁹ ibid. 1098a16-20
²⁹⁰ ibid. 1099a24-31
In NE I Aristotle identified the human good as the happiness of a life of activity in conformity with virtue. Ultimately, at NE X 7-8 Aristotle recognizes two kinds of happiness, the final, or perfect happiness of contemplation and the 'secondarily' happy life of virtuous activity. The nature of these kinds of happiness is different, one consists in contemplative activity, the other, in the activity of the ethical virtues.

The different kinds of goods as ends ultimately desired for the supreme good and most final end of happiness as a life of virtuous activity, was the basis in NE I of understanding 'good' as a _pros hen legomenon_. Here at NE X 7-8, the human good of happiness itself is, in effect, a term of multiple senses as signifying two different natures, one of contemplative activity, the other of ethically virtuous action. That 'happiness' is not a chance homonym as signifying two things of utterly different natures without any connection between them is apparent at NE X 7 where Aristotle describes the dependence of the politically virtuous life on the happiness of contemplation:

And happiness is thought to depend on leisure; for we are busy that we may have leisure, and make war that we may be at peace. Now the activity of the practical excellences is exhibited in political or military affairs, but the actions concerned with these seem to be unpleasurly. Warlike actions are completely so ... but the action of the statesman is also unpleasurly, and - apart from the political action itself - aims at despotic power and honors, or at all events happiness, for him and his fellow citizens - a happiness different from political action, and evidently sought as being different. So if among excellent actions political and military actions are distinguished by fineness (_kallei_) and greatness, and these are unpleasurly and aim at an end and are not desirable for their own sake, but the activity of intellect, which is contemplative, seems both to be superior in worth and to aim at no end beyond itself...

The fine activities of the political life comprise that life which is described as 'secondarily' happy at NE X 8:

But in a secondary degree the life in accordance with the other kind of excellence is happy, for the activities in accordance with this befit our human estate. Just and brave acts, and other excellent acts, we do in relation to each other, observing what is proper to each with regard to contracts and services and all manner of actions and with regard to the passions ... being connected with the passions also, the moral excellences

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291 ibid. 1098a16-8, b1099a3
292 ibid. 1177a12-1179a32
293 ibid. 1177b4-20

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must belong to our composite nature; and the excellences of our composite nature are human; so, therefore, are the life and the happiness which correspond to these. The excellence of the intellect is separate (kkechôrismenê) ... it would seem, however, also to need external equipment but little, or less than moral excellence does. Grant that both need the necessaries, and do so equally, even if the statesman's work is the more concerned with the body and the things of that sort; for there will be little difference there; but in what they need for the exercise of their activities there will be much difference.¹⁹³

The happiness of the fineness of virtuous activity, then, is secondary because it is a good and final end desired ultimately for the sake of the perfect happiness of contemplation.

Aristotle describes the perfect happiness of contemplation, or the happiness of the intellect as 'separate' (kkechôrismenê).²⁹⁵ In the context, it can be seen that the 'separateness' of this happiness is its self-sufficiency, for as Aristotle immediately states, 'it [the happiness of the intellect] would seem to require some external equipment, but less than [the happiness] of ethical virtue'.²⁹⁶ In the *Metaphysics*, as we have seen, substance is ontologically prior to its accidents as separate.²⁹⁷ In an analogous way, the happiness of contemplation could be understood as prior to the happiness of virtuous activity as the more self-sufficient, and thus the more desirable and therefore final good. The happiness of contemplation is ontologically prior to the happiness of virtuous action as that good which is more final and self-sufficient. Thus the virtuous man desires the happiness of virtuous activity in the polis ultimately for the sake of the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation.²⁹⁸ 'Happiness', then, can be understood as a term of multiple senses as it signifies two different kinds of lives, not as a chance homonym but rather as a *pros hen* legomenon with the primary sense of the term signifying the happiness of contemplation and the secondary sense signifying that of virtuous action, with the latter focally connected to the former as it is a good as final end ultimately desired for its sake. Of the two senses

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²⁹¹ ibid. 1178a9-28  
²⁹² ibid. 1178a22  
²⁹³ ibid. 1178a22-5  
²⁹⁴ Supra pp. 63-4  
²⁹⁵ Cf. NE 1178b5-7
of the term ‘happiness’, then, the primary sense, that of perfect happiness, could be understood to be definitionally prior to its secondary sense in that the latter as a good as final end depends ultimately on the former as the good as the most final end.

That ‘happiness’ is being understood as a *pros hen legomenon* may also be indicated in the term Aristotle uses to describe the happiness of ethically virtuous action. The term he uses is ‘secondary’ (*deuterōs*), a term Aristotle sometimes uses in the *Metaphysics* to signify things with natures which are focally connected to one as primary.299 The use of this term suggests that Aristotle is understanding ‘happiness’ as a *pros hen* homonym, with final, or perfect happiness as the primary instance of the term signifying the life of contemplative activity and the secondarily happy life as the secondary instance of the term signifying the activities of the ethical virtues in the life of the polis.

But if the term ‘secondary’ suggests that Aristotle understands ‘happiness’ as a focal homonym, that which the term ‘happiness’ signifies - the nature of the two kinds of happiness and their focal connection as a good and end desired for the sake of the supreme good and most final end - is decisive. For what counts, as Aristotle reminds us at Meta VII is the reality of the thing and not so much the different words or sets of words we use to signify that reality.300

Thus from the evidence provided in *NE X* 7-8 we can infer that happiness for Aristotle is a *pros hen legomenon* and as such exemplifies the three characteristics of *pros hen* homonymy: (I) As signifying two different kinds of lives causally connected as one is

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299 At Meta 1022a14-9 Aristotle explains that in sensible substance ‘in virtue of which’ (*to kath’ legetai*) the thing is, is primarily the form and secondarily (*deuterōs*) the matter and composite. The matter and composite appear to be focally connected to the form, for at Meta 1030a28-32, form is described as primarily and simply substance and to other things (like the matter and composite) in an extended way (*eita*). Again, at Meta 1004a3ff Aristotle tells us that there are as many divisions of philosophy as there are kinds of substances and then divides philosophy into a first and secondary (*deuterēs*), the former dealing with primary substance (1005a3), the latter, natural philosophy, with sensible substance (1037a14-6). As ‘substance’ appears to be a focal homonym signifying a focal connection between sensible substance and the immaterial substance of the divine first mover in the *Metaphysics*, cf. Owens, (1978), Patzig, (1979), 33-49, Frede, (1987), 81-95, Kosman, (1987), 165-88, this use of secondary to refer to natural philosophy, appears to be a reference to the science of that substance which is focally connected to the primary substance studied by first philosophy.

300 Cf. Meta 1030a32-b7
desired ultimately for the sake of the other, 'happiness' can be understood as a term with multiple senses united in focal reference to one sense which is primary. This primary sense of the term is definitionally prior to the other sense of the term as the definition of the former is found non-reciprocally in the latter. Happiness signifies a life of contemplation, while it signifies a life of virtuous action as ultimately desired for the sake of contemplation. (II) The things signified by the term 'happiness' as a *pros hen legomena* - the lives of contemplation and ethically virtuous activity - are focally connected to the nature of the life of contemplation as signified by the primary sense of the term. This focal connection is based on a causal connection between the life of ethically virtuous activity as a good and final end desired ultimately for the sake of contemplation as its supreme good and most final end. The happiness of a life of contemplation is the principle of happiness as separate, that is, as its nature is that signified by the term 'happiness', while the life of virtuous action is termed 'happy' as ultimately desired for the sake of a life of contemplation. (III) How the definition of the secondary sense of happiness contains the definition of the primary sense of the term, that is, how the life signified by that secondary sense of the term is focally connected to the nature signified by the primary sense, has to be determined by examining the nature of the human good as the actualization of the human function in virtuous activity. That good is a life of virtuous activity, and as there are many virtues, a life of activity in accordance with the best and most final virtue. The human good of happiness, then is a life of contemplative activity in accordance with wisdom. It is a life of this activity which is best, most pleasant, and finest. Activities according to the other human virtues are fine and desired for the sake of their fineness, yet as comprising a life are desired ultimately for the life of contemplative activity. Thus a life of such activities is happy secondarily as it is a good and final end desired ultimately for the *kalliston* of the supreme good and most final end of the life of contemplative activity.

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301 Cf. *NE* 1098a24-31
303 ibid. 1177b4-20, *supra* note 293
3. ‘Good’ Understood According to Analogy

At *NE* I 6, when considering how ‘good’ can be said in many ways, Aristotle excludes the possibility that ‘good’ is a simple, or ‘chance’ homonymy, and then considers whether it is a homonymy as from one good (*aph’ henos*), towards one good (*pros hen*), or rather, according to analogy (*kat’ analogian*). Although we have argued that Aristotle’s reference to ‘another branch of philosophy’ for its treatment is evidence that he is understanding ‘good’ as a *pros hen legomenon* just as he understands ‘being’ in his first philosophy, there is nevertheless some evidence in this passage to suggest that Aristotle understands ‘good’ also as a word said in many ways according to analogy.

Again, at *NE* I 6 after listing the different ways ‘good’ as said in many ways might be understood, including the possibility of understanding it *aph’ henos* and *pros hen*, Aristotle concludes with the possibility of understanding the good as a homonym according to analogy. This last possibility is introduced with the phrase ‘or rather’ (*ē mallon*), a phrase Aristotle uses later in *NE* I to signal his preference for one way of understanding a thing over another. An example is offered to explain what is meant by analogy: ‘as sight is to the body, so is reason in the soul.’ Sight and reason are different functions yet they can be understood to be united in a way by a proportion in their relation, respectively, to the body and the soul. In the same way, evidently, Aristotle is suggesting that things can be called ‘good’ homonymously according to analogy. He does not give an example of how things are called ‘good’ analogically but presumably he means something like the following. As good is that at which all things aim, or the end for the sake of which all thing are done, the good as end is the object of a desire. In so far as a good is correlative to a desire, the different goods are similar, but to the extent that each good differs as the object of a different desire, the goods are different in nature. The many different goods as ends

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304 ibid. 1096b26-31
305 ibid. 1096b27-8
306 At *NE* 1101b10-2 Aristotle opens a discussion, ‘let us consider whether happiness is among the things that are praised or rather (*ē mallon*) among the things that are prized’, where it turns out that the latter possibility is the one he thinks is right: ibid. 1102a1-4.
differ in proportion to the different desires. That is, this good as the object of this desire is
different from that good as object of that desire and yet the two goods are similar to the
extent that as this good is the object of this desire so that good is the object of that desire.
Things, then, might be called 'good' homonymously as they are the object of different
desires, but analogically the same as they are all the object of some desire. What might be
some examples of 'good' so understood?

The 'good' as an analogical homonym might be appropriately employed in
understanding the different human goods conceived in the traditional notion of the three
happy lives as presented at NE I 5. These three lives are considered happy by three
kinds of human beings. The happiness of a life of pleasure (ho apolaustikos), is that kind
of happiness desired by the generality of men (hoi polloi, hoi phortikoi), that of politics (ho
politikos), the kind desired by those who are more refined (hoi charientes) and the kind of
happiness of a life of contemplation (ho theōretikos), is desired, as we shall see, by the
virtuous (hoi spoudaioi, agathoi), men who are endowed with all the intellectual and ethical
virtues of the complete human function. As happiness is the supreme good and most
final end of action, the happiness of these three lives is different according as they are the
ultimate objects of the desires of these different kinds of men. Yet happiness is not simply
homonymous, for there is at least a certain proportion in all three: as the happiness of the
life of pleasure is the supreme good and final end of the great generality of men, so the
happiness of the life of politics is the supreme good and final end of the more refined men,
and so the happiness of the life of contemplation is to the virtuous man. It would appear,
then, that the human good of happiness as expressed in the doctrine of the three lives could
be understood according to analogy.

Another instance in the NE where the 'good' could be understood as an analogical
homonym is that of the good as object of politikē, that is, that good which is 'fine and

307 ibid. 1096b29-30
308 ibid. 1095b14-1096a10, cf. EE 1214b28-1216a37
309 Cf. ibid. 1177b26-1178a1

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just’, where this good is different for different characters. The ‘fine’, or the ‘fine and just’, is a good as final end which differs according to the different characters which desire it. What is desired as fine for one character is different from what is desired as fine by another character. To this extent the ‘fine’, or the ‘fine and just’, can be understood as an analogical homonym: as things are considered ‘fine’ and desired as such by the generality of people for whom the human good of happiness if a life of pleasure, so are things are considered ‘fine’ and desired as such by the more refined, those for whom a life of politics is happiness, and so are things desired as fine for those for whom the human good of happiness is a life of contemplation.

4. ‘Happiness’ in NE X Understood According to Analogy

At NE X 7-8 Aristotle presents two lives of happiness, the perfect happiness of contemplative activity and the secondary happiness of virtuous ethical activity. Each of the two lives involve the actualization of different faculties and virtues of the human function. The perfect happiness of contemplation consists in a life of the activity of the intellect in the exercise of the intellectual virtue of wisdom and the secondarily happy life of ethically virtuous activity consists in the activity of the calculative and appetitive faculties in the exercise of practical intelligence and ethical virtue. The former happiness is a life of the wise, the latter, the life of the politically virtuous man. Accordingly, it would appear that ‘happiness’, as Aristotle presents it here at NE X 7-8, could be understood as a term spoken of in many ways according to analogy: as the life of contemplative activity is happiness for the wise man, so a life of ethically virtuous activity is the happiness of the politically virtuous man.

5. ‘Good’ and ‘Happiness’ in the NE Understood According to Analogy but Finally According to Pros Hen Homonymy

\[310\] Cf. ibid. 1144a1-11, 1144b35-1145a11, 1178a1-8
\[311\] ibid. 1094b14-5, 1095b4-6
\[312\] ibid. 1113a31
\[313\] ibid. 1177a12-35
\[314\] ibid. 1178a9-19
\[315\] Cf. 1177a27-b19
As we have seen in our examination of *pros hen* homonymy and analogy, there is nothing in Aristotle to preclude the same things from being homonymous in both ways.\(^{316}\) This is apparently the case for "good" and "happiness" in the *NE*. Both terms can be understood according to analogy and *pros hen* homonymy. Good and happiness as the object of the desire of any agent may be understood according to analogy whereas the good and happiness as desired by the virtuous man is understood according to *pros hen* homonymy.

The good sought in the *NE* is something practical or humanly attainable;\(^{317}\) it is the end for the sake of which everything is done.\(^{318}\) The good as the object of an agent’s desire in a choice of action can be understood according to analogy. That is, as this good (whether the fineness of an action or the happiness of a life) is the object of the desire of the man of this character, so that good is the object of the desire of a man of that character. But when Aristotle directs his attention to the good (whether the fineness of action or the happiness of a life) of the character of one kind of man, the virtuous man, that good is to be understood according to *pros hen* homonymy. That ‘good’ and ‘happiness’ as object of the virtuous man’s desire is to be understood according to *pros hen* homonymy rather than according to analogy may be seen in Aristotle’s interest in the human good as the object of the desire of the virtuous man in his choice of action.

While Aristotle recognizes that different kinds of characters desire different kinds of goods, in the *NE*, as in his practical philosophy in general, Aristotle is concerned not with the good as desired by the general mass of men, nor even by those of greater refinement, but with the good as desired by the best man,\(^{319}\) that is, the virtuous man who rationally desires that good which is truly to be wished for and who is the standard and measure of

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\(^{316}\) *Supra* p. 84, notes 274-5

\(^{317}\) *NE* 1096b33-5

\(^{318}\) ibid. 1097a15, 18-9

\(^{319}\) In his practical philosophy Aristotle is primarily concerned in that which is best (*tis arete*) in a class of things, *NE* 1098a7-20, 1181b20-3; *EE* 1218b37-1219a39; *Pol* 1288b10-5, cf. 1254a36-9, 1260b27-9, 1323a14-21, 1325b33-1326a13-4, that which is not the very best interests him only in so far as an understanding of it may contribute to understanding what is best, cf. *Pol* 1288b10-1289a14.
what is really fine and just. In the NE Aristotle is interested in this man and the good and happiness he desires in his choice of action. As we have seen, the good as understood according to analogy is (at least) a four term relation between a number of different characters and the goods they desire. Aristotle's interest in the good as desired by one kind of character is a two term relation which therefore cannot be understood according to analogy.

Now if we consider the practical good itself as the end for the sake of which all else is done, we see that this good is to be understood according to pros hen homonymy.

At NE I 2. Aristotle considers the logic of desiring goods as ends in the conduct of one's life:

If, then, there is some end of the things we do, which we desire for its own sake (everything else being desired for the sake of this), and if we do not desire everything for the sake of something else (for at that rate the process would go on to infinity, so that our desire would be empty and vain), clearly this must be the good and supreme good (tagathon kai to ariston). Will not a knowledge of it, then have a great influence on life?

If there is some end of the things we do which we desire for its own sake and everything else is desired for its sake, then the relation between the other goods desired and this supreme good as end is a two term relation.

As we have seen at NE I 7, Aristotle begins his examination of the human good with a sense of 'good' as the end (telos), or that for the sake of which everything else is done. There are many goods as ends, goods as ends desired for further ends, goods as final ends desired for themselves and also for happiness, and happiness as the supreme good as most final end, desired for itself, never for anything else and everything else for its sake. As happiness is that one good as end for the sake of which all the other goods as ends are desired, the sense of 'good' precisely as 'the end', or 'that for the sake of which everything else is done' signifies this one good. The other goods as ends, on the other
hand, can be called ‘good’ only in an extended sense of the term, for while they may be
desired as ends, even as final ends, they are not desired for the sake of which everything is
done, unless they contain in their definitions a reference to happiness. As all goods as ends
are ultimately desired for the sake of happiness, they are focally connected to that supreme
good and most final end as to their final cause. Their relation to happiness is a two term
relation between goods as ends and the supreme good and most final end as their final
cause. This relation, involving as it does two rather than four terms, is described not
according to analogy but rather according to a pros hen homonymy.

As all the goods as ends are desired ultimately for the sake of happiness as their
final cause, knowledge of this supreme good is therefore of great practical importance for
the conduct of life. But as we have seen, the analogical relationship of four terms does not
yield any knowledge of how the things signified by the analogy relate to one another except
in the minimal sense that one good is desired in this way as another is desired in another
way. In the case of the three lives considered happy at NE I 5, for example, the fact that
the happiness of a life of pleasure for the generality of men is analogous to the happiness of
a life of contemplation as the virtuous man desires it contributes nothing to understanding
the nature of the happiness of either the life of pleasure or of contemplation nor does it
contribute anything to an understanding of the kind of men who desire it. The virtuous
man’s knowledge of the supreme good of happiness, on the other hand, does contribute to
a knowledge of the other goods, whether goods of pleasure or political virtue, as these
other goods are desired ultimately for its sake. The virtuous man’s knowledge of the other
goods as finally ordered to that good which is their final cause is well signified by ‘good’
as a pros hen legomenon in which the definition of the primary sense of the term is
included in the definitions of its secondary senses. Thus, while ‘good’ as a term signifying
the end for the sake of which anyone engages in a pursuit can be understood according to
analogy, ‘good’ as a term signifying the end for the sake of which the virtuous man
engages in a pursuit is understood according to pros hen homonymy. ‘Good’, then, as the
end for the sake of which all things are done, can be understood as homonymous according to analogy when this term signifies the different things desired by a number of different kinds of characters, but is focally homonymous when this term signifies the different things focally connected to the nature of that good which the virtuous man desires.

When we come to happiness as described at NE X 7-8 we are apparently dealing with a new situation. Here Aristotle seems to be presenting us with different kinds of happiness which are desired by different kinds of virtuous men, the wise and the politically virtuous. The contemplative life is happy for the wise man as the politically virtuous life is happy for the politically virtuous. Happiness, then, appears to be something spoken of in many ways according to analogy. But if the term ‘happiness’, as signifying the different kinds of life desired by different kinds of virtuous characters, can be understood according to analogy, that term can also and finally be understood as spoken of in many ways according to pros hen homonymy. For as we shall argue in our next chapter, for Aristotle the politically virtuous man as practically intelligent and ethically virtuous must also be wise if he is to be happy, so that there really are not two different kinds of virtuous men for Aristotle but only one, the best man who is endowed with all the intellectual and ethical virtues of the complete human function. If this sort of man exercises his practical intelligence and ethical virtue in his choice of action for the sake of the fineness of virtuous action in the polis it is because he ultimately desires that fineness for the sake of the happiness of the contemplative life as final, or perfect. The two kinds of lives, then, are happy as focally connected to one as final, or perfect happiness and the best man is one who is endowed with all the intellectual and ethical virtues of the complete human function to desire the secondary happiness of one for the sake of the final happiness of the other. ‘Happiness’, then, can be understood according to analogy to the extent that the different lives demand from the best sort of man the exercise of different virtues, but finally ‘happiness’ is a term understood as a focal homonym signifying the two different lives
desired by the best man as they are focally connected to one life as finally, or perfectly happy.

Secondly, as analogical knowledge of things yields no knowledge of the natures of those things beyond the mere fact that they stand in a proportionate relation to each other, if happiness were understood merely according to analogy there could be no knowledge of the relation between the two lives of contemplation and politically virtuous action beyond the mere fact that one life is happy for one kind of virtuous character, as the other life is happy for the other. But this understanding cannot account for Aristotle’s obvious preference of one life as ‘final’ or ‘perfect’ over the other as ‘secondary’. A mere analogical understanding of ‘happiness’ cannot account for the relation between the life of politics and contemplation as described at NE X 7:

Now the practical virtues are exercised in politics or in warfare; but the pursuits of politics and war are unleisured ... the activity of the politician is also unleisured and aims at securing something beyond the mere participation of politics - positions of authority and honour, or, if the happiness of the politician himself and of his fellow citizens, this happiness is conceived of as something distinct from political activity (indeed we are clearly investigating it as so distinct). If then among practical pursuits displaying the virtues, politics and war stand out pre-eminent in fineness and grandeur, and yet they are unleisured, and directed to some further end, not desired for their own sakes: whereas the activity of intellect is felt to excel in serious worth, consisting as it does in contemplation, and to aim at no end beyond itself ... and if accordingly the attributes of this activity are found to be self-sufficiency, leisuredness, such freedom from fatigue as is possible for human beings, and all the other attributes of blessedness: it follows that it is the activity of intellect that constitutes final, or perfect happiness - provided it be granted a complete span of life, for nothing that belongs to happiness can be incomplete.\footnote{ibid. 1177b16-26}

Virtuous political action, which later at NE X 8 Aristotle calls the secondary happiness of virtuous action, has as a further end the happiness of contemplation. This relation between the two lives can only be accounted for by understanding ‘happiness’ as a focal homonym signifying a focal connection between the secondarily happy life of virtuous action and the final, or perfect happiness of contemplation as the former is causally connected to the latter as to its final cause.
Conclusion

The conclusion we reach after this examination of Aristotle's understanding of happiness is that for Aristotle in the NE the human good for the virtuous man is a life of virtuous activity which consists in a life of virtuous action focally connected to a life of contemplation. In reaching this conclusion we have all but assumed that the virtuous man for Aristotle is the wise, practically intelligent, and ethically virtuous man who, in his choice of action exercises all the intellectual and ethical virtues of the complete human function. In our next chapter we shall see that for the virtuous man to be happy he must indeed be wise, practically intelligent and ethically virtuous so that he can exercise all the virtues of the complete human function in his choice of action. In order to show in greater detail the necessity of this unity of virtues the virtuous man exercises in his choice of action, we shall in the next chapter examine first of all the nature of human knowledge. We shall see that for Aristotle theoretical knowledge is the best and most divine knowledge and that the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation is a life of such knowledge. But we shall also see that for the virtuous man the secondarily happy life of virtuous action in the polis is a life of practical knowledge of the human good which is good in focal reference to a life of theoretical knowledge and presupposes a knowledge of the nature of that good, a knowledge which can only be that of the wise man in the exercise of his wisdom. The virtuous man in the secondarily happy life, in other words, must not only be practically intelligent and ethically virtuous in his choice of action but he must have the wisdom to know the nature of the human good for the sake of which he desires the fineness of that action. That is, in his choice of action the virtuous man exercises his practical intelligence and ethical virtue for the sake of the fineness of that action, desiring that good and end ultimately for the sake of the good of happiness which he knows by his wisdom to be the life of contemplation. Next, we shall examine in greater detail the unity of the virtuous exercised by the virtuous man in his choice of action by looking especially as the relation of wisdom and practical intelligence in his exercise of right reason. The conclusion to this
second chapter, that the best man for Aristotle is the virtuous man as one endowed with all
the intellectual and ethical virtues of the complete human function, will then join hands with
the conclusion to this first chapter.
Chapter 2

THE VIRTUOUS MAN IN A HAPPY LIFE OF VIRTUOUS ACTIVITY IS WISE, PRACTICALLY INTELLIGENT, AND ETHICALLY VIRTUOUS

In our first chapter we argued that in the NE Aristotle understands the human good of the virtuous man as the happiness of virtuous activity which consists in two lives united in focal connection to a life of contemplation. In this chapter we shall argue that from what Aristotle presents us in the NE, it can be inferred that the virtuous man is wise, practically intelligent, and ethically virtuous, that is, he is a person who actualizes the complete human function in his virtuous activity. In order to show this, we examine first the nature of knowledge, and specifically human knowledge, for if the human good is a happy life of virtuous activity, that life will be a life of knowledge\(^1\) for a nature which naturally desires to know\(^2\) and whose activity of soul is knowledge and its exercise.\(^3\) Human knowledge includes a number of different kinds but the happiness of the virtuous man consists in a life of practical knowledge of the human good as that knowledge is focally connected to a life of theoretical knowledge of the divine. If this is right, then the virtuous man must exercise all the intellectual and ethical virtues of the complete human function in this happy life of knowledge. Such a man must be wise as well as practically intelligent and ethically virtuous.

The first part of the chapter we examine Aristotle's understanding of the nature of human knowledge in order to show that the human good of the happiness of a life of knowledge consists in a life of practical knowledge of the human good in a focal connection to a life of theoretical knowledge of the divine. The second part of the chapter examines the unity of intellectual and practical virtues that must be exercised by the virtuous man if he is to lead such a life. This second part of the chapter will deal in particular with

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\(^1\) NE 1170a18-9; EE 1244b23-9

\(^2\) Meta 980a21; cf. DA 402a1-7

\(^3\) DA 412a9-11
Aristotle's presentation of practical intelligence in the *NE* and the relation between wisdom and practical intelligence in the virtuous man's life of knowledge. We shall argue that from the evidence of the text of the *NE*, it can be inferred that the virtuous man's exercise of the practical virtues of practical intelligence and ethical virtue requires his exercise of wisdom as well if he is to be happy. The conclusion of this chapter is that as the happiness of a life of virtuous activity for the virtuous man consists in two lives of knowledge united in a focal connection to the perfect happiness of a life of theoretical knowledge of the divine, so the virtuous man is a man who is wise in his theoretical knowledge of the divine and practically intelligent and ethically virtuous in his practical knowledge of the human good in his choice of action.

I. The Happiness of the Virtuous Man is a Life of Different Kinds of Knowledge United in Focal Connection to the Life of Contemplation as a Theoretical Knowledge of the Divine

1. Knowledge: Human and Divine

Knowledge (*epistēmē, gnōsis*), for Aristotle, can refer either to a cognitive state of the knower\(^4\) or to a body of knowledge or science - a system of propositions which can be learned or known.\(^5\)

Human knowledge is both a capacity (*dunamis*) and an activity of the soul\(^6\) and a unity of the knower with what is known.\(^7\) In contrast, divine knowledge is the life of divine *theōria*, the absolute identity of thinker and object thought in the necessary and eternal activity of the divine mind.\(^8\) The divine life of knowledge is simple, and therefore, necessary, eternal, and good.\(^9\) Human knowledge as a *theōria* of the divine, can only

\(^4\) *PoA* 71b13-6, 73a21, 74b5-6
\(^5\) *PoA* 73a21, 74b5-6. For knowledge as a cognitive way of being, or habit, which qualifies the knower with respect to that which is known: *Cat* 8b29, 11a20-31; *Top* 145a15-8. The specification of the human faculties occurs in the objects apprehended, and habits are formed by repeated acts: *DA* 415a14-23. For knowledge as a system of propositions which can be learned and known, cf. Owens (1991) 13-42.
\(^6\) *DA* 417a21-b16
\(^7\) Cf. *Meta* 1074b15-1075a5
\(^8\) *PoA* 1074b34-35, 1072b18-27
\(^9\) *PoA* 1072a30-36. Necessity, for Aristotle, means that it is impossible for the thing in question to be other than it is: *Meta* 1006b32-3, 1026b28-9. Necessity in the primary instance is also eternal or
approximate the simplicity, and therefore the necessity, eternity, and goodness of divine knowing,\textsuperscript{10} for unlike the simplicity of the divine separate substance, the human being is a composite of soul and body,\textsuperscript{11} and human rationality a composite of the intellectual and the appetitive.\textsuperscript{12} Human knowledge, consequently, is not a simple activity but a realized potentiality or movement,\textsuperscript{13} an intellectual capacity, or set of capacities,\textsuperscript{14} which require the existence of an object other than the human knower for its actualization,\textsuperscript{15} and the span of a lifetime if that knowledge is to constitute a happy life.\textsuperscript{16} Once, however, the human knower is actualized in the act of knowing something, Aristotle recognizes a cognitive union between the knower and the thing known, a union in which the knower knows himself in his knowledge of the object.\textsuperscript{17} Knowledge of the thing in this activity of knowing is a necessary and invariable grasp of that which is necessary and invariable in that thing.\textsuperscript{18} When this activity of knowing has as its object that which is best and most divine, such knowledge is itself ‘divine’.\textsuperscript{19} A life of this divine knowledge is perfect human happiness akin to the divine life of thought.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{10} Meta. 1075a5-10. For the difference of pleasure in the divine simplicity and natural human complexity in \textit{praxis}: cf. \textit{NE} 1154b20-31

\textsuperscript{11} DA 412a3-b8

\textsuperscript{12} NE 1102a23-1103a3; cf. \textit{EE} 1224b26-35

\textsuperscript{13} DA 429a10-430a25. For Aristotle all human knowledge involves some reasoning: \textit{PoA} 100b10; \textit{NE} 1140b33

\textsuperscript{14} Human knowledge is an activity of the human soul, an act of knowing which qualifies the soul in relation to the thing known. Human knowledge is an actualization of the soul’s intellectual faculties and a quality (\textit{poios}) of soul: \textit{Cat} 8b25-9, 11a20-31; \textit{Top} 145a15-8; cf. \textit{NE} 1139b31-2. The specification of the human faculties comes from the objects of these faculties through the acts by which the objects are apprehended, and habits are formed by repeated acts: DA 415a14-23; NE 1103b21-3, 1104b19-21. Knowing requires intellectual faculties and dispositions perfected in virtue: \textit{NE} 1103a3-10.

\textsuperscript{15} Meta 1075a7-10; \textit{Cat} 7b-8a12; \textit{EE} 1245b16-8. Knowledge of that which is necessary and invariable in sensible substance will require a process by which the form of the sensible thing is disengaged from its material, and hence singular and variable, existence if it is to be known: DA 424a17-24, 425b23-4, 432a9-10; \textit{Meta} 1032b11-4, 1034a24, 1070b33, 1075a1-2, b10, though knowledge is an activity of the knower and not simply a passive reception of the form of the sensible thing, cf. \textit{PoA} 87b28-30.

\textsuperscript{16} The human good of an intellectual life of happiness is not a momentary activity but rather an actuality in a whole (\textit{en holoi}) period of time: \textit{Meta} 1075a7-10.

\textsuperscript{17} DA 429b5-9, 26430a9; \textit{Meta} 1072b19-20, 1074b35-6; cf. \textit{NE} 1170a29-35; \textit{EE} 1244b29-1245a10.

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{PoA} 71b9-12, 73a21; \textit{Meta} 993b20-32, 1015b6-16; \textit{NE} 1139b18-36, 1140b31-1141aff

\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Meta} 983a5-11, 1064a28-b6. Aristotle calls human theoretical knowledge of the divine an understanding (\textit{noein}), cf. ibid. 1051b3-32, or a ‘contact’ (\textit{to thigein}): ibid. 1051b24. This knowledge,
2. Human Knowledge and Its Kinds

Aristotle divides human knowledge into three kinds - theoretical, productive, and practical.\textsuperscript{21} Theoretical knowledge itself is divided into a number of different kinds, first philosophy, mathematics, and natural philosophy, with first philosophy as primary.\textsuperscript{22}

Of the other two kinds of human knowledge, one is the practical knowledge of the human good which is Aristotle's practical philosophy of human concerns, the other is productive knowledge.

a. Theoretical Knowledge

Theoretical knowledge has as its immediate principle the being of the sensible things of experience really independent of the human knower,\textsuperscript{23} while its goal, or end

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\textsuperscript{20} In the EE Aristotle describes human happiness as the sharing in 'some form of divine contemplation': \textit{tinos theorias koinōnounta theias}: ibid. 1215b12-3, and entertains the possibility that there may be a divine as well as human happiness: ibid. 1217a22-4. In Book X of the NE Aristotle describes the perfectly happy human life of \textit{theōria} not as divine \textit{theōria}, or \textit{theōria haplōs}, but rather as a \textit{theoretikē tis}: \textit{NE} 1178b7-8, or a \textit{theōria tis}: ibid. 1178b32. Cf. Wedin. (1988) 229-45: Modarak. (1991) 755-74. The language used to describe divine and human happiness suggests that Aristotle understands happiness as an equivocal of the human and divine united focally to the divine as primary.

\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Top} 145a14-8, 157a10-11; \textit{Meta} 1025b18-26, 1064a10-9. On other occasions Aristotle presents a bipartite division of human knowledge, in which the theoretical is always one member. The other member is the practical: \textit{Meta} 993b19-23; cf. \textit{DA} 407a23-5, 433a14-5; \textit{Pol} 1333a16-25, or the productive: \textit{Meta} 982b11-28, 1075a1-3. \textit{DC} 306a16-7; \textit{EE} 1216b10-9. As Owens. (1991) 31, observes, the basic division of human knowledge for Aristotle is between knowledge desired for its own sake and those types of knowledge desired for the sake of something else (action or production), or between knowledge which has its starting-point in the things and those whose starting-points (choice or plan) are in the agent or producer.

\textsuperscript{22} Aristotle evidently understands theoretical knowledge as an equivocal united in focal reference to one knowledge as primary. There are just as many divisions of philosophy, he tells us, as there are kinds of substance, so that there must be a primary philosophy as well as secondary kinds. And each kind of knowledge, for instance, mathematics, is also comprised of that which is primary and secondary: \textit{Meta} 1004a2-9. First, or primary, philosophy is a theoretical knowledge of \textit{ho theos}, a human knowledge which is divine: ibid. 983a5-11.

\textsuperscript{23} All knowledge for Aristotle has as its object the universal as derived from sense perception of the sensible thing: \textit{PoA} 81a38-b6, 100a1-b5; \textit{DA} 431a1-432a14; \textit{Meta} 994a1-b35; \textit{NE} 1142a18-9. 'Experience' for Aristotle, is a \textit{gnōsis} of particular things: \textit{Meta} 981a15-8, which requires the five senses: ibid. 981b10-5. The principles of first philosophy and natural philosophy are taken from experience. Knowledge (\textit{epistēmē}) of these particular things is the culmination of a process of induction (\textit{epagōgē}) with an understanding (\textit{nous}) of what is universal in them: \textit{PoA} 87b38, 100a14-b4, though in the \textit{Metaphysics},

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(telos), is truth. The truth of theoretical knowledge is the knowledge of the cause of the thing. This truth is a conformity, or a kind of identity, of the knower with the form of the thing known, and a necessary and invariable cognition of that which is necessary and invariable in the thing. The cause of what is necessary and invariable in the thing, its form (eidos, to ti en einai), is also, along with the activity of the human knower, the cause of the thing’s being necessarily and invariable known. Theoretical knowledge is the most perfect kind of knowledge, a knowledge simply for its own sake, a knowledge as an end in itself.

Although gnōsis for Aristotle can refer to knowledge in general, theoretical knowledge in a qualified sense is gnōsis as an acquaintance, or cognitive grasp, of the fact as we shall see below. Aristotle explains that knowledge of the universal is potential and founded on the actual understanding of the form of the sensible thing: Meta 1087a15-21.

24 Meta 980a21-7, 993b20-1; cf. NE 1139a27-8. Truth, for Aristotle, is properly in the understanding and expressible propositionally: Meta 1017a31-5, 1027b18-29, though thoughts and their propositional expressions are true or false relative to the being of the things known: ibid. 1027b25-33, 1051a34-b26

25 Aristotle speaks of causes and truth as the object of knowledge: ibid. 988a19-20. To know the truth is to know the cause of a thing: ibid. 993b23-4

26 Aristotle distinguishes cognition from physical being. To perceive or to know means that the cognitive agent has become and is something other than what he or she is physically: DA 431b21-3; cf. ibid. 425b25-426a28, 429a22-4, a27-9, b30-1, 430a3-8, 14-21, 431a1-3, b16-7. Aristotle defines the soul as ‘the first actuality of a natural organic body’: DA 412b4-6. This status of the soul as ‘first actuality’ leaves open to it the role of potentiality to something further, to habitual as well as to actual cognition: ibid. 412a19-413a3. Within the soul the faculties of knowledge and sensation are potentially these known and sensed objects: ibid. 431b26-8. In actual perception or thought the knower identifies with what is perceived or thought not physically but cognitively by means of the form apart from the matter of what is known; ‘for the stone does not exist in the soul, but only the form of the stone’: ibid. 431b29-432a1. Cf. Owens, (1981) 74-80.

27 PoA 71b17-19, 73a21; Meta 993b20-32, 1015b6-16, cf. ibid. 994a-b35; NE 1139b22-4

28 Meta 1027b18-1038a2, 1051a34-b9. The Aristotelian form (eidos) is the ‘essence’ or ‘realized nature’ (to ti en einai) of a thing: Meta 1032b1-2, its primary cause and principle: ibid. 983a28-9, 1041a20-b28, b4-9; PA 640a15-b4. All the other causes are reducible to it: Meta 1032b13-4, 1044a36-b1, 1070b29-34; Phys 198a24-6; GC 335b6. Since the definition is the account of the form: Meta 1031a12, 1033a3-4, the form of each thing is the basis for the universal and necessary knowledge contained in the definition of the thing. Form is something knowable: ibid. 1031b3-9; DA 430b28, determined, necessary: Meta 981a10, unchangeable: ibid. 1033b5-7, the basis of universality: ibid. 981a5-30, and the cause of the thing’s being known: ibid. 1031b6-7, 1035a7-9 along with the activity of the human knower. Cf. Owens, (1981) 148-64.

29 Meta 982a14-b28

30 E.g. NE 1095a9, 14-5. This gnōsis refers broadly to theoretical as opposed to practical knowledge: ibid. NE 1095a5-6, or to that which is, or can be, known. For instance, Aristotle distinguishes two meanings of ‘things known’ (ta gnōrima): things knowable to us and things knowable in themselves: Meta 1029b1-12; NE 1095b2-4

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of the matter (*hoti*). Theoretical knowledge in the unqualified sense (*epistēmē haplōs*) is knowledge of the cause of the fact.

This unqualified theoretical knowledge is a necessary and invariable cognition of that which is necessary and invariable in the thing that is known. Aristotle distinguishes two types of theoretical knowledge in this strict sense according to the difference in the necessary and invariable nature of things known. Some things are eternal (*aidion*) and incapable of being otherwise (*mé endekesthai allōs echein*) because they are necessarily existent (*ex anankēs onta haplōs*). These are the immaterial substances which are simple forms and as such are eternal. Cognition of these substances is unqualified knowledge in the strict sense, a knowledge of that which is necessary *haplōs* and eternal. Those things in the universe, on the other hand, which are sensible substances, beings which are a composite (*sunolon*) of form and matter, are necessary and invariable ‘for the most part’

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31 Burnyeat, (1981) 100-101 explains that *gnōsis* is that cognitive state in which someone is said to know particular propositions within a science (as distinct from a knowledge of the whole of the science and how that particular proposition fits in with the whole). The distinction between qualified and unqualified *epistēmē* is the difference between knowledge as a conclusion of syllogistic reasoning and knowledge as the conclusion of demonstration, the difference, in other words, between a deduction which establishes a fact and a deduction which also explains the fact. Someone with *gnōsis* knows the fact but not the reason why it is a fact, cf: *PoA* 98b19-24. *Gnōsis* is *epistēmē* but not the *epistēmē* which is an understanding of the cause - *epistēmē haplōs*.  

32 Or, as Burnyeat (1981) 106-107, explains, ‘*X epistatai Y* if and only if (a) *X gignōskει* what the explanation of *Y* is and (b) *X gignōskει* that *Y* cannot be otherwise than it is. In the *Physics* Aristotle maintains the same distinction between qualified and unqualified *epistēmē* substituting *gignōskει* for *epistathai* and *gnōrizein* for *gignōskει*: ‘We think we *gignōskει* a thing when we *gnōrizein* its primary causes and primary principles, right back to the elements (*Phys* 184a12-4, elucidating a claim about *epistathai*). The difference between qualified and unqualified knowledge is that between knowing something and understanding that thing, or knowing its explanation.

33 Burnyeat (1981) 110, argues that it is because *epistathai* involves explanation that Aristotle insists on proceeding from principles which are true, primitive, immediate, more familiar and prior to and explanatory of the conclusion. In the *Metaphysics*, of course, it is the form as necessary and invariable which is the cause of this knowledge: *supra* note 28.

34 ibid. 1027a15-29. That which is necessary *haplōs* holds always; the usual holds usually; the contrary of what holds for the most part is always rare: *Top* 112b10-11; cf: *Meta* 1025a14-21; *PoA* 88b30-89a10. The basis of the necessity of the universal is the form of the thing known: *supra* note 28.

35 *NE* 1139b20-4. Mathematics is a knowledge of objects which are immutable and necessary but these objects are quantitative forms which are not separable from sensible substance whereas the first or primary philosophy is a knowledge of immaterial substance which is immutable and separate: *Meta* 1026a7-16, 1029a16-9. Since theoretical knowledge is primarily concerned with what exists primarily and separately, that is, substance: ibid. 1003b16-9, 1029a27-8, mathematics is not primary philosophy.

36 *Meta* 1050b6-30, 1051b26-33, 1071b12-22

37 *NE* 1139b20-4
(hōs epi to polu), for they are 'capable of being otherwise (ta endechomena allōs echein'). These things are necessary in so far as their form is necessary and invariable; yet necessary only 'for the most part' because their form is inextricably linked to a material principle which is indeterminate, and therefore unknowable. It is the material component (hulē) of the composite which is the root of their contingency. Knowledge of these things will be a necessary and invariable grasp not of what is necessary and invariable haplos but in an extended sense of what is necessary and invariable 'for the most part'.

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38 *Meta* 1026b27-1027a28. Aristotle claims that hōs epi to polu relations are demonstrable: PoA 87b19-22; *Meta* 1027a20-1 and that a significant portion of the subject matter of ethics is of this same character: NE 1094b12-27; 1098a25-34. However, he says very little about how hōs epi to polu relations are demonstrable. Recently commentators such as Reeve, (1992); Anagnostopoulos, (1994), and Winter, (1997) 163-89, have offered differing interpretations of the demonstrability of this relation in Aristotle's philosophy. Reeve understands Aristotle as using two notions of science, pure and plain, both of which are encompassed by the dictates of the *Posterior Analytics* exposition of science. According to Reeve, ethics and the natural sciences like physics and biology are plain sciences which offer demonstrative knowledge that holds for the most part concerning subjects of essentially enmattered form. Pure science, on the other hand, involves demonstrations of things that are unconditionally necessary because those things are not enmattered. Anagnostopoulos, on the other hand, reads Aristotle not as offering two different kinds of sciences but rather a single conception of science that includes two types of demonstration, one of which is looser or softer (malakoteros) than the other. Winter offers a third interpretation. He wants to understand knowledge hōs epi to polu as a strict demonstration. By injecting what he calls a 'strong causal principle' - that a natural substance necessarily realizes its capacity when impediments are absent and the appropriate efficient cause is present - Winter thinks that the presence of exceptions in hōs epi to polu propositions does not rule out their candidacy for strict scientific demonstration. He argues that a demonstration in the form of a syllogism with hōs epi to polu propositions can generate necessary propositions expressing analyzed hōs epi to polu relations.

39 Aristotle refers to things that hold for the most part as ta endechomena, things that admit of being otherwise. By this designation he means to exclude not necessity altogether but the unconditional necessity of the necessary and eternal: PrA 25b14-15, 32b4-13. He explains 'To be possible' (to endechesthai) is used in two senses: (a) to describe what generally happens (hōs epi to polu) but falls short of being necessary, e.g., a man's becoming gray-haired or growing or wasting away, or in general that which is naturally applicable to a subject...and (b) to describe the indeterminate, which is capable of happening both in a given way and otherwise...or in general a chance occurrence: PrA 32b4-13; cf. EE 1247a31-2.

40 Besides the absolutely undetermined matter which is known only by analogy: Phys 191a8-12, the matter of the composite is knowable through the form it possesses: ibid. 1035a7-9. Matter is unknowable in itself: *Meta* 1036a8-9.

41 ibid. 1032a20-2, 1039b27-31. The matter of a thing is the capacity or potential of the thing to become something else: ibid. 1042a26-8, b9-10, 1049a14-22

42 Phys 197a19-20; *Meta* 1027a20-1. What is known as necessary 'for the most part' is conditionally, or hypothetically necessary: Phys 199b34-200b8; DPA 639b21-640a10, 642a1-13, a31-b4. This is the type of theoretical knowledge obtainable in the biological sciences: cf. GA 763b-769a, 770b9-13; PA 644b14-5, HA 486a23-b16. Knowledge in this extended sense is the only knowledge one can have of sensible substances whose formal structure is inseparable from their matter: *Meta* 1025b26-1026a6. Matter is the basis of the particularity and variability of the sensible substance, a factor in the thing that cannot be known directly. It is the material component of the thing which causes knowledge of it to be hōs epi to polu: GA 778a4-9. There can be no knowledge haplōs of the thing as a particular (hekaston), only.
The two types of unqualified theoretical knowledge, then, are knowledge of what is necessary and eternal and knowledge of what is necessary and invariable 'for the most part'. Knowledge (in either of these two senses) is to be distinguished from knowledge in the qualified sense of a gnōsis of the fact of the matter. And knowledge (epistēmē) in either the qualified or the unqualified sense is to be distinguished from 'opinion' (doxa), which is a cognitive apprehension of something variable which can be either true or false.43

All human beings desire to know, Aristotle observes at the beginning of Book I of the Metaphysics, but it is wisdom (sophia), the theoretical knowledge of first principles and causes and ultimately of the divine good as final cause which is the best and most desirable knowledge.44 A life of such knowledge is happiest for human beings, and the supreme human good which most closely approximates the happiness of the divine life of theoria, the greatest good of all.45

Besides theoretical knowledge, there are two other kinds of human knowledge, the productive (poiētikē), and the practical (praktikē), each of which is distinguished from the theoretical as well as from each other by a distinctive principle (archē) and end (telos).46 Productive knowledge has its principle in the producer - his reason, art, or some capacity and its end is the product.47 Practical knowledge has its principle in the agent - his action or choice (proairesis),48 and the end of practical knowledge is the practical truth of acting well (eupraxia).49 These other kinds of human knowledge are indispensable parts of a happy human life of knowledge for the virtuous man as a human being.

b. Productive Knowledge

knowledge of what is necessary and invariable 'for the most part' which also requires perception (aisthesis), cf: NE 1109b20-3, 1126b2-4, 1142a14-8; Meta 1036a2-6, 1039b27-1040a7. Since the cosmos consists largely of enmattered things, Aristotle identifies nature (in one sense of the term) as what holds 'for the most part', cf. PA 663b28-9; GA 727b29-30; Meta 1027a8-28; Rhet 1357a34-b6, 1369a33-b2
43 PoA 88b30-89a10; NE 1039b30-1040a5; 1140b25-8, 1144b14-5
44 Meta 980a20, 982a30-b10, 983a5-11, 1064a28-b6
45 NE 1177a12-21, 1178b21-3; Meta 1072b20-31
46 Top 145a14-18, 157a10-11; Meta 1025b18-26, 1064a10-19; NE 1139a26-33
47 NE 1140a1-23, b5-6
48 For that which is done and that which is chosen are the same: Meta 1025b22-4
49 Meta 993b21; NE 1139b3-4, 1140b7
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One kind of human knowledge Aristotle calls productive (*poiētikē*).\(^{50}\) If theoretical knowledge can be described as a knowledge *that*, productive knowledge can be described as a knowledge *how* (*theōrein hopōs*)\(^{51}\) to take the theoretically known things of human experience and transform them into useful products or works of fine art. As things exist in the world by their own natural forms and can be known as such by theoretical knowledge, so those things can also be used in the making of things useful to human beings in living well. This ‘making’ is productive knowledge.

Because the principle of productive knowledge is in the technical knowledge, or skill (*techne*) of the producer, Aristotle distinguishes the objects of productive knowledge from those of theoretical knowledge as ‘things capable of being otherwise’ (*ta endechomena allōs echein*).\(^{52}\) Unlike the natural form of the sensible substances of human experience which is naturally necessary and invariable and theoretically known as such, the product depends not on the thing’s natural form but on the knowledge of its producer.\(^{53}\) The producer informs the matter of the thing with the form he has conceived with the result that the product is a composite of this artificial form and its matter.\(^{54}\) This artificial form of the thing as product, is, *qua* form, something necessary and invariable, but the fact that the artificial form informs the matter of the particular thing is a contingent factor which makes

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\(^{50}\) *NE* 1140a1-23; cf. *Meta* 1032b1-1034b19; *PA* 639b15-640a9, 645a24-7  
\(^{51}\) ibid. 1140a10-2  
\(^{52}\) ibid. 1140a1-2.34  
\(^{53}\) *Meta* 1032a32-b10, 1025b22-4  
\(^{54}\) ibid. 1033b5-1034a8
the product something hypothetical (ex hupotheseōs). The distinctive nature of the product is its contingency as causally dependent upon productive knowledge.

The efficient cause of productive knowledge is a combination of the artist’s ‘know how’ or skill (teknē) in producing something according to his conceived form and his deliberative desire to do so. The purpose, or end, of productive knowledge is the thing made. The end of theoretical knowledge is the truth of the form of the thing known; the end of productive knowledge is the truth of the thing made as that thing conforms to the form as conceived by its producer. Theoretical truth depends on the natural form of really existing things; the truth of productive knowledge is the reverse: the truth of the product depends on the productive wish and ‘know how’ of the artist. It will be the beauty of the product as conformed to the conception of the producer as mastercraftsman which is the final standard of productive truth. But if the mastercraftsman is the final standard and judge of productive truth, even that truth depends upon a more ultimate standard, that of the human and political good as the object of the practical knowledge of the statesman.

55 In the Parts of Animals Aristotle claims that nature itself works according to a productive knowledge and that the necessity of form both within the naturally and the artificially produced thing is an ex hupotheseōs necessity in contrast to the simple, or absolute (haplōs) necessity of the eternal substances: PA 639b21-640a9. In this passage Aristotle is concerned to distinguish the absolute necessity of the eternal substances with the hypothetical necessity of both the natural form of things and the artificial form of products. He distinguishes the hypothetical necessity of the artificial form of the product from the natural form of the thing by describing the former as ‘capable of being otherwise’, cf. NE 1140a14-6. For the distinction between simple, or unconditional, necessity and the hypothetical necessity of purpose in production: Phys 199b34-200b8.

56 The producer causes the product as a whole composite by shaping the matter in such a way as to receive the form, cf. Meta 1033a24-b19.

57 The end of productive knowledge is the product. The product as the end of productive knowledge is different from (heteron): NE 1040b6, or beyond (para): ibid. 1094a3-5, its productive activity. The goodness or badness of the productive activity is dependent on the goodness or badness, the beauty or ugliness of the product, or the work of art. The goodness of the thing as the product of a purpose is its beauty (to kalon): PA 645a24-7.

58 If the truth of productive knowledge depends not on the natural form of things in the world but on the producer, this does not mean that productive knowledge is subjective or arbitrary, cf. Meta 1063a1-9. Productive knowledge is a habit and skill that is the result of natural ability, proper training, and practice, cf: NE 1103a1-10, 14-26. This training is judged by the standard of the beauty of the product it produces, and this product itself conforms to a certain productive or artistic standard. The standard will reside in the productive judgment of the mastercraftsman and will often enough be recognized by the community. Unlike theoretical knowledge, this standard will not be in the natural form of things themselves but rather in the form as conceived and skillfully produced by the master.

59 NE 1094a26-b7
Theoretical knowledge has as its object that which is always and that which is usually so, or ‘for the most part’,\(^6\) while productive knowledge has as its object the form produced in the product. As the form of the product is the result of the contingent action of the producer and forms a composite with the matter, this form is of hypothetical necessity and the object *hōs epi to polu* of productive knowledge.

c. Practical Knowledge

Practical knowledge is the third kind of human knowledge. This kind of knowledge has as its end not knowledge itself, or the thing made, but action. Practical knowledge of the human good, or the practical knowledge of the virtuous man, has as its end virtuous action and this practical knowledge subordinates all productive and all (but one kind of) theoretical knowledge to that end.\(^6\)

An appreciation of Aristotle’s understanding of practical knowledge requires some acquaintance with his understanding of the human function. The human good of happiness is a good of the soul (*psuchē*\(^6\)) and the soul is divided into a rational (*to logon echon*) and a non-rational part (*to alogon*). The non-rational part of the soul, though not rational as such, can participate in rationality by following, or being obedient to, the rational part.\(^6\)

The rational part of the soul is the basis for what Aristotle calls the judging capacity (*to kritikon*), which is itself a function of thinking (*dianoia*) and perception (*aisthēsis*),\(^6\) divided into two faculties, the scientific (*to epistēmonikon*) and the calculative (*to

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\(^6\) *Meta* 1065a4-5

\(^6\) *NE* 1102a14-7

\(^6\) ibid. 1102a26ff

\(^6\) *DA* 432a15-6
logistikon) each of which has as its object a true apprehension of reality. The non-rational part is the appetitive part (to orektikon), that is, that in the human soul which is the cause of movement. Aristotle divides appetite (orexis) into three kinds, one rational and the other two non-rational. Rational appetite, appetite obedient to the rational part of the soul, is a wish (boulësis) for a good as end and a deliberative desire (bouleutikê orexis) to put that good into practice in a choice of action. Non-rational appetite divides into 'spirited desire' (thumos) and 'sensuous desire' (epithumia), neither of which follow reason but rather the immediate gratification of pleasure or avoidance of pain.

Practical knowledge is an appetitive knowledge of a good which results in action. This knowledge is appetitive as a rational desire, or wish, (boulësis) for the good as end (telos) and the deliberate desire (bouleutikê orexis) to choose the means to that end (pros ta teîê). In this way practical knowledge as appetitive is an 'end-means' knowledge. The

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65 NE 1139a21-31
66 DA 432a15-6, b3
67 NE 1111b10-12; EE 1223a26-7, 1225b24-6; DA 414b2, 432b3-10; DMA 700b19-22; Rhet 1369a1-4; Pol 1334b17-25: Top 126a6-13
68 NE 1111b26-30, 1112b11-2, 1113a9-15; EE 1226a16-7, b17
69 ibid. 1149a24-b3; EE 1223a26-8, 1225b24-5; DA 432b3-7. For Aristotle thumos, while a non-rational appetite, differs from epithumia in this: that the former in a sense listens to reason, while the latter does not. Sihvola, (1996) 124-34, maintains that for Aristotle, even though thumos does not follow reason, it is nevertheless connected to reason to the extent that it accompanies beliefs about a personal danger or slight.
70 NE 1111b26-9, 1112a15-7, 1113a9-16, 1139a31-3; EE 1226a17-17, b16-17. The good as end (to telos) stands in causal relation to the means as that for the sake of which (to hou heneka) the means is chosen. The good as end in action is the object of the agent's rational desire, or wish (boulësis), while the means, or that which is 'toward the end' (pros ta teîê), is the object of the agent's deliberation (bouleusis) and choice (proairesis): NE 1111b26, 1112b11-2, 34-5, 1113a9-16, b3-4. Many of Aristotle's commentators, however, endeavor to understand Aristotle's description of deliberation over pros ta teîê as a deliberation concerning the telos as well - to the extent that deliberation over the former is interpreted as a deliberation over a component, or 'constitutive', part of the latter: E.g. Greenwood, (1909) 46-7, 53-4, Allan, (1952) 120-27 and 163-78; Ackrill, (1980) 15-33, Wiggins, (1980) 221-40, Sorabji, (1980) 206, Nussbaum, (1986) 297, Sherman, (1988) 86-94, (1997) 273, and Richardson, (1997) 49-62, 211-18. This interpretation would understand a rational appraisal of what constitutes a happy human life as an object of deliberation whose conclusion would be a matter of choice. But for Aristotle neither happiness nor what constitutes happiness can be the object of deliberation or choice: NE 1111b20-1113a14. The action chosen as the result of virtuous deliberation does not constitute the human good of a life of happiness. Rather, the agent deliberates over and chooses an action for the sake of the human good of a life of happiness. Practical reasoning, then, demands a knowledge of the good as end which is not an object of deliberation. Cooper, (1975) 58-71, recognizes this when he admits that for Aristotle knowledge of one's end - whatever that end may be - is not a matter of deliberation but of what he calls 'intuition' because 'an agent does not have any reasons to pursue whatever end he pursues as ultimate'. 'This is something he knows, but he does not
first principle and final cause of this knowledge is the good as end while the efficient cause is the choice (proairesis) of a particular action as means.\(^2\) Since the principle of this knowledge as choice is in the knower as agent and efficient cause, practical knowledge, like productive knowledge, is a causal knowledge of the action as an object 'capable of being otherwise'.\(^3\) However, unlike productive knowledge, whose end, the product, is distinct (para, heteron) from its productive activity, the goodness of the action chosen is identical with the agent's practical activity of knowing.\(^4\)

Practical knowledge, like productive knowledge, is a causal knowledge of its object. In the virtuous man's practical knowledge of the human good, the good of virtuous action is caused by his wish for the human good as his good and end and his deliberative desire to put that good into practice in the choice of a particular action here and now. While the practical knowledge of the virtuous man is an appetitive knowledge which causes that which is chosen to be good, this knowledge, as we shall see, exhibits a remarkable similarity to his theoretical knowledge.

c.1 Practical \textit{Gnôsis}, \textit{Epistêmê}, and \textit{Doxa}

As we have seen in our examination of theoretical knowledge, \textit{episteme} includes knowledge of the fact, or \textit{gnôsis}, as well as knowledge of the cause of that fact, unqualified knowledge, \textit{epistêmê haplôs}, or 'understanding'. We also saw that unqualified knowledge can be a knowledge of that which is necessary and eternal, namely the divine, and that which is necessary and invariable 'for the most part'. Finally, we noted Aristotle's distinction between knowledge (\textit{epistêmê}), which is necessarily true, and opinion (\textit{doxa})

\(^1\) \textit{EE} 1218b19-20
\(^2\) \textit{NE} 1139a31-b4, 1140b7; cf. \textit{Meta} 993b21; \textit{EE} 1218b10-24. The wish for the human good of happiness as end is the final cause of the deliberate desire to choose that action which is the right means: \textit{EE} 1217a35-40. 'All our actions,' Aristotle observes, 'aim at ends other than themselves'. As such, action is an object of deliberation as means to that which is a good as end: ibid. 1112b33-4.
\(^3\) \textit{NE} 1140a1-2, b3-4; \textit{DA} 433a29-30
which is a cognition that can be true or false concerning that which can be otherwise. Although practical knowledge of the good differs in kind from theoretical knowledge, Aristotle nevertheless considers practical knowledge an *epistēmē*. Practical knowledge, then, must be in some way similar to the *epistēmē* of theoretical knowledge.

First of all, Aristotle recognizes a practical knowledge of the human good in a qualified sense which is similar to the theoretical knowledge of the fact. Early in the *NE* he insists that the proper students of ethics and those in general who love what is virtuous must be already well trained in character so as to have a basic knowledge of the good as a fact (*hoti*). This practical knowledge born of ethical training as *gnōsis* is a principle, or starting point (*archē*), in a mature practical knowledge or understanding of the human good. Besides a practical knowledge of the fact, Aristotle also recognizes a practical knowledge which is an understanding (*nous*) of the particular action as the end of practical reasoning, and a practical *doxa* concerning rules employable in practical reasoning. Practical knowledge of the fact, understanding, and opinion are the practical equivalents of theoretical knowledge of the fact, of the cause, and opinion. Let us first look at the virtuous man's practical knowledge of the human good as knowledge (*epistēmē*).

A thing is good relative to desire and a practical good is relative to practical desire, that is, to an agent's wish for that good as his end and the deliberate desire to choose the means to secure that good in action. Now there are as many and various practical human goods as there are many and various human desires, but of all these different human goods, Aristotle maintains that there is something which is the human good (*t'anthrōpinon agathon*), as distinct from the apparent good (*to phainomenon agathon*), precisely as the former is the object of a virtuous man's rational desire while the latter is the object of the

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74 ibid. 1112b32-3; 1140b6-7  
75 *Meta* 1025b18-24. 1064a10-9; *Top* 145a15-8. 157a10-11; cf. *NE* 1094a6-b6  
76 *NE* 1095b2-13  
77 ibid. 1143a35-1143b7  
78 ibid. 1147b9-10
desire of people who are less than virtuous.\textsuperscript{79} The human good is one, definite, objective good knowable as such by all who are ethically virtuous, while the apparent good is as manifold and various as the desires of those who are less than virtuous.\textsuperscript{80}

The criterion by which the virtuous man is able to know the human good is his own well-habituated, or ethically virtuous appetite. Practical truth, Aristotle tells us, is the conformity of an action (or thing chosen) to rightly habituated appetite,\textsuperscript{81} that is, an appetite for what is the human good (\textit{peri ta anthropōi agatha}).\textsuperscript{82} It is the good or virtuous man, with a character so trained in appetitive virtue that he is able to make the human good his practical good, who is the canon and judge of what the human good is and how to put that good into practice:

What is wished for in the true and unqualified sense is the good (\textit{t'agathon}) but what appears good to each person is wished for by him ... the virtuous man wishes for what is truly wished for, the bad man for anything as it may happen ... for the good man judges everything correctly; what things truly are, that they seem to him to be in every case - for special things are fine and pleasant corresponding to each type of character, and perhaps what chiefly distinguishes the good man is that he sees the truth in each kind, being himself as it were the canon and measure of the fine and the pleasant.\textsuperscript{83}

The human good is the virtuous man's object of wish, that which by nature (\textit{phusei}) is wished for as the good and end and final cause of action.\textsuperscript{84} In this way his ethically virtuous appetite makes his aim, or end, right.\textsuperscript{85} It is the well-formed character (\textit{to ethos}) of the virtuous man which makes the first principle of his practical knowledge of the human good a rational desire for what is unconditionally good for human beings and

\begin{footnotes}
\item[79] ibid. 1113a22-b2
\item[80] ibid. 1113a22-1113b2, ibid. 1129b5-6
\item[81] ibid. 1139a29-31
\item[82] ibid. 1140b4-6
\item[83] ibid. 1113a29-34; cf. \textit{EE} 1227a18-31; \textit{Pol} 1332a21-3
\item[84] In the \textit{Meta} 1029b7-8. Aristotle says that in both practical and theoretical knowledge we human beings advance from what is only apparent to a mature knowledge of what is really so. In the good man's practical knowledge of the human good, what he wishes for is that which \textit{phusei} is wished for: \textit{NE} 1113a21, just as in the wise man's theoretical knowledge what is intelligible \textit{phusei} is known by him (\textit{ta tēi phusei gnōrima autōi gnōrima}).
\item[85] \textit{NE} 1144a7-9
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enables him to deliberate well and choose the right means by which that good and end can be put into practice.\textsuperscript{86}

This well-formed character is the result of an education in the virtues provided by a political community governed by the best constitution, a constitution which has as its end the real human good and which is administered by politically virtuous men who legislate and adjudicate laws rightly for the sake of aiding the citizens in the practice of virtue. Practical knowledge of the human good for the virtuous man in such a political community is a necessary appetitive grasp of the unqualified human good.\textsuperscript{87}

Because of his ethical virtue, then, the virtuous man's rational appetite necessarily makes the real human good his good and end and the final cause of his choice of action. The necessity of the virtuous man's practical knowledge of the human good is similar to the necessity of unqualified theoretical knowledge of what is necessary and invariable 'for the most part'. That is, the virtuous man, thanks to ethical virtue, has a necessary appetitive grasp of the human good as end and his deliberative desire to practice this good in a choice of action causes the fineness (kalon) of that action. Because the virtuous action is a unity of the human good as end and the particular action chosen as means, the latter something particular and variable, something necessary and invariable only hŏs epi to polu,\textsuperscript{88} the fineness of the action is good necessarily and invariably 'for the most part' and the object of the virtuous man's practical knowledge as unqualified epistēmē - hŏs epi to polu.\textsuperscript{89}

\textsuperscript{86} ibid. 1144a20

\textsuperscript{87} The objectivity of the virtuous man's practical knowledge of the human good is similar to that of theoretical knowledge. For the human good as end is not just any life but a life which can be demonstrated as what is really perfective of human nature; a life recognized as such and wished for by the virtuous, that is, by good men who are wise. And the secondarily happy life is not just any life but a life of actions which are chosen by the wise man as practically intelligent and ethically virtuous whose fineness is recognized as good in focal reference to, that is, as preserving or promoting, the perfectly happy life. Any worry of a vicious circularity in Aristotle's repeated insistence on the good man as the standard and judge of practical truth should be allayed if we remember that for Aristotle even the recognition and judgment of theoretical truth presupposes some kind of right training in the knower. cf. Top 142a9-11. Though of different kinds, theoretical, productive, and practical truth all depend on their own kind of virtuous training.

\textsuperscript{88} NE 1094b21

\textsuperscript{89} Aristotle's term for the necessity of this action as the necessary means to put the human good into practice is 

\textit{dei}; NE 1115b11-9, 1119a16-20, b11-8, 1120a23-6, b30-2, 1121a1-4, b4-5, 1122b28-9, 1123b13-14, 1125b26-35, b4-10, 1126b16-25. \textit{Dei} also refers to the necessity of choosing those goods of
There is, of course, a significant difference between a theoretical knowledge of the composite sensible substance and the virtuous man's practical knowledge of the goodness of the fine and just action. For in theoretical knowledge it is the form of the thing known which causes the human knower to know. The form of the sensible thing as the form of a composite causes a theoretical knowledge of that thing to be a knowledge of what is formal, or necessary, 'for the most part'. In practical knowledge of the human good, on the other hand, it is the appetite of the virtuous man rendered virtuous by his ethical virtue which causes its object, the action chosen, to be good. His wish for the good as end (the human good which is the natural actualization of his function - a good he does not choose) is the final cause which compels him to deliberately desire and choose that action which is the best among possible alternatives - that which, in other words, is necessary (dei) to do. The cause of the action is the agent's choice and that choice is finally caused by the agent's appetite for, and reasoning concerning, the good as end. The truth of the action is thus its conformity with ethically virtuous or right appetite. In this way, the particular action chosen, though something particular (hekaston), is caused to be fine. Its necessity, unlike theoretical necessity, is caused by the ethical virtue of the virtuous man. In this way the causal nature of practical knowledge renders the virtuous man's practical knowledge of the fine and just act, an unqualified ἔπιστήμη of what is necessarily and invariably good ὧν ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ. This practical knowledge of the virtuous action is a perception (aisthēsis) of what is practically necessary (dei) to do.

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fortune which are conducive to the human good: ibid. 1129b5-6. This necessity is the practical equivalent to the hypothetical necessity of theoretical ἔπιστήμη of what is necessary ὧν ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ.

90 NE 1106b21-3; EE 1231b32-8
91 ibid. 1139a31-2
92 ibid. 1139a30-1
93 Perception is not ἔπιστήμη for one does not in perception discover why something is as it is. Explanation imports generality, which is beyond the scope of perception: PoA 81b6-7, 87b28-88a17; Meta 981b10-13. Perception is not ἔπιστήμη but it is (one type of) gnōsis: PoA 99b38-9, Meta 980a21-7, 981b1-3; GA 731a30-4; DM 449b13-4. Cf. Burnyeat, (1981) 114. However, the virtuous man's perception (aisthēsis) of the goodness of the action as a particular thing (hekaston) is not a theoretical perception of the material particular but a practical understanding (nous) of the goodness of the individual action, NE 1143b4-5. a practical equivalent to the perception of the triangle as the ultimate figure in mathematics: ibid. 1142a25-30. This practical nous, or understanding, of the goodness of the action is the

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Besides practical knowledge (gnōsis and epistēmē) Aristotle also recognizes a practical opinion, or doxa. As in the case of the theoretical, so similarly with respect to the practical, doxa is a cognition that can be either true or false about what is variable, or 'capable of being otherwise'. The virtuous man's practical knowledge of the human good is not a doxa. His virtue guarantees that his practical cognition of the human good is not doxa but rather epistēmē.

Although the virtuous man has a practical knowledge of the human good, he can (and does) make use of a practical doxa. The object of his practical doxa, however, is not the actual goodness of virtuous action but the grasp of a universal (to katholou) potentially good as applicable to other particular actions relevantly similar to it. This distinction presupposes the distinction Aristotle sees between actual and potential knowledge.

In the Metaphysics Aristotle tells us:

The doctrine that all knowledge is of the universal, and hence that the principles of existing things must also be universal and not separate

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basis for the virtuous man's practical knowledge of the human good as apodictic: cf. ibid. 1143b9-14. Woods, (1986) 145-66, points out that phainesthai need not always be understood perceptually; like 'appear' in English, it can also be used to describe what someone judges to be the case, including what is judged to be the case in the ethical sphere. Woods recognizes that the combination of appetitive virtue and the calculative virtue of phronēsis gives the virtuous man as phronimos the 'eye' to perceive the particular right action as both a perception and a judgment and that this judgment constitutes the action as a practical grasp of the final end. He recognizes, then, that this perception is practical, that is, it causes the goodness of the action rather than simply 'perceives' its goodness on the model of a theoretical perception. However, Woods fails to see what we shall argue presently: that it is because the virtuous man is a sophos and knows the nature of the human good of happiness that he has that 'eye' to rightly perceive that action which is the right means of putting that good into practice.

94 The action as practically necessary as the mean (meson), what is best of the possible alternatives: NE 1106b21-3; EE 1231b32-8.
95 NE 111b30-1112a13. cf. 1142b12-5
96 In the NE Aristotle never describes the human good as object of the virtuous man's doxa but always of his epistēmē. For example, 'we choose'. Aristotle observes, 'only things we absolutely know to be good; whereas we opine things we do not certainly know: NE 1112a7-8. In the EE Aristotle does describe the object of deliberation as opinion (doxa bouleutikē) from which choice arises: ibid. 1226b6-9, but the virtuous only choose what is known, not opined, to be good: NE1112a7-8.
97 Those who are not Aristotle's virtuous man, those in other words who are enkratic or even akratic, may in some sense have the human good as their end and object of boulēsis, but to the extent that their ethical virtue falls short of the deliberative desire to put that good into practice here and now in the necessarily right action, their practical cognition of the good would fall short of a practical epistēmē and would be more properly described as a practical doxa - a practical cognition which can be true or false of what is humanly good for the most part.
98 In the so-called 'practical syllogism' the universal as major premise is the object of doxa: NE 1147a25.
substances, presents the greatest difficulty of all that we have discussed; there is, however, a sense in which this statement is true, although there is another in which it is not true. For knowledge, like the verb 'to know,' has two senses, of which one is potential and the other actual. The potentiality being, as matter, universal and indefinite, has a universal and indefinite object; but the actuality is definite and has a definite object, because it is individual and deals with the individual. It is only accidentally that sight sees universal color; and the particular a which the grammarian studies is an a. For if the first principles must be universal, that which is derived from them must also be universal, as in the case of the logical proofs; and if this is so, there will be nothing which has separate existence; i.e. no substance. But it is clear that although in one sense knowledge is universal, in another it is not.  

Actual knowledge, epistēmē haplōs, has as its object a definite individual (tode ti), a separate (chōriston), or independently existing thing. Actual knowledge of what is 'for the most part', that is, actual knowledge of sensible substance, is also potentially a knowledge of that thing as a universal (katholou), that is, as something indefinite and common to many. Thus the same object can be known in two different ways. It is actually known as an individual thing and potentially knowable as a universal, as something potentially applicable to many different individuals of the same nature. The nature of the individual thing as actually known is potentially a universal, and knowledge of the universal is potentially a knowledge of the nature of the really existing individual. In a similar way, practical knowledge of the human good is also actual and potential. The virtuous man's practical knowledge of the human good is actually the virtuous action itself and potentially the knowledge of that action in the universal (katholou), as a law (nomos), or practical

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99 Meta 1087a10-25. For the nature and development of Aristotle's understanding of the universal see: Brakas, (1988) esp. 97-110. For we know no sensible thing, once it has passed beyond the range of our senses, even if we happen to have perceived it, except by means of the universal and the possession of the knowledge which is proper to the particular, but without the actual exercise of that knowledge': PrA 67a39-b3; (Oxford tr.) The same thing that passes out of actual cognition continues to be known in the universal: Meta 1036a6-8. PoA 87b28-39. In Aristotle's distinction between universal and particular in the Analytics, the sensible thing is something singular and able to be apprehended only by perception (aisthēsis), while that which is necessary and invariable in the thing, the universal (to katholou) as discovered by induction, is that which alone can be the object of knowledge. Aristotle came to recognize a difficulty in this account of our knowledge of the sensible thing. In his Metaphysics he observes that substance, the first principle of being, can be neither a particular (hekaston) in the sense of a material component of the thing nor a universal (katholou). What is material as such cannot be known and the universal is simply a common term, or type (toionde), and no common term denotes an individual thing (tode ti) which a substance must be: Meta 1003a7-15. In a practical knowledge of the human good, the virtuous action is potentially

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rule.102 This universal or practical rule signifies the unconditional good of the virtuous act but is itself not that good actually. The practical human good is something real and definite and the necessary object of the virtuous man's practical desire; it cannot be indefinite and common to many things as a universal.103 The rule as a universal is the unconditional good only potentially, and as such cannot be a necessary object of the virtuous man's appetite. The virtuous action which is a definite good and object of the virtuous man's actual practical knowledge haplōs is potentially a good that can be extended to many other particular actions in similar situations. Practical knowledge of the rule, then, is a knowledge in the extended sense of that which is potentially good. Following rules in Aristotle's practical philosophy is not practical epistēmē of the unconditional good but a type of practical apprehension, or opinion (doxa) of what is potentially good, or practically true.104 For the practical universal as law is defective precisely because it is universal105 and actions prescribed by law are only accidentally (kata sumbebekos) virtuous actions.106

knowledge of the universal which can be used as a practical rule in further practical reasoning. As for the nature of the universal itself, this is a matter of considerable dispute: Brakas, (1988) 11-6. I believe that for Aristotle the universal is a thought, or concept, of the human mind derived from actual knowledge of the nature of an individual thing as that nature can be shared by many individuals. See: Owens. (1966) and Lloyd, (1981); for an opposing view, cf. Brakas, (1988) 15-16, 40-1, 55-67, who argues that there is no textual evidence to support the claim that the universal, for Aristotle, is a thought or concept.

102 'Law' is a universal, or practical rule, derived from the legislators' practical knowledge of the good of an action: cf. NE 1135a3-8, 1180a21-2; Pol 1282b1-6. As a practical rule the law can be said to govern all while the ruler(s) of the polis govern according to the exigencies of the particular situation: Pol 1292a32-4. Whether the law is right (spoudaios) or wrong (phaulos) depends on whether or not the constitution of the polis is right (orthē): ibid. 1282b7-13, but law itself is not the good of virtuous action. Actions prescribed by law are only accidentally virtuous: NE 1137a11-2. As a universal formulation the law is limited always in need of correction with respect to the particular cases for which it was enacted: ibid. 1137b13-35.

103 In the Metaphysics Aristotle cites a number of reasons why the universal cannot be the substance of the thing: Meta 1038b1-1039a23. The good as end in practical knowledge is, like the form of the thing theoretically known, something definite and individual and an object of epistēmē - unlike Plato's good which Aristotle understands in his own terms as a universal (katholou), cf. NE1096a11-31; Meta 1039a24-b19. The universal in Aristotle's practical philosophy is something indefinite and derivative of the practical good, and as such, an object not of epistēmē but of doxa: ibid. 1112a7-8, 1147a24-b3. The human good, for Aristotle, cannot be an indefinite universal but a practically knowable definite reality - the practical good of acting well here and now.

104 NE 1147a25-6, b9-10
105 ibid. 1137b13-35; Pol 1269a8-12, 1282b1-6, 1286a9-16, 36-7, cf. 1287b19-20
106 ibid. 1137a9-12

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What is accidental, since it comes about neither always, necessarily, or usually, is outside the range of *epistēmē*.

The universal as a practical rule is derived from an actual practical knowledge of the human good in this particular action. Practical *doxa* of the rule derived from this actual knowledge is a potential grasp of how that good could be practiced in an indefinite number of different situations demanding choices of different particular actions.

Students of virtue need the rule as a formulation of the good as well as the motivation to perform the action by which that good can be practiced. Such students only gradually attain the appetitive and intellectual maturity required for a virtuous man’s wise, practically intelligent, and ethically virtuous practical knowledge of the human good. It is the task of the legislator and the teacher, or the legislator as teacher, while training the student in appetitive virtue, to present some formulation of the good which the students can grasp as the object of their practical desire to act well. In pedagogical use, the rule which is taught by the virtuous and followed by the students of virtue is the real human good, as it were, ‘by proxy’. Gradually, with a maturing appetitive and intellectual capacity well-trained in virtue, the students of virtue will come to desire not just what is good but what

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107 *Meta* 1065a1-6
108 The distinction between actual and potential practical knowledge of the human good has other important implications. For instance, Aristotle’s description of the practical knowledge of politics in *NE* I, 1094b11-27, cf. 1103b35-1104a11, as a knowledge ‘in outline’ (*tupoi*) and falling short of the exactitude of theoretical knowledge in its concern with what is *hôs epi to polu* is a description *not* of the virtuous man’s practical knowledge of the human good, but of his universal formulation of that good. This formulation is an activity of understanding (*sunesis*), or good understanding (*eununesis*), a practical faculty of *doxa* concerning practical matters: ibid. 1142b34-a18, which is set forth for those who are students of virtue, those interested in becoming virtuous: ibid. 1179b4-1180aff. Aristotle’s *NE* is composed for students who have been sufficiently trained in virtue to be interested in becoming virtuous citizens able to rule their polis virtuously. This is the motivation of virtuous men in enacting good legislation: ibid. 1103b3-6, 1179b29-1180a35, and what teachers like Aristotle himself are doing in expounding their *sunesis* of the practical philosophy of ethics to their pupils: ibid. 1142b4-43a18, 1103b26-31, 1179a35-b29.
109 See: Nussbaum (1978) 212-3
110 For the parallel between the intellectual and the ethical spheres in the student’s development: *Meta* 1029b3-12; cf. *Top* 142a9-12; *NE* 1151a15-9. ‘What is exemplary in Aristotle is his grasp of the truth that morality comes in a sequence of stages with both cognitive and emotional dimensions’, Burnyeat, (1980) 70-1. Lord, (1990) 202-51, argues that Aristotle includes a training in the intellectual as well as the ethical virtues for citizens throughout their lives. Also, cf. Sorabji, (1980) 214-8, who maintains that the student of virtue gradually acquires a knowledge of the human good by induction. While in agreement with these observations, I would stress that the cause of this personal induction is the teaching of virtuous
is best and by developing the intellectual virtues will come to gain the wisdom for a theoretical knowledge of the divine, thereby recognizing a life of such knowledge as the human good of perfect happiness with the ability, when necessary, to exercise practical intelligence and a deliberate desire to choose action for the sake of the fineness of life in their polis as a good in focal reference to the perfect happiness of that life.  

This would presume a polis as described in the Politics where the constitution and laws are best, that is, a polis well-governed according to a constitution which has the human good of a happy life of virtuous activity as its good and end, virtuous men as legislators, and the laws which will enable the citizens to live that good in their polis.  

In the Politics Aristotle explains how the law of a polis (despite its limitation as a universal) can educate its citizens:

It may be objected that any case which the law appears to be unable to define, a human being also would be unable to know. But the law first specially educates the magistrates for the purpose and then commissions them to decide and administer the matters that it leaves over 'according to the best of their judgment' (tē dikaiotatē gnōmē), and furthermore it allows them to introduce for themselves any amendment that experience leads them to think better than the established code.

3. There is a Focal Connection between the Virtuous Man's Practical Knowledge of the Human Good and the Happiness of a Life of Theoretical Knowledge of the Divine

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legislators and teachers in the community, who, by their wisdom, guide the ethically virtuous and intellectually maturing student in attaining for himself a knowledge of the content of the human good.

111 How would this take place? By a continual repetition of conforming their appetite to the rule in their actions, the students of virtue gradually acquire an appetitive habituation which enables them to follow the dictates of their teachers' practical reasoning. They learn, in other words, to conform their appetite to right reason - the right reason of their virtuous guides. As the students mature intellectually as well as appetitively, they will be able to acquire from their teachers that wisdom (sophia) to know the divine and the human good of a life which is as divine as is humanly possible to live. Once the students acquire that wisdom, they will have acquired the appetitive, or character virtue (ēthikē aretē) to wish to live that life in practice in their choice of action, as well as the practical intelligence (phronēsis) to do so. As mature men and citizens, they will then join the ranks of their educators in governing their polis well.

This training in virtue by conversion of appetite to the real human good by following the rule will be long and arduous. Book VII 3 1146b8-1147b19 of the NE presents the rule as the formulation of the real human good in the practical knowledge of the enkratic and the failure of the rule as a guide for the akratic. The rule as major premise for both the enkratic and akratic is the universal formulation of the human good, an object, therefore, not of practical epistēmē but of doxa: ibid. 1147a25. (The enkratic, like the akratic and unlike the virtuous, simply does not practically know haplōs the real human good.) The enkratic's practical opinion of the good as formulated in the rule will compel him to put the good formulated in that rule into practice in the particular action: ibid. 1147a25-8 (but not with the truth and necessity of the virtuous man's appetite for the real human good).

112 Cf. Pol VII

113 ibid. 1287a23-8
If there are three different kinds of human knowledge, the theoretical, the productive, and the practical, these different kinds are united in the happiness of the virtuous man's life of knowledge, a life which consists in a practical knowledge of the human good in focal connection to the final, or perfect happiness of a life of contemplation, or the life of theoretical knowledge of the divine. This is apparent in the relation Aristotle describes between the virtues exercised in practical knowledge, practical intelligence and ethical virtue, and wisdom as the intellectual virtue exercised in the theoretical knowledge of the divine.

At *NE VI* 13 Aristotle describes wisdom as dominant or supreme (*kuria*) over the exercise of practical intelligence and ethical virtue in a choice of action:

...our choice of actions will not be right without practical intelligence (*phronēsis*), any more than without virtue (*aretē*), since virtue enables us to achieve the end and practical intelligence makes us adopt the right means to the end. Nevertheless it is not really the case that practical intelligence is supreme over wisdom (*sophia*), or over the higher part of the intellect, any more than medical science is supreme over health. Medical science does not control health, but studies how to procure it; hence it issues orders in the interest of health but not to health. And again, one might as well say that political science (*politikē*) governs the gods, because it gives orders about everything in the polis.\(^{114}\)

At *NE VI* 12 Aristotle compared wisdom to health and medicine in the same way: wisdom produces happiness not in the sense in which medicine produces health, but in the sense that health produces health.\(^{115}\) Aristotle's use of this example is significant. As medical science is practiced for the sake of health as the good and end, so the practical virtues, and especially practical intelligence, are exercised for the sake of wisdom and wisdom is identified with happiness. The exercise of these practical virtues in a practical knowledge of the human good is for the sake of wisdom, or the happiness produced by wisdom. This happiness produced by wisdom can only mean the happiness of the contemplative life. The happiness of a life of practical knowledge, then, can be understood

\(^{114}\) *NE* 1145a4-11. See also *Meta* 982a8-19 where Aristotle explains that the wise man by virtue of his wisdom, should give orders, not receive them; nor should he obey others but the less wise should obey him.

\(^{115}\) *NE* 1144a1-5
to be focally connected to the happiness of a life of theoretical knowledge as the exercise of the practical virtues is for the sake of the intellectual virtue of wisdom.

II. The Happy Life of Knowledge for the Virtuous Man Requires that He be Wise, Practically Intelligent, and Ethically Virtuous

1. The Virtuous Man’s Practical Knowledge of the Human Good Requires the Exercise of Wisdom

There is evidence in the text of the NE from which we can infer that for Aristotle the virtuous man’s practical knowledge of the human good requires that he exercise his wisdom in a theoretical knowledge of what human happiness consists in.

Practical knowledge, unlike theoretical knowledge, is an appetitive grasp of a good which results in a choice of action:

... for the end of [politikē] is not knowledge (gnōsis) but action (praxis)\(^{116}\)

and a knowledge which determines the character of the agent:

As our present study, unlike the other branches of philosophy, has a practical aim (for we are not investigating the nature of virtue for the sake of our knowing what it is, but in order that we might become good, without which result our investigation would be of no use), we have consequently to carry our inquiry into the region of conduct and ask how we are to act rightly; since our actions, as we have said, determine the quality of our dispositions.\(^{117}\)

This appetitive knowledge has as its principle the choice of the agent and its conclusion is an action which is caused, or ‘begotten’ by that choice.\(^{118}\)

Aristotle recognizes two causes of an action, the agent’s choice and his end, or that for the sake of which he makes his choice:

Now the cause of action, the efficient, not the final cause, is choice (proairesis), and the cause of choice is appetite (orexis) and reasoning to some end (logos ho heneka tinos).\(^{119}\)

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\(^{116}\) ibid. 1095a5-6ff
\(^{117}\) ibid. 1103b26-31; EE 1216b2-16
\(^{118}\) ibid. 1113b19-21
\(^{119}\) ibid. 1139a31-3
The agent’s choice is the efficient cause of his action and the end, that for the sake of which he chooses, is the final cause of the action as the cause of that choice. Choice and the cause of choice are the two causes of practical knowledge.

Choice is the origin of the agent’s action. But as Aristotle tells us at NE III 3, the origin (archē) of the agent’s choice is the ruling part of himself:

A human being stops inquiring how he shall act as soon as he has carried back the origin of action to himself, and to the ruling (to hégoumenon) part of himself, for it is this part which chooses (to proairoumenon). This may be illustrated by the ancient constitutions represented by Homer: the kings used to proclaim to the people the measures they had chosen to adopt.120

That this ruling part of himself is his intellect is clear at NE IX 8 where Aristotle describes the intellect (nous), that which is most dominant (to kuriōtaton) in the virtuous man, as that which he obeys in everything:

Also it is the most dominant part of himself that he indulges in and obeys in everything. But as in the polis it is the sovereign that is held in the fullest sense to be the polis, and in the composite whole it is the dominant part that is deemed especially to be that whole, so it is with the human being...again, the terms ‘self-restrained’ and ‘unrestrained’ denote being restrained or not by one’s intellect, and thus imply that the intellect is the human being himself. Also it is our reasoned acts that are felt to be in the fullest sense our own acts, voluntary acts. It is therefore clear that a human being values this part of himself most ... the good man does what he ought, since intellect always takes (hairetai) for itself what is best, and the good man obeys his intellect.121

It is clear, then, that for Aristotle, the ruling part of the virtuous man as agent, that part which is decisive in his choice of action, is his intellect and its activity in choosing or ‘taking’ what is best. Now Aristotle recognizes a theoretical and a practical intellect, the former the scientific faculty of the rational part of the human function exercised according to the intellectual virtue of wisdom,122 the latter the calculative faculty of the human function exercised according to the calculative virtue of practical intelligence (phronēsis).123

That Aristotle is referring ultimately to the former intellect in his praise of what is most dominant is apparent at NE VI 13 where he describes wisdom as ‘the better part’ for the

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120 ibid. 1113a5-9
121 ibid. 1168b29-1169a18
122 ibid. 1141a18-20, b2-3, 1139a8-17

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sake of which practical intelligence is exercised\textsuperscript{124} and at NE X 7 where the human good of a life of perfect happiness is described as a life of intellect, a life of the faculty of the activity of \textit{theoría} in accordance with \textit{sophia}.\textsuperscript{125} It is this intellect which Aristotle describes as that part which is best (\textit{to kratiston}) and dominant (\textit{to kurion}) in the human being, the life of which we are urged to 'take' by immortalizing ourselves for as far as we can.\textsuperscript{126} It is this intellect which the virtuous man loves most in his choice of action for the sake of the human good as end. The efficient cause of the virtuous man's practical knowledge of the human good, then, is his practical intelligence but the origin of that choice is not ultimately that of practical intelligence but rather his theoretical intellect as that for the sake of which he makes his choice.

Besides the efficient cause of the action in practical knowledge, there is the final cause. The final cause of an action, or the cause of the agent's choice, is that for the sake of which he chooses to act. The final cause of practical knowledge is the good and final end as the object of the agent's appetite. For the supreme human good to be the good and end as object of his appetite, the agent would have to be a virtuous man, that is, one who is ethically virtuous, for as Aristotle observes at NE VI:

\ldots virtue ensures the rightness of the end we aim at, practical intelligence ensures the rightness of the means we adopt to gain that end.\textsuperscript{127}

\ldots practical syllogisms always have a major premise of the form 'since the end or supreme good is so and so' (whatever it may be, since we may take it as anything we like for the sake of the argument); but the supreme good only appears good to the good man: vice perverts the mind and causes it to hold false views about the first principles of conduct.\textsuperscript{128}

If ethical virtue determines the rightness of the good as end, this virtue is that of the appetitive and non-rational faculty of the human function. Ethical virtue may guarantee that

\begin{enumerate}
\item[123] ibid. 1143a35-b11, 1139a8-17
\item[124] ibid. 1145a2-11
\item[125] ibid. 1177a12-25
\item[126] ibid. 1177a31-1178a2. As opposed to a concern for (\textit{phronein}) what is merely human and mortal: ibid. 1177a31-3. As to the vexed issue of how this intellect as what is most the man himself is related to the productive intellect at DA III 5, cf. Kahn, (1996) 359-79.
\item[127] \textit{NE} 1144a7-9
\item[128] ibid. 1144a29-36
\end{enumerate}
the virtuous man desires what is truly the human good as end and practical intelligence the
means to that end but neither ethical virtue nor practical intelligence can be the virtue by
which the virtuous man knows what the human good as end is. As appetite for the good
depends upon a true apprehension of the nature of what is desired, the virtuous man’s
virtuous appetite for the human good as end depends upon a true apprehension, or a
theoretical knowledge, of the nature of that good.

In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle explains that appetite follows upon a knowledge of the
nature of that which is desired:

...it is the apparent good that is the object of appetite, and the real
good that is the object of the rational will. Desire is the result of opinion
rather than opinion that of desire; it is the act of thinking (*noēsis*) that is the
starting point and thought is moved by the intelligible (*hupo tou
noētou*). ... \(^{129}\)

The thing as intelligible is the cause of its being known. The desirability of the
thing as good presupposes its being truly apprehended. Practical knowledge, being
appetitive, is an actualization of the non-rational part of the human function, the part which
shares in the rational to the extent that it follows, or obeys, that rational part. As a faculty
is actually determined by its exercise and that exercise by its specific object, \(^{130}\) the
appetitive faculty of appetite and its exercise are determined by their object (*to orekton*): that
which is desired as good. \(^{131}\) Since the human good as object of rational appetite (*to
boulēton*) is first a nature, or substance (*ousia*), which is intelligible (*to noēton*) and known
to be so, \(^{132}\) the good as end and first principle of the virtuous man’s practical knowledge

\(^{129}\) *Meta* 1072a27-30

\(^{130}\) Cf. *Cat* 7b23ff; *DA* 415a16-22

\(^{131}\) *DMA* 710b32-4, 702a16-9, 703b18-9. This is also evident in *DA* III 9-11, where, as Richardson,
(1996) 381-99, rightly points out. Aristotle accords central importance to the good as object of desire and a
coordinate importance to the faculty of desire and discernment.

\(^{132}\) *Meta* 1072a26-b1. The life of *theoría* is perfect human happiness and the primary instance of the
human good. And as Aristotle explains in his first philosophy, the primary instances of both the object of
desire (*to orekton*) and the object of understanding (*to noēton*) are the same, but the object as desired
presupposes that object as first understood. For desire follows on what is apparent rather than the reverse
and rational desire (*boulēsis*) for the real good presupposes an understanding of that good as intelligible (*to
noēton*). The primary intelligible is substance (*ousia*) and knowledge of substance is the theoretical
knowledge of first philosophy. It is in this way that practical knowledge of something as good presupposes
depends upon a true apprehension, or theoretical knowledge, of the nature of that good.\textsuperscript{133}

As the only other rational faculty active in the virtuous man’s practical knowledge of the

\textsuperscript{133} Aristotle describes the exercise of the rational and appetitive virtues of the human function in practical knowledge as an \textit{orexis} which follows \textit{nous}, but characterizes \textit{nous} as ‘practical’ (\textit{ho praktikos}), that is, the exercise of the rational faculty which is a knowledge of the good as end and final cause of action: \textit{DA} 433a1-8; \textit{DMA} 701a33-6. \textit{NE} 1139a35-6. The good and end as object of appetite (\textit{to orektos}) is unmoved and causes movement by being thought of or imagined (\textit{moêthenai è phantasthênaï}:: \textit{DA} 433b10-2; \textit{DMA} 701b32-4, 702a16-9, 703b18-9. Imagination involves either calculation or sensation (\textit{logistike e aisthêtik}): \textit{DA} 433b29, but deliberate imagination in calculation presupposes the universal as object of the cognitive faculty (\textit{to epistêmonikon}) which is unmoved: ibid. 434a15-12. As Aristotle explains at \textit{NE} VI, this cognitive or scientific faculty is an \textit{epistêmê} and \textit{nous} whose activities are a theoretical knowledge of that which is necessary and eternal: \textit{NE} 1139a11-2, 26-9, b18-36, 1140b31-1141a8. Wisdom is that theoretical knowledge of the best objects which combines \textit{nous} and \textit{epistêmê}: ibid. 1141a16-20, and as we shall see, this wisdom is described in the \textit{Metaphysics} as a theoretical knowledge of the final cause both of the universe and of human action: \textit{Meta} 982b1-7. Thus the human good and end as object of the virtuous man’s rational appetite presupposes a true apprehension of the nature of that good as an intelligible (\textit{to noetos}), cf: \textit{Meta} 1072a26-b1, and this apprehension is the exercise of the intellectual faculties of \textit{nous} and \textit{epistêmê} in the exercise of the virtue of \textit{Sophia}.

The relation between theoretical knowledge of something as true and a practical knowledge of that thing as the good and end of a choice of action in Aristotle’s understanding of action has been articulated in the idiom of some contemporary philosophies of mind. For example, Anscombe, (1981) 76, writes: ‘What affirmation and negation are in judgment, pursuit and avoidance are in desire. That is, one can say ‘yes’ or ‘no’ both to a statement and to a proposal. Suppose, then, that the statement should say that doing such and such is ‘doing well’ There is the ‘yes’ in judgment and the ‘yes’ in will, meaning that one wants to do that sort of thing. For to characterize it as ‘doing well’ is \textit{eo ipso} to propose it as an object of ‘will’ - to put it up as a candidate for ‘will’, \textit{boulësis’}. Similarly, other contemporary thinkers understand a mental state such as desire or belief as analyzable into two components, one of which corresponds to the object clause in sentences like ‘John believes that it is raining’, or ‘Mary desires that it stop raining’, and the other which corresponds to the psychological verb in such sentences. There is no essential difference in propositional content between these two sentences but a difference in ‘propositional attitude’. Desires derive their distinctive characteristic of being able to motivate action not from their propositional content, but from the element which corresponds to the psychological verb in sentences attributing desire. See: Searle, (1983) 14-6 (though unlike Aristotle, many, like Searle, do not suppose this analysis reveals ontological constituents of mental states, but rather reveals, e.g., the logical features of these states). According to Stampe, (1987) 355: ‘While the belief and the desire that \textit{p} have the same propositional content and represent the same state of affairs, there is a difference in the way it is represented in the two states of mind. In belief it is represented as \textit{obtaining}, whereas in desire, it is represented as a state of affairs \textit{the obtaining of which would be good}.’ On the other hand see: Tuozzo, (1994) 525-49. While Tuozzo concedes that Aristotle holds that desires and beliefs have what may be called propositional content, he maintains that Aristotle’s view of desire differs fundamentally from this contemporary propositional-attitude account in that there is a difference (for Aristotle) in the content itself of desire and belief. Tuozzo argues that mental states, for Aristotle, are ‘mental predications’ and a desire is such a mental predication with a specific sort of mental predicate, differing from that of a belief in that it is a predicate with intrinsically motivating force. Earlier, Fortenbaugh, (1975) also stressed the distinctive cognitive aspect of desire in his interpretation of emotion in Aristotle. If this interpretation of Fortenbaugh’s and Tuozzo’s (and others) is taken as correct, it would mean a radical separation between practical knowledge and theoretical knowledge, thereby threatening Aristotle’s understanding of the unity of the ethical and intellectual virtues in the happy human life. Fortenbaugh even goes so far as to argue that the virtuous man can act virtuously without exercising \textit{phronësis} at all: (1969) 169-73. But this cannot be correct, for it
human good is practical intelligence (phronēsis), which we shall see shortly is a calculative virtue which has as its object the means to the good as end rather than the end itself.\(^{134}\) practical intelligence cannot supply the virtuous man with a knowledge of the nature of the supreme good as end desired by ethical virtue. The remaining possibility is that of the activity of the scientific faculty of the human function exercised according to the virtue of wisdom which has as its object that which is most honored,\(^{135}\) that is, as Aristotle describes it at NE X 7, that which is divine and fine (kalon).\(^{136}\) If the object of wisdom includes the nature of the human good as end as that which is divine and fine, it may be inferred that for Aristotle the virtuous man's practical knowledge of the human good presupposes the exercise of wisdom in a knowledge of the nature of the good and end which he desires by his ethical virtue and by his practical intelligence chooses the right means for it.

The object of wisdom is that which is most estimable in reality. That this object can include the nature of the human good can be inferred from what Aristotle tells us in the Metaphysics concerning wisdom as the knowledge of the good as a final cause:

...the things which are most knowable are first principles and causes; for it is through these and from these that other things come to be known ... and that knowledge is supreme ... which knows for what end each action is to be done; i.e. the good in each particular case, and in general the highest good in the whole of nature.\(^{137}\)

For inasmuch as it is most architectonic and authoritative and the other sciences, like slave-women, may not even contradict it, the science of the end and of the good is of the nature of wisdom (for the other things are for the sake of the end).\(^{138}\)

Since wisdom is the intellectual virtue by which the first principles and causes of all things are known, it is by the exercise of this intellectual virtue that the nature of the human good as the end, the first principle and final cause of action, is known as well. Indeed, as

confuses Aristotle's distinction between the rational and the appetitive parts of human rationality which together function in virtuous action. In that action the appetitive is that part of human rationality which obeys the rational part: e.g. NE 1102b25ff. Appetitive virtue is determined by the rational virtues involved in right reason and would be blind without it: NE 1144b10-7. Cf. Smith, (1996) 65-72.

\(^{134}\) NE 1139a6-15, 1140a31-5
\(^{135}\) ibid. 1141a16-20, b2-3
\(^{136}\) ibid. 1177a15, cf. a12-25
\(^{137}\) Meta 982b1-7

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Aristotle says, wisdom knows not only the good and end of the whole of nature, but the end of each action. So when in the right circumstances the virtuous man must choose action for the sake of its fineness, it will be by virtue of his wisdom that he will also know that the fineness of that action is the human good, for as we have seen, at NE X 7, it is the activity of nous according to wisdom which has as its object that which is divine but what is fine.139

In the NE Aristotle takes very seriously what the wise (hoi sophoi) have to say about happiness. At NE I 4, in broaching the subject of the nature of happiness for the first time, he acknowledges the different conceptions of happiness by noting the difference between the popular accounts and that given by the wise,140 and at the end of the NE he compares his understanding of happiness with the opinions of those he considers wise.141 This consideration of the wise implies that for Aristotle it is the task of the virtuous man as wise to understand the nature of the human good. If this is correct, then the virtuous man’s theoretical activity in accordance with wisdom is, in effect, that knowledge (gnôsis)142 of the supreme good which Aristotle describes in Book I of the NE as being of such practical importance:

If therefore among the ends at which our actions aim there is one which we wish for its own sake, while we wish the others only for the sake of this ... it is clear that this one ultimate end must be the good, and indeed the supreme good. Will not a knowledge of this supreme good be also of great practical importance for the conduct of life? Will it not better enable us to attain what is fitting, like archers having a target to aim at?143

This theoretical knowledge of the nature of the human good is not, of course, a practical knowledge of that good, for the latter is an appetitive knowledge which results in a choice of action for the sake of what is fine and the subsequent formation of the virtuous

139 ibid. 996b10-3
139 NE 1177a15, supra note 136
140 ibid. 1095a20-2. The passage at EE 1215a2-3 where Aristotle urges his readers to consider only what the sophoi teach about happiness appears to be an interpolation.
141 NE 1179a9-17
142 Aristotle describes this knowledge of the supreme good in this passage as a gnôsis. Here it would appear that he is using the term in its broader reference to a theoretical knowledge in contrast to a practical knowledge which results in action: supra note 30.
character of the agent. The virtuous man by his ethical virtue desires the supreme good but if he is to know the nature of that good - what he is desiring, if he is to attain a true apprehension of the nature of that good, he needs to exercise the virtue of that that rational faculty capable of a knowledge of that good as end. As this virtue cannot be practical intelligence, as the object of that virtue is the means to the end and not the end, it must be wisdom. In this way the virtuous man in his practical knowledge of the good actualizes the complete human function by exercising not only the practical virtues of practical intelligence and ethical virtue, but the intellectual virtue of wisdom as well.

An important challenge to this understanding of the unity of the virtues exercised in the virtuous man’s activity is an influential interpretation which takes phronēsis not as the virtuous man’s practical intelligence whose exercise depends upon the exercise of his wisdom but rather as a practical wisdom by which the virtuous man simply as a phronimos, or practically wise man, not only discerns and decides that action which is the right means to the human good of the fineness of the activity as end but contributes to the constitution of that good itself. This reading of Aristotle’s understanding of practical intelligence would effectively leave out the exercise of the intellectual virtue of wisdom in the virtuous man’s practical knowledge of the human good. For this reason a closer examination of the nature and role of phronēsis in virtuous action is called for.

2. The Nature and Role of Phronēsis in the Virtuous Man’s Practical Knowledge of the Human Good

a. The Problem Posed by an Influential Interpretation of the Nature and Role of Phronēsis in Virtuous Action

By understanding the unity of virtues in the virtuous man’s practical knowledge of the human good to include wisdom, I am taking issue with an influential interpretation of the nature and role of phronēsis in virtuous action. This interpretation sees the calculative virtue of phronēsis as a ‘practical wisdom’, and the virtuous man as a phronimos, or a ‘practically wise man’, who is able, simply by his phronēsis and éthiké aretē, not only to

\[\text{NE 1094a18-24}\]
deliberate and to choose the right action for the sake of the human good but to determine the constitutive character of that good as well.\footnote{Allan, (1952) 120-27 and 163- 78, defined \textit{phronēsis} as ‘practical wisdom’ and claimed that this intellectual virtue includes both an intelligent inquiry into the means of action (corresponding to the minor premise of the practical syllogism) and into the ends of action (corresponding to the major premise of the practical syllogism). For Allan the \textit{phronimos}, or ‘practically wise person’ possesses ‘a philosophical view of man’s place in the universe’ and ‘can best define the end for which all human society exists’. Also, cf. Gauthier and Jolif, (1970) I. 1:279. II. 2:567-68 and more recently, Cooper, (1975) 63-5; Wiggins, (1980) 221-40; Sorabji, (1980) 204; Engberg-Pederson, (1983), 220-39; Irwin, (1988) 336-38, 610; and Sherman (1988) 88-90, who argue that deliberation and choice have to do not only with means to an end but the} This interpretation of the nature and role of \textit{phronēsis} in virtuous action and the character of the \textit{phronimos}, I shall argue, in effect conflates the nature and role of \textit{phronēsis} with that of \textit{sophia} in Aristotle’s understanding of the unity of the virtues in virtuous action in the \textit{NE}. Such an interpretation cannot be right for a number of reasons. First, the attempt to understand the calculative intellectual virtue of \textit{phronēsis} as both determining the action as means to the human good as end \textit{and} determining the constitutive character of that good in effect assigns \textit{two} objects to the calculative faculty which contravenes Aristotle’s principle of strict correlation between a habit, its exercise, and its object. Second, even if the exercise of \textit{phronēsis} could have both the means to the good as end and the end itself as its object, this assignment of two objects to the calculative faculty of the human function would result in the effective exclusion of the activity of the intellectual faculty of \textit{nous} and its virtue of \textit{sophia} from virtuous action. The complete human function could not be actualized in such action and a life of such action, cut off from the exercise of theoretical wisdom could not be happy. Finally, \textit{phronēsis} for Aristotle is the virtue of good deliberation. Since human good as end is not an object of deliberation or choice but rather of rational appetite (\textit{boulēsis}), \textit{phronēsis} cannot be the virtue by which the human good as end is known - much less constituted. The human good as end, for Aristotle, is not an object of choice. The virtuous man as wise does not deliberate over and choose or ‘constitute’ the human good, for that good is the actualization of the natural human function in a life of virtuous activity. Rather, by his wisdom he recognizes and acknowledges the nature of that good as the activity of
theōria in a life of contemplation and rationally desires that good in striving to immortalize himself as far as he can by living such a life. But in his choice of action for the sake of its fineness, the wise man exercises his practical intelligence and ethical virtues understanding by his wisdom that the good of such action and the exercise of these practical virtues is in focal reference to the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation and the exercise of wisdom in that life. If a choice of action were made without the wisdom of knowing the nature of the human good, the agent could not give a rational account of why he chooses what he does, because he himself would not know the nature of the human good for the sake of which he makes his choice. Such a choice of action could not be virtuous, that is, fine, except accidentally and the agent of such a choice could not be a virtuous man.

Virtuous action is action chosen for the sake of its fineness by a practically intelligent and ethically virtuous man who has the wisdom to know that the good of such action is in focal reference to the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation.

b. Phronēsis is the Calculative Virtue of the Human Function whose Object is the Particular Action as Means to the Good as End

Since for Aristotle the human function is divided into rational and appetitive parts, each part having a number of faculties,\(^\text{145}\) and each faculty being specified by its characteristic virtues and their specific objects,\(^\text{146}\) each of the different human virtues will

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\(^{145}\) The rational part of the human function is divided into two faculties, the 'scientific' (to epistēmonikon) and the calculative (to logistikon): NE 1102a26-1103a3; DA 432a15-433b30. The appetitive is divided into the faculties of rational appetite (boulēsis) - which has as its object the human good as end: ibid. 111b26-9, 1113a15ff - and deliberative desire (bouleutikē orexis) whose object is the means by which the human good can be put into practice: 111b26-7, 1112b11-2, 32-1113a16, 1113b3-5, 1142b29-33.

\(^{146}\) Each faculty is actualized by the exercise of its own virtues with respect to its own objects: NE 1104b19-21, 1115a4-5, 1122b1-2, 1139a8-11; Cat 7b23ff; DA 415a16-22. The scientific faculty is actualized by the exercise of nous in the apprehension of the first principles of reality and definition, and of epistēmē in the demonstrative knowledge resulting from those first principles and definitions: ibid. 1140b31-6, 1141a7-8, 1143a35-b7. When nous and epistēmē are exercised together with respect to that which is most honored (timiōtaton) in reality: ibid. 1141a16-20, that is, the divine: Meta 983a5-11, 1072b24-30, the scientific faculty of the rational part of the human function is actualized. The calculative faculty is actualized by the exercise of the virtue of practical intelligence (phronēsis) in the deliberation over, and choice of, that action which is the necessary means of practicing the human good: NE 1139a1-17, 1141b8-14, 1144a1-11. The appetitive faculty is actualized by appetitive, of character virtue (ēthikē aretē),
be specified and distinguished from the other virtues by its particular faculty, activity, and object. In the *De Anima* Aristotle describes the method of inquiry by which the faculties of the human function are known:

> If one intends to investigate these faculties, one must first grasp what each of them is, and then proceed to inquire into secondary matters, and so on. But if one is to state what each of them—e.g., the thinking, sensitive, or nutritive faculty—is, one must again first explain what thinking and perceiving are; for logically the exercise of their functions comes before the faculties themselves. And if this is so, and if one should examine, even before these functions, the objects corresponding to them, then for the same reason one must first of all determine the facts about those objects, e.g., about food or the object of perception or thought.

This method of inquiry into the nature of a faculty by the examination of its exercise by means of a knowledge of its object is a principle cited or presumed throughout the *NE*. And so just as we know a faculty by its exercise and the exercise by its object, our knowledge of *phronësis* and its place and role in virtuous action should be determined by our knowledge of the object of its exercise. However, the object of the exercise of the virtue of *phronësis* has been a matter of some dispute. Some commentators are convinced that because the exercise of *phronësis* is described by Aristotle as ‘the truth attaining rational quality concerned with action in relation to things that are good and bad for human beings’ the virtuous man as a *phronimos*, or ‘practically wise man’, simply by the exercise of his *phronësis*, is able not only to deliberate well concerning that which is ‘toward the end’ (*pros ta telos*) but also to know the human good as end (*telos*).\(^{150}\)

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\(^{147}\) *DA* 415a16-22

\(^{148}\) *NE* 1103a1-10, b21-5, 1104b19-21, 1122b1-2, 1139aff, cf. 1115b20-1, 1129a11-6

\(^{149}\) ibid. 1140b4-6

\(^{150}\) The unity of the virtues of the intellectual and appetitive parts of the human function in the virtuous man’s practical knowledge of the human good has been a point of some controversy. Aristotle maintains that appetitive, or ethical, virtue (*éthiké areté*) ‘makes the end right’ while the calculative virtue of practical intelligence (*phronësis*) ensures the rightness of the means (*ta pros touton*) adopted to that end: *NE* 1144a7-9. This has been variously interpreted. Walter, (1874) insisted that our goals are decided by ethical virtue and that virtue is a state of the appetitive part of the human function which simply approves certain goals. But other commentators, more recently, Irwin, (1975), Allan, (1977) 72-8, and Wiggins, (1980) 221-40, have understood appetite and appetitive virtue to be dependent upon the rational part of the human function for its object, citing Aristotle’s position that the appetitive part of the human function is exercised in obedience to the exercise of the rational, e.g. ibid. 1102b25ff. These commentators complain that if
However, since Aristotle distinguishes action which is 'toward the end' and the good as end, this interpretation, in effect, would result in understanding the exercise of the one virtue of \textit{phronēsis} to have two objects. This would contravene the Aristotelian principle of the correspondence between faculty, exercise, and object. The exercise of the virtue of \textit{phronēsis} can have only one object and that object is the action as what is 'toward the end'.

Aristotle is understood as advocating the determination of the human good by appetite rather than by reason, he is being (mis)understood as a Humean or an emotivist. Sorabji, (1980) 210-19, maintains quite correctly and uncontroversially that neither appetitive virtue nor \textit{phronēsis} can be exercised apart from each other and argues that appetitive virtue does not present us with the end but rather preserves our conception of that end. The conception of our end, he avers, is the result of induction and teaching. Sorabji, like Irwin, Wiggins, and others go on to claim that the conception of the end is ultimately the work of \textit{phronēsis}. Fortenbaugh, (1975), Tuozzo, (1994). 525-49, and others maintain, on the other hand, that for Aristotle there is an inherent rationality in the emotions and the appetite: supra note 137. This leads Tuozzo to conclude that the human knower does indeed determine the human good by virtue of these parts of the human function. Smith, (1996) 56-74, takes something of a middle position by arguing that the exercise of appetitive virtue is intrinsically purposive, that is, appetite is ordered to what is fine (\textit{to kalon}), and that the fine is grasped as a practical universal by the \textit{nous} which is a part of \textit{phronēsis}. Irwin, Wiggins, Sorabji, and others with positions like theirs, are right to resist any interpretation that would try to assimilate a conception of the good as end to the exercise of the appetitive part of the human function apart from the exercise of the rational part, for the rational exercise of the appetite by its very nature for Aristotle must follow upon what is rationally understood to be the case. Appetitive virtue cannot be exercised apart from a prior rational apprehension of its object (though of course the object of appetite cannot be reduced to that prior rational apprehension). Nevertheless Irwin, Wiggins, and Sorabji are wrong to try to assimilate a rational conception of the good and end to the exercise of \textit{phronēsis}; for that virtue, though intellectual, is calculative, or deliberative, itself presupposing a knowledge of the good as end for the sake of which deliberation is made. The root problem here is the failure to acknowledge the place of \textit{sophia} in practical reasoning. Wisdom is the intellectual virtue which enables the virtuous man to know the nature of the human good and by his appetitive virtue to make that human good his practical good by the exercise of his practical intelligence the discernment and choice of that action which is the right means. Smith's attempt to explain the fine as a practical universal understood by practical intelligence fails for reasons given above in our analysis of the place of the practical universal in practical knowledge of the human good. The virtuous man has an actual practical knowledge of the fine as a definite good and not as a universal (which is only a potential knowledge of the fine). Besides, this practical knowledge of the fine is attained by the combined exercise of wisdom, practical intelligence, and appetitive virtue, not simply by practical intelligence with appetitive virtue.

\footnote{Proponents of the view that by virtue of \textit{phronēsis} one can deliberate about ends as well as means attempt to sidestep Aristotle's strict disclaimer that one can deliberate over ends by maintaining that one cannot \textit{at the same time} deliberate about means and ends, but in any exercise of deliberation one can take for granted something as an end which has been the subject of a prior deliberation. Besides finding no evidence of a \textit{bouleusis} of ends in Aristotle's text, this attempt remains inconsistent with Aristotle's description of \textit{phronēsis} in the \textit{NE} as the virtue of the calculative faculty of human reason. The virtuous man may well have considered his good and end prior to deliberating over a particular action as the means to put that good into practice, but that prior consideration cannot have been an exercise of deliberation and so cannot have been the object of the exercise of \textit{phronēsis}. Consideration of what constitutes the human good as end is the task of the virtuous man, who by his appetitive virtue, seeks to make the human good his practical good and by the exercise of his intellectual virtue of wisdom knows what that human good consists in. Deliberately desiring to put that good into practice in action, the virtuous man, in the exercise of his \textit{phronēsis} rightly discerns and chooses the action which fulfills that desire.}
Since knowledge of the human good as end is not the object of *phronésis*, the practically intelligent man in his exercise of *phronésis* with respect to what is 'toward the end' must have some knowledge of the good as end. This knowledge can only be the object of the practically intelligent man's exercise of wisdom, the exercise of the scientific faculty of the rational part of the human function which has the nature of the divine (which includes the nature of the human being and its good) as its object. The wise man by his wisdom knows the nature of the human good as end and this knowledge of the end enables him to exercise his practical intelligence and ethical virtue in a choice of action (that which is 'toward the end') for the sake of the fineness of the action.

To see why the exercise of *phronésis*, or practical intelligence, is insufficient without the virtuous man's exercise of wisdom in practical knowledge of the human good as presented in the *NE*,\(^\text{152}\) we need to look at the object of the exercise of *phronésis* as the virtue of the calculative faculty of the rational part of the human function.

In the *NE* Aristotle divides the two faculties of the rational part of the human function, the scientific and the calculative, according to their different activities and objects:

> Let us now divide the rational part of the soul and let it be assumed that there are two rational faculties, one whereby we contemplate those things whose first principles are invariable, and one whereby we contemplate those things which admit of variation ... these two rational faculties may be designated the 'scientific' (to *epistémonikon*) and the calculative (to

\(\text{\textsuperscript{152}}\) In the *EE* Aristotle recognized only *phronésis* as the virtue of the rational part of the human soul (although *sophia* is mentioned at ibid. 1215a2, this appears to be a scholarly interpolation). The reason is not that the exercise of *sophia* for Aristotle was ever superfluous to the practical knowledge of ethics but that at the time of his composing the *EE* he simply had not explicitly distinguished the virtues of the rational part of the human soul according to their distinctive objects as he did later in the *NE*. At the time of his composing the *EE* Aristotle seems to have understood *phronésis* as an intellectual virtue which included both the end and the means to that end as its concern. In the *NE* however, he clearly distinguishes the calculative from the intellectual faculty of the rational part of the human soul and distinguishes their virtues and objects as well. *Phronésis* in the *NE* is the virtue of the calculative faculty of the rational part of the human soul which has as its object that which is variable - the action as means to the good as final end. See: Rowe (1971) 63-72 and (1971a) 74-92. Yet even in the *EE*, at least in Book VIII, the exercise of *phronésis* is described as exercised for the sake of the human good as end, which is identified as divine contemplation: ibid. 1249b13-25. In *NE VI* the exercise of *sophia* is expressly singled out as that which produces happiness: ibid. 1144a3-6, while *phronésis* is clearly understood as a virtue exercised for the sake of *sophia*: ibid. 1145a6-11. If in fact, as some scholars have argued, *NE VI* was originally part of the *EE*, it seems to have been subsequently edited by Aristotle when he placed it in the *NE* to conform to his mature understanding of the differentiation of the faculties and virtues of the rational part of the human soul according to their different objects, again, cf. Rowe op. cit.
lo gistikon) respectively: since calculation is the same as deliberation, and deliberation is never exercised about things that are invariable, so that the calculative faculty is a separate part of the rational half of the soul.153

The calculative faculty differs from the scientific by its distinctive exercise - deliberation (bouleusis) - and with respect to its distinctive object - that which is variable. Phronesis is the distinctive virtue of the calculative intellectual faculty and calculation, Aristotle tells us, is deliberation and its object is variable.154 In these two ways, phronesis differs from the virtue and exercise of the scientific faculty - episteme: For, as Aristotle observes:

No one deliberates about things that cannot vary, nor about things not within one's power to do. Hence inasmuch as knowledge (episteme) involves demonstration, whereas things whose fundamental principles are variable are not capable of demonstration, because everything about them is variable, and inasmuch as one cannot deliberate about things that are of necessity, it follows that phronesis is not the same as knowledge.155

Now practical knowledge, as we have seen, is appettive end/means knowledge. In practical knowledge of the human good, the object of deliberation is the means to the end rather than the end:

We deliberate not about ends (peri ton telon), but about means (peri ton pros ta tele). A doctor does not deliberate whether he is to cure his patient, nor an orator whether he is to convince his audience, nor a statesman whether he is to secure good government, nor does anyone else debate about the end of his profession or calling; they take some end for granted, and consider how and by what means it can be achieved.156

It appears that ... a man is the origin of his actions, and that the province of deliberation is to discover actions within one's own power to perform; and all our actions aim at ends other than themselves. It follows that we do not deliberate about the end (to telos) but about the means (ta pros ta tele).157

The object of deliberation is an action as means, that is, what is 'toward' the good as end. Phronesis is the virtue of deliberating well and the phronimos is one who is able to deliberate well about action which is conducive to the good life:

153 NE 1139a6-15
154 ibid. 1139a12-14
155 ibid. 1140a31-5
156 ibid. 1112b12-6
157 ibid. 1112b32-4
It is the mark of the *phronimos* to be able to deliberate well about what is
good and advantageous for himself ... as a means to the good life as a
whole (*pros tou eu zên holôs*).\(^{138}\)

If therefore to have deliberated well is characteristic of the *phronimoi*,
deliberative virtue must be correctness of deliberation with regard to what is
expedient as a means to the end, a true conception of which constitutes
*phronësis*.\(^{159}\)

In this last passage there is an ambiguity in the Greek which appears to many
commentators to favor reading the object of the true conception of *phronësis* as the end
rather than the means to the end.\(^{160}\) But in the context of Aristotle’s immediate and overall
ethical argument there can be no doubt that Aristotle’s meaning can only be that the object
of the virtuous man’s exercise of *phronësis* is the particular action as means to the end and
not the end itself. The immediate context of the passage makes it clear that Aristotle is
examining deliberative virtue. This deliberation, he explains, is virtuous with respect to or
towards the end: *pros to telos*.\(^{161}\) Some have attempted to interpret deliberation over what
is *pros to telos* as a deliberation over what ‘pertains to the end’ as a ‘constitutive part’ of
that end.\(^{162}\) But this attempt fails to take into account Aristotle’s clear contrast between
deliberation over what is *pros to telos* and the end itself: *peri tôn telôn* - a contrast which
appears throughout his practical philosophy.\(^{163}\) Moreover, Aristotle clearly distinguishes

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\(^{138}\) ibid. 1140a24-31

\(^{139}\) ibid. 1142b31-3

\(^{140}\) The syntax of the phrase *ei kata to sumpheron pros to (or té) telos hou ei phronësis alêthês*
*hupolépsis estin* is ambiguous. The difficulty is to know the antecedent of *hout: to sumpheron pros té (to)*
telos or solely *ti (or) telos*: Aubenque, (1965) 41-51. If this passage were taken out of the context
of Aristotle’s immediate and overall ethical argument, the ambiguous syntax might suggest interpreting
Aristotle to mean that the object of the exercise of *phronësis* is the means to the end, the end itself, or even
both the means and the end. Cf. Bodeus, (1993) 28-30. But commentators such as Burnet (1904) 277-8,
Aubenque (1965), 41-51, Tricot, (1967) 301, and Rackham, (1982) 356, nevertheless, have understood the
antecedent of ‘which’ not as ‘the end’ but as ‘what is expedient to the end’.

\(^{141}\) NE 1142b28-31

\(^{142}\) Supra note 70, 144, 150, 151

\(^{143}\) Supra note 159: *bouleumetha d' ou peri tôn telôn alla peri tôn pros ta telei*. And EE 1226a7-8:
*outheis gar telos outhen proaireitai alla to pros to telos*. See also: NE 1112b31-5; EE 1226b19-1227a18.
Another confirmation of the distinction Aristotle understands between *pros to telei* and *telos* is found in his
examination of utility friendship: EE 1239b23-40. Utility friends often love each other as opposites
seeking from each other the opportunity to attain the good of a mean point. The opposite, Aristotle
explains, is pleasant and desirable as useful, ‘not as contained in the end but as a means to the end’: *ouk hôs
en to telei all' hôs pros to telos*. In the *Politics* Aristotle tells us that there are two things in which the
welfare of the citizens consist: one of these is the correct establishment of the aim and end of their actions
the two appetitive faculties of rational desire, or wish (boulesis), and deliberative desire (bouleutike orexis) precisely by their different objects. The object of boulesis is the good as end; the object of bouleutike orexis that which is the means to the end.\textsuperscript{164}

The phronimos, by the exercise of his phronësis, the virtue of the calculative faculty in the activity of deliberating well, is able to discern and choose that action which is 'toward' the human good as end. The object of phronësis, then, is what is 'toward' that end; not the human good as the end itself. This distinction between the action as 'toward the end' and the good as end is of crucial significance if we are to rightly understand Aristotle when he describes the object of phronësis, in contrast to that of sophia, as that which is fine and just and good for human beings:

Sophia does not consider the means to human happiness at all, for it does not ask how anything comes into existence. Phronësis, it must be granted does this; but what do we need it for? seeing that it is concerned with that which is just and fine and good for human beings...\textsuperscript{165}

Here Aristotle describes phronësis as 'concerned with' that which is just and fine and good for human beings (peri ta dikaia kai kala kai agatha anthropoi) just as the calculative virtue of deliberation is concerned with that which is 'toward the end' rather than with the end itself.\textsuperscript{166} The human good as the end itself is the fineness of the action - that for the sake of which the action is chosen. The fineness of the action requires, of course, the practical intelligence of the phronimos to choose the action as what is 'toward the end', but practical intelligence presupposes a knowledge of the good precisely as end.

\textsuperscript{164} ibid. 1111b26-30, 1113a9-16, b3-5; 1140a25-31, 1142b27-34, 1145a2-6; EE 1226a7-17, cf. NE 1139a31-2, 1142b10-2
\textsuperscript{165} NE 1143b19-24, cf. ibid. 1140b4-6, 20-1, 1141b8-14. At NE 1143a3 Aristotle describes iatrike as 'about health' (peri hugieian)
\textsuperscript{166} At 1143b19-24 phronësis is supposed to be concerned with human happiness (eudaimôn anthropos) as being 'about just and fine and good things for human beings' (peri ta dikaia kai kala kai agatha anthropoi). If iatrike is different than, but employed to bring about health, then by analogy Aristotle understands phronësis as different from human happiness but employed by the virtuous man in his concern
This knowledge is not had by virtue of practical intelligence nor by ethical virtue (for a rational appetite and deliberate desire for a good, as we have seen, itself presupposes knowledge of the truth of what is desired), but by wisdom.\footnote{Supra pp. 127-34}

Now it is true that wisdom is unconcerned with the human good in the way practical intelligence is concerned with that good. that is, with the action which is 'toward' that good as end. The reason is that the exercise of wisdom in theoretical knowledge of what is divine, which includes the knowledge that this is the perfectly happy human life of virtuous activity, \textit{is} the human good. And because the virtuous man as wise knows this, and knows the focal connection between the fineness of virtuous action and the human good of happiness, he can exercise his practical intelligence in determining that action which is 'toward' the human good as end. In this way his practical knowledge of the human good is the exercise of \textit{phronēsis} and \textit{ēthikē aretē} according to \textit{sophia}. What distinguishes the practical knowledge of the human good from the theoretical knowledge of the divine which \textit{is} the human good is the wise man's exercise of practical intelligence and ethical virtue in choices of action for the sake of the fineness of those actions. But this distinction between theoretical knowledge of the divine and the practical knowledge of the human good does not spell a separation of the two kinds of knowledge as if a practically intelligent and ethically virtuous man could have a practical knowledge of the human good without the wisdom to know the nature of the good and end for the sake of which those practical virtues are being exercised in his choice of action.

Besides being what is 'toward the end' (rather than the end itself), the object of \textit{phronēsis} differs from the object of \textit{epistēmē} as that which is contingent or variable differs from what is necessary. That which is necessary and invariable is the object of knowledge \textit{(epistēmē haplōs)} while the variable and contingent matter for deliberation is the object of \textit{doxa}. \textit{Phronēsis} deals distinctly with objects of \textit{doxa}:
Of the two parts of the soul possessed of reason, phronēsis must be the virtue of one, namely, the part that forms opinions, for opinion (doxa) deals with that which can vary, and so does phronēsis.\(^{168}\)

In addition, the variable action is also a particular (hekaston) which can only be grasped in perception (aisthēsis). Phronēsis further distinguishes itself from epistēmē as a perception of the action as a particular:

*Phronēsis* is not the same as *epistēmē*, for as has been said, it apprehends ultimate particular things, since the thing to be done is an ultimate particular thing ... *phronēsis* deals with the ultimate particular thing, which cannot be apprehended by *epistēmē* but only by *aisthēsis*.\(^{169}\)

Besides being a practical *nous* of an action as necessary, *phronēsis* is also, according to Aristotle, a grasp of the universal (*to katholou*):

Nor is *phronēsis* about general principles only (*ton katholou monon*): it must also take into account particular facts, since it is concerned with action, and action deals with particular things... *phronēsis* is concerned with action and so requires a grasp of both, but the particular especially...\(^{170}\)

Aristotle’s description of *phronēsis* as concerned with general principles as well as with particular action appears to ascribe two objects to the exercise of *phronēsis*. But that this ascription of two objects to the exercise of one faculty is more apparent than real can be seen if we keep in mind what we have noted before - the distinction Aristotle makes in the *Metaphysics* between actual and potential knowledge.\(^{171}\) As applied to practical knowledge of the human good, this distinction enables us to see that the actual object of the exercise of a faculty and its virtue, in this case *phronēsis*, is (and can only be) one, while a potential knowledge of that object also is possible. The actual object of the exercise of *phronēsis* is the particular action as the necessary means of putting the human good into practice while the grasp of the particular action is also potentially a *doxa* of a universal. While there is only one actual object of the exercise of *phronēsis*, namely the particular action chosen, there are potentially two objects - the particular action and the universal. Thus Aristotle’s

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\(^{168}\) *NE* 1140b25-8, 1144b14-5; cf. *PoA* 88b3-89b9

\(^{169}\) ibid. 1142a23-7

\(^{170}\) ibid. 1141b14-22

\(^{171}\) *Meta* 1087a10-25, *supra* pp. 121-2
description of *phronēsis* as concerned with the universal as well as with the particular does not threaten his one faculty, one activity, one object principle.

Nor does *phronēsis*’s concern for the universal mean that by the exercise of this calculative virtue alone the virtuous man can know the human good. The potential doxastic grasp of the action as a universal is derived from an actual *nous* of the action as necessary, and, as we have argued, this actual *nous* of the action presupposes the intellectual virtue of wisdom in an activity of intellectual *nous* whose object is of the nature of the human good as the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation and the secondarily happy life of virtuous action. The coordinated exercise of the intellectual and appetitive virtues in the wise man’s virtuous action is the key to understanding how Aristotle can apparently ascribe different kinds of knowledge of different objects to the exercise of *phronēsis* as a calculative virtue. Thus the *phronimos*, by the exercise of his practical intelligence, is able to attain an actual knowledge of the action as necessary means and potential knowledge of that action as a universal only in conjunction with his exercise of *sophia* and *ēthikē aretē*. For the *phronimos* to have a practically intelligent grasp of a universal, then, he must be not only a *spoudaios* but a *sophos*.

c. The Role of *Sophia* in the *Phronimos*’s Exercise of Practical Virtue

In this section I shall argue that from what Aristotle presents us with in the *NE*, it can be inferred that the virtuous man as a *phronimos*, or practically intelligent man, must exercise in his virtuous activity not only practical intelligence and ethical virtue, but also *sophia*, if the fineness of that activity is to be happy.

The focus of this section will be the use the virtuous man (*spoudaios*) as practically intelligent (*phronimos*) makes of wisdom (*sophia*) in his choice of action for the sake of the fineness of virtuous activity in the polis.

As we have seen, at *NE* VI 1 Aristotle divides the rational faculty into the scientific (*to epistēmonikon*) and the calculative (*to logistikon*) as their objects of their activities are, respectively, things which are invariable or variable. The calculative faculty, as the faculty
of deliberation,\textsuperscript{172} has as its object things attainable by action.\textsuperscript{173} At \textit{NE} VI 2, Aristotle tells us that sensation (\textit{aisthēsis}), intellect (\textit{nous}), and desire (\textit{orexis}) are those faculties of the soul which control action and the attainment of truth.\textsuperscript{174} At this stage the sense of \textit{nous} is the rational part of the soul as a whole whose function is \textit{dianoia}, or thought in general, for \textit{nous} and \textit{dianoia} can be divided into faculties and functions which have things which are variable or invariable as their respective objects.

Practical thinking deals with the attainment of truth in action as corresponding to right desire.\textsuperscript{175} This kind of thinking involves choice (\textit{proairesis}), or deliberate desire (\textit{orexis bouleutikē}), which combines right, or ethically virtuous, desire with true reason (\textit{logos alethēs}). In practical thinking, the efficient cause of an action is choice while the final cause is desire and reasoning directed to some end.\textsuperscript{176} As reasoning directed to an end involves a practical \textit{nous} and \textit{dianoia}, choice necessarily involves this kind of \textit{nous} and \textit{dianoia} and a certain disposition of character.\textsuperscript{177} The end of choice is something practical (\textit{to prakton}) as well done (\textit{eupraxia}).\textsuperscript{178}

As practical \textit{nous} and \textit{dianoia}, along with a certain character, are necessary for action, practical thinking involves the activity of the calculative rational faculty and the non-rational faculty of appetite. The virtues of these respective faculties are practical intelligence (\textit{phronēsis}) and ethical virtue (\textit{ēthikē aretē}). Aristotle describes the exercise of \textit{phronēsis} as the actualization of the calculative virtue which has the particular and variable action as means to the end as its object and the exercise of \textit{ēthikē aretē} as the actualization of the non-rational part of the human being which makes the end right. The end of the exercise of

\textsuperscript{172} \textit{NE} 1138b35-1139a15
\textsuperscript{173} ibid. 1112a30-1
\textsuperscript{174} ibid. 1139a17-20
\textsuperscript{175} ibid. 1139a29-31
\textsuperscript{176} ibid. 1139a31-4
\textsuperscript{177} ibid. 1139a35-b3
\textsuperscript{178} ibid. 1139b3-4, 1140b6-7
these practical virtues is the action itself as _eupraxia_.\textsuperscript{179} To this extent, then, the virtues exercised in virtuous activity appear to be confined to _phronēsis_ and _ēthikē aretē_.

If the calculative and appetitive faculties and their respective virtues are exercised in _eupraxia_, at _NE VI 12_ Aristotle makes it clear that happiness requires the exercise of wisdom (_sophia_) as well as _phronēsis_ and _ēthikē aretē_:

First then let us assert that wisdom and practical intelligence, being as they are the virtues of the two parts of the intellect respectively, are necessarily desirable in themselves, even if neither produces any effect. Secondly, they do in fact produce an effect: wisdom produces happiness, not in the sense in which medicine produces health, but in the sense in which healthiness is the cause of health. For wisdom is a part of virtue as a whole, and therefore by its possession, or rather by its exercise, renders a man happy. Also practical intelligence as well as ethical virtue determines the complete human function: ethical virtue ensures the rightness of the end we aim at, practical intelligence ensures the rightness of the means we adopt to gain that end. (The fourth part of the soul on the other hand, the nutritive faculty, has no virtue contributing to the human function, since it has no power to act or not to act).\textsuperscript{180}

From this passage we can conclude that if the agent of a virtuous action is to be happy, he must possess not only the faculties of deliberation and appetite and their virtues, but the scientific faculty and its virtue, wisdom, as well.

Aristotle explains how the exercise of _phronēsis_ is related to that of _sophia_ at _NE VI 13_: we learn that in virtuous activity practical intelligence is exercised for the sake of wisdom:

... our choice of actions will not be right without practical intelligence any more than without ethical virtue, since ethical virtue enables us to achieve the end, practical intelligence makes us adopt the right means to the end. But nevertheless it is not really the case that practical intelligence is in authority over wisdom, or over the higher part of the intellect, any more than medical science is in authority over health. Medical science does not control health, but studies how to procure it; hence it issues orders in the interest of health, but not to health ( _ekeinēs oun heneka epitattei, all ouk ekeinenti_). And again, one might as well say that political science governs the gods, because it gives orders about everything in the polis.\textsuperscript{181}

As medical science issues orders for the sake of health, _phronēsis_ is exercised for the sake of _sophia_. In this analogy health is being understood as the end of medical

\textsuperscript{179} ibid. 1140b6-7
\textsuperscript{180} ibid. 1144a1-11
science, health is that for the sake of which medical science is exercised. To complete the analogy, sophia is the end of phronēsis, that for the sake of which phronēsis is exercised in adopting the right means to the end. If we combine what Aristotle has told us in these two passages we can say that if a person is to be happy, phronēsis, in conjunction with ēthikē aretē, must be exercised for the sake of wisdom, whose exercise produces happiness.\(^{182}\) But how is wisdom related to eupraxia if the agent is to be happy?

As we have seen, the calculative and appetitive faculties of the human function and their virtues are exercised in choice for the sake of the virtuous action as the end.\(^{183}\) As the end of an action is its principle (archē),\(^{184}\) the virtuous action is the principle of the practical virtues exercised in a choice of action. However, in practical thinking, Aristotle appears to recognize a plurality of principles, for he describes the first principle of things done in the plural:

> The first principles of things done are the end to which our actions are the means (hai men gar archai tôn praktikōn to ou heneka ta prakta).\(^{185}\)

What other principle of choice is there besides the virtuous action itself? At NE VI 12 Aristotle describes the first principle of things done the end and 'supreme good' (to ariston):

> For deductive inferences about matters of conduct have as their first principle 'since the end or supreme good (to telos kai to ariston) is so and so' (whatever it may be, since we may take it as anything we like for the sake of argument); but the supreme good only appears good to the good man: vice perverts the mind and causes it to hold false views about the first principles of conduct. Hence it is clear that we cannot be prudent without being good.\(^{186}\)

\(^{181}\) ibid. 1145a4-11  
\(^{182}\) In NE X the activity of wisdom is contemplation. Aristotle not only identifies the activity of contemplation as happiness and a life of such activity as perfect happiness, but he also says that happiness consists in some form of contemplation: ibid. 1178b24-32, suggesting that happiness and contemplative activity are the convertible terms of a definition. cf. PoA 78a12.  
\(^{183}\) NE 1139a31-1139b4, 1140b6-7  
\(^{184}\) Cf. ibid. 1140a16-7  
\(^{185}\) ibid. 1140b16-7  
\(^{186}\) ibid. 1144a31-1144b1
This ‘end and supreme good’ as first principle of action, is, of course, happiness.\textsuperscript{187} But that happiness as the ‘end and supreme good’ and first principle of things done is \textit{not} the virtuous action can be inferred from things Aristotle has already told us in the \textit{NE}. First, as we have seen in our introduction, Aristotle in \textit{NE} I describes happiness as good and fine in superlatives: \textit{ariston}.\textsuperscript{188} \textit{kalliston}.\textsuperscript{189} He does not describe the good of ethically virtuous activity as the supreme good \textit{(to ariston)} and although he does describe the good and end of ethically virtuous activity fine \textit{(kalon)}, or fine and just \textit{(ta kala kai ta dikai)}, he never describes such activity as \textit{kalliston}. From this it can be inferred that Aristotle does not identify the \textit{eupraxia} of the virtuous action the end and supreme good of happiness. Virtuous action as the end of a choice of action is a principle but not the first principle of happiness. \textit{If} the virtuous action as end were happy, \textit{then}, it would have to be in reference to, as ultimately desired for the sake of, happiness. The exercise of wisdom, of course, does produce happiness. From this one can conclude that for Aristotle the end or first principle of action is happiness as the exercise of wisdom.

Second, as we have also seen, at \textit{NE} I 7 Aristotle turns to an examination of the human function in trying to figure out the nature of human happiness. After examining the nature of the human function he concludes that human happiness consists in the actualization of that function in a life of virtuous activity.\textsuperscript{190} The premises and conclusion of this argument from the human function are not the variable things of an action to be chosen but the invariable things of nature. The nature of human happiness as the end and supreme good of human action, in other words, is the invariable object of theoretical, not practical thinking. Happiness as the first principle of action as the end and supreme good, \textit{then}, is not an object of the activity of the calculative faculty - practical \textit{Nous} and \textit{Dianoia} and \textit{Phronesis} as its virtue - for deliberation has as its object the action as means to the good and end - neither the good and end itself, nor the invariable good and end of happiness.

\textsuperscript{187} ibid. 1097a27-1097b22, 1101b35-1102a2, cf. 1153b7-17
\textsuperscript{188} ibid. 1097a28, 1099a24-5. 1099b29-30, 1101b22
\textsuperscript{189} ibid. 1099a24, 7, 1101a2-5, cf. 1099b22-4
But *nous* is both theoretical and practical. Theoretical *nous* has as its object the invariable first principles of scientific knowledge\(^{191}\) and is a part of the intellectual virtue of wisdom in the knowledge of the nature of the most exalted things.\(^{192}\) Both theoretical and practical *nous* are an apprehension of what is ultimate (*tōn eschatōn*):

Also *nous* apprehends the ultimates in both aspects - since ultimates as well as primary definitions are grasped by *nous* and not reached by reasoning: in demonstrations *nous* apprehends the immutable and primary definitions, in practical inferences it apprehends the ultimate and contingent fact, and the other premise, since these are the first principles from which the end is inferred, as general rules are based on particular cases; hence we must have the perception of particulars, and this immediate perception is *nous*.\(^{193}\)

Demonstrations have *nous* as their starting point and end.\(^{194}\) Practical *nous* has as its object the ultimate and particular action as the other, or minor, premise in the practical inference. As there are a number of first principles of action,\(^{195}\) besides the ultimate and particular action as the other premise of the practical inference, there is also the *archē* of the end or supreme good (*telos kai ariston*).\(^{196}\) It is not the other, or minor premise and object of practical *nous* as the ultimate and particular action, for this end and supreme good is ultimate not as a particular and therefore contingent thing but is rather something as necessary as is human nature, for, as we have seen just above, the supreme good of happiness is discovered not in a deliberation over the ultimate particular action but in understanding the nature of the human function.\(^{197}\) Thus the end and supreme good is not the object of practical, but of theoretical *nous*, and the *archē* as the major premise of the practical inference. The practical inference has as its principle the supreme good as object of theoretical *nous* and the ultimate particular virtuous action as object of its practical

\(^{190}\) cf. ibid. 1097b22-1098a20  
\(^{191}\) ibid. 1141a3-8  
\(^{192}\) ibid. 1141a16-20, 1141b2-3  
\(^{193}\) ibid. 1143a35-b5  
\(^{194}\) ibid. 1143b9-11  
\(^{195}\) ibid. 1140b16-7  
\(^{196}\) ibid. 1144a31-3  
\(^{197}\) Cf. ibid. 1097b22-1098a20
The content of this supreme good is happiness and happiness, as Aristotle has just told us in the same chapter, is the exercise of wisdom. It is this supreme good and end which appears good to the ethically virtuous man (ho agathos, spoudaios) and for the sake of which the virtuous man as practically intelligent (ho phronimos) commands this particular action to be done. At NE VI 7 Aristotle described wisdom as including epistēmē and nous of things of the most exalted nature (tōn timiōtatōn tē phusei). In NE I happiness is described as one of the things honored and perfect (tōn timiōn kai teleion), or honored and divine (timion ti kai theion), as the first principle and cause of all things good and at X 7 Aristotle tells us that the activity of intellect according to wisdom has as its object things ‘fine’ and divine’ (peri kalōn kai theiōn). The nature of the human good of happiness, then, as one of the things honored and divine, is the object of the exercise of the intellectual virtue of wisdom. In effect, then, the practically intelligent man exercises his wisdom in grasping the starting point or major premise of the practical inference. The virtuous man as phronimos, in other words, exercises his wisdom in knowing (among other things) the nature of the end and supreme good for the sake of which he exercises his phronēsis and ēthikē aretē in virtuous action. The good and end of the exercise of the practical virtues of phronēsis and ēthikē aretē is the ultimate and particular virtuous action, but the virtuous man desires the fineness of that action because he ultimately desires the supreme good of the happiness of contemplation (as the activity of the virtue of wisdom). In this way the exercise of phronēsis is for the sake of wisdom, as Aristotle explains at NE VI 13 and the exercise of phronēsis and ēthikē aretē in virtuous action are happy as completing human function as described at the opening of NE VI 12. The complete human

198 Cf. Stewart, (1892) 94
199 NE 1144a1-11
200 ibid. 1141a18-20, 1141b2-3
201 ibid. 1102a1, 4
202 ibid. 1177a15. This may be taken as evidence that it is by the exercise of wisdom that the virtuous and practically intelligent man knows not only the supreme good and first principle of things done but the secondary principle of the fineness of the virtuous action.
function with all the intellectual and appetitive faculties and virtues is thus actualized in the secondarily happy life of virtuous activity.

As we have seen, Aristotle describes phronēsis as concerned not only with the action as the ultimate and individual thing as means to the virtuous action as end, but also with the universal (to katholou). But this universal is, as we have seen, potential knowledge derived from the practical nous of the ultimate and particular virtuous action. This practical universal as derived from a practical nous of a virtuous action can in turn be used as a major premise in another practical inference. In such a practical inference the major premise is a universal and the object of doxa, while the minor premise, since it has as its object a particular action, is the object of doxa as a perception. But this kind of practical inference which has as its major a universal derived from practical nous of a previous virtuous action, always presupposes the fundamental practical inference which has as its first principle and major premise the end and supreme good of happiness. And since this first principle is the object, not of practical, but of theoretical nous as a part of the exercise of wisdom, the virtuous man as a phronimos, cannot exercise of his phronēsis and ethikē aretē in his use of universals in his practical thinking without the wisdom to know the nature of happiness as his end and supreme good.

Our conclusion, then, is that from the evidence of the text of the NE, it can be inferred that for Aristotle the virtuous man as a phronimos, or practically intelligent man, must exercise in his virtuous activity not only practical intelligence and ethical virtue, but also sophia, if the fineness of that activity is to be happy.

If practical intelligence (phronēsis) as the virtue of the calculative faculty of human rationality is not the intellectual grasp of the human good as end, it is nevertheless a practical intellectual grasp (nous) of the action as what is 'toward' that end. Dependent as it

203 ibid. 1141b14-22
204 And so phronēsis is more concerned with the ultimate and particular action than with the universal as derived from it and the man of experience ignorant of the universal is often more successful in action than one who does know the universal: NE 1141b14-22
205 NE 1147a25-6, 1146b35-1147a4, b9-14
is upon wisdom (sophia) for a knowledge of the nature of the good as end, practical intelligence is a practical nous which includes an actual grasp of the action as a particular as well as a potential grasp of that action as a universal. The exercise of practical intelligence, along with appetitive virtue, is thus characterized by Aristotle as 'right reason' (orthos logos). In the following section we will examine right reason. We shall argue, again from the evidence of the NE along with that of the EE, that right reason in the virtuous man’s practical knowledge, presupposes his exercise of wisdom, and thus exemplifies the unity of the virtues in the virtuous man’s practical knowledge of the human good which includes not only the practical virtues but the intellectual virtue of wisdom as well.

dl. Right Reason in Virtuous Action Presupposes Wisdom

The virtuous man’s ethical virtue makes his good and end (the nature of which is known in his exercise of wisdom) fine, and his exercise of phronēsis guarantees that the right action will be chosen for the sake of that good. In this final section we will see that just as in his description of phronēsis as practical nous and in his treatment of phronēsis as a potential grasp of the action as a universal, so in his description of phronēsis as orthos logos Aristotle in no way means to argue that the exercise of practical intelligence with appetitive virtue apart from wisdom is able to give the virtuous man a practical knowledge of the human good. In fact, the exercise of right reason in the virtuous man’s choice of action presupposes his wisdom in knowing the nature of the human good.

In the opening book of the NE Aristotle describes human rationality as a union of the rational and the appetitive, the latter sharing in reason to the extent that it is obedient to the former.206 Yet because this appetitive part of the human agent can also resist reason (tōi logōi),207 reason is praiseworthy when, in the teeth of such resistance, it urges the agent in the right way (orthos), that is, toward what is best (epi ta beliista).208 Reason is right, then, when it points the agent’s appetite in the direction of what is best.

206 ibid. 1102a23-1103a3
207 ibid. 1102b18
208 ibid. 1102b15-6

153
Early on in the NE Aristotle defines virtue with respect to the *phronimos*:

Virtue is a settled disposition of the mind determining the choice of actions and emotions, consisting essentially in the observance of the mean relative to us, this being determined by reason (*logoi*), that is, as the *phronimos* would determine it.\(^{209}\)

The *phronimos* determines (*horizei*) the mean (*to meson*) (that action which is the necessary means) because he is also the virtuous man (*ho spoudaios*) who is the canon and measure (*kanon kai metron*) in judging what is truly fine and pleasant.\(^{210}\) Although what is fine and pleasant - virtuous action - is described throughout the early Books of the NE as that which 'right reason determines',\(^{211}\) it is only at the commencement of Book VI that Aristotle explicitly begins to examine the nature of right reason:

We have already said that it is right (*dei*) to choose the mean and to avoid excess and deficiency, and that the mean is prescribed by right reason ... we have to define exactly what right reason is ...\(^{212}\)

Aristotle describes right reason in conjunction with appetitive virtue and then identifies it with *phronēsis*:

[Virtue] is not merely a disposition conforming to right reason (*kata ton orthon logon*) but one co-operating with right reason (*meta tou orthou logou*); and *phronēsis* is right reason in matters of conduct.\(^{213}\)

Right reason is the exercise of *phronēsis*, the calculative intellectual virtue which, along with the appetitive virtue of deliberative desire, enables the virtuous man as the *phronimos* to deliberate well and determine the necessary means to put the human good into practice. Appetitive virtue, however, does not merely conform with right reason, but accompanies right reason in the *phronimos'* exercise of *phronēsis* in deliberation.\(^{214}\) That

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\(^{209}\) ibid. 1106b36-1107a2. The mean is that which is 'relative to us' by which Aristotle means 'relative to us as human beings as the *phronimos* would determine. Cf. Brown, (1997) 77-93.

\(^{210}\) NE 1113a22-33

\(^{211}\) ibid. 1114b28-30. 34. All the ethical virtues require the exercise of *orthos logos* in discerning and determining the good and mean of virtuous action: e.g. courage: ibid. 1115b19-23, temperance: ibid. 1119b13-8, and liberality: ibid. 1120a23-6, cf. ibid. 1138b18-20

\(^{212}\) ibid. 1138b18-20

\(^{213}\) ibid. 1144b26-8, cf. 1140b4-5, 20-1

\(^{214}\) The difference between the phrases 'in conformity to' (*kata*) and 'accompanying' or 'with' (*meta*) right reason is usually taken to mean that the right reason must not only be present in the quality of the actions controlled by the agent's disposition, but must be deliberately adopted by the agent. Thus to act 'with'(*meta*) right reason means to act deliberately in accordance with right reason whereas to act *kata* right
is, the exercise of right reason, or *phronēsis*, is not only exercised along with the
deliberative desire to seek and find the necessary means to put the human good into practice
but requires the appetitive virtue of *boulēsis* which has as its object the supreme good – the
good and end for the sake of which *phronēsis* is exercised:

Deductive inferences about matters of conduct always have a major
premise ‘since the end and supreme good is so and so’ (whatever it may be,
since we may take it as anything we like for the sake of the argument); but
the supreme good only appears good to the good man: vice perverts the
mind and causes it to hold false views about the principles of conduct.
Hence it is clear that we cannot be prudent without being good.\(^\text{215}\)

Ethical, or appetitive virtue is the deliberate desire (*orexis bouleutikē*), which, in
conformity with right reason, enables the *phronimos* to deliberate well concerning the right
choice of action for the sake of the human good as end. But as we have seen, right reason
as *phronēsis* in conjunction with *ēthikē aretē* is not a knowledge of the human good as end
but rather presupposes such knowledge. The knowledge of the human good as end
presupposed by the *phronimos* in his exercise of right reason is what Aristotle calls the aim
(*skopos*) or limit (*horos*).\(^\text{216}\)

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215 NE 1144a31-7, b7

216 The nature of both the *skopos* and the *horos*, as well as their relation, has been a subject of dispute, cf. Peterson, (1988) 233-50. Ackrill, (1981) 138, finds it ‘tempting to suggest’ that ‘promoting *eutēdaimonia* is the final objective of morality and the ultimate criterion of right action.’ But he thinks that *eutēdaimonia* as the ultimate criterion is unexplanatory and that Aristotle has not explained himself sufficiently to help us out. Cooper, (1975) 101-6, on the other hand, cites *NE* 1145a6-11 as evidence that the *skopos* Aristotle has in mind is the exercise of *sophia*, but rejects this as inconsistent with what he says about morally virtuous action, that is, that the morally virtuous action is done for no other reason than its
own fineness and that this fineness is what the practically intelligent man has as his end. For this reason Cooper rejects an identification of the *horos* with contemplation, maintained by Gauthier and Jolif, (1970) II 437. Kenny, (1978) 181, cites not only *NE* 1145a6-11, but also ibid. 1144a3-6, and more importantly *EE* 1249b16-25 as the explicit identification of the *skopos*, or *horos*, as the effort ‘to perceive as little as possible the non-rational part of the soul as such’. Rowe, (1971) 111-2, questions the need for anything
At the beginning of *NE VI*, in proposing to treat of the nature of right reason, Aristotle introduces this notion of an aim or limit, used in determining the mean of an action:

... the mean is prescribed by right reason. Let us now analyze this notion. In the case of each of the ethical virtues or dispositions that have been discussed, as with all the other virtues also, there is a certain mark (*skopos*) to aim at, on which the man who knows the reason (*logos*) involved fixes his gaze, and increases or relaxes the tension accordingly; there is a certain *horos* determining those modes of observing the mean which we define as lying between excess and defect, being in conformity with right reason (*kata ton orthon logon*).\(^{217}\)

An examination of what Aristotle tells us about *skopos* and *horos* in the *EE* should help us in understanding what the *skopos* and the *horos* is in the *NE* and their relation with right reason.

In Book I of the *EE* Aristotle considers it foolhardy not to have a *skopos*, or end (*telos*) to aim at in the choices of one’s life, and this *skopos* or *telos* is one’s understanding of what constitutes a good life (*to eu zên*)\(^{218}\) and in Book II he tells us that a *horos* is needed to determine the mean for men guided by right reason.\(^{219}\) Finally, at *EE* VIII 3 the *skopos* of things absolutely good and *horos* of what is fine and good (*kalokagathia*) is described as the contemplation (*tēn tou theou theōrían*), or contemplation and service (*tōn

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\(^{217}\) *NE* 1138b21-5

\(^{218}\) *EE* 1214b6-14

\(^{219}\) ibid. 1222b4-14
theōn therapeuein kai theōrein), of the divine.220 The virtuous man (ho spoudaios) has this contemplation, or service, of the divine as the aim in his choice of what is good and the limit in his determination of what is fine.221 That the aim or limit of divine contemplation is not the same as the virtuous man’s exercise of phronēsis is also clear:

Now in what preceded we stated the standard ‘as reason directs’; but this is as if in matters of diet one were to say ‘as medical science and its principles direct,’ and this though true is not clear. It is proper, therefore, here as in other matters to live with reference to a ruling factor, as for example slave must live with reference to the rule of the master, and each person with reference to the rule appropriate to each. And since the human being consists by nature of a ruling part and a subject part, and each would properly live with reference to the ruling principle within him (and this is twofold, for medical science is a ruling principle in one way and health in another. and the former is a means to the latter), this is therefore the case in regard to the faculty of contemplation (kata theōretikon). For God is not a ruler in the sense of issuing commands, but is the end as a means to which phronēsis gives commands.222

In this passage we learn that the ruling part of the person is divided into two parts according to an analogy with medicine and health: as medical science is a ruling principle in issuing commands for the sake of health and health is a ruling factor as that for the sake of which medical science is practiced, so phronēsis rules in the sense of issuing commands for the sake of the faculty of contemplation and its activity in contemplation of the divine and the activity of the faculty of contemplation rules not so much in giving commands but as that for the sake of which commands are given. The faculty of contemplation and its activity as the skopos and horos of the virtuous man, then, is the end, or that for the sake of which, the virtuous man exercises his phronēsis in a right choice of goods and action.

In the NE, where Aristotle clearly distinguishes the intellectual faculties and their virtues from the calculative faculty and its virtue in human rationality,223 the activity of

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221 EE 1249a24-b3, 16-25
222 ibid. 1249b3-15
223 NE 1139a5-15

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wisdom in contemplation clearly rules as that for the sake of which the virtuous man as phronimos exercises phronësis as right reason in his choice of action. Wisdom as contemplation of the divine, which includes the knowledge of the human good as the happiness of a life of such activity and a life of virtuous action as secondarily happy, is both the skopos and the horos of the virtuous man’s exercise of right reason in his choice of action.

In Book I of the EE Aristotle understood the skopos, or end (telos) as one’s understanding of what constitutes a good life (to eu zên). In NE I Aristotle supposes knowledge (gnōsis) of the supreme good (tagathon kai to ariston) as of supreme practical importance in the conduct of one’s life and likens such knowledge to the mark (skopos) an archer aims at. As we have argued, this knowledge of the supreme good can only be the theoretical knowledge of the divine as the wisdom of the virtuous man. Wisdom, then, as this knowledge of the nature of the supreme good, must be the skopos of the virtuous man.

Again, at EE VIII 3 the activity of the theoretical faculty (to theōrëtikon) in the contemplation, or service of the divine was not only the skopos but the horos of the virtuous man; that for the sake of which he exercises his phronësis. In NE VI we see that Aristotle substitutes sophia for to theōrëtikon and its activity in EE VIII 3. As at EE VIII 3, Aristotle in NE VI uses the relation of health to medical science as the analogy which expresses the relation between the human good of contemplative activity, now identified as wisdom, and the exercise of phronësis:

It is not really the case that phronësis is supreme over sophia, or over the higher part of the intellect, any more than medical science is supreme over health. Medical science does not control health, but studies how to procure it; hence it issues orders in the interests of health, but not to health.

Phronësis as understood in the NE has the same relation to wisdom as phronësis in the EE has with the contemplation, or service of God. Wisdom, then, in the NE, is the

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224 EE 1214b6-14
225 NE 1094a22-4
226 ibid. 1145a6-9, and the superior knowledge is wisdom so that the wise man is true ruler who should give orders and to whom all should obey: Meta 982a17-21

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human good of the perfect happiness of contemplation and phronēsis has to do with the
right action is chosen as means:

The exercise of wisdom renders a man happy and phronēsis as well as
appetitive virtue complete the performance of the human function: appetitive
virtue ensures the rightness of the end we aim at, phronēsis ensures the
means we adopt to gain that end.227

Thus a comparison between the EE and the NE concerning the relation between
phronēsis and contemplation as the skopos and horos of the virtuous man allows us to
conclude that in the NE Aristotle understands wisdom as the virtue of contemplative activity
is the skopos of the virtuous man’s exercise of right reason in a choice of goods and the
horos of his choice of action. Wisdom as identical with happiness is the perfect happiness
of contemplative activity and as a theoretical knowledge of the divine, wisdom is also that
virtue by which the virtuous man understands that the human good is an equivocal of two
happy lives united in focal reference to the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation.

Wisdom is supreme over practical intelligence both as the virtue of the activity of
contemplation and the virtue by which the virtuous man understands the nature of the
human good. As this good is the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation, a life akin to
the divine life, right reason, or the practical intelligence of the virtuous man, has this good
as its final end.228 And as a thing is defined by its end, right reason is finally defined by
the activity of that for the sake of which it is exercised - the happy life of virtuous activity.
It is in this sense that the virtuous man’s exercise of phronēsis may be translated as
‘practical wisdom’ without thereby excluding the need the phronimos has of wisdom as an
intellectual virtue.

Thus, if the virtuous man as a phronimos, is one who by the exercise of right
reason, or phronēsis, along with ethical virtue, is able to discern and decide that action as
the necessary means to the human good as end, it is because he has, by the exercise of his

227 ibid. 1144a6-9
228 Since God in Aristotle’s practical philosophy is not understood as a rule-giver to be obeyed but rather
as the object of a life of theôria the wise man’s activity of theôria and secondarily his exercise of practical
intellectual virtue of wisdom, knowledge of the nature of that good to make that his good and end in his choice of action. So the *phronimos* can determine what is to be done for the sake of the human good because he is a virtuous man who is wise. Right reason can only be exercised in accordance with wisdom as the knowledge of the human good as its *horos*, or good as end, described in the *EE* as divine contemplation, and in the *NE* as the perfect happiness of a life of *theôria* and secondarily as the fineness and justice of virtuous action.

The *skopos*, *horos*, and *telos* of right reason is the human good of a happy life of virtuous activity as the nature of that good is known by the wise man in the exercise of his intellectual virtue of wisdom and is the motivation for his exercise of practical intelligence and ethical virtue in his choice of action. Right reason, then, is the practical intelligence of the *phronimos* as ruled by wisdom in his knowledge of the nature of the human good. The man of right reason, then, is practically intelligent, ethically virtuous, because he is wise.

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229 Each thing is determined (*horizetai*) by its end: *NE* 1115b22. The virtuous man as *phronimos* determines (*horizei*) by right reason the mean: ibid. 1107a1-2, because by his wisdom as a *sophos* he understands the *horos* of the good of the life of divine *theôria* and the secondary instance of good in the human good of a human life of *theôria*.

230 Gauthier and Jolif, (1970) II 1, 149 understand Aristotle’s *horos* of right reason as ‘the rule leading to contemplation.’ Gomez-Lobo, (1995) 24, criticizes this interpretation, arguing that such a view leads to the absurdity that a choice to give one’s life courageously in battle would lead to one’s goal of contemplation. For the sake of contemplation, Gomez-Lobo thinks, cowardice may be a better piece of advice than risking one’s life. Whether Gomez-Lobo’s understanding and criticism of Gauthier and Jolif’s interpretation is apt or not, the *horos* for right reason according to Aristotle is not a rule or plan that leads to contemplation. The *horos* is rather the human good itself of virtuous activity which is an equivocal of a life of contemplation and virtuous action in the polis. The virtuous man’s choice of acting bravely even to the point of death in the defense of his polis is determined by his right reason with the fineness and justice of that act as his standard and end, knowing as he does that this fine and just act is a secondary instance of the human good whose primary instance is a life of contemplation. Some commentators, such as Ackrill and Cooper have complained that the intellectualism of Aristotle’s position is unexploratory. Cooper appears to think that the exercise of wisdom in contemplation would not give the requisite rules to know what to do in the given situation: Cooper, (1975) 103. But this a misunderstanding of how the contemplation of the divine functions as the end in Aristotle’s practical philosophy. As Aristotle explains at *EE* 1249b4-5, God is not a ruler in the sense of issuing commands but as that for the sake of which *phronesis* gives commands. If the wise man rules cf. *Meta* 982a17-9, it is because he knows the truth of the final good of reality: ibid. 982a32-b10, a good which includes the human good: cf. ibid. 982b4-7. Should he desire to exercise that rule in leading himself and others to a practice of that good, he would be exercising his calculative virtue of *politeia* or *phronesis* as a *politeia* or *phronimos*. The virtuous man
Conclusion: The Virtuous Man is Wise, Practically Intelligent and Ethically Virtuous

In this chapter we have seen that the unity of the human good of happiness for the virtuous man is a life of knowledge which consists in a life of practical knowledge of the human good united in focal connection to a life of contemplation. The virtuous man who leads such a life exercises his practical intelligence and ethical virtue in choosing action for the sake of its fineness ultimately desiring that good for the sake of the final happiness of a life of theoretical knowledge of the divine. By his wisdom he knows the nature of that good and end which he desires. Such a man actualizes the complete human function by exercising all the intellectual and ethical virtues. He is, in other words, wise, practically intelligent, and ethically virtuous. Thus just as the human good of happiness is one as a life of virtuous activity, or knowledge united in a focal connection to that activity, or knowledge which is perfect happiness, so the man who lives such a life, is the one who unites all the human virtues in his action.

In the following chapter we shall examine the central place friendship of virtuous men has in Aristotle's practical philosophy. Besides being the epitome of a happy life of virtuous action in a community we shall also see that for the virtuous, those who know that the human good of a happy life of virtuous activity is the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation and strive to immortalize themselves by living that life as far as they can in the activity of theōria, a friendship among themselves can be an activity of sumphilosophia, a community of the wise, which actually enhances their activity of theōria and as human beings who must live in the polis, the virtuous also know that a perfect friendship among them is something fine and the fullest way of living the social nature of the human good in the secondarily happy life of virtuous action in their polis, a life happy in focal reference the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation. The virtuous man, then, in his striving to

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wants to become as divine as humanly possible by living as well as humanly possible. In other words, the phronimos is the sophos who acts virtuously as the human way of being divine.
immortalize himself in contemplative activity as well as in his choices of action, will strive
to do both with friends like himself in perfect friendship.
Chapter 3

THE NATURE AND PLACE OF PERFECT FRIENDSHIP IN THE VIRTUOUS MAN'S HAPPY LIFE

In our first two chapters we argued that the human good for the virtuous man is the happiness of virtuous activity which consists in a life of virtuous action in focal connection to a life of contemplation and that the virtuous man is one who is wise, practically intelligent, and ethically virtuous. In this chapter we shall see how the virtuous man lives this happiness with others like himself in what Aristotle calls perfect friendship. We shall see that for the virtuous man a friendship with others like himself is desirable as a sumphilosophia - an activity of theoria which is shared. Such a friendship is a community of the wise, the most final of human goods and therefore happiest of human lives. But the virtuous man will also recognize the desirability of a friendship with others like himself who choose action for the fineness of a virtuous life in the polis, ultimately desiring the fineness of that activity together for the sake of the happiness of contemplation. The friendship such men form for the sake of this good in their mutual choice of action to share good things with one another out of love for each other is what Aristotle calls perfect friendship, or the friendship of the good, or virtuous. This friendship is a sumpraxis of virtuous activity which includes justice and the other character virtues, thereby forming a community of the virtuous and the perfect actualization of the naturally social life of the human being. In their shared contemplation and their sharing of goods with one another out of love for each other, the virtuous men as perfect friends with one another are able to enjoy the human good of the happiness of virtuous activity more fully than if they were to live without that friendship.
We shall in this chapter examine, in order, the nature of appetitive, or character virtue, justice as a specially social character virtue, and finally the nature of perfect friendship as including but also transcending justice in the love the virtuous friends have for each other as other selves. We shall then see that a perfect friendship is a virtuous action of men who are wise. After this examination of the nature and place of perfect friendship in the secondarily happy life of virtuous action, we will consider the nature and place friendship can have among wise men who strive to immortalize themselves as far as they can in living a life of contemplation.

I. Character Virtue

1. The Unity of Virtue and the Different Character Virtues

Ethical, or character virtue (aretē ēthikē) is an habitual state of the non-rational (but potentially rational to the extent of being capable of following reason) part of the human function which enables the virtuous man to want the human good and deliberately desire to put that good into practice in a choice of action. Aristotle defines character virtue as an agent's habit (or an ensemble of habits) of choice of action and emotions,1 lying in a mean

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1 NE 1107a1-6. What are emotions and how are they the object of choice? According to Aristotle, the non-rational part of the soul whose virtues are the virtues of character can be regarded as primarily the seat of the emotions: NE 1103a3-10; EE 1220b5-10. He defines 'emotions' (pathē) as mental states accompanied by pleasure or pain: NE 1105b21-3; EE 1220b12-4. In the De Anima we are told that pathē are 'formulae in matter' (logoi enuloi): DA 403a25, such that their complete definitions must include both physiological and intentional conditions, the former studied by the natural scientist, the latter by the dialectician, cf. ibid. 403a24-32. In the Rhetoric, pathē are 'all those things changing in respect to those who have them differ with respect to their discriminations (krisēs) and which are accompanied by pain and pleasure, such as anger, pity, fear and all those that are like that and their opposites: Rhet 1378a19-22, cf. Cooper (1996) 238-257. The exact nature of the cognitive dimension of the emotions has been a source of some dispute among scholars. Some like Fortenbaugh, (1975) and Nussbaum, (1994), 78-101, argue that emotions are belief-based, while others offer an alternative interpretation which regards perceptual appearance (phantasia), rather than belief or judgment, as the necessary cognitive basis for emotion. Cf. Sorabji, (1993); and Sihvola, (1996) 105-44. The outcome of this debate is relevant to our understanding of the voluntary nature of emotion and to what extent emotions can be the object of choice. For while Aristotle does maintain that virtue is concerned with both action and passion: NE 1109b30, he avers that the emotions (being pleased in doing well and pained at the thought of doing evil) are not chosen as actions are: ibid. 1106aaff. Although the emotions are not, like actions, subject to praise or blame, they are belief-based (as I believe Fortenbaugh and Nussbaum, among others, are right to maintain), and voluntary to the extent that, with proper training, they can be made to listen to and 'obey' the authority of reason: NE 1102b31 by a practical knowledge of the human good and a correct rational appraisal of the given situation. Cf. Nussbaum, (1996) 303-23; and Sherman, (1993), 1-56. In the case of the virtuous man his emotions have been cultivated, thanks to virtuous upbringing and practice, to support right reason.
relative to the agent and determined by reason, that is, by the reasoning of the agent as a *phronimos*, who exercises his virtue of *phronēsis* for the sake of wisdom. As a habit is determined in its exercise in relation to its specific object, ethical, or character, virtue consists of the many different ways the virtuous man is appetitively disposed to choose this particular action in these circumstances as the necessary means of putting the human good into practice. A just character, for example, formed by the right kind of education in a polis governed by the right kind of constitution, will be that appetitive habit which enables the agent to choose to practice fairness in trade with his fellow citizens. Similarly, a courageous character, similarly well-trained in the right kind of polis, will be that appetitive disposition which enables the agent to choose to stand and defend his political community here and now even in the face of death, and so forth.

Each different situation or circumstance will offer the virtuous man the opportunity to exercise his appetitive faculty in ethical virtue in different ways - thereby building up a character which results in an ensemble of those different virtuous character habits. The choice to act here and now as the necessary means to put the human good into practice may be an act of courage in the heat of

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2 ibid. 1106b36-1107a2
3 ibid. 1145a6-11
4 As Aristotle explains at *NE II* 4, acts done in conformity with the character virtues are not done justly or temperately if they themselves are of a certain sort, but only if the agent also is in a certain state of mind when he does them, that is, besides acting with knowledge and deliberately choosing the act for its own
battle or, say, an act of temperance in eating and drinking at a symposium. While different circumstances will call forth a choice of different actions and their appropriate emotions, all those different actions will be fine and just to the extent that they are determined by the virtuous man's ethical virtue and practical intelligence as the necessary means to practice the human good which he knows as a wise man. Virtuous action, then, is a one and many: one in that every action of the virtuous man is chosen as the necessary means to put the human good into practice, many in so far as those actions will differ according to their differing circumstances and the differing choices that need to be made. Thus virtuous action, or acting well in a choice of action for the sake of practicing the human good, requires of the virtuous man that character virtue and emotion appropriate to the kind of choice that needs to be made in a given circumstance. And though the appropriate character virtue and emotion will vary with the kind of choice appropriate to the circumstance, each and every choice will require of him the wisdom to know in what the human good consists and the practical intelligence to discern and decide the action that must be chosen in this circumstance. Thus ethical virtue may differ in character in each virtuous act but the unity of intellectual, calculative, and ethical virtues remains the same.

2. The Human Good, Character Virtue, and the External Goods

The human good of *eupraxia*, or living well, requires other goods as well. goods external to, but necessary for, its practice. Since action and emotion have to do with external goods, whether in the form of other people or other things, choice has to do with those external goods as well. The exercise of the character virtues enables the virtuous man to choose well with respect to actions and emotions and those external goods. In this subsection we will examine briefly those external goods with which the practice of the character virtues is concerned. Because justice and friendship, as we shall see, are understood by Aristotle as character virtues - and character virtues which have to do in distinctive ways with external goods - the study of character virtue and the external goods

sake, he must act from a fixed and permanent disposition of character: *NE* 1105a28-b9. This character is
of human life will serve as an introduction to Aristotle’s treatment of the virtue of justice and that virtue’s relation to friendship.

Aristotle notes that a traditional way of organizing the good things (agatha) of human life is to divide these goods into three: external (ektos) goods, the goods of soul (psuchē) and the goods of the body (sōma). He accepts this threefold division to the extent that it places the good of actions and activities that make for human happiness among the goods of soul and not among the external goods. Besides this tripartite classification, he also approves of another way of organizing the human goods, a twofold division between the good of that virtuous activity (or activities) synonymous with happiness on the one hand, and goods external to that activity on the other. The two ways of dividing human goods overlap with respect to the goods external to the human good of virtuous activity. The external goods in the twofold division include both the external and the bodily goods of the other division: bodily goods such as beauty and health as well as goods external to the body such as friends, wealth, and political power. Taking the two divisions together, we see that for Aristotle the goods of human living are finally divided into goods of soul, which are especially activities in conformity with virtue, and goods external to those activities.

Actions in conformity with virtue are goods of the soul. Such actions require the exercise of character virtue. As a virtuous disposition of choice, character virtue has as its object action and its appropriate emotion, and actions and emotions have to do with

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the result of being well-trained the practice of the character virtues.

5 NE 1098b12-4
6 ibid. 1098b14-20, cf. ibid.1153b16-9; EE 1218b32-7; Pol 1323a38-b29
7 ibid. 1099a25-b8, cf. ibid. 1101a14-6
8 It appears that Aristotle would also include honor (time) among the external goods. Honor is the good of reputation among others and, even if it is deserved, rests more on others than on oneself: cf. NE 1095b22-35, 1116a17-29. In the Rhetoric Aristotle lists honor along with good birth, friends, and wealth as external goods but seems to want to understand goods of the body along with goods of the soul as internal in contrast to these external goods: Rhet 1360b26-9.
9 NE 1098b18-20
10 ibid. 1104b13-6, 1106b24-5, b36-1107a6

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external goods. Aristotle lists as external goods pleasure, other people, or other things like the goods of competition. Aristotle subdivides external goods in a number of ways. For instance, they can be divided into the necessary (ta anagkaia) and the choiceworthy (hairote de kath' hautea) as sources of pleasure. Necessary external goods such as physical nourishment are goods which can be enjoyed in moderation or in licentious excess, while choiceworthy external goods are goods like victory, honour, and wealth. External goods may also be divided into goods which are (or are not) subject to competition (perimachêta agatha). Goods which can be competed for would be such things as wealth, honours, bodily pleasure, or any good which could be acquired in excess of one's just share. Finally, external goods can be good simply (haplôs), that is, good for the good or virtuous man in the practice of virtue, or apparent (to phainomenon) - goods relative to the desires of the individual agent (hekastoi) whether he be virtuous or not.

In general, external goods are what Aristotle calls goods of fortune, goods external to the true human good of activity in conformity with virtue but nevertheless good absolutely for the good man in his practice of virtue. Such goods are all more or less necessary for the practice of virtue. Some, such as friends, wealth, and political power,
are necessary as instruments (organon), while others such as good birth, good children, and beauty, can contribute to a life of happiness by affording further opportunity to practice virtue or at least obviate certain impediments to its practice.18 There are some external goods so basic to human life that the practice of virtue would be impossible without them. The bodily goods of nutrition and health and the instrumental good of a society of others are so necessary for the human being that without them even human life itself would be impossible.19 In addition to these goods, a necessary external good without which virtuous activity would be impossible is the good of a political community governed by the right laws - or at least the good of a virtuous family environment.20

Thus the human good of virtuous action requires external goods and while some virtuous activities will require more external goods than others, all will require some in the form of other people and things. To this extent the human good of a life of practicing virtue is vulnerable to the misfortune of being deprived of the necessary goods.21

II. Justice

The virtue and practice of justice is the subject of the central book of the NE completing Aristotle's examination of the other character virtues in Books III and IV.22 As

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18 Cf. NE 1099a33-b6

19 The wise, the just, and any other virtuous man will require the goods necessary for life (pros to zên anagkaion) to an equal degree, though the goods necessary for the practice of the different virtues will vary: NE 1177a28-32, 1178a23-b7. But all the virtues will require for their practice the external goods of other people and other things. Even the relatively self-sufficient practice of study (theoria) will require the external good of the thing studied: ibid. 1178b5-7, and will be better done with others: ibid. 1177a34-5.

20 Cf. NE 1179b23-1180a35

21 Human happiness, for Aristotle, is a life of activity in conformity with virtue along with the right (and right amount of) external goods necessary for such a life: NE 1098a1-1101a21. The virtuous depend on a virtuous and sufficiently wealthy political community both for their education in virtue and for the opportunity to practice their virtue. The very polis one lives in is a good of fortune beyond voluntary control or choice. But should a man be fortunate enough to be materially provided for and educated well in a virtuous community so as to reach maturity in virtue, his happiness is not vulnerable even in severe misfortune, for according to Aristotle he can practice virtue even in the midst of pain unto death: ibid. 1115a6-1117b22. Since the virtuous man can never be forced to do anything base no matter how severe his situation is, but will always acquit himself in the finest way possible, his happiness to this extent is invulnerable. Nevertheless his circumstances can be such as to make happiness in the more comprehensive sense of blessedness (makariotês) vulnerable: ibid. 1100b22-1101a13. For a differing view, cf. Nussbaum, (1986) 318-72, esp. 333-40.

22 Justice, dikaiosunê, is that character virtue by which the virtuous man as just, ho dikaios, does the just thing, to dikaion: NE 1134a1-2. The virtuous man by practicing justice, dikaiosunê, in his choice of
a virtue especially practiced with others in the polis, justice is not only pivotal in Aristotle’s understanding of the ethical life, but a virtue intimately related to friendship. An examination of justice and its relation with friendship will be an indispensable introduction to an understanding of the nature and place of friendship itself in Aristotle’s ethics. This examination will be complicated, however, by the fact that for Aristotle justice can be understood in two ways, either as synonymous with the whole of virtue, and as such described as ‘perfect virtue’, or as one specific character virtue among others. Justice in both senses will prove relevant to our understanding of the nature and role of friendship as a virtue in the ethical life, and so justice as perfect virtue and as character virtue will both merit consideration.

1. Justice as ‘Perfect Virtue’

Virtuous action, as we have seen, is the human good of living well, the good Aristotle calls in Books III and IV of the NE the ‘fine’ (ta kalon) - that for the sake of which the right action in a given situation is chosen. Acting well is ‘fine’ as the final end perfective of the human function that makes for human happiness. But as the human being is by nature social, the human good is also social. Acting well has not only an individual dimension in the perfection of the agent but also a distinctively social dimension. Practicing the character virtues requires interaction with others and if human happiness is the actualization of the agent’s capacities in that practice, that happiness is essentially a social life.

In Book I of the NE Aristotle defines the good of the practical philosophy of politics as ‘the fine and just’ (ta kala kai ta dikaia). Throughout Books III and IV of the same work the good of acting well in the practice of the character virtues is described as

what is just, to dikaion, does what is fine and just. As the object of his choice, to dikaion is the ta kala kai ta dikaia of the virtue of justice. Aristotle will understand the perfect, teleia, friendship, or the friendship of the good, hē ton agathon phillia, as a character virtue as well and the activity of that virtue: ibid. 1157b5-7. as something fine, to kalon: cf. ibid. 1155a28-9.

23 NE 1115b20-4, 1119b15-7, 1120a12-5, 23-9, 1122b4-7, 1125b10-4, 1126b28-32, 1127a28-30
24 Cf. ibid. 1178a9-16
25 ibid. 1097b6-14
what is ‘fine’ (*ta kala*), whereas in Book V we are introduced to the good of acting well toward others as what is ‘just’ (*ta dikai*). The introduction of ‘the just’ along with ‘the fine’ hearkens back to Aristotle’s original description of the good in Book I. What is the significance of ‘the just’ as an addition to Aristotle’s description of acting well as ‘fine’? The answer is found in Aristotle’s examination of the virtue of justice in general as ‘perfect virtue’.

Following his examination of the various character virtues in Books III and IV, the fineness of their means and the viciousness of their extremes, Aristotle opens Book V with what would appear to be the introduction of justice as yet another character virtue. Instead we meet with something new. Aristotle begins his investigation of justice by showing how it is generally understood. “We observe,” he writes, “that justice is taken by all as that disposition which renders men apt to do just things and which causes them to act justly and wish (boulontai) for what is just (*ta dikai*).” Aristotle’s recognition and incorporation of justice, as that virtue is commonly understood, into his discussion, along with what he will later introduce as a more restricted notion of justice as a character virtue, gives justice a double sense. What is commonly understood as justice, or justice in general, is understood as identical with what is lawful (*to nomimon*) and equal or fair (*to ison*) with respect not simply to the proper sharing of the goods of fortune but of all that is included in a virtuous life. Since law is enacted for the sake of the happiness of the political community, and, if rightly enacted, prescribes virtuous conduct in the polis, and what is fair is what is lawful, justice in general is that virtue which has as its object all the external goods necessary for the production and preservation of the happiness of the political community. This justice is termed perfect (*teleia*) virtue because what is lawful and fair covers the whole of the life of

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26 ibid. 1094b14-5, 1095b4-6  
27 ibid. 1129a6-9 (Aristotle mentions *ta dikai* but once earlier on: ibid. 1105a17-9)  
28 ibid. 1129b25-1130a13  
29 ibid. 1129a6-9  
30 ibid. 1129a34-b6, 1130b3-5
virtue in a political community. Such ‘perfect’ virtue is practiced ‘toward others’ (pros heteron, pros allon) in contrast with the practice of virtue ‘toward oneself’ (pros hauton, monon kath hauton). This justice will not be simply one character virtue among others but the whole of virtue. The good of ‘universal’ justice will be what is ‘just’ (ta dikaia). The perfect virtue of universal justice will be that disposition which men commonly understand as enabling them to ‘wish what is just’ (boulontai ta dikaia).

Now wish, or rational desire, as we have seen, is appetite for the good as final end. By endorsing this common understanding of the good and end of universal justice as ‘the just’, Aristotle is in effect completing a description of the secondary human good of virtuous practice as what is ‘fine and just’ given in Book I. That is, the description of the good of acting well as what is just (ta dikaia) appears to add to the characterization of ‘the fine’ the social dimension of that good as ‘towards others.’ By characterizing justice as perfect and ‘toward others’ in contrast to the other character virtues, Aristotle is not suggesting that the goodness of the other character virtues as ‘fine’ is in no way social and ‘towards others’. For as we have seen, to the extent that the practice of every character virtue has as its object the choice of external goods (including others), acting well under the description of any of the character virtues will demand a political community for its practice. Moreover, in the practice of any of the character virtues, the agent as virtuous will make the real good his good and so will always choose this particular action for the sake of the ‘fine,’ precisely because the fine is the real human good (r’anthropinon agathon) which is social. To the extent that the good for the sake of which he chooses to act is a

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31 ibid. 1129b12-26, 1130b20-9
32 ibid. 1129b26-1130a8, 1130b20
33 ibid. 1130a8-10, 1130b18-20
34 ibid. 1129a6-10 Although this common understanding of universal justice as the disposition to ‘wish what is just’ is first taken by Aristotle as true in a preliminary way, it will prove to be his definitive position.
35 Cf. ibid. 1178a9-16
36 Cf. ibid. 1097b6-16

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good that is essentially social, striving to act for the sake of the fine will contribute to the
good of others and be of benefit to the political community.\textsuperscript{37}

Rather, by introducing the commonly held notion of justice as ‘toward others,’ and
therefore, perfect virtue, and by characterizing this good as ‘the just’ (ta dikaia), Aristotle
means to bring out the full social dimension of the practice of the human good. For the
goodness of acting well is both ‘fine and just.’ ‘The just’ is the lawful, that which is good
for the whole polis. ‘The fine’ is the good of the agent in practicing character virtue. By
acting well in a given situation the agent not only practices the good (to kalon) of a
character virtue but in following the law practices the good (to dikaion) of the polis at large.
The fineness of practicing a character virtue is also, as a matter of fact, the justness of
following the law of the good community. But the justness of the practice of that character
virtue is the good of the polis as wished for (boulësis) by the agent. That is, for the
virtuous, the practice of a particular character virtue is not only ‘fine’ but also ‘fine and
just’, because the agent in the choice of the external goods as means to the human good has
not only his but the whole community’s good in mind. In other words, in choosing an
action as the means of practicing the human good, the virtuous agent is mindful not simply
of his good (monon kath’ hauton) in the action but of the good of others (pros heteron) in
the polis. This explicit concern for the good of others (as well as of oneself) in the practice
of universal justice may be what Aristotle has in mind in his appraisal of the social good as
something better than the good of the individual:

The human good (t’anthrōpinon agathon) must be the end of politics.
For even though it be the case that the good is the same for the individual
and the polis, nevertheless the good of the polis is manifestly a greater and
more perfect good (teleioteron), both to attain and to preserve. To secure
the good of one person only is better than nothing; but to secure the good of
the people or the polis is a finer (kallion) and more divine (theioteron)
achievement.\textsuperscript{38}

In enacting the right laws for the community, the politician or legislator not only
practices something fine but something finer and more divine - something just - to the

\textsuperscript{37} Cf. ibid. 1168b25-1169a11
extent that he keeps the good of the whole community in mind in legislative action. To the extent that the legislator, or any virtuous agent, acts for the sake not simply of his own but of others’ practice of the human good, to that extent that fine action can be described in the fuller terms of ‘the fine and the just’ (ta kala kai ta dikaia). The difference, then, between the fineness of the practice of the character virtues and the justness of practicing justice as perfect virtue is the difference in fact and in intention between a good that is explicitly individual and implicitly social and a good which is explicitly social as well. To illustrate this, let us take for an example the practice of the virtuous man in defending his polis. In the heat of the battle by choosing not to throw down his shield but to hold formation, the virtuous man can wish for the human good as his own, the good of living well in this particular action. This action would be ‘fine’. It would also as a matter of fact be ‘just’ in that it would be sanctioned by law. So the practice of what is ‘fine’ is also the practice of what is ‘just’. But Aristotle’s virtuous man would choose to hold formation not only for his own good but for the good of following the law for the happiness of the polis, understanding as he does the social nature of the human good and desiring that good as such. This action would be fine and just and courageous in the fullest sense. Conversely, should someone choose to throw down his weapon and break rank for the sake of his own physical safety, he would do something vicious - rejecting the human good for himself and de facto turning his back on the law and the happiness of the polis. And should this action be chosen with that in mind, it would be both de facto and intentionally vicious and unjust. Thus we see that by including justice in the sense of perfect virtue and ‘toward others’, Aristotle adds an explicitly social dimension to the human good of practicing the character virtues. For the virtuous man in the practice of a character virtue, would be both fine and just - good for himself and for his polis. The same relation between the fine and the just would apply to the practice of the rest of the character virtues. To the extent that the

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38 ibid. 1094b6-10
39 ibid. 1129b19-25
practice of any character virtue or vice is the fulfillment or rejection of what is lawful and fair, the virtuous action is both fine and just or vicious and unjust.

2. Justice as a Character Virtue

Besides justice in the sense of the whole of, or ‘perfect’, virtue, Aristotle wants also to understand justice as one of the character virtues of a good human life. As one character virtue among many, justice in this sense would be part of the whole of virtue, part of justice as perfect virtue. Here also, even as a character virtue, justice is distinguished from the other character virtues by its explicit reference ‘toward others’ (*pros allon, pros heteron*).

In Book II of the *NE* Aristotle had defined character virtue as a settled disposition determining the choice of actions and emotions, lying in a mean relative to us determined by principle (*logoi*) as the practically intelligent would determine it. The mean in action and emotion in any given circumstance will be what is fine or noble (*kalon*) and as the mean, character virtue is locatable between two vices, that of excess and defect. Aristotle wants to define justice as a character virtue in a similar way. Accordingly, in Book V of the *NE* Aristotle describes justice as ‘that disposition by which a man is able to choose that which is just, and, when distributing good things between himself and another or between two others, not to give too much to himself and too little to his neighbor but to each what is proportionately equal; and similarly when he is distributing between two other persons.” This means that justice is an observation of the mean as what is equal (*to ison*) in the distribution of the shareable goods of fortune, lying between two extremes, extremes which Aristotle describes as doing and suffering injustice. The defining motive of justice

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40 *ibid.* 1106b36-1107a2
41 *ibid.* 1109a29-30
42 *ibid.* 1108b11-2, 1109a20-4
43 *ibid.* 1134a1-10
44 *ibid.* 1129b2-4, 1130b2
45 *ibid.* 1133b30-2

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will be the fineness of that mean, while the motive of injustice will be that of taking more than one's due (pleonexia).\textsuperscript{46}

Aristotle's attempt to define justice in terms of a character virtue has puzzled many. Commentators have not missed the oddity of Aristotle's description of the extremes of injustice as 'doing and suffering injustice' as well as his attempt to see the motive of injustice exclusively in terms of pleonexia.\textsuperscript{47} The strangeness of such an attempt is this. If justice were a character virtue like the other virtues which Aristotle examines in Books III - IV of the \textit{NE}, it would have to be a virtuous disposition as a mean between two vicious extremes. This means that if doing the just thing was the mean, the extremes of taking too much or too little of some good (or taking too much of, or too little of, something evil) would both be vicious. But choosing to have too little of what is good (or too much of what is evil) is tantamount to choosing to suffer injustice and choosing something like that, according to Aristotle, is impossible.\textsuperscript{48} One cannot, he maintains, voluntarily and deliberately do injustice to oneself. Thus to have too little of the good (or too much of the bad) would not depend upon the agent at all but rather on the vicious choice of someone else.\textsuperscript{49} One can suffer injustice, according to Aristotle, but not deliberately. Thus one extreme of justice as a character virtue cannot be a vice on the sufferer's part. In this way at least Aristotle's attempt to see justice as a mean between doing and suffering injustice does not conform to his usual account of character virtue.\textsuperscript{50} But besides this odd feature of justice understood as a character virtue, there appears to be another as well. For it would

\textsuperscript{46} ibid. 1130a14-b4
\textsuperscript{47} E.g. Hardie (1968), 187-8: and Williams, (1980), 189-99
\textsuperscript{48} Aristotle allows that one could be voluntarily harmed but he argues that no one could voluntarily (by choice) suffer injustice: \textit{NE} 1136b1-25, 1138a9-12, 20-1, b5ff.
\textsuperscript{49} ibid. 1136b25-9
\textsuperscript{50} Although some, like Curzer, (1996) 220-5, do try to make justice as a character virtue conform to the virtuous mean/vicious extremes form by introducing an extreme which \textit{can} be a vice on the part of the agent. Curzer calls this the vice of 'meionexia', a desire for less than one deserves. He sees Aristotle's example of the falsely modest person who takes less honor than he deserves: \textit{NE} 1125a19-20, as an example of the \textit{meionectic}. Hardie, (1968) 184, and Urmson, (1988) 77, argue, on the contrary, that the introduction of \textit{meionexia} is incompatible with Aristotle's claim that 'it is not possible to treat oneself unjustly': \textit{NE} 1138a14-5. If anything, Urmson counters, the \textit{meionexia} of 'being willing to forgo that to which you have a right' is thought by Aristotle to be a sign of liberality or even magnificence.'
seem that in some cases, for instance the case of the judge making an unjust decision with respect to two parties involved in a dispute, injustice could be done without there being a motive of gain at all. For the judge may quite regularly rule unjustly in such cases for motives other than to get more of his fair share of anything.

Aristotle is not unaware of these difficulties. Even in his attempt to understand justice as a character virtue he recognizes its distinctiveness by observing that justice, unlike the other character virtues, 'is related to a mean while injustice is related to the extremes.' What does he mean by this?

In the practice of the character virtues, the good of acting well is the mean between two extremes, a good for the sake of which an agent chooses the right action in a given situation. The external goods connected with that action are instrumental to the good of acting well. By acting well in the given situation the agent is rendered virtuous according to the character virtue exercised in the virtuous action. The practice of justice as a character virtue, on the other hand, is not a mean but related to the mean. The good and mean of justice is an objective relation between external goods and the persons to whom those goods are due. This objective relation between goods and persons is an equality proportionate to the worth of the persons engaged in the exchange. The practice of justice as a character virtue is in relation to that equality as the good and mean of justice. That is, the just man chooses the right action and emotion that will secure the good of a proportionately equal exchange of the external goods among the members engaged in the exchange. When the good and mean of that equality is deliberately secured by the virtuous man, the participants of the exchange are treated justly and the virtuous man becomes just in character. When someone deliberately violates that equality, all the participants in the exchange suffer injustice and that person himself becomes unjust.

Because the practice of justice as a character virtue has as its good and mean the equality of an exchange of external goods among persons, those goods are related to that

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51 NE 1133b32-4
practice in a way different from the relation of the external goods to the practice of the other character virtues. The other character virtues make use of the external goods as instrumental goods to the good of acting well, while the practice of justice, on the other hand, has as its very good and mean the equality of those goods in exchange. The objective relationship between those goods and the people involved in the exchange is not instrumental to, but a constitutive part of, the good of the practice of justice. Because the practice of justice is in relation to this equality in exchange, the practice of justice involves the good of others in a more direct way than the practice of the other character virtues. For the good and mean of justice involves more than simply the good of the agent. The good involves at least two people. Further, because this exchange of goods is a mutual requital (antidosis), an interaction of giving and receiving what is due of those goods among the participants, the exchange is reciprocal (antipepondos). This means that when an objective good is secured as a result of practicing justice, all the participants in the exchange enjoy justice, some by giving, others by receiving what is due; whereas when this good is undermined by the practice of injustice, all suffer the injustice, some by acting unjustly, others by suffering that injustice involuntarily. The reciprocal nature of this exchange allows Aristotle to claim that no one can receive justice without someone acting justly and no one can suffer injustice without someone acting unjustly. The objective good of proportionate equality in exchange, then, renders the practice of justice especially social in that the good as mean and object of the practice is a reciprocal good involving all who make up the exchange. But this reciprocity in the mutual exchange of the external goods is confined to the objective good of the practice - it does not necessarily extend to the character of all who are involved in the exchange. The reciprocity does not necessarily extend to their choices. The good and mean of justice as an objective good might be secured without all the participants choosing the means to bring that good about.

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52 ibid. 1138a19-20
53 ibid. 1136a29-31
54 ibid. 1138a28-35
The good and mean of justice, then, is a good ‘toward others’, a reciprocal good. The practice of justice as a virtue is the way the members of the exchange relate themselves by choice to this good.

Aristotle is careful about describing how an action can be just or unjust and this description is the basis for understanding his insistence that although one can voluntarily suffer harm one cannot voluntarily suffer injustice.

When Aristotle describes an action as voluntary (hekousion), that can mean one of two things. The action may be voluntary in the sense that it is done by an agent who knows himself, the action, and his circumstances but is not necessarily chosen by the agent as the necessary means of putting something good and an object of his wish (boulēsis) into practice, or it may be an action that is both voluntary and deliberate, that is, an action chosen as the necessary means of practicing that good. Like the practice of any of the other character virtues, an action is just or unjust only if it is voluntarily and deliberately performed. The final goodness of the action chosen must be the object of the agent’s wish (boulēsis) if that action is to be just. The practice of justice as a virtue (or injustice as a vice) must be a voluntary action chosen by the agent as the means of putting what he wishes as his good and end into practice. Failing that requirement, an action can be just (or unjust) accidentally (sumbebēkos) when the good ‘toward others’ is (or is not) maintained as a result either of an involuntary action, or of an action that is voluntary but one which is not chosen for its just goodness by the agent. An involuntarily just action would be one where the person involved would be forced to do something, like the rightful restoration of a deposit, simply because of coercion or external compulsion, and a voluntary but accidentally just action would be the just restoration of a deposit because of some other motive than the justness of the action itself: perhaps because of a fear of the consequences if it were not performed or because of the good reputation that may come of doing it.

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55 ibid. 1136b3-9
56 ibid. 1135a15-b6
57 ibid. 1135b2-6

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either case, though the state of affairs would be an equality (or inequality) according to what is due, the action itself could be characterized as just or unjust only accidentally, for the objective good (or evil) ‘toward others’ is either involuntary or the voluntary but unchosen result of the agent (or agents) involved. Conversely, should that good ‘toward others’ be the result of choice, then the action would be just or unjust.

This distinction between the deliberate and the non-deliberate within voluntary action is the basis for Aristotle’s insistence that one cannot voluntarily, that is, deliberately, suffer injustice. For to deliberately suffer injustice would be to choose this action as the necessary means of putting something evil, or harmful (blabē) as an object of one’s wish into practice and no one can wish anything that is not (or at least does not appear as) good. This distinction allows Aristotle to account for the case of the morally weak person who voluntarily suffers evil without making that evil the object of wish. One can, therefore, suffer harm (to blaptein) voluntarily but not injustice (to adikein).

This distinction between harm and injustice can be applied to Aristotle’s understanding of the mean and the extremes of justice. One can be harmed - even voluntarily - without there being someone who is acting unjustly, but one cannot suffer injustice without someone acting unjustly. Harm can be perpetrated and suffered in accidentally unjust actions, but injustice can be done and involuntarily suffered only in unjust actions. Thus someone’s being harmed could be the result of involuntary injustice in an accidental sense, but for a person to suffer injustice there must be someone who voluntarily and with deliberation acts unjustly.

But what about the judge who gives an unjust decision from motives other than pleonexia? Surely Aristotle’s identification of the motive of injustice as exclusively that of trying to get more than is one’s due breaks down at least in this case. Yet to see that it does not we need to remember the distinction between perfect justice as the whole of virtue and the character virtue of justice as only a part of virtue. If the judge desires more than his due

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58 Ibid. 1136b3-9
in a particular decision (whether that be in terms of power, reputation, influence, revenge - as long as these are in some sense goods shareable in the polis\textsuperscript{60}) then his decision is unjust both as the character vice of injustice and as the vice of general injustice, and the aggrieved parties involved in the decision would likewise suffer injustice in both senses of that vice. But should the judge make a decision which results in an objective inequality between the parties involved, and should that decision be made out of a motive other than pleonexia, the judge's action would be describable in terms of the vice of that particular motive and also in terms of injustice in the wider sense. Those suffering from his vicious decision would suffer injustice in the wider sense but not injustice in the particular sense of the vice. They would be harmed by his vicious apathy, for example, and suffer injustice - but only in the wider sense of that vice.

The peculiarity of justice as a character virtue lies in its good and mean being 'towards others,' that is, in the reciprocal character of the good and mean as a giving and receiving of what is due of external goods. When that good and mean is attained, the members of the exchange all benefit from the just exchange of external goods and all practice justice and become just to the extent that they deliberately participate in that exchange for the sake of its goodness. When that good is not attained, all the members are harmed by the injustice, though not all in the same way. Some become unjust having chosen the means to undermine the good and mean, while others suffer the injustice involuntarily. The just man, one with a character capable of practicing justice in his dealing with others, will be a virtuous man, for the character virtue of justice includes the other character virtues.\textsuperscript{61}

\textsuperscript{59} ibid. 1136a31-b9, cf. 1136b23-5

\textsuperscript{60} ibid. 1137a26-30. Williams (1980) 192, complains that there must be something wrong with extending pleonexia to such things as gratitude or revenge. But for Aristotle honor and wealth are external goods of fortune which can be the object of pleonexia: ibid. 1130a24, 27-8, 31-2, b3-4; Pol 1266b38-b2, 1308a9-10, 1311a4-7, 1315a17-20; Rhet 1372b1-8, 16-21. Gratitude is a kind of honor: NE 1163b1-5; EE 1242b19-21, while taking revenge is a way to restore one's honor: NE 1126a3-8, 1132b34-1133a1; EE 1231b10, 19-20, 25-6.

\textsuperscript{61} Cf. Pol 1283-40
The practice of justice is a character virtue especially social in nature whose reciprocity in the exchange of the external goods necessary for the good human life of virtue binds the community in a way that the practice of the other character virtues does not.

3. Justice as the Social Virtue of Character which binds the Polis

Aristotle divides justice as a particular character virtue into the distributive (*to dianometikon*) and corrective (*to diorthótkon*), the former dealing with the distribution of divisible goods within the community and the latter with voluntary or involuntary private transactions. Equality in distribution will be a four term relation between persons and shares proportional to desert, while the mean of corrective justice will be an arithmetical proportion between gain and loss.

The objective good of justice is equality in the reciprocal activity of giving and receiving what is due, the good which is the basis for human life as the bond which ties human beings together as a community. Since happiness is a life of activity and no human activity is self-sufficient in itself, human beings need external goods to act and be happy. The need (*chrēsis*) for such goods is the basis for human community. This need leads to an exchange (*allagma, metadosis*) of those goods which binds members of the community together. But exchange binds only if it is equally beneficial for the participants; if not, there is no exchange and no intercourse. The equality that binds the participants is that of a proportional requital of external goods, and so the virtue whose good is this proportion, justice, is the practice which is the bond of the community.

Political justice is that virtuous state of affairs where the citizens are able to give and receive their due and so live and live well as human beings. The good of this proportional equality among the citizens will be universalized in rules or laws, and these laws will guide

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62 *NE* 1130b30-1131a9
63 ibid. 1131a10-b24
64 ibid. 1131b25-1132a19
65 ibid. 1132b31-1133a5
66 ibid. 1133a26-7. b6-10

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the citizens as well as their governors in their day to day lives of being ruled and ruling fairly.\footnote{ibid. 1134b13-15}

Absolute justice, or justice simply (haplōs) is political justice between free and actually equal citizens who are capable of ruling and being ruled justly according to law.\footnote{ibid. 1134a24-32} Those members of the polis neither free nor actually equal will be capable of just practice in a greater or lesser degree according to a certain likeness (kath' homoioitēta) to political justice. Justice, for instance, between master and slave, is not the same as, but similar to (homoioūn), justice haplōs, or political justice, whereas justice between parent and children, or between husband and wife, more closely approximates the political justice of the citizens of the polis.

According to Aristotle, political justice is of two kinds, one natural (to phusikon), the other conventional (to nomikon).\footnote{ibid. 1134b18-19} Natural political justice is described as having the same validity everywhere independent of varying social or political custom. Conventional justice, on the other hand, is in the first instance a matter that can be settled in one way or another indifferently. Once justice in this case is settled, though, it becomes a fixed rule for a given political community.\footnote{ibid. 1134b20-1} Aristotle gives a number of examples of conventional justice, one of which is the particular political regulation of a prisoner's ransom fee.\footnote{ibid. 1134b21-4} Although he gives no examples of natural political justice, earlier in Book V he claimed that such justice would be embodied in laws concerning virtue in the polis.\footnote{ibid. 1129b19-25} Since the best form of government, according to Aristotle, is that which is best according to nature (kata phusin he aristē),\footnote{ibid. 1135a3-5} natural political justice should be that justice embodied in the laws of the best constitution.

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\begin{itemize}
  \item \footnote{ibid. 1134b13-15}
  \item \footnote{ibid. 1134a24-32}
  \item \footnote{ibid. 1134b18-19}
  \item \footnote{ibid. 1134b20-1}
  \item \footnote{ibid. 1134b21-4}
  \item \footnote{Cf. ibid. 1129b19-25}
  \item \footnote{ibid. 1135a3-5}
\end{itemize}
If natural political justice is a virtuous human life as embodied in the laws of the best constitution, justice as a law and justice as the good of virtuous practice must be distinguished. For natural justice embodied in law can admit of some variation\textsuperscript{74} while the good of virtuous practice, as we have seen, is practically necessary and invariable. The human good of giving and receiving what is due among citizens within the polis, as good (\textit{to kalon kai to dikaios}) must be distinguished from that good’s formulation as law. For as we saw in the previous chapter, the good of acting well in this particular action and its universal formulation in a rule or law are not the same thing.\textsuperscript{75} The former is the object of the actual knowledge of practical \textit{noos}, the latter something derivative and potential, the object of practical \textit{doxa}. This is the basis for the distinction between ‘that which is unjust’ (\textit{to adikon}) and ‘the unjust action’ (\textit{to adikema}), and ‘that which is just’ (\textit{to dikaios}) and ‘the just action’ (\textit{to dikaiosma}).\textsuperscript{76} The former terms are universals sanctioned by or embodied in law, the latter the evil or good itself as practiced in a particular situation. Justice to the extent that it is formulated in law as a universal is something potential and variably applicable to actions in different situations. But the fineness of the human good of justice, and primarily natural political justice, is not a universal but a virtuous action practiced in this situation under these circumstances.

The difference between the good of justice practiced and its formulation in law is the basis for the need of a virtue by which the law can be appropriately applied to an action in a given situation. Precisely for the sake of the good of practicing justice in a given situation, the virtuous citizens as legislators and judges need to exercise the virtue of equity (\textit{to epieikes}) to correct justice formulated as law because of the law’s limitation as a universal.\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{74} ibid. 1134b24-35
\textsuperscript{75} Supra Chapter II pp. 122-5
\textsuperscript{76} NE 1135a8-12
\textsuperscript{77} ibid. 1137b13-27. Rectification of a just law as a universal is the practice of natural political justice: ibid. 1137a31-b13.
The practice, then, of justice as a character virtue is the human good of what is fine and just in relation to the equality of giving and receiving what is due. Justice is the pre-eminently social virtue in ethical and political life which binds human beings together in a right exchange of the external goods necessary for living the good human life. While justice can be practiced in any human relationship with respect to the external goods necessary for living a good human life, the practice of justice will be primarily that of a natural political justice between the citizens of the polis with the best constitution.

Aristotle's examination of justice follows, and in one sense concludes, his examination of the character virtues in Books II - V of the NE. Understood as a character virtue, justice is treated last in Aristotle's exposition of those virtues because of its especially social nature. But if justice is the social character virtue which comprehends the other character virtues, justice itself can only be practiced among friends. Aristotle's examination of friendship in Books VIII and IX of the NE marks the culmination of his examination of the character and social virtues of the happy human life of virtue in the polis. For as we shall see, justice is practiced by friends and there is one kind of friendship, the primary, or perfect friendship of virtuous men, which comprehends justice and all the character virtues in its practice. It is the practice of this friendship which is, for Aristotle, the culmination of the self-sufficient happiness of a human life of virtue in the polis.

III. Justice, Friendship, and the Perfect Friendship of the Virtuous

1. Justice and Friendship

The relation between justice and friendship is an important feature in Aristotle's practical philosophy of human concerns, an examination of which will illuminate the nature and place of the perfect friendship of virtuous men as a virtue in Aristotle's ethical and political writings.

For Aristotle, friendship can initially be described as a relationship between two or more people characterized by a mutual and mutually acknowledged respect for and active
commitment to each other's well-being. Friendships vary according to the different motives the friends have for their commitment to each other. In a friendship of good, or virtuous men, that motivation is a love of the friends' good, or virtuous character. In a friendship of pleasure, it is the pleasure the friends gain from the other and in a friendship of utility the friends are motivated by the use they have for each other. Each of these three kinds of friendship are further divided into those friendships in which the friends are equally good, pleasant, and useful and those in which they are not. This understanding of friendship allows Aristotle to recognize a great variety of human relationships beginning from within the family and household and extending to the kind of associations possible in the political community at large as friendships of one kind or another.

In the EE Aristotle describes how friendship - and its different kinds - are related to justice:

To seek the proper way of associating with a friend is to seek for a particular kind of justice. In fact the whole of justice in general is in relation to a friend, for what is just is just for certain persons, and persons who are partners, and a friend is a partner, either in one's family or in one's life. For the human being is not only a political but also a house-holding animal .... accordingly there would be partnership, and justice of a sort, even if there were no state. And a household is a sort of friendship ... hence in the household are first found the origins and springs of friendship, of political organization and of justice. This relation between friendship and justice is similarly described in the NE:

The objects and the personal relationships with which friendship is concerned appear ... to be the same as those which are in the sphere of justice. For in every partnership we find mutual justice of some sort (ti dikaion) and also friendship ... it is natural that the claims of justice also should increase with the nearness of friendship, since friendship and justice exist between the same persons and are co-extensive in range.

Friendship, then, is the practice of justice between two friends and the kind of justice the friends practice is determined by the kind of friends they are for one another. The friendship of virtuous men is the practice of a justice determined by their mutual love for each other's virtuous characters; the friendships of pleasure and utility are, respectively,
the practice of justice among friends based on the pleasure or utility they seek from each other. In every kind of friendship a just, or equal, exchange of goods between the friends will be practiced.\textsuperscript{81} For friendship, like justice, is the good and mean of what is equal (\textit{to ison}) in exchange\textsuperscript{82} binding (\textit{sunechein}) the partners together.\textsuperscript{83}

Friendship, like justice, is an equal exchange of goods between partners in a relationship. But friendship differs from justice in two ways. First, in friendship good things are exchanged between friends not simply for the sake of the goodness of the equality of the exchange but for the sake of the goodness of both friends sharing equally in that exchange. The good of friendship, in other words, includes the justice of an equality in exchange in the friends' exchange of goods among themselves. Secondly, the goodness of the equality of exchange among friends as friends is, in contrast to that of justice, primarily an absolute or arithmetic equality and, only secondarily, an equality of proportion:

Equality in friendship does not seem to be like equality in matters of justice. In the sphere of justice, 'equal' means primarily proportionate to desert, and 'equal in quantity' is only a secondary sense; whereas in friendship 'equal in quantity' is the primary meaning, and 'proportionate to desert' only secondarily.\textsuperscript{84}

Friendship differs from justice, then, in that friends exchange good things with each other out of love for each other as friends and the equality they seek in their exchange is primarily an absolute equality of quantity. Friends love each other as friends and want to share equally the goods they have with each other because of that love. In this way friendship can be understood to complete justice. It completes justice in that the friends delight in the good of the equality of their exchange with each other because they rejoice in the good of their friendship. Their love for each other either as virtuous, pleasant, or

\textsuperscript{80} \textit{NE} 1159b25-1160a9
\textsuperscript{81} ibid. 1159b25-7. \textit{Haplos} friendship, the perfect friendship of the good, and justice, \textit{to dikaion}, are the fine and just good of the practice of their respective character virtues, \textit{philia} and \textit{dikaiosune}: \textit{supra} note 21. The practice of justice \textit{haplos} is between citizens whose mutual relations are regulated by law in the polis governed by the best constitution: ibid. 1134a25-31, 1135a3-5
\textsuperscript{82} Cf. ibid. 1157b34-6, 1158b1-3
\textsuperscript{83} Cf. ibid. 1132b31-1133a2, 1155a22-3

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useful preserves the just equality of their exchange and impels them to make that equality as absolutely equal as they can. Because of the love friends have for one another, lawgivers are anxious to promote friendship among the citizens and residents of their polis:

Friendship seems too to hold states together, and lawgivers to care more for it than for justice; for unanimity seems to be like friendship, and this they aim at most of all, and expel faction as their worst enemy; and when men are friends they have no need of justice, while when they are just they need friendship as well, and the truest form of justice is thought to be a friendly quality.⁸⁵

These observations are not to be construed in such a way that friendship is to be understood as doing away with, or disposing of the need for, justice. Friendship does not displace but rather completes justice. The practice of friendship enables the friends to preserve the good of a proportionate equality in exchange by impelling them out of their mutual love to seek an absolute equality of exchange, not just as the good of the other (pros allon, heteron), but as the good of the other as friend (pros ton philon).⁸⁶

If each kind of friendship includes a certain kind of justice, Aristotle recognizes many kinds of justice. Absolute justice, or justice haplōs, is political justice, the habit and practice of giving and receiving what is due among citizens in a political community. Even this political justice, as treated in the Politics, admits of several kinds. Of these kinds there is only one which is finally and absolutely justice - the justice of virtuous men who are citizens in the best polis.⁸⁷ If the practice of justice is not enough to maintain a human community, and especially a political community, each kind of justice, and especially each kind of political justice, must be a kind of friendship. As we shall see, the only friendship which includes and completes justice in this final and absolute sense is a friendship of citizens who are virtuous men - a friendship which Aristotle in the NE calls the perfect friendship of the good or virtuous. This perfect friendship of the virtuous is a character virtue which includes justice and the other virtues and the practice of such friendship is a

⁸⁴ ibid. 1158b29-33
⁸⁵ NE 1155a21-8
⁸⁶ ibid. 1166a29-33, 1171b32-4
⁸⁷ Pol 1328b33-41
virtuous action which perfectly preserves the equality of a just exchange between the friends. It is the nature of this friendship to which we now turn.

2. Perfect Friendship is a Character Virtue and Its Practice a Virtuous Action

The importance of friendship in Aristotle's Ethics is apparent. Two of the ten books of the NE are devoted to it and their placement near the end of the NE and just prior to Book X witnesses to its final significance in the human good of a happy life of virtuous action. Books II - V have dealt with the character virtues culminating in the study of justice. If friendship includes justice is friendship itself a character virtue?

Significantly, Aristotle opens Book VII of the EE with the observation that friendship appears to be a kind of character virtue (ἐθική ἕξις της). Similarly, at the beginning of Book VIII of the NE friendship is described as 'a kind of virtue or with virtue' (ἀρετῆς ἐστὶ ἐν ἁρετησί). As in his treatment of justice in Book V, so in both his Ethics, Aristotle apparently wants to understand friendship as a virtue along the lines of the character virtues he has examined in the middle books of the NE. Aristotle's examination of justice concludes and completes his examination of the character virtues as virtues of a life in the polis. The placing of his study of friendship in both Ethics at the conclusion of his examination of character virtue and justice indicates that the practice of friendship completes the virtue of justice and in some way is the culmination of the virtuous human life.

But if friendship is indeed a virtue, Aristotle appears hesitant to identify it as such. He calls friendship 'a kind of virtue', or 'a kind of character virtue' but never simply a character virtue. The reason for this appears to be that friendship is an equivocal of many

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88 EE 1234b25-8
89 NE 1155a3-4
90 In Books II and IV of the NE Aristotle describes philia or 'friendliness' as a mean between the extremes of obsequiousness and flattery: ibid. 1108a26-30, or between the extremes of flattery and surliness: c.f. ibid. 1126b28-1127a12. In EE 1233b29-30, 1234a23-7 Aristotle tells us that this philia is not a virtue but rather an emotion, for although it is a middle state it does not involve choice. In the NE he adds that while this philia may resemble the emotion found in friendship, it differs in that it is does not arise from a love of the friends for each other but rather from an innate amiability: ibid. 1126b19-28.
different kinds, not all of which can be understood as a character virtue. If friendship is a character virtue and not simply a ‘kind of virtue’ or something ‘that accompanies virtue’ it must be a certain kind of friendship, one which Aristotle will understand as friendship in the primary and proper sense.

There are, as we have noted above, many kinds of friendship. Of the different friendships, each kind is defined by that which the friends consider lovable (to philēton), on account of which (dia) they share affection, or love (to philēin), for each other. That which is lovable is what is good (to agathon), pleasant (to hēdu), or useful (to

91 Apostolos, (1984) 318: commenting on NE 1155a3-4, observes, ‘whether friendship is a virtue or something which requires virtue is left open here. Perhaps this term ‘friendship’ has many meanings. Those who are friends in the highest sense are virtuous, but those who are friends in a limited sense, e.g., for the sake of pleasure or usefulness, may be partly virtuous or even vicious. Again, since virtue is a disposition which is difficult to displace, and since friendship for the sake of usefulness is usually not enduring, it follows that some friendships are not virtues.’

92 Stewart, (1892) Vol II 266, pointed out long ago that while philia in the wide acceptance of the term is not itself an aretē, hē teleia philia may be described as aretē tis and met’ aretēs because it manifests itself in association with teleia aretē. As we shall see Aristotle did understand the practice of teleia philia as a virtue, in fact as the most important of character virtues, the social virtue which completes the exercise of justice. As the character virtue of the fullest practice of the human being’s social nature, the practice of hē teleia philia among the virtuous is necessary beyond simply the fulfillment of the sociological, cf. Stewart. op. cit. 262-4; and of the psychological, cf. Cooper, (1980) 330-4), needs of the human being. Cooper himself, (1977a) 312, acknowledged certain passages in the NE: 1167a31-3, 1168a5-9, and 1159a25-33, as evidence that Aristotle’s defense of the value of friendship as the necessary means for attaining important psychological goods in human living does not mean that Aristotle does not also insist on the ‘worthwhileness-in-itself’ of the active expression of love and the direct pleasure that human beings take in the experience of being loved by others: Cooper.

93 As Price, (1989), 152, points out, the term dia can refer to any of the four causes, for dia ti?, cf. Phys 198a14-21, is simply the indeterminate question ‘why?’ Dia aretēn can signify either a quality of the person loved: EE 1236a13; cf. NE 1156a12-13, or the goal of the friendship: NE 1162b7. But a distinction must be made between the quality which is lovable in the friends and the final and efficient cause of their friendship as a practical activity. The lovable thing (to philēton) on account of which (dia) the friends love each other is the character of the friends. Since character is a person’s appetitive habituation toward something as its practical good and end, the friends’ mutual love of character is a love of what the friends want as their good, whether that be the fineness of virtuous action or the good of pleasure and utility. That good which the friends want is the final cause of their desire and their character and, therefore of their friendship. The friends’ mutual choice to love each other is the efficient cause of the practice of their friendship. Thus the lovable thing or quality on account of which the friends love each other is the basis, or ground, of their friendship, the good they desire the final cause of the friendship and their mutual choice in their shared well-regard (eunoia) for each other, the efficient cause of their friendship. In friendship in the primary and proper sense, the perfect friendship of the virtuous, the basis, or ground, of the friendship is the virtuous character of the friends, the final cause is the fine and just good of virtuous action as object of their wish, and the efficient cause, the friends’ mutual choice to love each other for the sake of that good. Because virtuous character has as its final cause the fine and just good, a virtuous character is finally the virtuous man’s wish for the human good as his end and his deliberate desire to choose action for the se of


that end. In this way the virtuous friends' love for each others' character is their mutual love for each other as they both wish for the human good.

94. ibid. 1155b18-21. Since the useful may be taken to mean what is productive of some good or pleasure, the class of lovable goods as ends can be reduced to the good and the pleasant: ibid. 1155b19-21
95. ibid. 1156a6ff
96. Prōtōs, or its derivatives, is used in the EE at 1236b2, 15, 23, 28, 1237a9-10, b5, 8, 34-5, 1238a30-1. The NE uses prōtōs at 1157a30-1 coupled with kurios (virtue friendship is friendship in the 'primary and proper sense', on which phrase cf. Bonitz on Meta 1015b11), but generally the NE employs teleion, 'perfect' or 'complete': ibid. 1156b7, 34, 1158a11, or qualifies virtue friends as haplōs philoi: ibid. 1157b4, instead of prōtōs. Cf. Ward, (1995) Note 41. 196. This change in terminology does not necessarily mean that Aristotle is abandoning his analysis of friendship in the NE as a focal homonym, cf. Cooper, (1977) 619-48, some even have interpreted the more relaxed terminology of the NE as evidence of a surer, more mature grasp of friendship as such a homonym, cf. Owen (1979) 17-8.
97. ibid. 1156a3-5; EE 1236a12-5, 31-2. Hadreas, (1995) 393-400, argues that translating eunoia as 'goodwill' or 'well-wishing' is misleading because such translations suggest a volitional relationship whereas the term 'eunoia' rather implies a cognitive relationship between good people in their recognition of each other's virtue worth. Hadreas suggests the phrase 'recognition of another's worthiness' or 'to think favorably of' as better renderings of eunoia. It seems to me that 'well-regard' or 'respect' would also be adequate translations for this term as well. However, even though at one point Aristotle does distinguish eunoia from orexis: NE 1166b33, at other points in the text he glosses eunoia as a rational desire for the good: ibid. 1156a3-5 and tells us that those who have eunoia wish, or rationally desire (boulontai) what they recognize as some good of fine quality in another. This wish for what is good is not yet a praxis of friendship (which demands doing or practicing what one wishes for as good), it is a necessary prerequisite for a perfect friendship of the virtuous: NE 1167a3-21; EE 1241a9-12. By translating eunoia as 'good will' this rational appetitive response to the recognizable good is emphasized.
98. ibid. 1167a18-21
99. ibid. 1167a7-10; EE 1241a9-12
100. Only the virtuous man is concerned for the friend for the friend's own sake, because only he is concerned for the friend 'in himself' (kath' hauton), cf. NE 1156a10-1, 'because of himself' (di' hauton): ibid. 1156b10, and 'in so far as he is who he is': ibid. 1156a17-8. A friend who is loved qua himself is also most pleasant: EE 1236b27-32, 1237a26-33, b2-5; cf. NE 1156b18-24, 1169b35-6, and useful: EE 1238a3-8; cf. NE 1156b18-24, 1170a5-6, and as Price, (1989) 137, points out, loving the pleasure and usefulness of one's friend is fully derived from loving him qua himself.

chrēsimon. so that a friendship of the good is a mutual love the friends have for each other on account of what is good, and a friendship of pleasure arises on account of what is pleasant, and a friendship of utility on account of what the friends take to be useful. Friendship in the primary and proper sense is a friendship of the virtuous on account of the good of their virtuous characters. This friendship is a mutual love which is also a mutual 'good-will' or 'well-regard' (eunoia) between the virtuous friends - the acknowledgment of their virtuous characters, a 'good-will' which is not idle admiration, but the impetus to an active cooperation among them. Moreover, this friendship is a mutual love of the friends for each other because of who they are in themselves (di' hautous), a friendship which is fully pleasant and useful as well.
Friendships, on the other hand, formed on account of that which is pleasurable or useful apart from the good of virtuous character only partially resemble friendship in the primary and proper sense. For even though these friends share with one another an affection on account of what they both consider lovable in each other - either the pleasure or the use they afford each other - they do not share mutual well-regard for each other because they are finally unconcerned with the good of a virtuous character. In these friendships the friends do not love each other for who they are, and so the pleasure or utility they derive from their relationship is pleasant and useful only in a qualified way. Such friendships are related to friendship in the primary and proper sense only by a certain resemblance (\textit{kath' homoiotēta tina}) in focal reference to a primary instance. Friendship in the primary and proper sense is friendship \textit{haplōs} - the perfect friendship of the good. Perfect friendship is a mutual exchange of affection between virtuous men on account of their virtuous character. This mutual affection will be based on the equality of the character of the friends as good, and they will love each other for their good characters; that is, they will love each other for themselves (\textit{di' hauous}). The perfect friendship of the good, of those who are virtuous, is virtue friendship (\textit{hē philia kat' aretēn}). It will be this friendship alone which Aristotle understands as a type of character and social virtue whose practice completes the practice of the virtue of justice. Let us

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\textsuperscript{101} NE 1167a10-4. In his EE Aristotle is explicit: there is no \textit{eunoia} in either utility or pleasure friendships: ibid. 1241a5. Even Cooper, (1977) 632, 641-2, and (1980) 310, who endeavors to argue that \textit{eunoia} is present in some way in all the kinds of friendship, concedes Aristotle's denial of that position in this passage. However, Price (1989) 154, thinks he finds \textit{eunoia} at least "notionally present" in friendships of pleasure and utility in the form of the friends wishing each other those goods.

\textsuperscript{102} NE 1156b20-1, 1157a1-2, 31-2, 1158b6

\textsuperscript{103} EE 1236a15-b3. Besides the question of whether the focal analysis account of friendship in the EE is essentially the same as that in the NE, there is also question as to the adequacy of Aristotle's use of focal reference to account for the unity of friendship. Forthenbaugh (1975); Walker, (1979) 180-96; and Price, (1989) ch. 5, for example, all doubt the adequacy of focal reference as a means of analyzing \textit{philia}. For one argument in its defense, cf. Ward, (1995) 183-205.

\textsuperscript{104} NE 1157a30-b5; EE 1236a15-1236b1

\textsuperscript{105} ibid. 1157a29-b5

\textsuperscript{106} ibid. 1156b7-9, 1157a10-2

\textsuperscript{107} ibid. 1157a16-20, b3. Another formulation is that the friends are loved 'for their own sake' (\textit{ekeinōn heneka}): ibid. 1156b10; EE 1240a24-5

\textsuperscript{108} EE 1237a9-11
examine first the EE and then the NE to see that for Aristotle the perfect friendship of the
virtuous is indeed a character virtue and its practice a virtuous action.

In Book II of the EE, Aristotle examines the nature of character virtue. Character
virtue has to do with pleasure and pain, being pleased with what is good and pained with
what is evil.\(^{109}\) This kind of virtue is a disposition (\textit{diathesis}) or habit (\textit{hexis})\(^{110}\) of choice
(\textit{proairesis}) of action (\textit{ergon, praxis}) and emotion (\textit{pathos})\(^{111}\) that is a mean or middle state
between extremes in accordance with right principle which produces the best habit (\textit{poiei
ten beltist\-n hexin}).\(^{112}\) Choice is the result of a deliberation (\textit{bouleusis}) over the mean as
the means to the good as end, the latter being the object of rational desire or wish
(\textit{boul\-esis}).\(^{113}\) This choice of means for the sake of the good as end is praiseworthy.\(^{114}\)

In EE VII Aristotle plainly understands the primary friendship, that of the
virtuous,\(^{115}\) as a character virtue and the practice of this friendship as a virtuous action:

If active love is the reciprocal choice (\textit{antiproairesis}), accompanied by
pleasure of one another's acquaintance, it is clear that friendship of the
primary kind is in general the reciprocal choice of things absolutely good
and pleasant because they are good and pleasant; and friendship itself is the
habit (\textit{hexis}) from which such a choice (\textit{proairesis}) arises. For its function
is an activity, but this not external but within the lover himself ... hence to
love is to feel pleasure but to be loved is not an activity of the thing loved,
whereas loving is an activity - friendship.\(^{116}\)

The description of this friendship is that of a virtuous action arising from
friendship as a character virtue. Like any other character virtue the primary friendship of
the virtuous is the habit or disposition of a choice of action - in this case the action of loving
each other as good and pleasant \textit{hapl\-\-\-s} - and this virtuous activity is accompanied by
pleasure.

\(^{109}\) ibid. 1220a31-9, 1227a20-b5
\(^{110}\) ibid. 1220b18-20
\(^{111}\) ibid. 1220a29-31
\(^{112}\) ibid. 1220b27-9, 34-5, 1222a6-12, b9-14, 1227b5-11
\(^{113}\) ibid. 1226a7-17, b9-20
\(^{114}\) ibid. 1228a11-9, cf. ibid. 1220a4-8
\(^{115}\) ibid. 1237a9-18
\(^{116}\) ibid. 1237a30-8
A virtuous character is distinguished by the rational desire (boulēsis) for the good and the deliberative desire to choose action as a means to that good. That perfect friendship is a character virtue is apparent in Aristotle's insistence that only the virtuous have eunoia for that which they perceive as good but that this friendship requires more than just good-will; it requires doing the good one wishes:

*Eunoia* is neither entirely distinct from friendship nor yet identical with it. If friendship is divided into three kinds, *eunoia* is not found in the friendship of utility nor in friendship for pleasure ... so that it is clear that *eunoia* has to do with friendship that is based on character. But it is the mark of one with *eunoia* only to wish good, whereas it is the mark of the friend to do the good that he wishes *(prattein ha boulētai).* *Eunoia* is the beginning of friendship, as every friend feels *eunoia,* but not everyone who has *eunoia* is a friend since the man of *eunoia* is only as it were making a beginning.117

In order to practice the virtue of primary friendship, the friends must not only have *eunoia* or the acknowledgement of, and wish for, the good of their friendship, but must deliberately desire and choose to put that friendship into practice. Their good-will must lead them to a mutual choice of practicing their friendship - otherwise the two would be mere mutual well-wishers and in this respect not unlike the ethically weak who wish for the good as end but are unable to choose the means to put that good into practice.118

So while Aristotle opens *EE* VII merely with the observation that friendship is considered 'a kind' of character virtue, there is unmistakable evidence in the text of Book VII to support the conclusion that he understands the perfect friendship of the virtuous as a character virtue and its practice as a virtuous action. Evidence that Aristotle understands the primary friendship of the perfect friendship of the virtuous as a character virtue and its practice as a virtuous action is even stronger in the *NE.*

Aristotle observes at the beginning of his examination of friendship in *NE* VIII that besides the necessity of friendship for concord in the polis, friendship itself is 'fine' (*kalon*) and an object of our praise:

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117 ibid. 1241a2-14
118 cf. *NE* 1166b6-8
And it [friendship] is not only necessary but also fine (kalon): for we praise those who love their friends, and it is thought to be a fine thing to have many friends; and again we think it is the same people that are good men and are friends.\textsuperscript{119}

Aristotle's description here of friendship as fine and the object of our praise is the same as his description of the human good of virtuous action.\textsuperscript{120} But his description of friendship here refers to the primary friendship, the perfect friendship of virtuous men. For of the different kinds of friendships only this perfect friendship is, like virtue, something permanent,\textsuperscript{121} esteemed, or loved for its own sake,\textsuperscript{122} and praiseworthy.\textsuperscript{123} And it is with respect to this friendship that Aristotle observes:

It is with friendship as it is with the virtues; men are called good in two senses, either as having a virtuous disposition or as realizing virtue in action, and similarly friends when in each other's company derive pleasure from and confer benefits on each other, whereas friends who are asleep or parted are not actively friendly, yet have the disposition to be so. For separation does not destroy friendship absolutely, though it prevents its active exercise.\textsuperscript{124}

Further evidence of Aristotle's understanding of primary or perfect friendship as a character virtue is apparent in his distinction between emotion and the choice necessary in this friendship of the virtuous:

Love (philēsis) seems to be an emotion, friendship a fixed disposition, for liking can be felt even for inanimate things, but reciprocal love (antiphilōtus) involved deliberate choice, and this springs from a fixed disposition. Also, when men wish the good of those they love for their own sakes, their loving does not depend on emotion but on a fixed disposition.\textsuperscript{125}

\textsuperscript{119} ibid. 1155a26-31
\textsuperscript{120} ibid. 1101b31-4; cf. EE 1220a4-8. In the Topics Aristotle notes that friendship, like justice, is a good which is fine and praiseworthy in itself: Top 116b37-117a4.
\textsuperscript{121} Nothing is as permanent as activities in conformity with virtue: NE 1100b17, 1156b12, and the friendship of the virtuous is permanent: ibid. 1156a9-b18, 1158b34-5; EE 1237b8-16
\textsuperscript{122} The fineness of virtuous action is esteemed as an end in itself, done for its own sake: NE 1116b30-1, 1117b8-9, and virtuous friends love each other for who they really are - their virtuous characters: ibid. 1156a9-b24. As virtuous character is a character which chooses action for the sake of its fineness, these friends love each other as that kind of character. Their choice to benefit each other by their exchange of good things with each other out of love for each other's virtuous character is fine: ibid. 1169b10-13, 1171a21-27, b16, 21-5, something that is desirable in all circumstances: 1171b27-8, and ought (dei) to be done: ibid. 1169b22; cf. EE 1245b7-11.
\textsuperscript{123} Virtuous men are praiseworthy as is virtuous action: NE 1101b12-26 and so is the friendship of the good: ibid. 1159a33-5
\textsuperscript{124} NE 1157b5-11
\textsuperscript{125} ibid. 1157b28-32
The perfect friendship of the virtuous is a character virtue of the friends which they actualize in their mutual choice to love each other. This choice, like any virtuous choice, is a unity of the wish for what is good and the deliberate desire to choose action for the sake of that good. Their friendship will consist in a mutual eunoia for their own goodness of character which will not be idle (being good men who themselves wish for and practice the good) but will rather prompt them to choose to practice the good of their friendship - a sumpraxis. And as the practice of vice makes the agent wicked and the practice of any character virtue results in the good character of the agent, so the practice of a perfect friendship will improve the character of the virtuous as virtuous friends:

Thus the friendship of bad men is evil, for they take part together in bad pursuits (being unstable), and by becoming like each other are made positively evil. But the friendship of the good is good, and actually grows with their intercourse. And they seem actually to become better by putting their friendship into practice, and because they correct each others faults, for each takes the impress from the other of those traits in him that give him pleasure - whence the saying: 'noble deeds from noble men'.

That the primary or perfect friendship of the virtuous is a character virtue and its practice a virtuous action is consonant with what Aristotle tells us about the virtuous man. For as such a man every choice he makes will be right, because it arises from a virtuous character, and the action chosen, something fine. The virtuous character of this man enables him to form virtuous friendships in which he and his friend(s) mutually choose to share the goods they have with each other out of the love they have for each others' character. A character capable of such a friendship is capable of practicing justice and the

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126 ibid. 1166a14-6
127 Eunoia is aroused by virtue goodness or some excellence: NE 1167a18-21. Although eunoia may be simply a disinterested regard for another: ibid. 1167a18-21, the mutual recognition of each other's virtue worth can prompt two virtuous people to a sumpraxis of cooperation in assisting each other in getting what they both want: ibid. 1167a7-10, and what they both want more than anything is to live virtuously. Since love (to philein), for Aristotle, is the practical obtaining of the wished-for good for another and the friend is one who loves and is loved in return: Rhet 1380b36-1381a1, the mutual praxis of the friends is their mutual love for each other. Their choice to love each other as good is finally caused by the friends' wish for the human good. Their mutual practice, or love for each other, is a unity of that human good as wished-for end and the choice of their loving each other as means. Hence the virtuous activity of their friendship is fine.
128 ibid. 1172a10-4, also cf. ibid. 1165b14-20, 1170a11-3

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other virtues with the friend as well. The character of a perfect friend, then, is also the character of the just man, and since justice includes the other character virtues,\(^{129}\) so a character capable of being a virtue friend is an eminently social character virtue which includes justice and the other character virtues.

In sum, as in the case of the primary friendship in the \(EE\), so in the \(NE\), the primary or perfect friendship of virtuous men is a social character virtue, a character virtue which includes justice and the other appetitive virtues, and the practice of this friendship is a virtuous action. The fineness of their friendship as a virtuous action is the unity of their rational desire for a life of contemplation as their good and end and their choice of loving each other for their character as the means.

3. Character in the Perfect Friendship of the Virtuous

We have seen that the distinguishing feature of perfect friendship as a character and social virtue is the mutual love virtuous friends have for each other's good character. In the following we will examine Aristotle's use of character itself.

Although the mutual love friends have for each other in friendships of utility, pleasure, and goodness, is in some way caused by the love of each other's character, that is, the friends love each other as lovers of what they both take to be lovable,\(^{130}\) it is only the mutual love virtuous friends have for each other in perfect friendship which is a true love of their characters, a love of the friends in themselves:

The perfect form of friendship is that between the good, and those who resemble each other in virtue. For these friends wish each other good in respect of their goodness, and they are good in themselves; but it is those who wish the good of their friends for their friends' sake who are friends in the fullest sense, since they love each other for themselves and not accidentally. Hence the friendship of these lasts as long as they continue to be good; and virtue is a permanent quality. And each is good relatively to his friend as well as absolutely, since the good are both good absolutely and useful to each other. And each is pleasant in both ways also, since good men are pleasant both absolutely and to each other ... therefore it is between good men that affection and friendship exist in their fullest and best form.\(^{131}\)

\(^{129}\) Cf. \(Pol\) 1283-40

\(^{130}\) \(NE\) 1156a4-5

\(^{131}\) Ibid. 1156b7-24
Three features of the friendship of the virtuous make this friendship perfect. First, virtue friends love each other for their virtuous character, second this friendship is permanent, and third, the practice of this friendship combines the goods of utility and pleasure in both their absolute and relative senses. Pleasure and utility friendships, by contrast, are friendships of those who do not love each other for their virtuous character, and they are neither permanent nor inclusive of all the goods found in virtue friendship.\(^\text{132}\)

The first and most important feature of perfect friendship and the feature which most distinguishes it from the other friendships is the friends' love for each others' virtuous character. Loving their virtuous character the friends love themselves for who they are (*di' hautous*) rather than in an accidental way (*kata sumbebēkos*). This contrast between loving each other *di' hautous* and *kata sumbebēkos* suggests that for Aristotle a virtuous character is the perfection of the substance of what a human being is. Early in Book I of the *NE*, where Aristotle is concerned with how the good (*to agathon*) is predicated, he equates what is 'in itself' (*to de kath' hauto*) with substance (*ousia*):

...but the good is predicated alike in the categories of substance, of quality, and of relation; yet *to de kath' hauto kai hê ousia*, is prior in nature to the relative, which seems to be a sort of offshoot or 'accident' (*sumbebēkoti*) of substance...\(^\text{133}\)

In the *De Anima*, Aristotle defines the nature of the human soul as a first act of the human body which is further actualized in knowledge.\(^\text{134}\) In the *NE* the nature of the human being is defined according to its function (*ergon*) which is actualized in the happy life of virtuous activity. The function of a human being and of a good and happy human being could also be understood as the first and second act of the human substance.\(^\text{135}\) That is, as the function of a cithara player and an excellent cithara player are the same, though the latter is the cithara player finally and perfectly, so the substance of the human being

\(^{132}\) ibid. 1156a10-22

\(^{133}\) ibid. 1096a19-23

\(^{134}\) DA 412a23-8

\(^{135}\) Cf. Halper, (1995) 6-14
understood in terms of its function becomes perfect in activity in accordance with virtue.\textsuperscript{136} Virtuous character which results from activity in accordance with virtue is in this way substantially what a human being is finally and perfectly. This helps in our understanding of the following passage in Book VIII:

> If then it was rightly said above that a true friend wishes his friend’s good for that friend’s own sake, the friend would have to remain himself, whatever that may be; so that he will wish him only the greatest goods compatible with his remaining a human being.\textsuperscript{137}

Aristotle’s point in his description of the friend as a human being in contrast with the possibility of the friend becoming divine in a literal way is that virtue friendship is a friendship of equals in virtue. A literal apotheosis of the friend, Aristotle is saying, would sever the equality of the friends’ virtue and thereby sever their friendship. But if we recall that in Book X of the \textit{NE} Aristotle urges his hearers to ‘immortalize themselves’, that is, strive to become as divine as humanly possible in living the best of lives, we can see that for perfect friends to love each other as human beings is to love each other not simply as human beings but as human beings who strive to become as divine as they can. For if, as Aristotle asserts at \textit{NE} IX, whatever someone regards as his being, or the end for the sake of which he chooses to live, is that which he wishes to share in pursuit with his friend,\textsuperscript{138} virtuous friends, in loving each other for their character, love each other for who they are as fully perfected human beings and desire what is best for each other as perfect human beings. What is best for human beings is a life of activity in conformity with virtue, the human good which the wise recognize as a life of contemplation as that life which is as divine as can be humanly lived, and so virtue friends will pursue this life of virtue together as far as they can. Thus for virtue friends to love each other for who each is as a human being is to love each other as perfect human beings who strive to be as divine as they can. In contrast, pleasure or utility friends love each other not substantially as (perfect) human beings but accidentally as human beings who are pleasure or profit seekers. Hence, even if

\textsuperscript{136} Cf. \textit{NE} 1097b22-1098a17; \textit{EE} 1219a8-29
\textsuperscript{137} ibid. 1159a8-11, cf. 1166a20-3, 1168b5-6
they are concerned for each others’ character in their mutual love, they are concerned with their character only to the extent that it provides them pleasure or utility; in other words they love each other only accidentally as perfect human beings.

For friends to love each other for their good, or virtuous, character is to love each other for their goodness as fully perfected human beings. Perfect friendship of the virtuous is thus the primary and proper (kai prōtōs mēn kai kuriōs) friendship. As pleasure and utility friends only accidentally love each other as human beings, these friendships bear only a certain likeness (to homoiousthai toutois) to the mutual love virtuous friends have for each other. Aristotle is understandably concerned primarily with friendship of the virtuous in his investigation of the many kinds of friendships.

Virtue friendship is a mutual love of virtuous friends for their virtuous characters and a virtuous character is a human being fully actualized in virtuous activity. As the human function is comprised of a rational and an appetitive part, with the latter capable of following reason, character is the sum-total of appetitive habits which allow or impede the human agent in following the prompting of his rational principle. By the right education and training a virtuous character is formed, enabling the human agent to follow the prompting of right reason in the practice of the human good in any situation. And as we have seen, right reason is the exercise of the intellectual virtues of wisdom in the knowledge of what the human good consists in (the life of theoria) and phronesis in the correct calculation of the right action as that which is the means, or that which is ‘toward the end’. Virtuous character, then, is an appetitive habituation which enables the virtuous man to make the real human good the object of his wish and deliberate desire to choose the right action with that good as his motivation. This virtuous character is specified in the choice of a particular action in a particular situation as the means of practicing the human good. For, as noted above, the choice of this particular action calls forth from the virtuous agent a particular way of exercising his appetitive virtue, whether by an act of courage, or

138 ibid. 1172a1-3; cf. Rhet 1381a9-10
temperance, or liberality, or by an act of whatever character virtue is appropriate to the circumstances he finds himself in.

Virtuous character is the result of virtuous action. But just as the choice of action a virtuous man has to make to put the human good into practice varies with each circumstance, so the character of the virtuous man will be the result both of his necessary desire for the human good as his end and of the kinds of choices he has had to make in his life to put that good into practice. Virtuous character, then, like virtuous action, is a one and many. Like virtuous action, virtuous character can vary with the kind of choices that need to be made in each given circumstance. The choice of this particular action for the sake of the human good specifies not only that action, say, as a courageous action, but the character of the agent as well, for by that choice he becomes a courageous man. The choice of action specifies, or individuates, the character of the agent choosing. The kinds of choices a virtuous man makes during his life are the result both of his rational desire for the human good and of his deliberate desire to choose actions with that good as his end. The actions he chooses depend on the contingent historical circumstances he has lived through. As no two human beings have exactly the same set of historical circumstances, no two virtuous men will have exactly the same virtuous character. Each virtuous man’s character will be similar to others in the appetitive virtue of wishing for and deliberately desiring what is fine, but will differ in how exactly that good has been put into practice by the choices each man has had to make in the particular circumstances of his life.\(^{140}\)

Thus, while there may be relatively few really virtuous men, of those who are, no two virtuous characters will be exactly the same. And so while the virtuous may be attracted to each other by their virtuous character, their deliberative desire to choose to act with the human good as their end, those characters will differ to the extent that each friend

\(^{139}\) ibid. 1157a25-b5

\(^{140}\) Price, (1989) 130, makes essentially the same point when he observes that the other friend’s ‘self’ is realized in a series of choices and actions over time that identify him as an individual able to contribute to his friend’s \emph{eudaimonia} as an individual and not merely as a type. Cf. Irwin, (1988) 396.
has a different history of choices made for the sake of that end. Any virtuous man would therefore stand to gain from a perfect friendship with another virtuous man. For the virtuous friends could not only love and support each other in their mutual desire for what is fine and just, but the friends will also mutually benefit one another by their different histories, the particular choices they have made which have shaped their virtuous characters. The most important activity in the development and continuance of a virtue friendship will be the mutual communication or sharing of the friends’ individual stories of each other’s virtuous choices for the sake of their both practicing the human good. Their friendship as a mutual action will be the knowledge and love of each others’ characters, and the union of those individual characters in mutual practice will individualize their virtue friendship. As each virtuous man has a character - the result of the virtuous choices he has made throughout his life - so each instance of virtue friendship will be an individual biography, as it were, of the mutual practice of virtue between the two friends. The friends will help each other practice virtue by knowing each others’ story and making that story part of their own. The resulting practice will be a common history of virtue and further contribute to their friendship as a biography of one particular community in virtue within the history of the political community as a whole.

4. The Good of Virtuous Character as Ordered to the Intellect and to the Love of the Friend as Another Self in the Perfect Friendship of the Virtuous

As we have seen, Aristotle’s basic division of the goods of human living is between the human good of activity in conformity with virtue - the supreme good of human happiness (and a good of soul) - and goods external to that activity but either necessary for, or contributory in one way or another to, that human good. Accordingly, Aristotle places the good of friends among the external goods, eventually observing late in NE IX that friends appear to be the most important external good for the virtuous man. Considering the importance, even the necessity, of external goods for the activity of virtue,

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141 NE 1170b10-4
142 Supra notes 5-8
this is a very strong and interesting claim. For if the exercise of any character virtue in virtuous action has to do with some external good, then the exercise of the character virtue of friendship in the virtuous action of virtuous friends is the most important of all the character and social virtues in that the external good of the friend is the greatest of the external goods. A life of activity in conformity with virtue, a happy human life, could not be had without the practice of virtue friendship - the exercise of that virtue which has the greatest of external goods as its object. To make more sense of this claim we need to examine the place of the good of virtuous character in the good human life and, in particular, in the life of virtuous friends.

The very aim of practical philosophy, according to Aristotle, is that we become good (agathoi genōmetha) in practicing virtue, and this is the goodness of a virtuous character. This virtuous character is the appetitive faculty of the human function as obedient to the rational part of that function. Although not the good of happiness itself, which is activity in conformity with virtue, virtuous character is the capacity for that activity, and it is in that activity that virtuous character fully exists. The good of character, then, is distinguishable from that of the activity by which character is realized.

143 NE 1099a24-b8, 1169b8-10
144 ibid. 1103b26-31; EE 1216b16-25
145 ibid. 1102a28-1103a9
146 Cf. ibid. 1168a8-9, 1170a16-9; EE 1244b30-1245a11. As the capacity (dunamis) for activity (energeia) in conformity with virtue, a virtuous character is related to the activity of virtue as what is potential to the actual. This intimate relation between the good of virtuous character and the activity of virtue is best seen in Aristotle's discussion of the various senses of potentiality and actuality with respect to knowledge in the De Anima, cf. DA 417a21-b16. There is a difference, Aristotle notes, between the person who has knowledge of something but who is not now exercising that knowledge and the person who does not have the knowledge but has the capacity to acquire it. Both people are potential knowers but in different ways. The second person needs instruction while the first simply needs to exercise the knowledge he already has. Virtuous character in Aristotle's practical philosophy is the practical equivalent to knowledge as analyzed by Aristotle in the DA. The virtuous man has already, by previous virtuous acts, developed a character capable of acting well in any situation, while someone who has yet to develop such a character in practicing virtue is, as it were, two steps removed from the supreme good of virtuous activity. The distinction, then, between the good of a virtuous character and the good of activity in conformity with virtue is the distinction between an actual nature already perfected by habit and its further act. The same distinction can be seen in a virtuous man, the virtuous men as friends and virtuous men practicing their friendship in living together and actively communicating. The virtuous man has the capacity to become a virtue friend; the virtuous who are already friends thanks to their previous actions but who are not now in
Yet if the good of virtuous character is distinguishable from the good of happiness as an activity of virtue, virtuous character cannot be an external good like the other external goods necessary for virtuous activity. Virtuous character would have to be a good of one's own soul, for in desiring the human good of happiness in acting well the virtuous man concomitantly desires the good of his character, i.e. that he become good. So nothing could be more important to the virtuous man than the supreme good of virtuous activity and his virtuous character that results in that activity. For both these goods are the goods of soul, the most highly prized of all goods for the virtuous.

Of the many goods of human life, then, the two goods of soul are activity in conformity with virtue and one's virtuous character. These are the goods closest and most important to each virtuous man. All other goods are external to these goods of soul: goods in relation to these two goods. Each virtuous man desires most for himself the attainment of the human good of a life of happiness in acting well and thereby becoming good. His practical knowledge of the human good is a practical knowledge of himself as one who, by his ethical virtue rationally and deliberately desires that good which he knows by the intellectual virtues of the rational part of his human function. By knowing and loving the human good the virtuous man knows and loves himself, his virtuous character as obedient to the rational part of himself as to its principle. Thus virtuous self-love accompanies a practical knowledge of the human good. But in his practical knowledge of the human good the virtuous man comes to know and love not simply his appetitive faculty and its virtue as

communication with each other are virtue friends with the further capacity of actualizing their friendship when they reunite: *NE* 1157b5-11.

147 As we have seen in the previous chapter, theoretical knowledge is an act of knowing in which the mind of the knower becomes the thing known: *DA* 429b30-1, 430a10-2. Theoretical self-knowledge accompanies that knowledge of the object: *Meta* 1074b35-6, *DA* 429b9-10. We come to know who we are by knowing other things. In practical philosophy the human being becomes good in his or her practical knowledge of the good: cf. *NE* 1170a29-35; *EE* 1245a8-9. Becoming good is the formation of a virtuous character and knowledge of our character is concomitant with our practical knowledge of the good thing. Practical knowledge of who I am, my character, is formed by the good I practically know. The virtuous man's practical knowledge of his character is the human good which he wishes for and deliberately desires to put into practice in his choice of action.
obedient to the rational part of the human function as its principle but that rational part as who he more truly is:

The virtuous man is of one mind with himself, and desires the same things with every part of his nature. Also he wishes his own good, real as well as apparent and seeks it by action (for it is a mark of a good man to exert himself actively for the good); and he does so for his own sake (for he does it on account of the intellectual part (tou gar diakoëtikou charin) of himself and this appears to be a man's real self). Also he desires his own life and security, and especially that of his rational part (hôi phronei).  

And in knowing and loving his rational part the virtuous man loves most of all the best faculty of that rational part, his intellect (nous):

[The man desirous of securing what is fine] might be held to be a lover of self in an exceptional degree. At all events he takes for himself the things that are finest and most good. Also it is the most dominant part of himself that he indulges and obeys in everything. But as in the state it is the sovereign that is held in the fullest sense to be the state, and in any other composite whole it is the dominant part that is deemed especially to be that whole, so it is with the human being. He therefore who loves and indulges the dominant part of himself is a lover of self in the fullest degree. Again, the terms 'self-restrained' and 'unrestrained' denote being restrained or not by one's nous, and thus imply that nous is the man himself. Also it is our reasoned acts that are felt to be in the fullest sense our own acts, voluntary acts. It is therefore clear that a man is or is chiefly the dominant part of himself, and that a good man values this part of himself most.

At NE X 7, of course, Aristotle tells us that it is intellect which is the proper nature of the human being and that a life of intellect is therefore happiest for human beings:

... it may even be held that this [intellect] is the true self of each, inasmuch as it is the dominant and better part ... that which is best and most pleasant for each thing is that which is proper to the nature of each; accordingly the life of intellect is the best and pleasantest life for human beings, inasmuch as the intellect more than anything else is the human being; therefore this life will be the happiest.

But it is significant that Aristotle describes intellect as that which is best and most loved by the virtuous man at NE IX in the context of his practical knowledge of the human good. Practical knowledge of the human good reveals to the virtuous man that his virtuous

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149 Everyone wishes good things for himself most of all: NE 1159a11-2, and for the virtuous man, for whom virtuous action is the good, he loves himself rightly, and benefits others most, by desiring that good for himself most of all: ibid. 1168b25-1169b2.
149 NE 1166a16-7
150 ibid. 1168b29-35
151 ibid. 1178a2-8
character, the appetitive faculty of his human function and its virtue, is ordered to the rational part of who he is, his practical intelligence and especially the activity of his intellect as that faculty which is the dominant part of who he is. This is consonant, of course, with Aristotle’s understanding of the human function itself which he divides into the appetitive part which is non-rational but capable of following reason and the rational part which is the principle of human action. The rational part as principle is divided into the intellectual and calculative faculties with their respective virtues and at which is best in the rational part of the human being, his intellect, is that which the virtuous man loves most in his practical knowledge of the human good, for, as we have seen in our previous chapters, it is by virtue of his activity of intellect in a knowledge of the nature of the human good that the virtuous man comes to know and love intellect as that faculty whose activity according to virtue is what is best and happiest for him and who he most of all is. In this way the virtuous man is the wise man who, in his practical knowledge of the human good, actualizes the complete human function by exercising all the virtues according to that virtue of his intellect, wisdom, by which he knows the nature of the human good and himself as knower of that good. Thus, for the virtuous man to be a lover of self in his practical knowledge of the human good is to be a lover of his virtuous character as that character is ordered to that part which is most who he is - his intellect and its activity. But how is this self-love compatible with the social dimension of the human good and, more particularly, how does such a self-love allow the virtuous man to love his friend as another self?

Aristotle considers it obvious and unproblematic that the virtuous man’s love for his friend should begin with his own self-love. All the characteristics of the love one has for one’s friend - the good one wishes for the friend for that friend’s sake, the desire to be with the friend, and sharing in the same things, especially joys and sorrows - all these are found first and fundamentally in the virtuous man’s love for himself, his virtuous character as ordered to the actualization of his intellect. Since a man loves himself first and foremost,
that is, since he naturally wishes good things for himself most of all,\textsuperscript{152} his desire for good things for the other must begin with his own love of self. Aristotle explains this relation between love of self and love of the friend:

In loving their friend they love their own good, for the good man in becoming dear to another becomes that other's good. Each party therefore both loves his own good and also makes an equivalent return by wishing the other's good and also makes an equivalent return by wishing the other's good and by affording him pleasure.\textsuperscript{153}

Once a character becomes virtuous through the practice of virtue, that self-love can become the starting point for a love of another virtuous character as another self (\textit{allos autos}).\textsuperscript{154} Thus the movement of love in friendship is from oneself to one's friend:

It is said that we must love most the friend who is most a friend; and one person is most a friend to another if he wishes goods to the other for the other's sake, even if no one will know about it. But these are features most of all of one's relation to oneself; and so too are all the other defining features of a friend, since we have said that all the features of friendship extend from oneself to others.\textsuperscript{155}

This move from the love of self to a love of the friend as another self can be effected only by the virtuous who, by the exercise of all their intellectual and ethical virtues in a choice of virtuous action love themselves for who they are as virtuous, that is, they love themselves as human beings who have completely actualized their human function in virtuous activity. And they are able to know and love themselves as virtuous because they know and love the human good (\textit{t'anthrōpinon agathon}) of activity in conformity with virtue, the good whose primary instance is a human life of contemplation and whose secondary instance is the good (\textit{ta kala kai ta dikai}) of acting well. As ethically virtuous, they are so well trained in appetitive virtue as to desire the real human good as their own good and as intellectually virtuous they know the nature of that human good as a life of virtuous activity.\textsuperscript{156} They love that good as their own because it is the real good and not

\textsuperscript{152} ibid. 1159a10-1
\textsuperscript{153} ibid. 1157b33-6
\textsuperscript{154} ibid. 1166a1-33
\textsuperscript{155} ibid. 1168b1-6 (Irwin trans.) Irwin (1985), 254
\textsuperscript{156} ibid. 1113a29-33, cf. 1168b29-30, 1179b29-31
because it is theirs. As the real human good is activity in conformity with virtue, and a virtuous character is the concomitant good of that activity, so by knowing and loving the real human good, the virtuous man knows and loves himself as really good. He knows and loves himself, then, because he is really good; his self-love is a knowledge and love of the real human good and that human good is his actually in practice and habitually in character.

Now the virtuous man as wise knows that the human good of a happy life of virtuous activity is the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation and the secondarily happy life of virtuous action in the political community. When he chooses action for the sake of the fineness of this secondarily happy life, the virtuous man knows by his wisdom, that this good is the human good ( τ'ανθρωπινον αγαθον), not simply his own individual and idiosyncratic, that is, apparent or relative good. His good is the human good and the human good as human is the good for all other human beings as well (though recognized as such only by the wise). Thus by striving for the human good of what is fine and just in their choice of action, the virtuous knowingly desire a good which benefits not only them but all the citizens of their polis. In effect, the virtuous man, by striving to make the human good his good strives thereby (knowingly and willingly) to benefit his fellow citizens. In this way Aristotle can maintain, without thereby threatening the social nature of the human good, that the virtuous man ought to be a lover of self and to strive to secure for himself a greater share of what is fine:

Therefore in all spheres of praiseworthy conduct it is manifest that the good man takes the larger share of moral nobility for himself. In this sense then, ... it is right to be a lover of self, though self-love of the ordinary sort is wrong. If egoism about value says: 'what makes X valuable is that I want it' and egoism about desire says: 'Get valuable things most of all for yourself', see: Nozick, (1989) 151-61. Aristotle's virtuous man's desire for the human good is an egoism of desire but not of value because the virtuous man is precisely the one who is capable of allowing the real human good be his good because it is the real human good. But since the human good is a social good, being an egoist about desire for that good does not mean that that good is threatened by the virtuous man's "egoistic" desire for it.

157 NE 1169a34-b1. Politis, (1993) 153-74. claims that in this passage, and indeed throughout NE IX 8, Aristotle is maintaining that the virtuous man's self-love does and ought to take precedence over the love of others. Aristotle, according to Politis, is telling us that "each person ought to love himself above
It is because the virtuous know by their wisdom what the human good is and by their appetitive virtue make that good their good, that any competition in achieving that good among themselves in practice will only help each other and the whole human community:

Persons therefore who are exceptionally zealous in fine actions (τὰς καλὰς πράξεις) are universally approved and commended; and if all men vied with each other toward what is fine (πρὸς τὸ καλὸν) and strove to perform the finest deeds, the common welfare would be fully realized, while individuals also could enjoy the greatest of goods, inasmuch as virtue is the greatest good. Therefore the good man ought to be a lover of self, since he will then both benefit himself by acting finely and aid his fellows.\footnote{This ‘priority thesis’ as Politi puts it, contradicts the supposed altruism of Aristotle’s virtuous man and friend. While Politi is right in maintaining that for Aristotle a right self-love is prior to (and the basis of) a right love of others, his ‘priority thesis’ may be a misleading paraphrase of Aristotle’s position on the self-love of the virtuous man if by ‘taking a larger share of what is fine for himself’ Aristotle is understood to be exhorting the virtuous man to love himself more than others as if the good of others is somehow separate from his own good as a human being. To ‘assign oneself the greater share of what is fine’ means that the virtuous man will want to choose that action which is the best possible way to put the human good (which, as human is social and therefore our good as well as his) into practice. Thus, if the virtuous man could so act as to allow his fellow citizen or friend to choose to act finely, the virtuous man would choose to do so rather than perform that action himself and deprive the friend of the chance to practice the human good: \textit{NE} 1169a32-4. But his choice to allow the friend to act virtuously is itself an action, in fact, a finer action than choosing to do that which he allows the friend to do. Finer because both the friend and he are thereby able to choose what is fine. The human good is social and the virtuous man will want all the citizens of his polis to practice that good and would choose, if he could, to allow them to do so. But he cannot choose for them. The human good is social but it is also practical, that is, it is a good that must be put into practice in a choice of action, and choice, as we have seen, is the individuating factor of a human being’s character. For the polis to attain the full human good, each of the citizens must choose to act for the sake of that good. The virtuous man cannot choose the human good for anyone else but he will always choose what is finest - that action which allows others as well as himself to act well - because that is the best way of putting the human good into practice. In this way he is taking what is ‘finer’ for himself. This self-love is neither internally problematic nor incompatible with a virtuous concern for the good of the polis; it is, in fact, the only way humanly possible to secure that social good.}

The real human good is the social good of the secondarily happy human life of virtuous action open, in the best of political communities, to all the citizens. Virtuous self-love, then, leads to the good of the political community as well as to the good of the individual virtuous man in his choice of action. Vicious, or ‘bad’ self-love, on the other hand, does not. But the reason why so-called ‘bad self-love’ does not lead to the human good is not because it is a self-love, and on that account incompatible with the human good as social, but because it is a self-love whose cause is not the rational appetite (boulesis) for everything else.\footnote{\textit{ed.} 1982, p. 208.}
the real human good, but the desire (epithumia) for external goods which are, at best, instrumental to the human good of virtuous action. If everyone were to strive for the human good of virtuous activity, these external goods, necessary for living a life of virtue, would be distributed justly and fairly so that each would have a sufficient amount to practice virtue in their political community.

Thus the basis for the social nature of virtuous self-love, a love of one's own virtuous character, is finally caused by the virtuous man's knowledge of and love for the human good. By his practical knowledge of this good the virtuous man knows (and loves) himself as good and understands the further good of inviting other citizens of his polis into that same practical knowledge and self-love. The virtuous man will recognize the nature of this good so that the practice of any character virtue in any given situation will be not only for his good but also, as we have seen in our examination of justice, the practice of justice as the whole of virtue, as virtue practiced 'toward others'. For the virtuous man's good is the human good for himself and for his political community, not simply in fact but in intention.

Besides understanding the human good as a social good involving all the citizens of the polis, the virtuous man will recognize that in practicing virtue not only he but the citizens of his polis benefit. He also recognizes the further good of a perfect friendship, a relationship in which there will be a mutual wish for the human good as end and a mutual choice to put that good into practice by the mutual action of sharing affection for each

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159 NE 1169a6-13
160 ibid. 1168b15-24, 1169a13-6
161 1129b26-1130a8, 1130b20, supra note 32. Engberg-Pedersen, (1983) 44, appears to argue along similar lines when he reads 'acting for the sake of to kalon as 'acting for the sake of others' maintaining that it is reason that determines how the natural goods should be distributed. Similarly, Nagel, (1970) 97, argued that reason can motivate agents to perform actions which are recognized to promote 'an objectively valuable end'. Cf. Stern-Gillet, (1995) 103-22.
162 Kahn, (1981) 20-40, thinks that one way to make sense of the move from the virtuous man's self-love to his love for the friend as another self is to take Aristotle's insistence on the true nature of the human being as nous and then, with what Aristotle seems to say about nous in De Anima 3.5, to interpret the nous of the human being as the same for all human beings. But there is no need for such a drastic interpretation. The virtuous man's practical knowledge of the human good (t'anthrōpinon agathon) - a good which includes both himself and his friend as human beings - suffices.
other's virtuous character. The practice of virtue friendship is thus a further and fuller way of practicing virtue - a mutual practice (sumpraxis) which more fully realizes the human good than merely practicing virtue alone. The conclusion we can draw from what Aristotle has presented us is this. The practice of perfect friendship completes and surpasses the practice of justice and is the fullest expression of the practice of justice as perfect virtue. Recognizing all this, the virtuous man will actively seek to engage in friendships of this kind with other virtuous men, as other selves, in a mutual practice of virtue. With the good fortune of meeting someone virtuous, either through the introduction of others, or in his own observation of people around him who excite his well-regard because of their evidently virtuous life, he will endeavor to form a friendship of virtue with them. This will take time and effort, but by dint of a continuous commitment on the part of both, the two will become virtue friends intent on sharing good things with each other out of their mutual love for each other with the human good as their end and final motivation. By their mutual wish for that human good and their mutual choice in sharing affection (and all other external goods) on the basis of their virtuous characters for the sake of that human good, the virtue friends will become other selves to one another. By their mutual challenge and correction they will take part in forming each other, but more importantly by their communication, especially their knowledge of, and desire for, the human good, the two will reveal their characters to each other - the sameness of their virtuous appetite for the human good and the distinctiveness of the history of the choices they have made for the sake of that good in their lives. In this communication they will inspire each other with that which is similar and distinctive in their character and in this way will most effectively spur each other on in the practice of virtue. By revealing themselves to each other -

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163 The virtuous man's character will be apparent to others who are virtuous, exciting well-regard among them: NE 1167a18-21. but unless some have the good fortune to meet and take the necessary time and effort to know each other by living together and communicating with each other, the virtuous will not become virtuous friends of each other: ibid. 1156b24-32, 1157a20-5, 1158a14-5.
164 NE 1172a10-4
165 ibid. 1170b10-4
166 ibid. 1172a5
especially in conversation - they will come to know each other as they know themselves. Their individual stories will become one history of friendship: a biography, as it were, of the human good as the mutually known and wished-for end, and a mutual practice of their friendship in a love for each other for the sake of that end. The self-knowledge concomitant with their practical knowledge of the human good together will be a biography of two distinct yet united stories. In this way both the virtuous friends will begin from their own rational desire for the human good and their own self-love in that desire, and, by means of a life of mutual choice in the practice of their friendship, they will come to know and love each other as other selves. The friends will become as important to each other as their own virtuous characters are to themselves. So if the virtue friend is the greatest of external goods, he is external to his friend in a unique way - as another (heteros, allos) or separate (diairetos) self. For because he is loved as another self, as another virtuous character, the virtue friend becomes a good of soul for the friend, loved along with his own self concomitantly with the love of the human good in his (and their) activity.

Thus, rather than being a hindrance to the love of the friend, love of one’s virtuous character as that character is obedient to reason is the starting point and necessary factor in the virtue friendship of friends loving each other as other selves.

5. The Relation between Justice and Perfect Friendship

We have examined the relationship between justice and friendship in general. Now that we have seen that the perfect friendship of the virtuous is a character virtue and its practice a virtuous action of men who love each other as other selves, we can compare this friendship in particular with justice.

If justice is a character virtue ‘toward others’, perfect friendship is a character virtue practiced ‘toward others’ in the person of the friend (pros ton philon) as another self (allos autos). If the mean (to meson) of friendship is the good of a middle state between

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167 EE 1245a34-5
168 NE 1166a29-33, 1171b32-4
169 ibid. 1166a31-2
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friends, we can say that the mean and fineness (to kalon) of a perfect friendship is mutual exchange of goods motivated by the friends' love of their own and their other self's virtuous character. And if friends love each other as each deserves, virtuous friends are most deserving of each others' love precisely because they are men of virtuous character. Although Aristotle himself does not treat this, from what he does say about this friendship as a virtue, the extreme to this mean of friendship might be described as the culpable failure of one or both of the friends to love each other as other selves, that is, the extreme of a vicious choice of a mutual exchange of good things which would not be the result of the love the virtuous men both deserve. This vicious failure to love the friend as another self would stem from the same failure to love oneself as virtuous, for to fail to recognize and love one's own virtue-worth would be to fail to love the virtue-worth of the friend as one's other self.

Both justice haplōs, or political justice, and perfect friendship have as their good and mean an equality of exchange of good things based on the worth of the partners in the exchange. The good and mean of justice haplōs is the equality of an exchange of goods based on the worth of the citizens involved in that exchange, while in a perfect friendship of the virtuous the equality of exchange of goods is caused by the love the friends have for their virtuous characters. In the practice of political justice, the worth of the citizens depends on the nature of the political community's constitution, on what the polis considers the human good to be. This understanding of what constitutes a happy human life varies with the different constitutions so that the practice of justice as a character virtue in each polis will vary according to what is acknowledged or taken to be the human good and end

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170 EE 1239b29-1240a4; cf. NE b20-24
171 NE 1159a33-6, 1165a14-35
172 Cf. ibid. 1159b35-1160a9, 1160b35-1161a1. Since it would be inconceivable that a virtuous character could be loved 'too much', virtuous friends in a friendship of equality could conceivably do each other wrong only in failing to recognize and love their own character thereby making it impossible for them to love the other according to his virtue due. The same would be true for a virtue friendship of friends unequal in virtue. By failing to acknowledge and love one's own virtue worth in comparison to the unequal friend, the friends would fail to love each other as they deserve: cf. ibid. 1165a14-8; EE 1239aff.
173 Supra pp. 185-97
of the polis and the individual citizen. An examination of the relation between the different kinds of justice practiced by citizens in the different political communities and the perfect friendship of virtuous men will be part of our final chapter.

Perfect friendship of the virtuous is a friendship among those who are equal in virtue. The equality of their love for each other is caused by the equality of their virtue goodness. Like all other friendships, the equality of perfect friendship is primarily that of ‘quantity’ (to ison kata poson). Secondly, though, there is a perfect friendship among virtuous men who are unequal in virtue. Perfect friendship in this extended sense is an equality of exchange between two who are unequally virtuous. The friends in this unequal virtue friendship will strive for a proportionate equality, or ‘equality of worth’ (to ison kat’ axian) among each other by giving and receiving goods out of a love proportionate to their respective virtue worth. Of these two types of perfect friendship it is the friendship of those who are equal in virtue which is primary. Thus the equality of perfect friendship, like that of all friendships, is primarily that of a strict equality and secondarily that of proportional equality.

While the equality of friendship, and specifically the equality of perfect friendship, appears to be simply the inverse of the equality of justice, it would be misleading to characterize the relation between these two kinds of equality in this way. For the proportional equality of justice in an exchange of goods results from the just partners’ choice for the sake of the good of that exchange, whereas the absolute equality of an exchange of goods in a perfect friendship is the result of the friends’ mutual choice for the sake of the good of their friendship. The good of a just exchange is a good ‘toward the other’ (pros allon, pros heteron), while the virtuous friends exchange goods equally with each other because they love each other for who they are as virtuous characters and as other selves (heteroi autoi). Perfect friendship of the virtuous is a virtue practiced ‘toward the other’ as ‘toward the friend (pros ton philon) - which means ‘toward oneself’ (hos pros

\[^{174}\text{NE 1158b11-1159a5}\]

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heauton) for the friend is ‘another self (heteros autos).’175 The equality of perfect friendship is an absolute equality of quantity because the friends love each other as they love themselves. Partners in the practice of a just exchange choose to exchange goods equally for they seek the human good of the fineness of the just act: perfect friends choose to exchange goods equally with each other for the human good of the fineness of their friendship. The immediacy of one’s own love of self extended to the friend as another self impels the friends to exchange the goods they have with each other as equally as they can. This distinctive equality of an exchange of goods motivated by the perfect friends’ love for each other is also apparent in a perfect friendship of unequals which separates the proportional equality of this secondary kind of perfect friendship from the proportional equality of mere justice, for the practice of perfect friendship among the unequally virtuous is founded not simply on the fineness of a proportionally equal exchange of goods but even more on the fineness of a friendship which respects the difference in the friends’ virtue. That is, the perfect friendship of the unequally virtuous looks not on the justice of the proportional equality of their exchange but on each other’s character, their choice and wish to be worthy of each other’s love - even if they can never be worthy in an equal way in the fineness of their friendship, for character, as we have seen, is ultimately intention (proairesis) determined by the good wished for.176 Because unequal virtue friends, as friends, look to each other’s intention first in their sharing of affection, their proportional equality of affection (and other goods) will be based on what they see in the desire of that character rather than on the de facto inequality in their characters. This is nowhere better illustrated than in Aristotle’s treatment of the unequal relationship between the virtuous man and the gods, or of his relation to his parents.177 Because the distance between the virtuous man and the gods or his parents is so great, there can be no question of friendship between the two in the primary instance of friendship of the virtuous, a friendship of virtue based on

175 ibid. 1170b5-8; Or, as the author of the MM puts it, the friend is ‘another I’(heteros egō): MM 1213a23-4
176 Cf. ibid. 1163a21-3; Pol 1333a9-11
equally virtuous characters. In fact, the distance separating the virtuous man from the gods or from his parents is so great that there is no question even of a strictly proportional equality between the two based on virtue worth. Thus one could not even speak of the equality of justice (primary or otherwise) in the usual sense between the virtuous man and the gods. But Aristotle does allow that there can be an equality of friendship between the virtuous and the gods or his parents, for as he explains:

Friendship exacts what is possible not what is due; requital in accordance with desert is in fact sometimes impossible, for instance in honouring the gods, or one's parents: no one could ever render them the honour they deserve, and a man is deemed virtuous if he pays them all the regard that he can.178

Because virtuous friends look to each other's character - their desire for the human good in their choice of action - more than to the actual equality of the exchange, Aristotle leaves open the possibility of a virtue friendship between the virtuous and the gods. Such a friendship would be that of the perfect friendship of the unequal in virtue in which the friend of inferior virtue would strive as best he could to render due affection to his superior in virtue, while the superior would consider not the proportional equality involved (for strictly, there could be none), but the desire of the inferior to render him his due. Thus, in the relationship between the virtuous man and the gods or his parents, while there could be no justice strictly there nevertheless could be a virtue friendship. Such a friendship would presuppose, of course, not only the virtuous character of the man but a willingness on the part of the gods or his parents to be his friend. Interestingly, in the case of the gods this is not altogether out of the question.179

Perfect friendship of the virtuous completes the practice of justice. Because the virtuous in their perfect friendship love each other as other selves, they will preserve justice between them. But their motive for doing so will be their love of each other's selves. Their affection for each other as friends and other selves not only guarantees an equality of

\[177\text{ibid. 1162a4-7, 1163a24-b18}\]
\[178\text{ibid. 1163b15-8}\]
\[179\text{Cf. ibid. 1179a24-32; Meta 982b28-983a5}\]
justice but beyond that demands an equality that is strict and appropriate only for those who love each other for who they truly are - for their virtuous characters. Thus equality of perfect friendship guarantees and includes the equality of justice in its practice. For this reason good rulers of the best polis should be most interested in the promotion of this perfect friendship among the citizens.

We witness perfect friendship's completion of justice in another way as well - in the nature of its reciprocal activity. Aristotle describes the reciprocal activity of friendship as mutual affection springing from choice.\textsuperscript{180}

Loving (\textit{philēsis}) seems to be an emotion, friendship a fixed disposition, for affection can be felt even for inanimate things, but reciprocal loving (\textit{antiphilēsis}) involves choice (\textit{proairesis}), which springs from a fixed disposition.\textsuperscript{181}

Justice, as we have seen, is the good and mean of an equality in exchange proportionate to the worth of the partners involved, a reciprocal activity of giving and receiving what is due among the external goods necessary for human living. Such a reciprocal activity requires two or more participants, one giving, the other receiving what is proportionally due. But this reciprocity does not extend to the very character of the citizens, to their choice and wish. For giving as an action is something voluntary, and in the case of giving (or withholding) justice, a deliberate action which renders the giver (or withholder) virtuous (or vicious). Receiving what is due, on the other hand, is not necessarily a voluntary, much less a deliberate, action. One need not voluntarily acquiesce in receiving one's due in the reciprocity of giving and receiving what is due; one could even be justly treated contrary to one's consent. And, as we have seen, in the case of injustice, the deliberate withholder of justice is culpable of vice while the necessarily non-deliberate receiver of that injustice could not be. Thus, in the reciprocal activity of justice, while the good of exchange according to proportional equality/inequality is reciprocal - the giving and receiving of what is due/not due - the activity of giving and receiving that justice/injustice

\textsuperscript{180} Cf. \textit{EE} 1236b2-3
\textsuperscript{181} \textit{NE} 1157b28-31
among the citizens in that exchange is not so necessarily. The reciprocity of justice is found in the good and mean of the equal exchange: how the citizens as partners in that exchange relate appetitively to that mean in choice and wish is not necessarily reciprocal by choice.

Reciprocity in friendship, and especially in the perfect friendship of the virtuous differs from reciprocity in justice. Perfect friendship, like justice, is a reciprocal activity of giving and receiving, but, as we have seen, this reciprocal activity is primarily one of mutual well-regard and active interest based on the virtuous character of the friends as other selves. For such friends, while receiving good things from each other is certainly good, giving good things to each other out of love is better and is virtuous, and so the virtuous are more intent on giving rather than receiving good things in their love for each other.\textsuperscript{182}

The mutual active love is a voluntary, deliberate activity - a \textit{(sum) praxis} - caused by a mutual appreciation of the real good of the friends’ virtuous characters.\textsuperscript{183} The friends know the goodness of their characters and reciprocally choose to share good things with each other as the necessary means here and now of practicing the fine and just good of their friendship together. Prompted by each other’s good character, a character which is essentially the desire to live as divinely well as is humanly possible, the good mutually choose to share their goods. There is in this friendship of the good, not only a reciprocity of shared goods as in justice but a reciprocity in the \textit{choice} to do so for the sake of the goodness of their friendship. Both friends voluntarily and deliberately love each other for each other’s (and their own) good. By including not only the good shared but also the deliberate desire to share in their reciprocal activity, the virtuous friends in their perfect friendship include and complete their practice of justice toward each other.

Thus the practice of the perfect friendship of the virtuous extends and completes the practice of justice in the equality of their exchange - an equality which is caused by their loving each other as other selves - and this mutual affection which they share with each

\textsuperscript{182} ibid. 1159a12-36

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other enables them both to put the human good of what is fine and just into practice in their friendship.

Now that we have seen how perfect friendship and justice are related as the especially social character virtues of human living, we can inquire how the practice of this friendship might relate to justice as the virtue commonly understood to be the whole of virtue. Recall that justice as the whole of virtue is 'perfect' because it is the practice of all the virtues to the extent that it is explicitly 'towards others.' Now every virtuous man will be wise, practically intelligent, and ethically virtuous. He will be capable of practicing any character virtue in the appropriate circumstances - doing so for the sake not only of his good but of the good of the polis. So the virtuous man is the just man. His practice of any character virtue will be the practice of perfect justice. And if two or more virtuous men come to love each other as other selves, their practice of friendship as a character virtue will be a practice of justice as perfect virtue, for two reasons. First, as in the practice of any other character virtue, the good for the sake of which they choose to share their affection is the human good for themselves individually and for the whole polis. Second, by loving each other as virtuous, as who they are in themselves, and for themselves, the friends will love each other in such a way as to perfectly practice the human good as social, or 'toward others'.

Thus while perfect friendship, like justice in the particular sense, is a character virtue and thus intelligible as a 'part' of perfect justice, nevertheless, of all the character virtues, friendship of the good perfectly realizes perfect justice.

In summary, we have followed Aristotle from his exposition of the character virtues through his treatment of justice as the especially social character virtue, and have concluded with the practice of the perfect friendship of the virtuous - a virtue which completes the practice of justice and is the primary instance of perfect virtue, the practice of virtue 'toward others' in the person of each other as friends, other selves.

\[\text{183 ibid. 1157b28-34, 1167a7-10; EE 1236b2-3, 1237a30-b7; cf. MM 1210b6-8, 1211b3-33}\]
The practice of perfect friendship, like the practice of all the other character virtues, is the fine and just good of living well (*eu zên*) in the polis. Like any other virtuous action, this friendship requires the exercise of *sophia, phronesis, and ethike arete* on the part of both friends. The description of virtuous action varies according to the different character virtues exercised in the virtuous man’s choice. One virtuous action may be a courageous act, another a temperate act, and so forth. But the exercise of any character virtue necessarily requires external goods. In the practice of the character virtues which Aristotle discusses in Books III - IV of the *NE*, these external goods are the object of the agent’s choice as the instrumental means to the good of acting well. Of all the character virtues justice is a virtue especially social in that it is the practice of virtue ‘toward others.’ The external goods with which justice deals are not merely the object of choice as means to virtuous practice; they enter into the good of the practice itself. For the good and mean of justice is an equality in giving and receiving those goods. The good and mean of justice is a reciprocal action - a giving and receiving of what is due of the external goods - involving two or more citizens in the polis. The practice of justice, then, is not only a character virtue perfecting the agent but a virtuous action which unites a community in the sharing of the necessary external goods of human living. This practice of justice among others requires the exercise of the other character virtues as well. The social character virtue of justice includes the other character virtues so that the just man is a virtuous man. But as we saw, the proportional reciprocity of justice is limited to the giving and receiving of what is due in the exchange and does not necessarily extend to the character of the citizens involved in that exchange. The partners in the exchange need not be mutually involved in a voluntary and deliberate way, and neither partner has as his direct concern the good of the other partner’s character. Perfect friendship between the virtuous is a fully reciprocal activity out of a love for each other’s character. The mutual well-regard and love they have for each other’s character as their own is the basis for their sharing all the necessary goods according to a strict or arithmetic equality. Such friendship is the completion of the practice of character
virtue - and of justice in particular - by the friends mutually choosing to share affection and all other necessary external goods with each other as the necessary means to live the human good of a happy life together. This friendship between the virtuous is the mutual practice of virtue by friends who are themselves virtuous and capable of practicing all the virtues. Friendship, then, not only completes justice as a character virtue but is the perfect social practice of justice seen as perfect virtue or virtue as a whole.

6. Perfect Friendship and The Self-Sufficiency of the Virtuous

If human happiness consists in a life of virtuous activity and the virtuous man is thus a happy human being, then the virtuous man should be self-sufficient, for one of the formal marks of happiness, as we have seen in NE I is self-sufficiency. But if the virtuous man is self-sufficient what need has he of friends?

People say that the supremely happy, or blessed (makarioi), are self-sufficing, and so have no need of friends: for they have the good things of life already, and therefore, being complete in themselves, require nothing further; whereas the function of a friend, who is another self, is to supply things we cannot procure for ourselves.

This conundrum arises from what is commonly understood to be the nature of the happy man and the friend. Its solution is found primarily in unmasking and disproving the assumptions behind it. These assumptions are, first, that the self-sufficiency of the happy excludes others and second, that virtue friends are necessary to supply what the happy lack. Aristotle argues that both of these assumptions are false.

The first assumption is the idea that the happy man is self-sufficient in a way that frees him from the need for any human relationship. This is a false understanding of human nature and the human good. Aristotle counters it first by appealing to an intuition. 'Nobody', he is convinced, 'would choose to have all possible good things on the condition that he must have them alone'. But the reason for this conviction is the very nature of the human being and good. Aristotle repeats what he had maintained in his

\[\text{184 ibid. 1097b6-21} \]
\[\text{185 ibid. 1169b4-7; EE 1244b2-10} \]
\[\text{186 ibid. 1169b16-8} \]
examination of human self-sufficiency in *NE* I.\(^{187}\) since human beings are by nature social (politikon), human happiness is possible only with others in a community.\(^{188}\) And since it is better to live with friends and the virtuous rather than with strangers or chance companions, the happy will require a community of such friends.\(^{189}\)

That Aristotle here at *NE* IX repeats what he had maintained about the nature of human being and the good in Book I surely indicates that the social nature of human self-sufficiency is of basic importance. While human happiness demands the external goods necessary for living well, what is of central importance is the *energeia* of the human function in the *praxis* of virtue. By insisting on the social nature of human being and action, Aristotle is maintaining that an individual’s choice of action must in some way or another be with others in a community. This is also apparent in the *Politics* where Aristotle concludes from the social nature of the human being that no human being could live humanly outside a human community.\(^{190}\)

The natural human need for community is not simply a need for a supply of goods necessary for human activity but the need for other human beings in the very choice of human action. Human action requires other human beings in a community. And since in every community there are mutual rights of some sort and friendship,\(^{191}\) human action in some way or another requires friends. If human living in a choice of action requires friends, all the more are friends required for living well in a virtuous choice of action. The virtuous man in living well needs friends for his virtuous action. But what kind of friends does the virtuous man need?

The second assumption is that friends are primarily good as supplying something the happy man needs which he cannot provide for himself. This assumption rests on an ambiguity. Since the human good of a happy life is a social good, the happy man stands in

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\(^{187}\) ibid. 1097b6-11

\(^{188}\) ibid. 1169b17-9

\(^{189}\) ibid. 1169b16-22. In the *EE* Aristotle argues that we human beings seek others not simply for utility but especially to share our enjoyments so that we most need friends who are worthy of our companionship: ibid. 1244b17-21.

\(^{190}\) *Pol* 1253a1-29

\(^{191}\) *NE* 1159b26-7

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need of others and especially of a virtuous friend if he is to live the good human life as fully as possible. But as the happy man is virtuous, he is in no need of friends who are not virtuous, except possibly for supplying him with external goods instrumental in his practice of virtue. The significance of Aristotle's answer to this second erroneous assumption is this. If human beings need a community of other human beings simply to live, virtuous men need a community of other virtuous men if they are to live well. Perfect friendship of the virtuous is a community of virtuous men. Virtuous men require a virtuous community of friends if they are to live as well as possible.

In the course of unmasking these assumptions as false, Aristotle presents a number of arguments to show the necessity of virtue friends for the happiness of the virtuous.

First, the virtuous need virtuous friends as objects of their benevolence. The practice of benevolence is a fine, or virtuous action, and the practice of benevolence to a friend because he is virtuous is a mark of virtue friendship and a finer (kallion) thing to do than conferring those benefits on others.

Second, as mentioned above, human nature and the human good are social. The virtuous know this and know that the practice of virtue friendship is the fullest way of putting that good into practice. The virtue friend is the best of external goods for that very reason and so the virtuous must have virtue friends to live as well as possible.

192 Although, strictly, the happy are already supplied with the right amount of external goods of use for practicing virtue and their life is intrinsically pleasant without need of the adventitious pleasure and utility non-virtuous friends could provide, cf. NE 1169b22-8

193 Throughout NE IX 9 when Aristotle writes of the importance of 'friends' for the virtuous, he means friends who are virtuous men: ibid. 1170b18-9, for strictly speaking, the happy man needs friends neither for utility: ibid. 1169b24-5; EE 1244b14-6, nor for pleasure: NE 1169b25-8. He does need virtuous friends, however, since these friends, as virtuous, supply him with the pleasure and utility he really needs, cf. ibid. 1156b7-24. Aristotle's treatment of the virtuous man and the perfect friendship of these men in the NE presupposes what is explicitly stated in the Politics: these men are citizens of a polis governed according to the best constitution where other members of that community supply them with the goods necessary for the kind of leisure (scholé) to cultivate such friendship in their active participation in politics, cf. Pol 1328b33-1329a2.

194 NE 1169b10-3,19-21. In the EE Aristotle observes that 'when we need nothing, then we all seek others to share our enjoyment, those whom we benefit rather than those who benefit us': ibid. 1244b17-9.

195 ibid. 1169b9-10, 16-22
Third, virtue friends are necessary for the virtuous because of the limitations of human being and activity. The life of the happy man ought to be pleasant but the solitary man has a hard life, for it is difficult to remain active continuously without the aid of other people. The virtuous man's activity therefore, which is pleasant in itself, is more continuous if practiced with others, especially friends. Together the friends can offer support and enable each other to practice all the character virtues more continuously and easily.

Besides the opportunity of a more continuous practice of virtue, the virtuous friend's companionship provides the virtuous man a greater appreciation of, and pleasure in, his own virtuous character. This is so, according to Aristotle, because:

...happiness is a form of activity, and an activity clearly is something that comes into being, not a thing that we possess all the time, like a piece of property. But if happiness consists in life and activity, and the activity of a good man, as was said at the beginning, is good and so pleasant in itself, yet we are better able to study (theidœin) our neighbors than ourselves, and their actions than our own, and thus good men find pleasure in the actions of other good men who are their friends ... it therefore follows that the supremely happy or blessed (ho makarios) will require good friends, inasmuch as he desires to study actions that are his own, and the actions of a good man that is his friend are such.

While the virtuous man in his virtuous action is aware of his own virtuous character, he cannot directly witness himself in the performance of that action whereas he can directly witness the virtuous action of his friend. He becomes more aware of and enjoys his own goodness in virtuous action by witnessing directly the virtuous action and

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196 Cf. ibid. 1170a5-13. In this passage Aristotle again refers to the solitary man (ton monoton). He says that a solitary man has a hard life because continuous activity by oneself is difficult whereas with others it is easier, and by that, presumably, more pleasant. By this 'solitary man' Aristotle cannot be referring to someone living outside society altogether, for such a life would be impossible for human beings: Pol 1253a27-9. By 'solitary man' Aristotle must be referring to the citizen in a polis who is trying to live a virtuous life but temporarily alone, that is, without the immediate support of virtuous friends. As we have seen in our study of the difference between the practice of justice and friendship, while it is not possible to practice the character virtues 'alone' in the sense of acting without any reference to others, one could practice the virtues 'alone', in the sense that one might be able to continue to practice virtue temporarily cut off in space and time from a virtue friend as a 'another self' with whom one acts - sumpraxis. But this practice of virtue 'alone' could only be possible for a time and it would still presuppose a virtuous community of friends in one's earlier upbringing, education, and ongoing support.

197 NE 1169b28-1170a13, 1172a10-4
198 ibid. 1169b30-1170a4; EE 1245a16-24
goodness of his friend. Recalling what Aristotle observes in his Politics about the
importance of representation (to mimeisthai) in the learning of, and habituation in, virtue\(^{199}\) and in the Poetics about the natural human desire for, and pleasure in, representation,\(^{200}\) we
might say that for Aristotle the friend, as it were, learns more about his own goodness and
finds greater joy therein in his friend's representation of that goodness.

Finally, Aristotle presents what he considers a 'more fundamental' (phusikôteron) reason why a virtuous friend is naturally desirable for a virtuous man.\(^{201}\) Human life, as we have seen in our previous chapter, is a life of knowledge, a life whose intrinsic good is
that of perception (to aisthanësthai) and understanding (to noëin). As there is a concomitant
self-awareness in perception and understanding, the virtuous man, who appreciates what is
intrinsically good and so appreciates life as good, appreciates himself as good as well. His
consciousness of himself as good in perception and understanding is pleasurable. With a
virtuous friend as a second self, the virtuous man is able to share with his friend this
consciousness of his goodness and the friend is able to do the same with him. Together,
the friends share a mutual perception or awareness (to sunaisthanësthai) of their goodness
and of the pleasure they take in that knowledge.\(^{202}\) This the friends do in their
communication with each other. Knowing as they both do that the human good is social
and that human life is a shared perception (to sunaisthanësthai) and knowledge
(suggnôrizein),\(^{203}\) the virtuous realize that they ought (dei) to share their perception of each

\(^{199}\) Cf. Pol 1340a12ff

\(^{200}\) Poet 1448b5-9

\(^{201}\) ibid. 1170a13-4. Rackham's translation of 'phusikôteron' in the Loeb (1975) 560, is 'the more fundamental' while Apostle, (1984) 176, translates the word as 'more in the nature of things' and glosses this as meaning 'more in the nature of things than dialectically or logically'. The whole argument in the NE is located at ibid. 1170a3-b19 and in the EE at 1244b21-1245a26. For a comparison of the two see: Kenny, (1992) 45-52. I think the two versions of the argument are mutually illuminating and when combined manifest a more perspicuous presentation of Aristotle's position than if taken separately.

\(^{202}\) Aristotle uses the term aisthanësthai (to sense/to perceive) to describe awareness of the sensible qualities of a thing but he also uses this verb in contexts where the sense is clearly that of being aware. In De Mem 450b17-18, Aristotle speaks of 'perceiving' (aisthanëtai) the memory image. In De Som 454a2-4, he makes 'perceiving' the criterion of being awake. We know (gnôrizomen) the present through perception: De Mem 449b13-4; cf. DA 427a18-21, and perception is a kind of gnôsis: DGA 731a30-4; Meta 981b11-31; PoA 99b38-9; cf. De Mem 450a9-12. Cf. Modrak, (1987) 189-190.

\(^{203}\) EE 1244b24-6; NE 1170b10-1
other, in conversation as the actualization of their humanity in the practice of the human good.

This 'more fundamental' argument for the necessity of the virtuous friend for the virtuous man goes beyond simply the opportunity for the friends' representing their virtuous character to each other for contemplation. The friends' mutual practice of the virtuous action of their friendship, their mutual choice to love each other as a way of putting the human good into practice, affords them a consciousness of their virtuous action and of their good character in that action which exceeds that of the consciousness of a virtuous man in virtuous action without benefit of a virtue friend. This 'more fundamental' argument for the necessity of the virtuous friend for the virtuous man is misunderstood if it is taken to mean that without the friend the virtuous man would be without consciousness of his own goodness. Rather, Aristotle is maintaining that in the mutual practice of their

\[\text{204 NE 1170b10-1}\]
\[\text{205 EE 1245a20-2}\]
\[\text{206 Cooper, (1977a) 293-5, for one, considers this argument defective for two reasons. First, he takes Aristotle to be arguing that the good of a virtuous friend is so important that a good person's life would be defective without it. This conclusion he claims is unsound. For granting the goodness of the virtue friend, no one, Cooper counters, can have all the things in life that are good in themselves; there are too many of too many types. Secondly, even should we grant that self-awareness is a sufficiently important good-in-itself to be a necessary component of the flourishing life, it would still not follow that friends are a compulsory component of this life. To show this, Cooper thinks, one would have to show that self-awareness is only or best obtainable through the observation of one's friends, for it does not seem to be true that merely in order to be distinctly conscious of oneself one needs to be aware of other persons first. And even granting that one cannot attain self-consciousness except through consciousness of another person and his action, it would still not follow that one needs friends for this purpose. Cooper's criticism of Aristotle in this regard is consistent with his effort to take what Aristotle attributes only to the virtuous man and his friendships, that is eunodia, and apply it to people who are not virtuous and their friendships. Cooper does not want to see that for Aristotle there is a radical difference between the virtuous and their friendship and those who are less than fully virtuous. In the NE Aristotle is focally interested in the virtuous man and perfect friendship. So while Cooper may be right that for most, perhaps even for all of us, a virtuous friend would not be absolutely important for what we may consider a happy life to be and for what we take self-knowledge to be, for Aristotle, the virtuous man does need a virtuous friend for living well and he does need interaction with that friend for a complete knowledge of himself as virtuous. In answer to Cooper's first objection, the virtuous man's life would be defective without a virtuous friend, not simply because the friend is the best of all external goods but because the happiness of the virtuous man is that of a life of virtuous action which cannot be practiced without a community of virtue. Perfect friendship is a community of virtue. And because the virtuous man is one who knows that the human good as self-sufficient is social and that the practice of virtue friendship is the fullest way to practice that good, he will necessarily want to have a virtue friend. As for Cooper's second worry, Aristotle is not arguing that anyone attains self-consciousness only in the practice of virtue friendship. What he is arguing is that the complete}\]
virtuous friendship the virtuous friends share in the consciousness of their good character and the mutual joy of that consciousness and thereby enhance their individual consciousness of and enjoyment in their virtuous character. The practice of the perfect friendship of the virtuous, as a mutual practice of virtue, is a mutual consciousness and pleasure in that virtue - a community of virtue and the perfect realization of the social nature of the human good put into practice.

For the virtuous, then, the practice of the human good, which is social, requires the practice of virtue friendship in the life of the polis. For such men, living in the society of family, friends, and fellow citizens but without a virtue friend would be like living alone. For just as a human being is by nature social, and the human good a social good, so living well for the virtuous man requires a community of virtue and only a virtuous friend can provide him with such a community. The virtuous friend is thus by nature good for the virtuous man, and the virtuous could no more live a life of happiness without a virtue friend than without a political community. Therefore the virtuous man, in order to be happy, naturally requires virtuous friends as his greatest external good, and, as we have seen, a good of his soul.

IV. Friendship and the Human Good of a Happy Life of Virtuous Activity

1. Perfect Friendship in the Secondarily Happy Life of Virtuous Action is a Friendship of the Virtuous Who are Wise

We have examined the nature of perfect friendship as a virtuous action and a character virtue which involves a community of (at least two) virtuous men. This community of virtue as we have seen, is the fullest way of living the happiness of self-

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self-knowledge of the virtuous man's character is obtained in a shared consciousness of that good with the virtue friend in the practice of their perfect friendship.

207 Cf. NE 1169b16-8
208 ibid. 1170a14-6
209 Aristotle describes the human being as social 'by nature' (phusei): ibid. 1097b11, 1162a16-9, and the virtuous friend 'by nature' (phusei) good and desirable for the virtuous: ibid. 1169b17-20, 1170a14-6. In the Politics Aristotle defines 'nature' as the end and perfection of a thing in its development: Pol 1252b31-4, and the nature of anything is defined by its function while the perfection and end of that function is the nature of the thing: Pol 1253a19-26. In the NE he states that the things of nature (ta kata phusin) are
sufficiency for the human being as naturally social. Perfect friendship of the virtuous, besides being the social virtue which perfects the social virtue of justice, is also, like all other virtuous actions, the actualization of the complete human function in the exercise of all the intellectual and ethical virtues according to the actualization of the best and most proper human faculty, nous, according to its virtue, sophia, in a theoretical knowledge of the divine, which includes a knowledge of the nature of the human good as a life of that knowledge. The virtuous friends in their mutual choice of sharing good things with each other out of a love for each other’s virtuous character know that the fineness of their friendship as a virtuous action is a good in focal reference to the supreme human good of a life of contemplation, that is, that the good and end of their friendship preserves and promotes a life of contemplation as their supreme and most final end. The virtuous know the nature of the good of their friendship as so related to the life of contemplation because they are wise. But as perfect friends the virtuous know this because in their love of themselves as who they really are as virtuous they love themselves especially as wise, as men for whom their intellect and its virtuous activity is most important in their practical knowledge of the human good. Because they know and love themselves in this way they know and love each other as other selves in the same way. As they love their intellect and its activity most of all in their love of their own virtuous character, their love for each other as other selves is a friendship of virtue in which their intellect and its virtue is of dominant concern. Such friends will have in the mutual choice of giving and receiving all that they have with each other out of a love for each others’ virtuous character, a final concern for wisdom and truth, the guiding principle of their mutual support and correction of each other.210 And as it seems likely that the wise man is most beloved of the gods for cultivating his nous, that part of himself most akin to the divine,211 the friends, in their mutual choice to benefit each other out of a love for who they are as virtuous and wise

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210 As in Aristotle’s friendship with ‘the friends of the Forms’, cf. NE 1096a14-7
should, in their concern above all else with their intellects, enjoy divine favor in their friendship. Perfect friendship of the virtuous, then, is a friendship of the wise in the secondarily happy life of virtuous action in the political community.

2. The Nature and Place of Friendship in the Wise Man’s Life of Contemplation

If perfect friendship in the secondarily happy life of virtuous action in the polis is a friendship of the virtuous who are wise, what can be said of the wise man as Aristotle depicts him in NE X 7-8, the man for whom a life of contemplation is the human good of a life of virtuous activity and who therefore strives to immortalize himself as far as he can by living that life in contemplative activity?

As we have seen, perfect happiness is possible only for natures capable of contemplation, to wit, the divine and the human.212 Perfect happiness is some kind of contemplation, which includes the divine activity of nous and the human activity in intellect in accordance with wisdom.213 Divine contemplation is happiest and most blessed while human contemplation is happy in so far as it contains some likeness to (homoiōma ti) the divine.214 The divine activity of contemplation is simple (aei mian kai haplēn),215 continuous (sunechēs), or eternal (aidios),216 and therefore completely self-sufficient.217 Human activity, on the other hand, is neither simple218 nor eternal,219 so that human contemplative activity cannot be continuous, and so continuously pleasant.220 It is apparently for this reason that Aristotle encourages us at NE X 7 to strive to immortalize ourselves ‘as far as possible’ (eph’ hoson endechetai) to live in accordance with that faculty.
and its virtuous activity which is highest in us. That we are encouraged to strive to immortalize ourselves as far as possible implies that we cannot do so continuously, or at least not without extraordinary effort. Further evidence to support this understanding is found earlier in NE X 7. Aristotle there distinguishes virtuous action as activity which requires others from contemplative activity which does not. Because contemplative activity requires so few external goods and does not require the kind of direct relationship with others required in virtuous action, the wise man in theoria is the most self-sufficient of human beings. Yet despite the relative self-sufficiency of his contemplative activity, Aristotle does appear to admit that this activity of the wise man shared with others may be 'better':

... Whereas the just man needs other persons towards whom or with whose aid he may act justly, and so likewise do the temperate man and the brave man and the others, the wise man on the contrary can also contemplate by himself and the more so the wiser he is; he will perhaps (isós) contemplate better (beltion) having fellow workers (sunergous ouchón), but still he is the most self-sufficient of men.222

By admitting the possibility of 'contemplating better' with 'fellow workers' Aristotle appears to admit that the wise man's contemplative activity can be made better when shared with others. But how can this be? The wise man's theoretical knowledge of the divine, does not require other human beings as do virtuous actions like acts of justice, courage, or temperance. The object of his contemplative activity is not rendered any more intelligible by sharing that activity with others; knowledge of x is not any more or less a knowledge of x whether that is one man's knowledge or a knowledge shared by others.

What Aristotle may have in mind in allowing that contemplation with others could be superior to solitary contemplation are the two limitations he recognizes in human activity. First, as Aristotle observed at NE VII 14, since our human nature is not simple, no activity of ours is continually pleasurable:

Nothing however can continue to give us pleasure always, because our nature is not simple, but contains a second element (which is what makes us

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221 ibid. 1177b33-4
222 ibid. 1177a32-5
perishable beings), and consequently, whenever one of these elements is active, its activity runs counter to the nature of the other, while when the two are balanced, their action feels neither painful nor pleasant. Since if any human being had a simple nature, the same activity would afford him the greatest pleasure always. Hence God enjoys a single simple pleasure always ... but change in all things is sweet, as the poet says, owing to some badness in us; since just as a changeable human being is bad, so also is a nature that needs change for it is not simple nor good.223

At NE X 4 Aristotle, after maintaining that each activity has its own pleasure, asks why no human being can feel pleasure continuously:

How is it then that no one can feel pleasure continuously? Perhaps it is due to fatigue, since no human faculty is capable of uninterrupted activity, and therefore pleasure also is not continuous, because it accompanies the activity of the faculties. It is for the same reason that some things please us when new, but cease to give so much pleasure later; this is because at first the mind is stimulated, and acts vigorously in regard to the object, as in the case of sight when we look at something intently; but afterwards the activity is less vigorous and our attention relaxes and consequently the pleasure also fades.224

As all human activities and their attendant pleasures are subject to this fragility, the wise man’s activity of theoria must likewise suffer some diminution in vigor and pleasure. At NE VII 7 Aristotle already observed that the pleasures of contemplation and study make us more able to engage in those activities.225 By ‘contemplating better’ with others, then, Aristotle evidently means that the wise man can engage in contemplative activity more continuously, and therefore pleasantly, with others than if he were to do it alone. And for one who strives to immortalize himself as far as he can, to contemplate more continuously is ‘better’ as happier, or more akin to divine contemplation,226 which is eternal and supremely pleasant.227 If this is Aristotle’s meaning in his allowing that the wise man’s contemplative activity may be ‘better’ with fellow workers, then the wise man needs others (and presumably other wise men as those ‘fellow workers’) if he and they are to immortalize themselves as far as they can in the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation which is as close as possible to the happiness of the divine life of contemplation. The wise

223 ibid. 1154b20-31
224 ibid. 1175a3-10
225 ibid. 1153a22-3
226 Cf. ibid. 1178b21-32
man, then, would surely seek out such ‘fellow workers’ to engage with in contemplation rather than simply to contemplate alone.

Another reason why the wise man may contemplate better with others may be found in another feature of human activity, that of human self-knowledge in a theoretical knowledge. If the life of contemplation is perfect happiness for the wise man, such a life of activity must be most pleasant. But the pleasure the wise man derives from his contemplative activity depends not only upon its continuousness but also upon his self-knowledge that he is indeed the one contemplating the divine. Aristotle explains this relation between knowledge and the pleasure the human knower derives from that knowledge at EE VII 12:

Perception and knowledge themselves are the thing most desirable for each individually (and it is owing to this that the appetite for life is implanted by nature in all, for living must be deemed a mode of knowing). If therefore one were to abstract and posit absolute knowledge (to ginoskein auto kath' auto) and its negation (though this, it is true, is obscure in the argument as we have written it, but it may be observed in experience), there would be no difference between absolute knowledge and another person’s knowing instead of oneself; but that is like another person’s living instead of oneself, whereas perceiving and knowing oneself is reasonably more desirable. For two things must be taken into consideration together, that life is desirable and that good is desirable, and as a consequence that it is desirable for ourselves to possess a nature of that [the good] ... so that to wish to perceive oneself is to wish oneself to be of a certain character, since then we are not each of the things in ourselves but only by participating in these faculties in the process of perceiving and knowing (for when perceiving one becomes perceived by means of what one previously perceives, in the manner and in the respect in which one perceives it, and when knowing one becomes known) - hence owing to this one wishes always to live because one wishes to know; and this is because one wishes to be oneself the object known.\(^{228}\)

The pleasure, or enjoyment, we human beings derive from knowledge of anything is the awareness we have of ourselves as knowers of that thing. Aristotle’s positing ‘absolute knowledge’ is his attempt to get us to see the crucial importance of self-knowledge in our knowledge of anything. If life and knowledge are good and desirable for us human beings it is because we are aware of the goodness of ourselves as living and

\(^{227}\) *Meta* 1072b22-30

\(^{228}\) *EE* 1244b24-1245a10

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knowing. This awareness and its pleasure, Aristotle goes on to argue, is enhanced by living with one another and especially by our sharing good things (especially knowledge) with one another as friends. Moreover, Aristotle concludes this long argument by stating that this awareness and pleasure is greater still when friends share the best things they can with each other, whether that be physical enjoyments, artistic contemplation, or even *philosophia*.

Because the good of the human knower in his knowledge of anything depends on this accompanying self-knowledge and this self-knowledge is enhanced by living with others and sharing this knowledge with others, it would appear that the wise man too in his theoretical activity of contemplation would be able to ‘contemplate better’, that is, find that activity more pleasant doing it with others rather than engaging in it by himself.

That the ‘fellow workers’ with whom the wise man may ‘contemplate better’ are his friends appears likely from what Aristotle says in the *EE* VII 12 passage cited above. It is pleasanter to share good things (like knowledge) with others and pleasanter still to share the best of things, like *philosophia*, with friends. At *NE* IX 12 Aristotle observes that friends want to share good things with each other and most of all those activities which they most enjoy:

Whatever pursuit it is that constitutes existence for a man or that makes his life worth living, he desires to share with his friends. Hence some friends drink or dice together, others practice athletic sports and hunt, or philosophize together (*sumphilosophousin*); each sort spending their time together in the occupation that they love best of everything in life; for wishing to live in their friend’s society, they pursue and take part with them in these occupations as best they can.

Since *philosophia* at *NE* X 7 is the activity of intellect in accordance with wisdom, the activity which makes up the life of contemplation, we can infer that for Aristotle at *NE* IX 12 those who consider a life of the activity of *philosophia* to be most worth living are the wise of *NE* X 7 and it is the wise who desire to share this activity of *philosophia* with each other as friends. If this is right, then we can say that even in the perfect happiness of

\[\text{ibid. 1245a10-22}\]
a life of contemplation in which the wise strive to immortalize themselves as far as they can in the activity of theōria, they still need and want to engage in that activity with others like themselves as friends. This shared theōria of the wise, in so far as it is an activity which is more continuous, more pleasant (both as more continuous and as more consciously their own), and more akin to the eternity of the divine activity of contemplation, is better than if the wise were to try to immortalize themselves as far as they could in contemplative activity alone. And as Aristotle tells us in the Topics: those things which can be shared among friends are more to be desired than those which are not. 231 the happiest of human lives, the perfect happiness of the wise in a life of contemplation is more to be desired as better and happier still with others as wise friends than such a life lived alone.

As the human good is a happy life of virtuous activity which is the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation and the secondarily happy life of virtuous action in the polis, friendship in the happy life of virtuous activity would be something like the following. In the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation the wise would desire to share their contemplative activity with other wise men as friends in their striving to immortalize themselves as far as they can in living the contemplative life. Because contemplation with others is better, that is, more continuous and pleasant (and therefore more akin to the eternity of divine contemplation) than if they were to engage in that activity by themselves, the wise will seek for other wise men as friends to engage in contemplation together. Their friendship will be a friendship of the wise in their activity of contemplation together. Presumably, they would engage in contemplation together out of love for each other as wise men and the good they share among themselves is their mutual knowledge and love of the divine. To this extent a contemplation with each other as ‘fellow workers’ could be understood as a perfect friendship of the wise in the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation. But as the wise are also human beings whose social nature requires the external goods of life and the good of friends to engage in the fineness of virtuous action in

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230 NE 1172a1-8
a political community, they will also at the appropriate times and circumstances choose to act for the sake of the fineness of a life of virtuous action in the polis, knowing as they do that such a life as fine preserves or promotes the perfect happiness of that life they want to live in their striving to immortalize themselves as far as they can. In that secondarily happy life of choice of action for the sake of what is fine, perfect friendship is a friendship of the wise who are virtuous, a friendship of those who, in other words, mutually choose to share their goods with each other out of love for their virtuous and ultimately wise characters. They love each other for their virtuous characters in their desire for the fineness of their friendship, desiring that good and end ultimately for the sake of the happiness of a life of contemplation. They share their goods with each other out of love for their virtuous characters so that they may have the leisure to engage in contemplation together by the exchange of knowledge in conversing with each other. In this way perfect friendship enables virtuous men to live a life of contemplation and virtuous action in the polis more fully than if they were to live a life of virtuous activity apart from that friendship.

**Conclusion to Chapter III**

In this chapter we have examined the happiness of the virtuous man in a friendship with others like himself. This friendship is a perfect friendship and a character virtue of the virtuous man which is exercised with other virtuous men in a mutual choice to share good things with each other out of a love for each other's character. This character virtue is, like justice, a social character virtue, yet includes justice and all the other character virtues in its practice. As friendship is a community (*koinōnia*) of friends,²³² virtuous friends in effect form a community of virtue in their mutual choice (*antiproairesis*) of benefiting each other by sharing good things with each other. In our first chapter we saw that for the virtuous man, the fineness of virtuous action is a good focally connected to the supreme human good of a life of contemplation as to the most final end. That is, when he must engage in virtuous activity in his polis, the virtuous man he will choose to act for the sake of what is

²³¹ *Top* 118a1-2
fine as a good and final end which he desires ultimately for the sake of the happiness of a life of contemplation. In the second chapter we saw that the virtuous man’s choice of action for the sake of its fineness requires that the virtuous man be wise, practically intelligent, and ethically virtuous. The human good of the virtuous man, then, as the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation and the secondarily happy life of virtuous action is Aristotle’s description of human happiness. In this third chapter we have examined the perfect friendship of virtuous men. After examining Aristotle’s understanding of character virtue and the social virtues of justice and friendship, we see that the practice of perfect friendship is the friends’ mutual choice to share the goods they value with each other out of love for each other is something fine as a virtuous action. And because perfect friendship is a virtuous action of virtuous men, men who are wise, practically intelligent, and ethically virtuous, the fineness of this friendship will be for the friends a good and final end desired ultimately for the sake of the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation. Because the friends are virtuous men, they are wise and so they will desire to immortalize themselves as far as they can in shared contemplative activity. A life of such shared contemplative activity is the happiest of human lives. But because the friends are human they must live virtuously in a political community as well. In such a community they will choose action together for the sake of the fineness of that action as a good and final end which preserves or promotes a life of contemplation for themselves and their polis. In this way the perfect friendship of the virtuous is a friendship of the wise because it is a friendship of the virtuous. Such friendship holds the final place in Aristotle’s exposition of the character and social virtues of the virtuous man in the NE because the practice of perfect friendship among virtuous men not only includes justice and all the other character virtues but is itself a community of virtuous action - a sumpraxis in a mutual choice of action. This friendship also holds final place in the contemplative life of

232 ibid. 1159b31-2
the wise man as well if indeed the wise are better able to contemplate with others than alone.

In the next and final chapter we will examine the nature and place of a perfect friendship in the polis according to Aristotle as that can be inferred from both his Ethics as well as from the Politics. Just as Aristotle recognizes different kinds of friendship in his Ethics, so in the Politics he acknowledges different kinds of political communities as those communities are governed by different kinds of constitutions. Of these different political communities we will focus our attention on that polis Aristotle considers the best, the polis governed by the best constitution, that constitution which has the true human good of the happiness of the a life of virtuous activity as its end. Different kinds of political communities are composed of, and foster, different kinds of friendship among their citizens. From what Aristotle tells us about the best polis and the citizens of that polis in the Politics and from what he tells us about civic friendship in both the Ethics, we can infer what the nature and place of perfect friendship might be in this best sort of polis. In this fourth chapter we will argue that as the citizens of a polis are understood as civic friends, the citizens of the best polis governed according to the best constitution are virtuous men who rule their community together as friends. These citizens of Aristotle’s best polis as virtuous men and friends are, in effect, perfect friends. The best polis, then, is a political community of citizens who are perfect friends. As perfect friendship is a community of the virtuous in virtuous action in the ethical life, so the perfect friendship of citizens in the best polis is a political community of virtuous action in the political life.
Chapter 4

THE NATURE AND PLACE OF PERFECT FRIENDSHIP IN THE BEST POLIS CIVIC FRIENDSHIP IN THE BEST POLIS IS A PERFECT FRIENDSHIP OF THE CITIZENS

Introduction: Reading the Politics in Conjunction with the Ethics and in the Light of the NE

In this fourth and final chapter we will examine Aristotle’s Politics, along with both Ethics, to see what can be said about the nature and place of perfect friendship in what Aristotle conceives as the best political community. We shall argue that in the best polis as Aristotle conceives it, the polis governed by the best men according to the best constitution, the citizen will be the political equivalent of the virtuous man of Aristotle’s Ethics and the best polis a civic friendship of the virtuous. The best polis will be, in effect, a political community of perfect friends and so the happiest and most self-sufficient of human lives will be that of the best polis governed by citizens as perfect friends.

In presenting this argument we must immediately acknowledge two things. First, most of what Aristotle tells us about friendship and in particular the perfect friendship of the virtuous is found in his Ethics and not, at least explicitly, in the Politics as we have the latter. Aristotle in the Politics is not explicitly concerned with friendship as such but rather with the nature of the best constitution and laws of the political community. That friendship plays a central role in the political community, indeed that the political community itself a civic friendship, can be plainly seen in Aristotle’s examination of friendship in the Ethics but in the Politics the polis as a friendship of its citizens is rather more presumed than explicitly stated. Secondly, important parts of the Politics as we have it appear to have been written earlier than the NE and, as we shall see, there is enough evidence in the text of the Politics to suggest that Aristotle’s understanding of the nature of

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\footnote{What Aristotle calls the best polis is that polis governed by the best men according to the best constitution: Pol 1288a32-b2, 1323b23-37. cf. 1277a1-3}
the human good and the unity of virtues exercised by the virtuous man who lived that good underwent some development between his writing the *Politics* and the *NE*. The human good of a happy life of virtuous activity is not described as the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation and the secondarily happy life of virtuous action in the *Politics*, as it is at *NE* X 7, nor is the statesman or ruler of the polis in his political work described as an ethical virtuous and practically intelligent man who is finally wise as the virtuous man is described in his mature ethical work.

In this final chapter we will take Aristotle's understanding of the human good of a happy life and the nature of the man who lives that life as these are presented in the *NE* as his most mature practical philosophy and, in conjunction with both his Ethics and the *Politics*, attempt to infer what the nature and place of perfect friendship could be in what Aristotle describes as the best polis. That Aristotle himself intended the *Politics* to be taken up and considered after his ethical work is clear both from what he tells us at the conclusion of *NE* X about the importance of studying the constitution and laws of the polis to complete his philosophy of human concerns\(^2\) and from his frequent allusions to the Ethics in the *Politics*.\(^3\) By using material in both the *EE* and the *NE* for support, and the *NE* as the interpretive key, we shall argue that from what Aristotle does say in the *Politics* about the nature of the human good of a happy life, the virtue of the citizen of the best polis, and the social, or political nature of the human being, it can be concluded that his understanding of the human good of a happy life in the *Politics* is relevantly the same as his understanding of that good in both Ethics, that the citizen or statesman of the best polis in the *Politics* is relevantly the same as the virtuous man in the *NE*, and that a civic friendship in the best polis as presented in the *Politics* can be understood as a perfect friendship of the citizens as the political equivalent of a perfect friendship of the virtuous as found in the *NE*. As a perfect friendship of the virtuous is the fullest way for a human being to live the happy

\(^2\) *NE* 1181b12-5
ethical life, so, we shall argue, the civic friendship of citizens in the best polis is the fullest way to live the happy human life in the political life. This chapter, then, will complete our study of the nature and place of perfect friendship in the happy life of virtuous men in Aristotle’s practical philosophy.

I. The Relation between the NE and the Politics in Aristotle’s Practical Philosophy: The Human Good of the NE and Politics is the Same and the Virtuous Man of the NE is the Citizen of the Best Polis in the Politics

As we have noted, what Aristotle in the NE calls his ‘philosophy of human concerns’ comprises both his ethical and political studies. This practical philosophy begins with the ethical study of the human good of the virtuous man as an individual in the NE and concludes in the Politics with the political study of the human good of the optimum political community, a community of virtuous men as citizens, governed by the best and second-best constitutions. The human good, the eudaimonia of a happy life of virtuous action, is the same for both the virtuous man individually and for a political community of such men as citizens.

Because the human good is the same for the individual and the polis, Aristotle’s practical philosophy, or his ‘philosophy of human concerns’ is both an ethics and a politics. As the human good of the polis is the greater and more final, or perfect (teleiotēton) good, a good which includes that of the individual, ethical study of the human good of the individual is understood by Aristotle in NE I as a kind of political study (politikē tis). The human good of this kind of political knowledge is what is fine and just and it is the statesman, or the legislator, who conducts this kind of political investigation for the sake of the good of the polis. In Book I of the Politics Aristotle nicely describes

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3 Kenny (1978) notes that the allusions to the ‘ethics’ in the Politics all appear to be references to the EE, (if we suppose that Books V, VI, and VII of the NE were originally included in the EE) cf. 1261a30ff, 1280a16ff, 1282b18ff, 1295a35ff, 1332a7ff, 1332a21ff, but infra note 16.
4 Cf. NE 1181b15
5 Pol 1288b21-7
6 NE 1098a16
7 ibid. 1094a26-b11
8 ibid. 1094b14-5, 1095b4-6
9 ibid. 1102a23-6, cf. 1103b2-6
the good of the individual and his various communities as included in, and subordinate to, that of the self-sufficient polis.\(^{10}\) thereby illustrating the basis for the relation between an ethical and a political study of the human good. As the formal character of the human good of happiness for the human being in the NE is that of finality and a self-sufficiency which required a community of family, friends, and citizens, so the political community is that final and most self-sufficient of human communities.

However, this conception of the nature of the individual and political human good in the Politics is the final result, it seems, of a development in Aristotle’s thinking.\(^{11}\) For although both NE I and Politics I present a unified and coherent conception of the individual and social dimensions of the human good and its philosophical study, that was not always so; in what appears to be an earlier phase of his philosophical development Aristotle had dealt with ethics and politics simply as separate disciplines. For example, except for one remark about the chief good being the subject of the most authoritative practical science,\(^{12}\) the comparatively early EE does not claim to be part of politike, and the likewise comparatively early first chapter of Book VII of the Politics has it that a detailed discussion of the question of the best life is simply ‘the concern of another science’.\(^{13}\) This suggests that Aristotle’s thinking on the relationship between ethics and politics underwent some development throughout his philosophical career. There is also evidence that Aristotle’s understanding of the human good of a happy life - the supreme good of the individual and his political community - underwent an important development in his philosophical thinking. For in Book VII of the Politics, the human good of a happy life of virtuous action is not described in terms of Book X of the NE as the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation and the secondarily happy life of virtuous action but appears to be very similar to the kind of happiness Aristotle describes in the EE. That the happy life in

\(^{10}\) Pol 1252a24-1253a28


\(^{12}\) EE 1218b13ff
Politics VII is so similar to that of the EE, suggests that this part of the Politics at least was composed earlier than NE I and X and probably around the time Aristotle composed the EE. If this is right, it would mean that the Politics, like the EE, works with the understanding of the human good as an equivocal of means in focal reference to happiness as the final end. Aristotle's more explicit account of the human good as an equivocal of goods as ends in focal reference to the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation as the supreme good and most final end in the NE is absent, then, in Pol VII as it is absent in the EE. This must be taken into account if we are to relate what we have learned about the nature and place of a perfect friendship of the happiness of the virtuous man in the NE to our understanding of the civic friendship of citizens in a political community as that community is presented in the text of the Politics. The account the Politics offers of the nature of the human good and of the unity of the virtues in the citizens' action in the best polis is especially important, for if that account is substantially the same as Aristotle's account in the NE of the human good of the individual virtuous man and the unity of virtues in his action, then we have the basis for arguing that the citizen in the best polis, as presented in the Politics, is the virtuous man of the NE and that the best polis is a community of civic friendship which is a perfect friendship of its citizens.

1. The Human Good of the Happy Life as Described in the Politics is Essentially the Same as that of the NE

Throughout the Politics Aristotle states that the human good of the individual is the same as that of the political community. That good, as we have seen, is described as the happy life of virtuous activity as the primary good and final end of an equivocal of means and end in the EE, and in the NE in Book X as a happy life of virtuous activity as an equivocal of two lives, primarily the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation as the supreme good and most final end and secondarily the happy life of virtuous action in the

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14 ibid. 1264b20-2, 1288a32-40, 1324a5-8, 1325b30-2, 1329a22-4, 1333a11, 1332a7ff, 1334a11

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political community as that good and end desired as preserving or promoting a life of contemplation.

The human good of the political community, as presented in Book VII of the *Politics*, although fundamentally similar to the account of that good in NE X, differs in one crucial respect. The description of the supreme human good and final end of happiness is not that of the NE but rather that of the earlier EE, suggesting that Pol VII at least was composed roughly contemporary with, though slightly later than, his EE.\(^{15}\) This difference in description of happiness between, on the one hand the EE and the *Politics*, and on the other, the NE, does not however mean that Aristotle’s understanding of the human good of the happiness of the virtuous man in the NE and that of the happiness of the citizen in the political life of the best polis in the *Politics* are so dissimilar as to vitiate understanding the citizen of the best polis in the *Politics* as the virtuous man of the NE and civic friendship in a polis governed by the best constitution in Aristotle’s political work as the political equivalent of a perfect friendship of the virtuous in the his ethical work. Rather, the human good of happiness in the *Politics*, because it is similar to that good as described in the EE.

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\(^{15}\) The frequent allusions to the ‘ethics’ in the *Politics* (almost) all appear to be references to the EE: *supra* note 3 and *infra* note 16. This in itself is evidence that much of the *Politics* was probably written after the EE but before the NE. Rist (1989) 159-60, notes that Pol VII seems close to the EE with respect to the remarks about the divine and human nature. Pol VII’s assumption that the divine activity and the whole cosmos have no externally directed activities as distinct from their own internal ones; ibid. 1325b28-30, appears very similar to EE 1245b16-9 where Aristotle contrasts the human dependence upon others with the divine independence in well-being. As for Pol VII’s relation with the rest of the *Politics*, cf. Pellegrin, (1996) 347-57. According to Pellegrin, while Book VII is clearly a part of the *Politics* as a whole, its chronological composition with respect to the rest of the work has been a matter of dispute. Today there seems to be a scholarly consensus that Jaeger was largely correct in his assessment of the last two books of the *Politics* as having been written earlier than the rest of the work: von Fritz and Kapp, (1977) 126. This would mean that Aristotle’s views on the precise nature of the human good of *theōria* and on what constitutes the conditions of the best constitution antedate what he thought and wrote concerning the human good in the NE. That Aristotle left Books VII and VIII of the *Politics* unrevised could mean either that he considered the material on *theōria* and the polis in Book VII essentially compatible with his account of the human good of the virtuous man in NE X and therefore felt no need to revise Books VII and VIII in the light of NE X, or that he did indeed intend to revise Books VII and VIII to fit more perfectly with NE X but did not get the opportunity to do so. In either case, as we shall see, because the content of the human good in Books VII and VIII of the *Politics* are in line with the content of that good in NE X, the resolution of this problem is not crucial. Aristotle’s understanding of the human good of the life of *theōria* and the secondary good of virtuous action in the polis, as presented in the NE, is compatible enough with his understanding of the human good and end of both the virtuous citizen and of the best polis as a whole in the *Politics*.
is compatible enough with the NE account to warrant our comparing the citizen in the best polis and civic friendship in that polis as presented in the Politics with the virtuous man and perfect friendship in the NE.

Aristotle in Book VII of the Politics devotes himself to an examination of the best form of constitution, that form which has the real human good as the good and end of the polis. In his introduction in the first chapter of Politics VII he takes as a preliminary description of this good the happiness of the best life (bios ariston) of virtuous actions:

Let us take it as established that the best life, whether separately for an individual or collectively for states, is the life conjoined with virtue furnished with sufficient means for taking part in virtuous actions.16

This description of the human good is substantially the same as that given in both of Aristotle’s Ethics.17 As in both the Ethics, happiness in Politics VII is described as an energeia:

... the greatest good is happiness, and this is some perfect energeia or employment of virtue ... 18

which is final, or perfect:

The view we maintain (and this is the definition that we laid down in the ethics, if those discourses are of any value) is that happiness is the final, or perfect activity (energeian teleian) and employment of virtue.19

Interestingly, in Pol VII Aristotle also considers the lives of philosophy and politics as what are commonly understood to be the two kinds of a happy human life:

... the question is raised even on the part of those who agree that the life accompanied is the most desirable, whether the life of citizenship and activity is desirable or rather a life released from all external affairs, for example some form of contemplative life (theoretikos tis), which is said by some to be the only life that is philosophic. For it is manifest that these are the two modes of life principally chosen by the men most ambitious of excelling in virtue, both in times past and at the present day - I mean the life of politics and the life of philosophy. And it makes no little difference

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16 Pol 1323b40-1324a2. It might be noted that the explicit mention of the sufficient means makes this passage in this respect more nearly parallel to the description of the human good in NE 1101a14-16. The EE does not include in its description of the best life an explicit mention of the necessary means, at least not in the same way as Pol VII, cf. EE 1249abff.
17 Supra note 15.
18 ibid. 1328a37-8
19 ibid. 1332a7-9. Cf. EE 1219a37-9; NE 1101a14-6, 1102a5-6 And at Pol 1339b18-9 Aristotle describes happiness as that which is fine (to kalon) and the pleasant (hē hēdonē).
which way the truth lies; for assuredly those who consider the matter well (eu phronounta) are bound to arrange their affairs in the direction of the better goal - and this applies to the state collectively as well as to the individual human being.\textsuperscript{20}

Although he will go on to reject both these lives as they are commonly conceived as truly happy, Aristotle ultimately combines what he views as good in these two lives in his description of happiness as an action (praxis), or a doing well (eu prattein)\textsuperscript{21}; a life which includes virtuous action toward others (pros heterous) as well as the virtuous actions of contemplation and reflection (theorías kai dianoëseis):

But if these things are well said, and if happiness is to be defined as well-doing, the active life is the best life both for the whole state collectively and for each man individually. But the active life is not necessarily active with respect to other men, as some people think, nor are only those processes of thought active that are pursued for the sake of the objects that result from action, but far more those speculations and thoughts that have their end in themselves and are pursued for their own sake; for the end is to do well, and therefore is a certain form of action ... otherwise God and the whole universe could hardly be well circumstanced, since they have no external activities by the side of their own proper actions.\textsuperscript{22}

This description of happiness is closer to Aristotle's account of the human good of happiness in the EE than to that presented in the NE.\textsuperscript{23} In the EE the human good of happiness was understood as a life of virtuous activity eventually distinguishing the intellectual and practical virtues as the latter were exercised as the means to the former.\textsuperscript{24}

\textit{Politics} VII description of happiness as well-doing which includes both actions in relation to others and intellectual pursuits but distinguishing them according to end (the former having an end beyond themselves; the latter being ends in themselves;) is very close, if not the same description of happiness and the relationship between the ethical and intellectual virtue in the \textit{EE}.\textsuperscript{25} If the \textit{Politics} and the \textit{EE} accounts of happiness and the virtues is essentially the same, that account is essentially that of the \textit{NE} as well, for in all three works Aristotle understands the human good as a unity of means to happiness as the end. In the

\textsuperscript{20} Pol 1324a25-35
\textsuperscript{21} ibid. 1325a31-41
\textsuperscript{22} ibid. 1325b14-32
\textsuperscript{24} EE 1249b9-13
Ever this unity is explicitly that of an equivocal in focal reference to happiness as the primary
good as end and in the NE this focal analysis is maintained and extended to the many goods
as ends united in focal reference to perfect happiness as the most final end. of means and
end united in reference to happiness as that good which is final. The difference between
the EE and Politics account and that of the NE is simply that the latter explicitly extends this
understanding of the human good to goods as ends in reference to perfect happiness as the
most final good in the description of happiness as a life of contemplation and the
secondarily happy life of virtuous action. This difference in accounts of happiness, as we
shall now see, does not affect Aristotle’s understanding of the relation between practical
and intellectual virtue. nor does it affect his understanding of what constitutes a virtuous
man in the Ethics or a citizen of the best polis in the Politics.

2. The Unity of Virtues Exercised by the Citizen of the Best Polis in the Politics is
the Same as that of the Virtuous Man in the NE

We have seen that in the NE Aristotle understands wisdom (sophia) as the virtue of
the highest human faculty and that the intellectual, calculative and appetite virtues of the
human function form a unity finally ordered to the exercise of this intellectual virtue in
virtuous action. The exercise of wisdom in virtuous action is that virtue which Aristotle
described in Book I of the NE as the best and most perfect of the virtues. In his practical
knowledge of the human good the virtuous man must exercise all his intellectual and ethical
virtues. By his sophia he is able to know the nature of the human good as his end and by
his ethical virtue desires that good as his end in a choice of action. By his calculative virtue
of phronēsis he is then able to discern and choose that action which is the right means to
that good and end. In the Politics, on the other hand. Aristotle’s description of the virtues
necessary for the virtuous citizen appears to differ from his description of the virtues
necessary for the virtuous man in the NE. For sophia as the perfectly happy life of
contemplation and as the exercise of the intellectual faculty of nous whose object is the
nature of the human good as end in the virtuous man’s choice of action as means described

in the NE does not appear in the Politics. The absence of any explicit reference to sophia in his political work does not, however, mean that there is no place for wisdom, or an intellectual virtue like it, in the life of the citizen of the best polis. For in the Politics, (as in the EE, \(^\text{26}\)), while Aristotle does distinguish theoretical from practical reasoning,\(^\text{27}\) he does not yet distinguish these two kinds of reasoning and their respective faculties and virtues according to a more detailed analysis of their differing objects as he does in the NE.\(^\text{28}\) In the NE the action as means chosen for the sake of the human good as end presents a different object to the human knower than that of the good and end and therefore requires the exercise of a virtue of a different faculty of the rational part of the soul than the virtue and faculty required to grasp the nature of the good as end. In the Politics, on the other hand, while Aristotle recognizes the distinction between means (pros ta telê) and end (telos) in practical knowledge, he does not yet see that this difference as a difference in objects to be known and the basis for the distinction between faculties and virtues within the rational part of the human soul in practical knowledge. Hence, in the Politics the intellectual virtue of phronësis - the phronësis of the ruler - appears to have both the nature of the good as end and the means to that end as its object, thereby comprehending in its exercise what Aristotle will in the NE distinguish as the intellectual function of sophia whose object is the nature of the human good as end and the calculative function of phronësis whose object is the particular action as means to that end. Phronesis in the Politics, then, appears to be understood as the undifferentiated intellectual virtue of the rational part of the human soul which has both the good as end and the means to that end as its objects. This means that the citizen, or ruler of the best polis as a phronimos, is, in terms of the analysis of virtue in

\(^{26}\) In the EE, as Rowe (1971, 1971a) observes. Aristotle recognizes only phronësis as the virtue of the rational part of the human soul: supra Chapter II, p. 139, note 152. Aristotle's Politics appears to follow the EE in recognizing only phronësis as the virtue of the rational part of the human soul, though Aristotle does recognize a 'love of wisdom' - philosophia - as a virtue: Pol 1267a9-12, and with regard to a life of leisure philosophia is needed along with the virtues of temperance and justice: ibid. 1334a16-40. However, Aristotle does not explain in the Politics how this love of wisdom functions as a specific virtue of the human soul.

\(^{27}\) Pol 1333a23-7; EE 1216b10-9

\(^{28}\) Especially: NE 1139a8-10
the NE, not only a practically intelligent and ethically virtuous man, but one who is, by the same virtue, wise (sophos) as well. In this way the virtuous citizen as ruler of the best polis in the Politics can be understood as the virtuous man of the NE despite the fact that Aristotle understands the intellectual virtues of the rational part of the soul of the citizen and the virtuous man differently in the two works. The citizen of the best polis as phronimos in the Politics is indeed the political counterpart to the virtuous man of the NE: a man endowed with all the ethical and intellectual virtues necessary for a life of virtuous action. This equivalence between the citizen as ruler with the virtuous man of the NE becomes more apparent later in Politics VII with Aristotle's specification of phronēsis as a philosophia, or the love of wisdom, in the leisure of the virtuous life. This philosophia as a virtue in effect specifies that part of phronēsis which is the intellectual counterpart to sophia in the NE. The citizen's philosophia in the leisure of the virtuous life apparently functions as that intellectual virtue which has the nature of the human good of the polis as its object and which actually commands the same finally important place in his virtuous governance of the polis as the intellectual virtue of wisdom (sophia) in the virtuous action of the NE's virtuous man. Let us see this in more detail by examining some important texts in the Politics.

Practical knowledge of the citizen of the best polis and the virtuous man appears to be understood similarly in the Politics and the NE. First, as he does in the NE, Aristotle recognizes in the Politics both the familiar two-part division of the human soul and the final importance of nous in virtuous action:

......Reason (logos) and intelligence (nous) are for us the end of our natural development, so that it is with a view to these ends that our engendering and the training of our habits must be regulated. And secondly, as soul and body are two, so we observe that the soul also has two parts, the irrational part and the part possessing reason, and that the states which they experience are two in number, the one being desire (orexis) and the other intelligence (nous) ... in the first place it is necessary for the training of the body to precede that of the mind, and secondly for the training of the appetite to precede that of the

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29 Pol 1334a2-40

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intelligence; but the training of the appetite must be for the sake of the intellect and that of the body for the sake of the soul.\textsuperscript{30}

Aristotle also recognizes the distinction in the rational part of the soul between the theoretical and the practical and a corresponding distinction between theoretical and practical activity:

The rational part of the soul is better than the irrational. And the rational part is subdivided into two, according to our usual scheme of division; for reason is of two kinds, practical and theoretic, so that evidently the rational part of the soul must be subdivided accordingly. A corresponding classification we shall also pronounce to hold among activities: the activities of the part of the soul that is by nature superior must be preferable for those persons who are capable of attaining either all the soul's activities or two out of the three; since that thing is always more desirable for each person which is the highest to which it is possible for him to attain.\textsuperscript{31}

In \textit{Politics} VII Aristotle also clearly recognizes in the practical knowledge of the ruler the difference between the good as end and the means to that end:

There are two things in which the welfare of all men consists: one of these is the correct establishment of the aim and end (\textit{ton skapon keisthai kai to telos}) of their actions, the other the ascertainment of the actions leading to that end (\textit{pros to telos}). (For the end proposed and the means adopted may be inconsistent with one another, as also they may be consistent; sometimes the aim has been correctly proposed, but people fail to achieve it in action, sometimes they achieve all the means successfully but the end that they posited was a bad one, and sometimes they err in both - for instance, in medicine practitioners are sometimes both wrong in their judgment of what qualities a healthy body ought to possess and unsuccessful in hitting on effective means to produce the distinctive aim that they have set before them; whereas in the arts and sciences both these things have to be secured, the end and the practical means to the end (\textit{to telos kai tas eis to telos praxeis}).\textsuperscript{32}

Despite these similarities in understanding the practical knowledge of the citizen as ruler of the best polis in the \textit{Politics} and the knowledge of the virtuous man in the \textit{NE}, there is also a clear difference. To see this we need to focus on \textit{phronēsis} as the intellectual virtue of the rational part of the human soul as that virtue is exercised by the citizen of the best polis as this virtue is described in the \textit{Politics} and compare this with Aristotle's understanding of \textit{phronēsis} in the \textit{NE}.

\textsuperscript{30} ibid. 1334b15-28
\textsuperscript{31} ibid. 1333a25-30
\textsuperscript{32} ibid. 1331b26-38
In the *Politics* the citizen in the best polis is a *phronimos*, one who is intellectually virtuous. It is the exercise of *phronēsis* in governing that especially sets the citizen as ruler off from others in the polis:

*Phronēsis* alone of the virtues is a virtue peculiar to the ruler; for the other virtues seem to be necessary alike for subjects and rulers to possess, but *phronēsis* assuredly is not the subject's virtue, but only true opinion (*doxa alethēs*): the subject corresponds to the man who makes flutes and the ruler to the fluteplayer who uses them.

*Phronēsis* in the *NE*, although a virtue of the rational part of the soul, is clearly distinguished from the intellectual virtues of *nous* and *epistēmé*, which together make up *sophia*. *Phronēsis* in the *NE* is the virtue of the calculative faculty of the rational part of the soul which enables the virtuous man as *phronimos* to deliberate well and decide that action which is the means of living the human good. This exercise of *phronēsis* in a virtuous choice of action depends upon the virtuous man's exercise *sophia* in a knowledge of the nature of permanent good and end of the human being.

In contrast to *phronēsis* in the *NE*, the *phronēsis* of the citizen in the *Politics* is an intellectual virtue which appears to include what in *NE* VI are distinguished as the objects of theoretical and deliberative activity. This is apparent in Aristotle's description of the ruler who by the same virtue is able to know both the good as end and the means to that end. First, the ruler knows the good and end of his polis:

Since we say that the goodness of a citizen and ruler are the same as that of the best man, and that same person ought to become a subject first and a ruler afterwards, it will be important for the legislator to know (*gignōntai*) how and by what courses of training good men are to be produced and what is the end of the best life.

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33 ibid. 1277a14-6, b25-9
34 ibid. 1277b25-9
35 *Phronēsis* and *sophia* are virtues of two different faculties of human rationality and have two different objects: *NE* 1139a3-15, 1140b25-30, 1141a16-1141b14.
36 *Pol* 1333a11-6
In *Politics* III Aristotle tells us that the constitution of a polis embodies the end of the polis. A good ruler must know not only know the constitution of his polis but the nature of the best constitution as well:

... it is clear that in the case of the constitution as well it is the business of the same science to study (*theōresai*) which is the best constitution and what character it must have to be most ideal if no external circumstance stands in the way, and what constitution is adapted to what people (since for many it is doubtless impossible to attain the best one, so that the good lawgiver and true statesman must be acquainted with both the form of the constitution that is the highest absolutely and that which is best under assumed conditions).  

This knowledge of the end of the polis enables the ruler to govern well, that is, to discern and choose the right laws as means for bringing that end about:

In addition to the things mentioned, the statesman must ... also discern (*idein*) the laws that are the best, and those that are suited to each of the forms of constitution. For the laws should be laid down, and all the people lay them down, to suit the constitutions - the constitutions must not be made to suit the laws; for a constitution is the regulation of the offices of the state and what is the end of the community, but laws are distinct from the principles of the constitution, and regulate how the magistracies are to govern and to guard against those who transgress them. So that clearly it is necessary to be in possession of the different varieties of each form of constitution, and the number of these, even for the purpose of legislation.

The discernment of what laws are best suited for a constitution is a deliberation, which, along with actually legislating, executing, and adjudicating rightly discerned laws, constitutes the activity of the citizen's rule of the polis. The citizen's exercise of *phronēsis* in rule then, appears to include both a knowledge of the nature of the good as end of the polis (in his knowledge of the constitution) and the means by which that good can be lived. A knowledge of the supreme good as end is, of course, recognized as of supreme practical importance in the *NE*:

... it is clear that this one ultimate end must be the good, and indeed the supreme good. Will not then a knowledge of this supreme good be also of practical importance for the conduct of life? Will it not be fitting, like archers having a target to aim at? If this be so, we ought to make an attempt

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37 ibid. 1289a15-8  
38 ibid. 1288b21-7  
39 ibid. 1289a5-22  
40 ibid. 1275b18-21, 1291a27-8
to determine at all events what exactly this supreme good is and which of the sciences or capacities it is the object.41

But in the NE, as we have seen, the supreme good is the perfectly happy life of contemplation and the secondarily happy life of virtuous action in the polis. The invariable nature of this supreme good is the object of the virtuous man's intellectual virtue of sophia whereas the calculative intellectual virtue of phronësis enables him to discern that action which is the right means to that good as his end. In the Politics, on the other hand, the citizen as ruler of the best polis is one who, by his phronësis, is able to know the invariable good and end of the polis and the variable means to attain that good for himself and for the rest of the polis.

The difference in understanding the intellectual virtue of phronësis in the Politics and the NE should not, however, lead us to conclude that there is little equivalence between the virtues of the citizen and that of the virtuous man in the NE. If we keep in mind the dual role Aristotle appears to assign to phronësis in the Politics we can more readily see that the virtues exercised by the citizen in the best polis as phronimos are in fact those which Aristotle later came to distinguish in the action of the virtuous man in the NE: sophia, phronësis, and êthikê aretê.

Toward the end of Politics VII in his examination of the virtues necessary for the citizen in peace and leisure we come to see evidence that the citizen as ruler of the polis with the best constitution is the political equivalent of the virtuous man in a way that more nearly approaches the analysis of the unity of virtues exercised in the action of the virtuous man in the NE:

Experience supports the testimony of theory, that it is the duty of the lawgiver rather to study how he may frame his legislation both with regard to warfare and in the other departments for the object of leisure and peace. Most military states remain safe while at war but perish when they have won their empire; in peacetime they lose their keen temper, like iron. The lawgiver is to blame, because he did not educate them to be able to employ leisure. And since it appears that men have the same end both collectively and individually, and since the same distinctive aim must necessarily belong both to the best man and the best government, it is clear that the virtues

41 NE 1094a20-6
relating to leisure are essential; since, as has been said repeatedly, peace is the end of war, leisure of business. But the virtues useful for leisure and for its employment are not only those that operate during leisure but also those that operate in business: for many of the necessaries must needs be forthcoming to give us opportunity for leisure. Therefore it is proper for the state to be temperate, brave and enduring; since, as the proverb goes, there is no leisure for slaves, but people unable to face danger bravely are slaves of their assailants. Therefore courage and fortitude are needed for business, philosophia for leisure, temperance and justice for both seasons, and more especially when men are at peace and have leisure: for war compels men to be just and temperate, whereas the enjoyment of prosperity and peaceful leisure tend to make them insolent. Therefore it is proper for the state to be temperate, brave and enduring; since, as the proverb goes, there is no leisure for slaves, but people unable to face danger bravely are slaves of their assailants.

In this passage Aristotle first distinguishes the virtuous political life of war with that of peace and the life of business from that of leisure. The actions of war and business may be necessary in the life of the polis - and even fine - but they are not in themselves final ends but rather are conducted for the sake of peace and leisure.\footnote{Pol 1334a2-40} It is the virtuous life of peace and leisure which is the good and end of the polis. But why does Aristotle list philosophia instead of phronēsis as the special virtue of the citizens in peace and leisure? At Politics VII 2 he cites philosophia as a bios, but this is only a recognition of what is commonly understood to be one kind of desirable life for the virtuous.\footnote{Cf. ibid. 1325a5-7} Aristotle's acknowledgment of philosophia and politikē as the two kinds of happy lives understood to be attractive to men of virtue is no more than a preliminary move in an argument which will conclude with a view of the happy life which is not identified as a bios of philosophia.\footnote{ibid. 1324a23-35} But in his examination of the happy life of peace and leisure, philosophia is being understood as an intellectual virtue exercised along with the ethical virtues of justice and

\footnote{Cf. ibid. 1325b14-32}
temperance. Presumably in war and business the citizen as ruler must exercise *phronēsis* along with ethical virtue for the sake of a life of peace and leisure, whereas in peace and leisure, while ethical virtue remains necessary, the actual attainment of that for the sake of which war and business were conducted motivates Aristotle to express unambiguously that aspect of *phronēsis* as the intellectual virtue whose object is the nature of the good as end rather than the deliberative dimension of *phronēsis* which has the means to that end as its object. If this is right, then this analysis of the virtues of the citizen in leisure more nearly approaches what we have argued is the analysis of the unity of intellectual virtues exercised by the virtuous man in the *NE*. For if *philosophia* can be distinguished from *phronēsis* in the rule of the citizen in the best polis, then the citizen’s virtuous action of ruling the best polis is an action which includes the exercise of the intellectual virtue of *philosophia* in a knowledge of the nature of the human good of happiness and the calculative virtue of *phronēsis* in legislation for the sake of that good as end. This is equivalent to *NE*’s analysis of the virtuous man’s exercise of *sophia* in a knowledge of the nature of the human good and the exercise of his *phronēsis* in the deliberation and choice of the right action as means.

But if the good citizen is the same as the virtuous man of the *NE*, not only must he be wise with a knowledge of the nature of the human good of the polis but he also must be practically intelligent and ethically virtuous if he is to govern well according to that good as embodied in the best constitution. Is the practical intelligence and appetitive virtue of the citizen as described in the *Politics* comparable to that calculative and appetitive virtue in the virtuous man of the *NE*? In order to answer this we need to distinguish the citizen of a polis

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46 Besides the context of this passage on the life of peace and leisure which substitutes *philosophia* for the intellectual virtue of *phronēsis*, there are places where Aristotle seems to understand *philosophia* as an activity, not unlike that of *theōria* of wisdom in the *NE*. In *Pol III*, for example, Aristotle alludes to certain ‘philosophical discourses’ which concern questions of ethics vital for ruling the polis: *Pol* 1282b14-21; (cf. *NE* 1152b1-2). At another point he cites the benefit of knowledge gained by the pursuit of philosophy: ibid. 1342a30-2, and notes that one who studies a subject ‘philosophically’ (*philosophounti*) is not concerned solely with its practical aspect: ibid. 1279b12-4. Moreover, he tells us that the pleasure of *philosophia* is relatively independent of the action and influence of others: ibid. 1267a10-2.
governed by a good, or correct constitution from the citizen of a polis governed by a bad, or deviant one.

According to Aristotle, the citizen haplōs is one who participates fully in the life of his polis by governing according to that polis’ constitution. As the citizen is defined by his function as articulated in his constitution, the nature of the citizen depends upon the nature of the constitution of his polis. Now there are different kinds of constitutions, divided into what Aristotle calls the ‘correct’ (hai orthai) and the ‘deviant’ (hai parekbaseis). Correct constitutions have governments with the common good (koinōn sumpheron) of the polis as their concern whereas the incorrect constitutions do not. A good, or virtuous citizen (polités spoudaios), rules according to a correct constitution; such a citizen is a virtuous man (ho spoudaios), a good man of perfect virtue. The citizen who rules according to a deviant constitution may be good relative to that constitution but is not a good man of perfect virtue. Of the correct constitutions, the best is that constitution governed by the best men for the sake of the human good of a life of virtuous action. The best constitution for Aristotle is either the constitution of a monarchy or an aristocracy. A citizen who is the good or just man haplōs is the citizen of this best polis. Since the best constitution is the government of the polis which has the human good of a life of virtuous action as the good and end both for the polis and for the individual citizen, the citizen who

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47 Pol 1275a22-3
48 ibid. 1276a3-4. b1-4, 1278a15-6
49 ibid. 1275a35-b5, 1279a17-31
50 ibid. 1279a17-31
51 ibid. 1276b27-34, 1278a40-b5. In the NE Aristotle observes that different things are held to be fine and pleasant by agents of different character: NE 1113a31-3. In the different political communities the citizens share a practical opinion about different things as fine and pleasant depending on their practical grasp of the good life as articulated in their different constitutions. There are, then, as many kinds of ‘civic virtue’ and ‘justice’ as there are kinds of constitutions. But only the civic virtue and justice of the good citizen in the polis governed by a correct constitution and finally the citizen of the best polis governed by the best constitution will be civic virtue and justice kuriōs and haplōs: Pol 1328b34-9, while the practice of those virtues under a deviant constitution are only a kind of virtue and justice (to dikaiot ti): ibid. 1279a17-21, 1280a7-35, 1283a29-31, and the character of those citizens is a goodness only relative to the good of their constitution.
52 Cf. Pol 1328b37-9
53 ibid. 1283b42-1284a3, 1323b23-37
54 ibid. 1288a32-b2

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rules a polis according to the best constitution should be *ho spoudaios* - the virtuous man as described by Aristotle in the *NE*. Such a citizen, besides having the intellectual virtue to know the true human good of the polis and the calculative virtue necessary for enacting the right laws for the polis, must have the appetitive or ethical virtue to make the human good his good and end and to deliberately desire to actually enact, execute and adjudicate the right laws as means. This is precisely what we see in the *Politics*: The good citizen is a ruler of his polis; someone who is temperate and just. Since justice and civic virtue are indispensable in the administration of a polis, this citizen must have not only the intellectual, but the ethical virtue of the master-craftsman:

...the ruler must possess ethical virtue in completeness (for any work, taken absolutely, belongs to the master-craftsman, and rational principle is a master-craftsman); while each of the other parties must have that share of this virtue which is appropriate to them.

Like the virtuous man of the Ethics, the ethical virtue of the master-craftsman makes him a *spoudaios*, a man for whom things absolutely good are good for him so that he can employ these goods in fine actions.

Thus the virtues of the citizen in the best polis appear to be the political equivalent of the ethical and intellectual virtues of the virtuous man of the *NE*.

Although the virtues of the citizen in the best polis are equivalent to the virtues of the virtuous man in the *NE*, Aristotle makes in the *NE* a distinction between the political intelligence, or *politike* of the citizen and the *phronēsis* of the virtuous man. This distinction is based on a distinction of objects. The object of the citizens' political intelligence is the well-being of the polis as a whole, while the object of the *phronēsis* of the individual virtuous man is that of his own well-being:

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55 ibid. 1328b33-1329a2
56 ibid. 1259b39-40, 1277b13-20, 1283a19-22, 1309a33-7. And justice is a social virtue which necessarily brings all the other ethical virtues in its train: ibid. 1283a37-40, so that the good citizen as ruler is endowed with all the ethical virtues: cf. ibid. 1260a17-24.
57 ibid. 1283a19-20
58 ibid. 1260a17-20
59 *EE* 1236b17-1237a6; *NE* 1113a29-33
60 *Pol* 1332a21-5

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Practical intelligence is concerned with action ...[and] requires a knowledge of particular facts even more than knowledge of general principles ... however there must be some supreme architectonic faculty. Practical intelligence is indeed the same quality of mind as politikē, though their essence is different. Of practical intelligence as regards the polis, one kind, as supreme and directive, is called legislative science; the other, as dealing with particular occurrences, has the name politikē, that really belongs to both kinds... practical intelligence is commonly understood to mean especially with oneself, as an individual (hē peri auton kai hena) ... now knowledge of one's own interest will certainly be one kind of practical intelligence ... yet probably as a matter of fact no one can pursue his own welfare without domestic economy or a form of government (politeia).\textsuperscript{51}

This distinction between political and practical intelligence in the \textit{NE} (a distinction not made in the \textit{Politics}) illustrates the difference between the virtuous man as citizen in the best polis and that same man understood simply as an individual in the ethical life. In \textit{NE} I the good of the polis is understood to be a good which is finer and more divine than the good of the individual.\textsuperscript{62} Because the object of \textit{phronēsis} as politikē is finer and more divine than that of \textit{phronēsis} as practical intelligence, the exercise of the former is finer and more divine than the exercise of the latter. So while the virtuous man as citizen in the best polis is the same as the virtuous individual in the ethical life, the virtuous man as citizen exercises politikē, or political intelligence, in ruling the polis for the good of the whole, while the virtuous man as an individual exercises \textit{phronēsis}, or practical intelligence, in putting the human good into practice in a choice of action - a good which is part of the good of the polis as a whole. The two are really the same habit with the same object, differing only in this: by the exercise of politikē the virtuous citizen as ruler discerns and chooses to enact and adjudicate laws for the good of the polis as a whole, whereas the virtuous man who is not a ruler exercises his \textit{phronēsis} in discerning and choosing that action as the necessary means in his practice of virtue. Thus as the good of the best polis is the same as

\textsuperscript{51} \textit{NE} 1141b21-1142a10. This same distinction Aristotle makes between two things being the same and yet different in essence is seen in Book V of the \textit{NE} where he compares perfect virtue and justice: ibid. 1130a12-3. An apparent explanation of this distinction may be found at \textit{EE} 1219b35-6. One possible way of understanding the distinction is offered by O'Connor, (1985). 'There is only a single object on the desk, but that object is both straight and white. If I need to draw a line, I will ask you to hand me 'the straight thing'; if I need a color sample I ask you for 'the white thing'. There is one thing on the desk but two perspectives from which I can view it.'

\textsuperscript{62} \textit{NE} 1094b7-10
the good of the virtuous man as the good of the whole is the same as that of its part, so the virtuous citizen of such a polis is the same as the virtuous man except that the former exercises a practical intelligence which enables him as citizen to administrate the constitution for the good of the whole.

The virtuous man as citizen differs from the virtuous man as an individual to the extent that the virtues he exercises in ruling the polis are explicitly, rather than implicitly, political. That is, the citizen exercises his wisdom in a knowledge of the good of the polis, his ethical, or appetitive, virtue in rationally desiring that good for all the citizens and his deliberative desire and political intelligence in enacting those laws by which all the citizens may practice virtue in their exchange of goods with one another.

The conclusion we can draw from this examination of the good citizen, or the citizen of the best polis as presented in the *Politics*, is that this citizen is the same as the virtuous man of the *NE* and exercises essentially the same kind of unity of virtues in governing the polis as the virtuous man exercises in virtuous action. But as the citizen of the best polis has a responsibility for the good of the polis, his virtuous action in governing is a finer and more divine good than the virtuous action of the virtuous man as an individual in the ethical life whose explicit concern in his choice of action is his own (and his friends') good. With this important qualification we conclude that the citizen of the best polis as presented in the *Politics* is the virtuous man of the *NE*.

II. The Nature of the Human Being as Social Requires Action with Others in Justice and Friendship and the Polis is an Action of Justice and Friendship of its Citizens

In this section we examine the nature of the human being as a social, or political, animal and the nature of the polis as that community in which the human being can flourish. We shall see first that the nature of the human being as social requires action with others in justice and friendship and secondly, that the polis is an action of justice and friendship among its citizens. The polis is a civic friendship and the human being as social flourishes as a citizen in such a friendship.
1. The Nature of the Human Being as Social Requires Action with Others in Justice and Friendship

In Book I of the *NE*, Aristotle lists self-sufficiency (*to autarkes*) as one of the two formal characteristics of human happiness. There he explains that human self-sufficiency is not a life of solitary independence from others but a life with family, friends, and fellow citizens, since the human being by nature (*phusei*) is social, or political (*politikon*).63

In Book I of the *Politics* Aristotle states that the political community is the natural fulfillment of the political nature of the human being:

The community finally composed of several villages is the polis; it has at last attained the limit of virtually complete self-sufficiency, and thus, while it comes into existence for the sake of life, it exists for the good life. Hence every polis exists by nature, inasmuch as the first communities so exist; for the polis is the end of the other communities, and nature is an end, since that which each thing is when its growth is completed we speak of being the nature of the thing, for instance of a human being, a horse, a household. Again, the object for which a thing exists, its end, is its chief good; and self-sufficiency is an end, and a chief good. From these things therefore it is clear that the polis is a natural growth, and that the human being is by nature a political animal.64

The first principle and final end of practical philosophy is the human good, the good of a nature which is social, or political, as well as intellectual. The final importance of a political community in the human good of happy self-sufficiency rests on the social, or political nature of the human being. In the following section we shall examine what Aristotle means by 'nature' and what he means by calling the human being naturally social, or political.

Nature (*phusis*) is obviously important for Aristotle in his understanding of the human good of the human being and the polis.65 In his *Physics* Aristotle defines 'nature' as 'the distinctive form of such things as have within themselves a principle of motion'.66

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63 ibid. 1097b6-11
64 *Pol* 1252b27-1253a3
65 As von Fritz and Kapp. (1977) 112-8, point out, citing a fragment of Aristotle’s *Protrepticus*, (frag. 13 in Ross), Aristotle rejected Plato’s theory of the ideas and Plato’s appeal to the contemplation of those ideas for discerning how to act in and govern the polis well and substituted instead (at least early on) an understanding of *phusis* in order to carry out the very same practical tasks. As we see in *NE* I and *Pol* I this emphasis on an understanding of *phusis* remained strong with Aristotle throughout his philosophical career.
66 *Phys* 193b3-4
Things which move thanks to an internal principle are beings which develop from the potential to the actual and so the term ‘nature’ has a twofold sense according as it refers either to the beginning and potential or to the final and actual state of the thing.\(^67\) The term ‘nature’ itself, Aristotle notes, is etymologically equivalent to gene-sis and in Greek is actually used as a synonym for it; nature\(qua\) genesis proclaims itself as the path to nature\(qua\) goal.\(^68\) With reference to the human being, then, the term ‘nature’ can refer to opposite ends of human development. That is, in one sense human ‘nature’ can refer to the chronological and physiological beginnings of human development and a signification which includes those elements of the human being which we share with other animals in contrast with a developed human rationality. In this sense of the term, Aristotle in the \(NE\) contrasts the formation of virtuous habit by practicing virtue with human ‘nature’, for ‘nothing of nature can be altered by habit’.\(^69\) In the same sense of the term he states that the human being is ‘by nature’ a ‘pairing’ rather than a ‘political’ animal,\(^70\) and that ‘natural virtue’ is similar to yet different from virtue in the proper sense.\(^71\) In his \(Politics\) Aristotle observes that human beings live not only ‘by nature’ as other animals do, but by reason as well.\(^72\) The ‘nature’ of the human being in this first sense is distinguished from reason.\(^73\)

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\(^68\) \(Phys\) 193b12-3. In \(Meta\) 1014b16-1015a19. Aristotle lists a number of meanings of the term ‘nature’ with a primary and proper sense of the term as ‘the essence (\(ousia\)) of those things which contain in themselves their source of motion.’

\(^69\) \(NE\) 1103a18-23

\(^70\) ibid. 1162a17-8

\(^71\) ibid. 1144b3, 36

\(^72\) \(Pol\) 1332b3-8

\(^73\) Keyt, (1991) 118-40, and (1996) 425-30, in his criticism of Fred Miller, argues that ‘nature’ in Aristotle is simply the efficient cause of a thing. That is, nature is ‘an origin and cause of being moved and of being at rest in that which it belongs primarily and of itself - that is, not incidentally: \(Phys\) 192b21-3 and concludes that since the polis cannot be natural in this sense it can only be something artificial. Keyt appears to overlook the fact that while ‘nature’ as an internal source of motion is the basic meaning of the term, its final - and finally more important - cause is fully realized nature as form and end. (For Miller’s reply to Keyt, cf. Miller, (1996) 443-50.)
From the other end of the human developmental process, however, 'nature' signifies the principle (arché) of a thing as its end (telos) and perfection. The realization of the nature of a thing is its end: that which a thing is when its process of growth is complete, or perfect, is its 'nature'. It is 'nature' in the sense of a final cause (to hou heneka) which defines what a thing is (ti estin). In this sense of 'nature', the human being is 'by nature' rational, or intellectual, for the end of natural human development is reason (logos) and intelligence (nous). The human intellect (nous) is specifically rational, that is, an intelligence which makes use of speech (logos), a social, or political being able to communicate with others what is right and wrong and who can be perfected by the practice of the virtues so as to become good and happy. It is the unimpeded activity of nature in this sense which is truly pleasurable. The goodness and happiness of a fully actualized, or flourishing, human being is 'human nature' in this second and final sense of the term. In this way Aristotle defines 'nature', and specifically 'human nature', teleologically. Human nature is the final end and full realization of natural human development. Thus while human 'nature' in one sense can be used to distinguish the non-rational from the rational within the human being, it can also be used to signify the capacity (dunamis) for rationality and rational habit formation because nature is finally realized in the actual practice of rationality. For this reason Aristotle maintains that the best way of understanding the nature of anything, and specifically human nature, is to examine the best possible, or fully realized, instance of that nature.

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74 Pol 1337b28-33
75 ibid. 1252b32-4
76 Phys 198a21-8; cf. NE 1115b20-4
77 Pol 1334b15-7
78 ibid. 1253a9-18
79 NE 1103b26-31, 1098a1-20
80 ibid. 1153a12-5; cf. MM 1205b6-7
81 ibid. 1103a23-6
82 Pol 1254a36-b2
In *NE* I Aristotle states that the goodness of human nature is in the actualization of the human function (*ergon*) according to rational principle.\(^8^3\) This actualization of the function of the human being as the realization of human nature demands action, and for the good man, virtuous action.\(^8^4\) The realization, then, of human nature as the end and perfection of human development can only occur in the virtuous action of the good, or virtuous, man. And if the nature of the human being is social, or political, that virtuous action of his must in some way be social, that is, action with others. The actualization of the human function must be in virtuous action with others.

If human beings are by nature social, or political, they have a natural inclination to live together and naturally flourish in living together in a political community - the community which is completely self-sufficient.\(^8^5\) But the term 'political' has a wide signification. In order to determine in what sense human beings are by nature 'political' we need to examine the different senses of this term as well.

Like the term 'nature', 'political' for Aristotle is a term with many senses. The term generally refers to a biological, or zoological characteristic shared by a great number of animal species. In his *History of Animals* Aristotle observes:

> Here are some further differences with respect to animals' manner of life and activities. Some are gregarious (*ta agelaia*), some solitary ... some of the gregarious animals are social (*ta politika*), whereas others are dispersed ... the social animals are those which have some one common function (*to ergon*); and this is not true of all the gregarious animals. Examples of social animals are the human being (*anthrōpos*), bees, wasps, ants, and cranes. Some of these live under a ruler, some have no ruler. For example, cranes and bees live under a ruler, while ants and innumerable others do not.\(^8^6\)

'Political', then, for Aristotle, is a certain zoological classification of animals. Political animals are those species which have some one common work or function to

\(^8^3\) *NE* 1097b22ff
\(^8^4\) ibid. 1098a7-20
perform. Within this classification of animals, the human being is considered especially political because of speech (logos):

And why the human being is more (mallon) of a political animal than any bee or any herd animal is clear. For nature, as we declare, does nothing without purpose; and the human being alone of the animals possesses speech [...] speech is designed to indicate the advantageous and the harmful, and therefore also the right and the wrong; for it is the special property (idion) of the human being in distinction from other animals that he alone has perception of good and bad and right and wrong and other moral qualities and it is partnership (koinônia) in these that makes a household and a polis.  

Human beings, like all other political animals, have some shared work or function. But by the special property of speech, human beings are not simply 'more political' than other animals; their common work is naturally distinguished from the common work of other animals by the exercise of that special property. Thus to designate the human being as a 'political animal' in one sense of the term 'political' does not define the human being as such, for 'political' is a classification which includes many other kinds of animals as well. Yet in another sense 'political' can designate what is definitive of the human being and society. In effect, the political nature of the human being can be understood in two ways, corresponding to the way 'nature' can signify both extremes of human development. If

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86 HA 487b32a13
87 Cooper, (1990) 221-41, takes Aristotle's description of political animals as having 'something one and common that is the work of all' as a support for his claim that for Aristotle animals are political by their having a common work with differentiating functions and roles. Depew, (1995) 169-71 concurs. This interpretation seems consistent with Aristotle's understanding of the polis, and even the best polis, to the extent that Aristotle distinguishes the citizens as rulers and the other members of the polis who are ruled. While the citizens as rulers are equal, and in their activity of ruling the polis share 'something one and common that is the work of all', those who are ruled differ from the citizens in virtue. Moreover the members of the polis who are ruled comprise many different kinds of people who perform many different kinds of functions in the polis. Despite this difference between ruler and ruled, the polis, as we shall see, is essentially one action of the ruler who sets down the law and the ruled who obey the law for the sake of the good of the polis.
88 Pol 1253a7-18
89 The relation between the human and other political animals in Aristotle is a point of dispute. Keyt, (1991), 60-123, regards Aristotle's extension of 'political' to animals such as ants and bees as purely metaphorical. Irwin, (1988) 616 n.17 thinks the zoological sense of the political is necessary but not sufficient for being political in the inclusive 'civic' sense, while Cooper, (1990) 221-41, sees human rationality as the difference which makes humans more political than any bee without reducing 'political' to an equivocal term. Cf. Depew, (1995) 163.
90 Mulgan, (1974) 438-45, reads Aristotle as recognizing a third sense of 'political' intermediate between the capability to govern which is specific to human political nature and a nature - human or animal - which
'human nature' is taken in the sense of what we are born with, the beginnings of our development and what we share with other animals, then our nature in this sense is 'political' as a zoological classification which includes many different kinds of animals. *Politikon* in this sense is neither a specific differentia of the human being nor interchangeable with the differentia. But if 'human nature' is taken to refer to the perfect development of the human being in the mature exercise of *logos*, or communication, then 'political' as a being existing in active communication with others becomes the differentia of the human being.

Our biological nature equips us with the physiology for making sounds indicating pain and pleasure, something we share with other kinds of political animals, but intelligence gives us the ability to use that physiology by means of our voice in speech and language to communicate our understanding of things with each other:

Words spoken are symbols or signs of affections or impressions of the soul; written words are the signs of words spoken. As writing, so also is in speech not the same for the whole human race. But the mental affections themselves, of which the words these words are primarily signs, are the same for all human beings, as are also the objects of which those affections are representations or likenesses, images, copies.

Understanding of things which can be shared among a human community of the same language can be the theoretical, productive, and practical truth of things. It is this specifically human intelligence which utilizes voice in speech (and written signs in language) for the communication of truth which is both the natural basis for the human political community and the final perfection of that nature in the actualization of the human function. Human intelligence, that which is specifically human, is a *logos* - a communication of truth with and among others.

has some one common *ergon*. That intermediate sense is the human life in the polis which would include not simply the zoological but the household as well: *NE* 1097b8-11. 1169b16-22; *PoI* 1278b15-30. But this third sense of 'political' is finally included in the activity of governing which is the perfection and goal of human life in the household and the village. Cf. Depew, (1995) 156-7.

91 Kullman, (1991) 101, points out that *politikon* and *agathou kai kakou kai dikaiou kai adikaiou aisthésin echōn are sunbebēkota kathē hauta* of the human being in the sense of the theory of science in *PoA* 1.4 and 1.6, i.e., necessary nondefining features which are derivable from his definition.

92 *DI* 16a3-8
Thus the definition of the human being has animal (ζων) as its genus and political (πολιτικόν) as its differentia, because that which is specifically human - intelligence as logos - is social, or political. Human intelligence and the property of speech so qualifies the common work of human beings that it makes the political life of the human being distinctive as a partnership or community (κοινωνία). As community is an exchange of something one and common among its members, so the political community naturally arising from the nature of the human intelligence as logos is an exchange not merely of the necessary goods for biological life, but more especially the goods of soul (most notably, truth) for the good life of virtuous action. Active exercise of reason in speech demands not just a community in the exchange of the goods of life, but a rational community formed by the mutual exercise of reason in the communication of truth.

There is a further implication in the nature of the human being as political. If the nature of human intelligence as logos demands a political community of members who can exchange truth in their communication, then the members must in some way be equal. In the political community justice as proportional equality is something all strive for. Citizens who are free and equal strive to maintain their equality by taking turns in governing the polis. In political communities governed according to deviant constitutions, any inequality in external goods or honor among the citizens can often incite revolution, the actual overthrow of both constitutional governments and aristocracies is largely due to a deviation from justice in the framework of their constitutions, and in political communities governed by correct (though not the best) and deviant constitutions, an inequality which results from the presence of a greatly superior member of the citizenry.

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93 Cf. Pol 1253a9-14, NE 1172a1-6
94 ibid. 1328a25-7, NE 1132b31-1133a5
95 ibid. 1323a24-b36
96 ibid. 1282b14-23, 1301a25-35, 1310a30, or justice as to meson: ibid. 1287b3-5
97 ibid. 1261a29-b6, 1317b2-10
98 ibid. 1301a35-9, b26-30
99 ibid. 1307a5-7

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is often dealt with by ostracization. In the best polis where the best men as citizens
govern the polis according to the best constitution, the citizens simply are equal in virtue and all rule.

As rational communication is an exchange of truth, and as all exchange requires justice, or equality, whether proportionate or numerical, so rational communication among the partners of this exchange of truth must be just, that is, it must be an exchange which is proportionally equal. And when this exchange of truth is chosen out of a love for the partners in the communication, rational communication becomes an exchange of numerical justice in friendship.

Finally, the nature of the human being as political means that not only is a life of virtuous action in the polis the natural good and end of the human being but that the human being knows and desires this good as his good and end. The human being as a citizen in a polis governed by the right sort of constitution will recognize that if his doing something for the sake of living well is fine, his doing something with others for the sake of their and his living well is something finer and more divine because the human good of living well is more manifest in the community’s living well than in the individual’s achieving that good alone. In other words, the human being as by nature social, or political and well brought up in the right political community will recognize what Aristotle observes in Book I of the NE:

Even though it be the case that the good is the same for the individual and for the polis, nevertheless, the good of the political community is manifestly a greater and more perfect good, both to attain and to preserve. To secure the good of one person only is better than nothing; but to secure the good of a nation or a polis is a finer and more divine achievement.

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100 ibid. 1284a3-b34
101 In so far as they are the best, that is, the most virtuous of men. Also, in a polis it is better when not only all the citizens are virtuous collectively, but when they are individually virtuous as well, cf. Pol 1332a36-8
102 Pol 1332a34-6
103 EE 1238b21, NE 1132b31-33
104 Cf. NE 1158b29-34
105 ibid. 1094b7-10
The good of the polis is finer and more divine than the good of the individual human being and is recognized and desired to be so by the individual because the human being is by nature social.

The nature of the human being as political, then, means that the actualization of the individual human function in virtuous action - the human good of the Ethics - is secured in a political community where the individual can participate in a rational exchange of truth with others in justice and friendship. As we shall see, this communication of truth in friendship, which actualizes the human function and makes for human happiness, is the best polis as a community of virtuous action in which the citizens are civic friends of perfect friendship.

2. The Political Community is An Action of Justice and Friendship among its Citizens: The Polis is a Civic Friendship

a. The Polis is Fundamentally an Action

Aristotle begins the Politics by describing the polis as a partnership, or community:

Every state (polis) is as we see a sort of partnership or community (koinônia), and every partnership is formed with a view to some good (since all the actions of all human beings are done with a view to what they think to be good). It is therefore evident that, while all partnerships aim at some good, the partnership that is most supreme of all and includes all the others does so most of all, and aims at the most supreme of all goods; and this is the partnership entitled the state, the political association (he koinônia he politike).106

The literal meaning of the word koinônia is communion, association, or partnership.107 Koinônia is a certain unity between a number of people. Aristotle begins the Politics by describing the polis as a koinônia and then states that every koinônia is formed (sunestēkian) for the sake of some good. Then, by way of what appears to be a parenthetical explanation for this formation of the polis, he adds that all do (prattousi) everything for the sake of what they think is good. The implication is that the formation of the polis is an action (praxis), that is, something done for the sake of some good. The polis as a koinônia is a certain unity of its members which the members themselves form

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106 Pol 1252a1-7

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for the sake of some common good. Later in Books I and III, we learn that the political community is something deliberately chosen (kata proairesin),\(^{108}\) for the sake not simply of life (tou zên heneka), but for the sake of the good life (tou eu zên).\(^{109}\) The polis, then, is a certain unity of its members deliberately chosen, or arising from their choice, for the sake of living well. But what is the nature of the polis as this unity among the citizens?

If the polis is a unity of its citizens as something deliberately chosen it appears that what the citizens choose is to exchange their goods among each other for the sake of living well. This exchange of goods is an action chosen by the citizens for the sake of living well. The nature of the polis as a community, then, is that of a mutual choice of action among its citizens for the sake of living well.

In *Politics* VII, with respect to the constitution of a well governed polis, Aristotle makes a distinction between the end and that which is for the sake of the end. That which is done for the sake of the end is described as an action, or actions:

There are two things in which the welfare of all men consists: one of these is the correct establishment of the aim and end of their actions, the other the ascertainment of the actions leading to that end.\(^{110}\)

The constitution, for Aristotle, formulates the good and end of the polis as well as the means to that end. What is significant here is that the means are described not as things, states, or conditions, but as an action or actions. That which is for the sake of the end is an action as an object of choice. Now in the *NE*, as we have seen, Aristotle tells us that all actions aim at ends other than themselves\(^{111}\) and that we deliberate and choose action for the sake of some good as end.\(^{112}\) Actions are chosen by the virtuous man for the sake of the human good of the happiness of living well. In effect, then, Aristotle is understanding the polis as a practical reality - an action, a community of the action of its

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\(^{107}\) Liddell&Scott (1948) Vol. I, 979

\(^{108}\) Cf. *Pol* 1252a26-31: Those human communities like the household, to the extent that they are formed simply out of the natural inclination for procreation and security, and not out of deliberate choice (ouk ek proairesedos) (which necessitates knowledge of and wish for a good as end), are not properly praxeis.

\(^{109}\) *Pol* 1280a31-4, 1252b27-30

\(^{110}\) ibid. 1331b26-9

\(^{111}\) *NE* 1112b32-4
members in their choice to live together and share their goods with one another for the sake of a happy life. If the polis is also a state or condition of unity, it is such because more fundamentally it is a community of action, a mutual of choice of the citizens to live and share their goods together for the sake of the human good of living well. The nature of the polis, then, is the nature of the citizens as its agents who choose to exchange their goods with each other for the sake of living well. As the human function is actualized in virtuous action and then the habit which facilitates that action, so the polis is fundamentally an action of its members in their mutual choice to live together and share their goods with one another and then the unity of habit, or the collectively sustained disposition, to continue to choose to do so.

In the NE, as we have seen, the human good is a life of happiness, a life which is an activity (energeia) of virtue. This life is primarily that of the activity of wisdom and secondarily a lifetime of virtuous action in the political community. This secondarily happy life consists in action (praxis), virtuous action. The good of such a life is the fineness of virtuous action, or living well (eupraxia). Human action is deliberately chosen for the sake of some good and when that action is chosen by the virtuous for the sake of the human good, that action is virtuous, or fine. Aristotle in the Politics is understanding the polis in the same way. The political community is an action chosen for the sake of some good. As chosen by its citizens for the good of living well, the political koinonia is a praxis, and if chosen by citizens who are virtuous for the sake of living well, that is, the human good of a life of virtuous action, then that political koinonia is a virtuous action.

In the NE, the human good is a life of activity in conformity with virtue. Virtue is a habit of choice, or permanent disposition, which enables the agent to choose well that action which is the means of living the human good, which is primarily the perfect

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112 ibid. 1112b11-2, 1113a9-14, 1139a31-2
113 Aristotle explains at EE 1217a29-40 that human happiness is practical, and a practical reality is made up of an end and means, both of which have to do with action. Aristotle in the Politics is understanding the polis as a practical reality: a community of the action of its citizens in their mutual choice to share the goods of life with each other for the sake of a happy life.
happiness of a life of contemplation. Living that human good in one’s choice of action is the fineness of the secondarily happy life of virtuous action in the polis. One becomes virtuous by virtuous action:¹¹⁴ and while virtue as a habit may be inseparable from its exercise in virtuous action, happiness is not the habit of virtue but the manifestation of virtue in action.¹¹⁵ The virtuous habit is formed by virtuous action, but it is the virtuous action, not the habit, which is the fundamental human good.¹¹⁶

In the Politics, because the political community is fundamentally an action of its citizens, it can also be understood as a habit, or a kind of habitual state, of those citizens. When Aristotle describes the political community, its constitution and its citizens in static terms, he appears to be viewing these as kinds of habitual states or permanent dispositions. The polis is described, for instance, as a multitude of citizens by nature¹¹⁷ or a composite whole of many parts.¹¹⁸ The constitution of the polis is similarly described in the static term of an order, or organization (taxis) of its members¹¹⁹ and of the offices (archai) of the government.¹²⁰ The citizens as the members of the polis who compose the constitution,¹²¹ are described according to their permanent dispositions as men endowed with the virtues of rule, especially the virtue of phronēsis.¹²² In this way the political reality of the community can be described in static terms as the habitual state or permanent disposition of its citizens. But if the polis can be understood as a habitual state of the citizens who compose it, it can be so understood because fundamentally the polis is the action of its citizens in their mutual choice to rule. Let us see this in more detail.

In the Politics Aristotle understands the polis as an action chosen for the sake of the end of living well. But he understands the constitution of the polis as an action as well.

¹¹⁴ ibid. 1103a27-b25
¹¹⁵ ibid. 1098b30-1099a7
¹¹⁶ Cf. ibid. 1168a3-9
¹¹⁷ Pol 1261a18. 1328b16-7. cf. 1274b41
¹¹⁸ ibid. 1264b38-40
¹¹⁹ ibid. 1274b38
¹²⁰ ibid. 1278b8-9
¹²¹ ibid. 1279a25-40
¹²² Supra pp. 250-8
The constitution is described as a kind of life (*bios tis*), and, as life is a *praxis*, this can only mean that the constitution is also being understood as a kind of action. If the constitution is an organization of its citizens and their political offices, the citizens are those who actively share (*koinônein metechein*) in the action of rule (*to archein*) which consists of deliberating (*to bouleuesthai*) and judging (*to krinein*) in the legislation, execution, and adjudication of the laws of the polis, and their political offices are the actions of deliberating, judging, and giving orders (*to epitattein*). Finally, if the citizens of a polis are endowed with the virtues of rule, it is because they actually do rule virtuously, and the citizens of the best polis are virtuous *haplos* because they actually do govern well according to the best constitution.

That the political community is fundamentally an action is further borne out by Aristotle's description of the various human communities as kinds of activities. In the first, or basic, *koinonia*, that of the household, for instance, the members as those who share all that they have (*hoi tôn autôn ekoinôn noun panton*) with each other. The *koinonia* of the village, also is an exchange (*allage*), or the giving and receiving (*didontes kai lambanontes*) of goods by barter between households for the sake of life. The polis, the *koinônia* which includes all others, is a *koinônein* of all the human goods among the citizens. The citizens' choice to share goods they have among themselves is the choice of a mutual requital (*antidosis*), or reciprocal exchange (*antipepithos*) for the good and end of living well as human beings. It is this practice of *koinônein*, governed by the laws of the

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123 Pol 1295a40-1295b1
124 ibid. 1254a7
125 For Aristotle in the Politics, *koinônein* can mean either the action itself of sharing some good: e.g. ibid. 1257a19-23, 1263a15-6, 1280b22-3, 1330b5-6, or, with its synonym *metechein*, an active engagement in some action: e.g. ibid. 1268a17ff, 1275a22-3, b17-21, 1276a3-5, 1283b42-1284a3, 1332a32-5, 1339b40ff.
126 ibid. 1281b31
127 ibid. 1297b35-1298a9, 1299a25-8, 1300b13-4
128 ibid. 1299a25-8
129 Cf. ibid. 1332a3-23
130 ibid. 1257a18-37
131 ibid. 1252a4-6

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constitution of the polis, which binds together the citizens as a political community. The goods shared include the external goods of land and property, the goods of body (the daily needs of life, procreation, and security in the household, bartered commodities as natural wealth in the village, healthy living conditions, security, and foreign trade in the polis), and the goods of soul (education, culture, and the political offices as the responsibility of ruling the polis well).

As the polis is composed of rulers and those who are ruled, so the polis is fundamentally an action of both the citizens who rule and those members of the polis who are ruled. The action of those who rule is that of the mature citizens of the polis, those who are ruled are those who are preparing for, or are retired from, full citizenship, as well as women, slaves, and all others who by their own specific function contribute to the life of the polis. The action of ruling consists, as we have seen, in the enactment of laws, their execution and adjudication. Law is the expression of the justice of the polis, prescribing the conduct of its members. As such it is the order of the polis and the means by which the members of the polis can live the good life as that end is defined by their constitution. In the best polis, governed by citizens who are virtuous men having the human good of a life of virtuous action as their good and end, the laws will be well enacted, executed, and adjudicated so that all the members of the polis will be able to live the virtuous life, according to the capacity and function of each. Since the polis is said

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132 ibid. 1261a30-1; NE 1132b31-1133a2, 1134a26-32
133 ibid. 1260b37-1261a1
134 ibid. 1252a26-34
135 ibid. 1257b19-22
136 Cf. ibid. VII 4-12
137 Cf. ibid. VIII 1-2
138 Cf. ibid. VIII 3-7
139 ibid. 1332b12-3
140 ibid. 1326b12-3
141 ibid. 1278a2-6, 1329a2-34
142 ibid. 1260a7-17, 1328b2-1329a2
143 NE 1129b11-4, 19-25, Pol 1255a21-2
144 Pol 1287a18, 1326a29-31, cf. 1253a37-9
145 NE 1129b14-9, Pol 1289a13-25

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chiefly to be its constitution, and the constitution is the government made up of the citizens who rule for the sake of some good, whether the polis' or their own, it is the rule of the citizens for the sake of the good and end of the polis which is the action of the polis. Good government however, requires not simply that the citizens enact good laws but that those who are ruled keep those laws:

But we must remember that good laws, if they are not obeyed, do not constitute good government. Hence there are two parts of good government: one is the actual obedience of citizens to the laws, the other part is the goodness of the laws which they obey; they may obey bad laws as well as good. And may be a further subdivision: they may obey either the best laws which are attainable to them, or the best absolutely.

The members of the polis who are ruled by the citizens variously share in the action of the polis by their obedience to the laws. Though they do not have the virtue of rulers, and so do not understand the nature of the human good as end of the polis as the citizens do, (the knowledge of the good and end of the polis by those who are ruled is merely a doxa) by their obedience to the laws they nevertheless act virtuously according their own capacity and function as those who are capable of being ruled well. That the ruled become as virtuous as they can is the practical concern of the citizens in their action of ruling. All authority, for Aristotle, should be exercised in the interest of those ruled or for some common interest of both ruler and ruled, but essentially in the interest of the ruled. To rule in a polis with a correct constitution is to take responsibility for the virtue of the citizens.

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146 Pol 1276b10-11, 29
146 ibid. 1281b31
147 ibid. 1278b8-11
148 ibid. 1279a25-31
149 ibid. 1294a3-9
150 ibid. 1277b26-9
151 Those who are to be guided to virtue by the citizens must be endowed with the right intellectual and emotional capacities: Pol 1327b36-8, and each member of the polis has his or her own ethical virtue: ibid. 1260a14-24. By proper education provided for by the citizens, those who are ruled are able to learn to live well, some by practice, others by precept: Pol 1332b8-11
152 Pol 1332b25-1333a6
153 ibid. 1278b30--1279a21
of the ruled.\textsuperscript{154} The citizens' action of ruling in a polis with such a constitution is, as it were, a service for the ruled.

The political community is an action, a \textit{koinônein} of all the goods of human living among the citizens. The citizens as rulers in enacting the laws for this exchange and the ruled in obeying those laws all engage in this action of exchange. As Aristotle distinguishes the action or the ruler and the ruled, so he appears to employ two senses of \textit{koinônein}. In the \textit{Politics}, \textit{koinônein}, can, along with its synonym \textit{metechein}, refer to an active engagement in some action.\textsuperscript{155} and in the case of the \textit{koinônein}, or \textit{metechein} of the citizens, engagement in government, or the action of ruling (\textit{to archein}).\textsuperscript{156} \textit{Koinônein} (and \textit{metechein}) can also refer to the action of sharing some good among a number of people.\textsuperscript{157} These two senses of \textit{koinônein} appear to come into play in the action of ruling and being ruled in the polis. The citizens' \textit{koinônein} is their active engagement in the action of ruling, while the \textit{koinônein} of the ruled (those in the polis who choose to obey the laws) is their obedience to the citizens' rule. And the enactment, execution, and adjudication of the

\textsuperscript{154} ibid. 1333a11-6, 30-b9, 37-8, 1334a2-10, 1337a11-21

\textsuperscript{155} Thus \textit{koinônein} and its finite forms: \textit{Pol} 1330a4-8, b3-8, 1339b38-42, 1340b22-5, 31-3, and \textit{metechein}: ibid. 1254a32, 1280a32-34, 1301a28-34, 1339a11-6, 1340b35-6, and especially that of happiness: ibid. 1328a37-40.

\textsuperscript{156} \textit{Pol} 1261a37-b2, 1268a17-25, 1270b17-8, 1271a27-37, 1272a13-6, 1273b12-7, 27-9, 1275a7-33, b17-21, 1276a3-5, 1277b33-8, 1278a34-40, 1281b25-31, 1282a29-32, 1283b42-1284a3, 1291b40-1292a2, 39-41, 1292b23-5, 1293a1-6, 1293a14-7, 1294b29-31, 1297a39-41, 1297b4-10, 23, 1298a40-b2, b30-1, 1305b12-6, 1306b9-16, 22-4, 1308a16ff. 1309a28ff. 1320b11-4, 25-8, 1324a15ff, 1332a32-5, b25-7, 34-5, 1339b40ff

\textsuperscript{157} ibid. 1257a19-23, 1260b37-1261a5, 1263a15-6, 1264b37-9, 1280b22-3, 1290a7-13, 1330b5-6

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laws by the citizens and the obedience of those who are ruled enables both the citizens and those who are ruled to share koinōnein the goods of their polis according to those laws.158

b. The Citizens are Parts of the Polis as the Agents of an Action United by Their Concerted Choice of End

With an understanding of the good human life as articulated in their constitution, mature citizens govern their polis so that they and others in the political community can, as far as possible, put that into practice in virtuous action. By the virtuous rule of the citizens, the polis becomes a unity (mía) in the praxis of the citizens' rule and the obedience of those who are ruled in their exchange of goods with each other. This unity of action naturally presupposes a certain multitude (pléthos) of citizens who by their mutual choice of sharing in exchange exist individually as parts (meré). But the citizens are 'parts' only in the sense of individual agents in a community of action.159

Practical knowledge, as we have seen, is a causal knowledge. The agent in choosing an action for the sake of a good as end causes that action to be the means. The final cause of practical knowledge is the end; the efficient cause the choice of the action for the sake of that end.160 As its efficient cause the agent's action is, as it were, his own child.161

158 And because the citizens engage in the action of the polis as rulers, and if they do so well, they could be said to engage in the action of the polis in a fuller way than those who are ruled: cf. 1280b40-1291a8
159 Compare Aristotle's understanding of the virtuous praxis of governing the polis as that which unites the many individual citizens as agents with Plato's emphasis on the inner unity of the individual citizen in virtuous praxis, cf. Rep 443c-444a, 588b-591d. For Aristotle, the action of the citizens in their virtuous rule of the polis is a mutual choice and therefore a mutual action, a sumpraxis of the many individual citizens as agents in choice. The action of ruling together is an action of justice and friendship among the citizens. By their choice of ruling together for the sake of the good of the polis (which is their good as well) the many individual citizens become one in action. This unity of justice and friendship in the action of ruling together differs from the unity of faculties exercised in the choice of an individual agent. Justice (and friendship) between the different faculties within an individual is, for Aristotle, a metaphorical or analogical use of those terms: NE 1138b5-14, cf. ibid. 1166a33-b1; EE 1240a7-21. This appears to be the basis of Aristotle's criticism of Socrates' alleged position on the optimum unity of the polis in Book II of the Politics. The purported Socratic understanding of political unity would do away with the multitude of citizens and destroy the nature of the polis as a unity of mutual action. (Although the accuracy of Aristotle's presentation of (and fairness to) Plato's Socrates is not relevant here, for an appraisal of that presentation, cf. Stalley, (1991) 182-99.)
160 NE 1139a31-2
161 Cf. ibid. 1113b17-21

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In the *Politics* the citizens in their rule of the polis likewise *cause* the polis to be and to be the kind of polis it is:

When we come to the virtue of the polis, to secure this is not the function of fortune but of knowledge (*epistēmē*) and choice (*proairesis*). But then the virtue of the polis is of course caused by the citizens who share in its government being virtuous; and in our polis all the citizens share in the government.¹⁶²

The citizens, in other words, are the agents of the polis as their action. The existence and quality of the polis as an action is caused by the choice and character of the citizens in their wish for the good life as they understand it. The nature of the polis is that of a practical reality - the unity of the citizens in their choice of action for the sake of living well. Aristotle describes the polis as this kind of unity in several ways. The polis, for instance, is described as 'prior' and a 'whole' with respect to the citizens and their subordinate communities as 'posterior' and its 'parts'.¹⁶³ If we keep in mind that the polis is 'prior' and a 'whole' fundamentally as a practical reality - the action of its citizens in their rule and the other members of the polis in their obedience to that rule for the sake of the good life - the 'priority' of the polis as a whole and the 'posteriority' of the citizens as 'parts' will be correctly understood as describing an action caused by the choice of many individual agents.

Let us begin then with Aristotle's description of the polis as a 'whole' of 'parts'. Aristotle describes the polis as a 'whole' (*to holon*) made up of its individual 'parts' (*merē*).¹⁶⁴ These parts appear to include the different subordinate communities of the polis which are themselves united in their order to the good and end of the political community as well as the individuals who compose them.¹⁶⁵ The most basic of human communities, the

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¹⁶² *Pol* 1332a31-5. And the character of the political community's constitution depends on the character of its citizens: ibid. 1337a14-8
¹⁶³ ibid. 1253a18-29; *NE* 1160a21-9
¹⁶⁴ ibid. 1253a18-20
¹⁶⁵ ibid. 1252a17-1253a29. Here we can cite Aristotle's use of what might be called his 'teleological principle' - the principle of the good and end as final cause uniting in subordination lesser and penultimate ends. Besides the polis as the good and end which unites all the goods of the subordinate communities, Aristotle applies this principle to human activity. cf: *NE* 1097b33-1098a20, 1102a14-1103a10, as well as
family, is subordinated to the village, and the village to the polis, as each supervening good
and end includes the good and end of the more basic community. It is finally the good of
the political community - the good not simply of life but of the whole of life and the good
life for human beings - which includes and subordinates all the goods of the individuals
and their communities.\footnote{166} Since that which each thing is when its growth is completed is
its (realized) nature, the polis is the perfection and nature of all its subordinate communities
as well as the perfection and end of the individual members of those communities.\footnote{167}

Citizens of the polis rule for the sake of this good, that is, they rule so that all the members
of the political community may attain the happiness of living well as far as is possible for
each. In this way the citizens are the parts of the polis as a whole.\footnote{168} As parts of the polis
as a whole, the virtue of the citizens must have regard to that of the polis,\footnote{169} for the citizens
ultimately do not belong to themselves but to the polis.\footnote{170} Their happiness and that of their
polis is indivisible.\footnote{171}

The nature of the citizens as ‘parts’, or individual agents, in the action of their polis
as the ‘whole’ is illustrated in Aristotle’s comparison of the citizens as parts of the polis
with the members of an alliance, or league (\textit{summachia}). An alliance is a whole of similar
and independently self-sufficient persons or communities which unite for the sake of some

\textit{DA} 412a3-b9, 414b28-515a13, b1-7, 416b23-5.
\footnote{166} Whether this ‘genetic’ analysis of Aristotle’s is meant to be an historical description of the evolution
of the polis or not, the community which is naturally basic to the polis, the household, is a community
made up of the adult couple, the master and slave, and the parent and child whose end is not put into
practice by choice (\textit{proairesis}), but by natural instinct and security: \textit{Pol} 1252a24-b15, 1253b1-14; cf. \textit{NE}
1160b22-1161a9. The village arises from several households or from one household as a sort of colony, or
extended family, whose members form a community which has as its good and end something beyond the
mere daily needs of the household: \textit{Pol} 1252b15-26. Finally, the political community is composed of
several villages whose citizens come together not simply for life but for the good life of living well (\textit{eu}
\footnote{167} \textit{Pol} 1252b34-1253a7, 1260b14-6
\footnote{168} ibid. 1274b38-41. In all the different political communities while those members who perform an
indispensable function in the polis are considered ‘parts’ of the polis, in the best polis it is finally those
citizens who actively rule who are the ‘parts’ of the polis in the strictest sense - while not excluding the
military - those who are training to become active citizens - from being considered ‘parts’ of the polis: \textit{Pol}
1329a34-9
\footnote{169} Cf. \textit{Pol} 1260b14-20
\footnote{170} ibid. 1337a27-30

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goal, such as economic or military utility.\textsuperscript{172} The part-whole relation of the polis is very much like that of an alliance to the extent that the citizens of the polis choose to rule and be ruled in their polis for the sake of a good as end they all desire. But there are fundamental differences as well. First, a member of an alliance is not naturally ordered to the alliance so he can either enter or refrain from entering. The human being, on the other hand, as a \textit{politikon zoon}, is naturally social and can find his good and end only in the self-sufficient good of the polis as the whole.\textsuperscript{173} The citizen is not a naturally independent agent. Rather, the human being as rationally intelligent is naturally social so that his good and end is to choose to engage in an exchange of goods, the most important of which being the rational communication of truth, with other citizens in a political community. The citizen as naturally social in this way differs from a member of an alliance in that he naturally requires a polis by choice as the means of living well as a human being.

Another way an alliance differs from the polis is the good and end for the sake of which their respective members choose to engage in their respective communities. The alliance has as its good and end economic or military utility - a good which may indeed be the preservation of the life of its members but is not the human good of living well. The polis, on the other hand, not only has the good of living as its end but the good of living well.\textsuperscript{174}

Despite their considerable differences, the alliance and the polis are nevertheless alike in this. If they are both understood as a whole of many parts, both the alliance and the polis are a whole of parts fundamentally as an action of many agents in their choice of the whole for the sake of a commonly understood good and end.

\textsuperscript{171} ibid. 1264b20-2, 1329a22-4
\textsuperscript{172} ibid. 1261a24-5, 1280b5-10
\textsuperscript{173} Cf. ibid. 1253a2-7 Aristotle also notes that unlike an alliance in which the parts are equal, the polis is composed of members who differ in kind. But this difference does not apply to the citizens of the polis who, \textit{qua} citizens are all free and equal in their capacity to rule and therefore do not differ in kind among themselves: ibid. 1261a39-b1, though there is a difference of virtue among the citizens in so far as not all the citizens are engaged in active rule: ibid. 1261a30-3, 1277b13-21. There is however no such difference among the citizens of the best polis where all are the best men: ibid. 1277a1-3, and all rule: ibid. 1332a32-5.
Aristotle also likens the community of the polis to a composite whole of parts in which the constitution is the community’s form (eidos). The form defines the constitution, and therefore the polis, in such a way that as the constitution changes so does the nature of the polis as a whole.\(^{175}\) Aristotle’s description of the constitution as the form of the polis as a whole may suggest his form/matter analysis of substance as an analogy for understanding the unity of the polis.\(^{176}\) However, the polis is not a substance but an action, an object of a community of human choice for the sake of the human good which is a life of activity. If the polis is something natural it is not because it is a being of nature, like a human being, but because it is naturally caused to be by the choice of human beings who are naturally political as rationally intelligent. The polis, in other words, is something practical by nature, an action which is the object of practical knowledge and part of Aristotle’s practical philosophy of human concerns and not the proper subject of first philosophy, physics, or biology. Aristotle does resort to various organic analogies in his attempt to illuminate aspects of the polis as a whole and the citizens as its parts,\(^{177}\) but because the polis is an action and a habit, not a substance or an organism, these analogies must, as in Aristotle’s likening the polis to a game of draughts with its members as pieces,\(^{178}\) the constitution as a

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\(^{174}\) Pol 1280b5-10  
\(^{175}\) ibid. 1276b1-15  
\(^{176}\) Cf. Gerson. (1994) 98, 104-5; and Halper (1995) 3-28. At best the constitution as the form and the citizens as its material parts are only an analogy for the polis. for as both Gerson and Halper note, unlike the matter in sensible substance, which cannot be what it is apart from its form, the individual is separable from the state. The constitution is the eidos of the polis in the sense that the formulation of the good of the polis is the final cause of its action. The polis is a practical and ethical reality, finally caused and defined by its good and end. When the constitution of a polis changes (that is, when the good and end of the polis changes) so the nature of the polis as action changes, since an action is defined by its end.  
\(^{177}\) E.g. Pol 1253a18-25, 1255b8-15, 1284b3-10, 1290b21-40, 1302b33-1303a2, 1320b33-9. Aristotle’s comparison of the happiness of the individual to that of the polis, God, and the cosmos, is with respect to a life of virtuous action which is an end in itself and independent: ibid. 1325b16-32  
\(^{178}\) Cf. ibid. 1253a4-6

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ship, and the multitude to one man with many feet, hands, and senses, be understood rather as metaphors for what is a fundamentally practical reality.

Aristotle’s description of the constitution as the form of the polis cannot be understood as suggesting that the polis is a substance of citizens as its parts. Such an analogy would, if taken strictly, like any other organic analogy, suggest an understanding of the polis that would completely miss its practical nature as a unity of its citizens in their choice of action. Taken literally as a substance the polis would, in effect, be reduced to a natural entity and reduce its citizens to the material principle of a formal unity which would destroy their agency, their individual choice as human beings to act. Uncritical acceptance and use of biological or entitative analogies in describing what is at heart a practical reality in effect can lead to the kind of problematic understanding Aristotle thinks Socrates had in his ideal of the fullest possible unity of the polis, a unity which would destroy the necessary multiplicity of its citizen parts. Rather, the polis is something practical; the constitution as the form of the polis is to be understood as the good as end, or perfection (telos) of the polis as an action. As an action is defined by its good and end - that for the sake of which it is chosen - so the nature of the polis is to be understood as the good for the sake of which its citizens choose to exchange their goods. This good and end is formulated in the constitution of the polis and it is this formulation which defines the polis as an action. The polis, then, as the ‘whole’ is to be understood as the action of its citizens.

\[179\] Cf. ibid. 1320b33-9

\[180\] Cf. ibid. 1281b5-7. An analogy which better expresses the practical nature of the polis is that of the subject of the polis as one who makes flutes and the ruler as the one who uses the flutes, cf. ibid. 1277b29-32.

\[181\] Vergnières, (1995) 153-5, gives a number of reasons why Aristotle’s organic analogy of the polis as a living substance is metaphorical. First, the polis does not reproduce offspring like itself, which is one of the fundamental features of a physical organism, cf. DA 415a28. Second, the final end or term of development in the physical organism is never described by Aristotle as the autarkeia of the organism precisely because autarkeia is an ethical, not a biological concept. Finally, the polis is not a living individual composed of many potential parts but a community of many actual individuals. The polis is natural not because it is a physical substance but because it is the actualization of human beings as many and distinct political animals in a community of praxis.

\[182\] Cf. Pol II 1

\[183\] NE 1115b20-4; cf. Pol 1257b35-1258a1, 1333a9-11, 1337b17-21

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and the citizens are 'parts' of that whole as the many agents who by the choice contribute to the whole.

Besides describing the individual (or, 'each of us' hekaston hēmōn) and the subordinate communities as parts to the polis as a whole, Aristotle also describes the individual and the subordinate communities as 'posterior' to the polis as 'prior'. How is the citizen, as ruler of his polis 'posterior' to that polis?

Aristotle distinguishes a number of respects in which one thing is 'prior' to another, of which the following are relevant to the relation between the citizen and the polis.

Something can be prior essentially, or in 'substance' (ousia) to another if, and only if, that thing is more fully developed or realized (teleioteros) than the other. What is posterior in generation, for instance, is prior essentially. As a man is posterior in generation but prior essentially to a boy, so the polis is posterior in generation but prior essentially to the individual and its subordinate communities.

A thing is prior 'in formula' (logoi) to another if, and only if, the one is mentioned in the formula of the other but not the other in the formula of that one. The right angle, for instance, is prior in formula to an acute angle since the latter is an angle that is less than a right angle. By Aristotle's definition of the human being and the polis, neither is prior in formula to the other. As the human being is a 'political animal' and the polis is 'a community of free human beings,' the formulae of the human being and the polis include each other. In a similar way, a soldier (stratiotes) is a member of an army (stratia), and an army is an organized body of soldiers.

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184 Pol 1253a18-29
186 GA 742a19-22: Meta 1050a4-b6; Rhet 1392a20-3
187 Meta 1050a4-7
188 ibid. 1035b4-6, 1049b12-7, 1077b3-4
189 ibid. 1035b4-8
190 Pol 1279a21

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One thing is prior ‘in nature’ (phusei) to another if, and only if, the one can exist without the other but not the other without the one. The sun is prior in nature to any plant, for the sun can exist without the plant whereas the plant cannot survive without the sun. A colony of bees is prior in nature to each of its members, for the colony can exist without one or other of its members (even the queen can be replaced), but the bee cannot exist without the colony. In this way the polis is prior in nature to the household and to each of us individually.

Thus the polis is related to the individual citizen and its subordinate communities as a prior whole to its posterior parts in essence and nature but not in formula. The polis as a prior whole to its posterior parts is simply different from the organic unity of a natural substance with respect to its parts. The natural substance is related to its organic parts in formula as well as essentially and naturally because the formula of the organic part mentions the substance as its whole whereas the formula of the natural substance does not mention its organic parts. Neither a whole of similar and relatively self-sufficient parts, nor a substantial prior whole of its organic parts, the polis is rather a unity of action which comprises the citizens as agents as its parts. This unity is expressed in the Ethics as ‘concord’ (homonoia) between the citizens. Though every polis to some extent enjoys a certain concord among its citizens, concord is best expressed among citizens who are good men:

Concord is said to prevail in a polis when the citizens agree as to their interests, adopt the same policy (t' auta proairentai), and carry their resolves into execution (prattōsi ta koinei doxanta). Concord then refers to practical ends, and practical ends of importance, and able to be realized by both or all partners ... concord appears therefore to mean friendship between citizens ... for it refers to the interests and concerns of life. Now concord in this sense exists between good men, since they are of one mind (ept tōn autōn ontes hōs eipein) both with themselves and with one another ... they wish for just and expedient ends, which they strive to attain in common.  

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191 Meta 1019a2-4; cf. Cat 14a29-35; Phys 260b17-9  
192 GA III.10  
193 Pol 1253a19. Aristotle admits the possibility that an individual or a community could exist apart from the polis due to chance (dia tuchēn) but not by nature: ibid. 1253a3-4  
194 NE 1167b9-10  
195 ibid. 1167a26-1167b9; EE 1241a30-3
The polis as a whole is the concord of its citizens as parts in their concerted choice of action for the sake of the good life. Because the citizens agree in their choice of action for the sake of what they understand their good and end to be, the polis can be described as a whole of parts in such a way that the excellence of the part is in relation to the whole and that the happiness of the whole cannot be separated from that of its individual parts. For the citizen as part of the polis to live for the good of the polis as a whole is to live for his own individual good as well. The nature of the polis as a whole of parts, then, is the concord of its citizens in their concerted choice of action for the sake of the good life.

c. The Polis is Civic Friendship

As we have seen, friendship among the citizens is described in the *NE* as the perfect bond of the polis and the goal which legislators strive for in their enactment of laws.\(^{196}\) Individual friendships among the citizens are included in the political community,\(^{197}\) the polis will ensure the well-being of those friendships,\(^{198}\) and the nature and variety of political communities will depend on the just and friendly relations between the citizens.\(^{199}\) Furthermore, in both the Ethics, the polis is described as made up of many different kinds of communities, each with its own kind of justice and friendship.\(^{200}\) All the different kinds of communities, or friendships, are part of the political community which is characterized by its own distinctive kind of justice:

... all koinôniai are parts as it were of the koinônia of the state. Travelers for instance associate together for some advantage, namely to procure some of the necessary supplies. But the political koinônia too, it is believed, was originally formed, and continues to be maintained, for the advantage of its members: the aim of lawgivers is the good of the community, and justice is sometimes defined as that which is to the common advantage. Thus the other koinôniai aim at some particular advantage ... but they all seem to be subordinate to the state which aims not at a temporary advantage but at one covering the whole of life.\(^{201}\)

\(^{196}\) ibid. 1155a22-8
\(^{197}\) ibid. 1160a8-9, 28-30
\(^{198}\) ibid. 1160a9-12
\(^{199}\) ibid. 1160a31-1161b9
\(^{200}\) EE 1242a20-41; NE 1159b25-1160a8
\(^{201}\) NE 1160a8-30
... all constitutions are some species of justice: for they are koinōniai, and every koinōnia is founded on justice, so that there are as many species of justice and koinōnia as there are of friendship... and since there are two sorts of equality, numerical and proportional, there will also be various species of justice and of koinōnia and of friendship. The koinōnia of democracy is based on numerical equality, and so is the friendship of comrades, as it is measured by the same standard; whereas aristocratic koinōnia (which is the best) and the royal are proportional, for it is just for superior and inferior to have not the same share but proportional shares; and similarly also the friendship of father and son, and the same way in other koinōnia. 202

The polis, governed according to a correct constitution, is a friendship between ruler and ruled:

Under each of these [correct] forms of government we find friendship existing between ruler and ruled, to the same extent as justice... under the deviant forms of constitution friendship, like justice, can have but little scope... for where there is nothing in common between ruler and ruled, there can be no friendship between them either, any more than there can be justice. 203

And this friendship can include any human member of the community:

There can be no friendship with a slave as a slave, though there can be as a human being; for there seems to be room for justice in the relations of every human being with every other that is capable of participating in law and contract, and hence friendship is also possible with everyone so far as he is a human being. 204

In the Ethics, then, the political community is clearly presented as a friendship of those who rule and are ruled. However, in the Politics, the polis as a friendship of its citizens is rather more presumed than explicitly stated.

In Aristotle's political work the polis is an action, a koinōnein of its citizens which arises out of choice. This action must be regulated by justice, or law, for human beings can either live virtuously or like beasts, 205 for living together in a community and sharing all our human affairs is difficult, 206 and human evil, especially ambition, the cause of strife

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202 EE 1241b13-40
203 NE 1161a10-11, 32-4
204 ibid. 1161b5-10
205 Pol 1253a29-39
206 ibid. 1263a15-6

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and faction in the political community, is limitless. But if these difficulties are to be overcome so that the members of the polis can live together and share their resources with one another for the sake of living well, the promotion of justice and law in the polis is necessary. Living together as human beings is an achievement that takes effort, the promotion of justice, and the sanction of law. But as Aristotle tells us in the *NE*, justice is not enough if human beings are to live well together. Friendship is essential.

Because of the importance of friendship in the life of the polis Aristotle can say:

> We think that friendship is the greatest of blessings in the state, since it is the best safeguard against revolution, and the unity of the state, which Socrates praises most highly, both appears to be and is said by him to be the *ergon* of friendship.

Friendship among citizens is the solution Aristotle offers for the vexed issue of whether property should be private or publicly owned:

> Property ought to be common in a sense but private speaking generally. For the superintendence of properties being divided among the owners will not cause these mutual complaints, and will improve the more because each will apply himself to it as to private business of his own; while on the other hand virtue will result in making 'friends' goods common goods,' as the proverb goes, for the purpose of use. Such a system exists even now in outline in some states, so it is not deemed impracticable ... for individuals while owning their property put their own possessions at the service of their friends and make of their friends' possessions as common property ... it is clear therefore that it is better for possessions to be privately owned, but to make them common property in use: and to train the citizens to this is the special task of the legislator.

And the delight of friendship is of such value that private ownership of property is deemed better for its sake:

> Moreover, to bestow favours and assistance on friends or visitors or comrades is a great pleasure, and a condition of this is the private ownership of property.

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207 ibid. 1267a37-b9, 1272b11-5, 1302a29-31
208 *NE* 1155a22-8
209 *Pol* 1262b7-10
210 ibid. 1263a26-40
211 ibid. 1263a37-b6

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In *Politics* IV, when considering the political consequences of a government of either the wealthy or the poor, Aristotle implies, if he does not explicitly state, that the well-governed polis is a friendship:

... the latter class do not know how to govern but know how to submit to government of a servile kind, while the former class do not know how to submit to any government, and only know how to govern in the manner of a master. The result is a state consisting of slaves and masters, not of free men, and of one class envious of another and another contemptuous of their fellows. This condition of affairs is far from friendship and from political partnership - for partnership is a thing of friendship (*hé gar koinônia philikon*) - since men are not willing to be partners with their enemies even on a journey. But surely what is to be wished is that the polis consist as much as possible of people who are equal and alike (*ex isṓn einai kai homoioán*); and this similarity is most found in the middle classes.\(^{212}\)

Aristotle’s close juxtaposition of friendship and political community in this passage and the obvious implication that the political partnership is a ‘thing of friendship’ (the polis is a partnership, partnership is a thing of friendship, *ergo* ...) strongly suggests that the well-governed political community for him is a friendship of its members. In urging that the members of a polis ought to be equal and alike, he uses the same terms he used in his description of friends in *Book III*: *isos kai homoioû*.\(^{213}\) Throughout the *Politics*, of course, it is the citizens of a good polis who are free and equal in their capacity to rule.\(^{214}\) Aristotle, then, is understanding the polis, or at least a good polis, as a friendship of its citizens.

We have seen already that in the *Politics* Aristotle understands the polis as something very like a permanent disposition of unity among the citizens and more fundamentally as an action of its citizens. This is exactly the way he understands friendship in the *NE*:

> It is with friendship as it is with the virtues; men are called good in two senses, either as having a virtuous disposition or as realizing virtue in action, and similarly friends when in each other’s company derive pleasure from and confer benefits on each other whereas friends who are asleep or

\(^{212}\) ibid. 1295b19-27

\(^{213}\) ibid. 1287b33

\(^{214}\) Citizens of the polis *qua* citizens are all free and equal in their capacity to rule: *Pol* 1261a39-b1, though they differ in whether they actually rule or not: ibid. 1261a30-3. 1277b13-21. But to the extent that they do actually rule they are actually free and equal.
parted are not actively friendly, yet have the disposition to be so. For separation does not destroy friendship absolutely, though it prevents its active exercise. If however the absence be prolonged, it seems to cause the friendship itself to be forgotten.215

The polis is a habit and an action of the citizens in their choice of exchange of goods among each other for the sake of living well. The polis is an action of justice among its citizens and in a well-governed polis the citizens will be trained to become friends with each other so that the polis becomes an action of justice in friendship.216 The well-governed polis for Aristotle is clearly a friendship of its citizens.

A friendship of citizens is what Aristotle in his Ethics calls ‘civic friendship’ (philia politikê).217 As any community is a friendship, the political community is a friendship of its citizens. The polis, in other words, is a civic friendship. The justice which characterizes the polis and this civic friendship is the proportionately equal reciprocal exchange of goods necessary for life.218 This just exchange of goods is the result of need (chreia),219 the need human beings have not only for the material goods of life and the sharing of common interests but for the good of living well.220

Since the justice of the polis is that of a proportional reciprocity which arises out of the need to exchange goods, the friendship of its citizens is a friendship according to need, or utility (chrêsimê). Utility friendship, the friendship of most people, is the kind of friendship which has as its motive the usefulness of the friends.221 Civic friendship, the friendship of citizens in a polis, is in this respect a utility friendship:

Civic friendship on the other hand is constituted in the fullest degree on the principle of utility, for it seems to be the individuals’ lack of self-sufficiency that makes these unions permanent - since they would have been formed in any case merely for the sake of society ... the justice that underlies a friendship of utility is in the highest degree just because this is the civic principle of justice.222

215 NE 1157b5-12
216 ibid. 1155a22-8; cf. EE 1234b22-3
217 Cf. EE 1241a32ff. 1242b22ff, 1243a32ff; NE 1167b2ff
218 NE 1132b31-4
219 ibid. 1133b6-8
220 Pol 1278b19-30
221 EE 1236a33-5
222 ibid. 1242a6-13
Civic friendship is much like the kind of friendship found between states:

Fellow citizens are one another's friends in the same way as different cities are... citizens do not know each other when they are not useful to one another.\textsuperscript{223}

Aristotle appears to understand civic friendship as the political equivalent of utility friendship. But by characterizing civic friendship in this way Aristotle does not mean to restrict civic friendship to the political equivalent of that secondary type of friendship analyzed in the Ethics in which the friends love each other for their utility rather than for virtue.\textsuperscript{224}

Utility for Aristotle has two different meanings. In the \textit{EE} Aristotle makes a distinction between what is absolutely (\textit{haplōs}) and relatively good and pleasurable.\textsuperscript{225} The primary friendship of the virtuous is a friendship in which the friends are concerned with sharing what is absolutely good (and profitable) with each other. That is, they wish for each other things absolutely good as well as things good under certain conditions, such as taking medicine, for the sake of an absolute good like health.\textsuperscript{226} This is in contrast to the other kinds of friendships, which are useful and profitable not absolutely but only according to the friends' own purposes.\textsuperscript{227} The implication here is that the primary friendship of the virtuous is absolutely useful and profitable to the friends because they are interested in sharing with each other what is absolutely good and pleasant. Apparently, then, what is absolutely useful is what can be chosen as a means to an absolute good and pleasure. The primary friendship of the virtuous would be a friendship of this kind of utility.

In the \textit{NE} also there is an implicit distinction between a utility which is relative to the purpose of those uninterested in virtue and an absolute utility as a means to the absolute good of virtue. Utility, Aristotle tells us in Book VIII, seems to be desirable as a means to

\textsuperscript{223} ibid. 1242b22-6; \textit{NE} 1157a25-7  
\textsuperscript{224} ibid. 1236a33-b1; \textit{NE} 1156a10-29  
\textsuperscript{225} \textit{Pol} 1235b30-2, 1236a7-12  
\textsuperscript{226} ibid. 1238b5-9, cf. 1235b32-1236a1, 1237a12-8
what is good and pleasant as ends. The perfect friendship of the virtuous is a friendship in which the friends are good and pleasant for each other as well as good and absolutely. This friendship also includes what is useful:

In view of their likeness to friendship based on virtue, they [the friendships of pleasure and utility] do appear to be friendships, for one contains pleasure and the other utility, and these are attributes of that form of friendship too.

The utility (and pleasure) found in the perfect friendship of the virtuous cannot be that of the utility of those uninterested in virtue, but of those who are. Further on in NE VIII, Aristotle calls the virtuous both pleasant and useful because, in contrast to others, they seek the pleasant and useful for the sake of the fine. Thus, perfect friendship of the virtuous, while not the kind of utility friendship described of friends who are uninterested in virtue, is nevertheless useful for what is absolutely good and pleasant - the fineness of living well. In this latter sense of utility the perfect friendship of the virtuous can be understood as friendship of utility.

That a civic friendship of citizens who are virtuous can also be understood as a civic friendship of what is useful for virtue can be seen in the possibility of concord (homonoia) among the citizens. Although civic friendship is according to need, it is an agreement of concord as well. Concord, as we have seen, occurs in the polis when citizens agree as to their interests, adopt the same policy, and carry their resolves into execution. In the EE Aristotle maintains that concord in the primary sense is possible only among the virtuous:

Homonoia occurs in the case of good men - at all events when bad men purpose and desire the same things they harm one another. And it appears that homonoia, like friendship, is not a term of single meaning, but whereas the primary and natural form of it is good, so that it is not possible for bad

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227 ibid. 1238a39-40
228 NE 1155b19-21
229 ibid. 1156b7-24
230 ibid. 1158b6-8
231 cf. ibid. 1158a30-4
232 ibid. 1241a32-3; NE 1167b2-3
233 ibid. 1241a30-3; NE 1167a26-1167b9

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men to agree in this way, there is another sort of agreement shown even by bad men when their purpose and desire are for the same objects.\textsuperscript{234}

Aristotle makes essentially the same observation in the \textit{NE}:

Now concord ... exists between good men, since these are of one mind both with themselves and with one another, as they always stand more or less on the same ground; for good men’s wishes are steadfast, and do not ebb and flow like the tide, and they wish for just and expedient ends, which they strive to attain in common. The base on the other hand are incapable of concord, except in some small degree, as they are of friendship, since they try to get more than their share of advantages, and take less than their share of the burdens. And while each desires this for himself, he spies on his neighbor to prevent him from doing likewise; for unless they keep watch over one another, the common interests go to ruin.\textsuperscript{235}

In the Ethics, then, a civic friendship capable of concord is a friendship of virtuous men. Since the virtuous are concerned with that which is useful for virtue, to call civic friendship of such men a friendship of utility cannot be to understand it as a secondary friendship of citizens concerned with utility rather than virtue but rather as a friendship which is concerned with what is useful for virtue. This sense of the utility of the virtuous appears to be confirmed in Book VII of the \textit{Politics} where we are told that utility is relative to the good of virtuous character and action:

[As regards] external goods, goods of soul and goods of the body, assuredly nobody would deny that the blessed (\textit{makarioi}) are bound to possess all three ... when one sees that men do not acquire and preserve the virtues by means of external goods, but external goods by means of the virtues, and that whether the life of happiness consists for man in enjoyment or in virtue or in both, it is found in larger measure with those who are of a surpassingly high cultivation in character and intellect but only moderate as regards the external acquisition of goods ... for external goods have a limit, as has any instrument (and everything useful is useful for something) ... whereas with any of the goods of soul, the more abundant it is, the more useful it must be - if even to goods of soul not only the term ‘fine’ but also the term ‘useful’ can be properly applied ... moreover it is for the sake of the soul that these goods are in their nature desirable, and all practically intelligent men must choose them, not the soul for the sake of those other things. Let us then take it as agreed between us that to each man there falls just so large a measure of happiness as he achieves of virtue and \textit{phronesis} and actions according to these.\textsuperscript{236}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{234} \textit{EE} 1241a23-7
\item \textsuperscript{235} \textit{NE} 1167b4-13
\item \textsuperscript{236} \textit{Pol} 1323a24-b23
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Since what is ‘useful’ depends on one’s character, civic friendship of the virtuous, the civic friendship of the best polis, is a friendship of what is useful for virtue.\(^{237}\)

In a passage in the *NE* Aristotle reflects on the demands of a perfect friendship which limit the number of people who could be such friends with each other. His reflections have clear implications for our understanding civic friendship in the best polis as a perfect friendship of the virtuous:

Should one have as many virtuous friends as possible? Or is there a limit of size for a circle of friends, as there is for a population of a state? Ten people would not make a polis, or with a hundred thousand it is a polis no longer; though perhaps the proper size is not one particular number, but any number between certain limits. So also the number of one’s friends must be limited, and should perhaps be the largest number with which one can constantly associate; since, as we saw, to live together is the chief mark of friendship, but it is quite clear that it is not possible to live with and to share oneself among a large number of people. Another essential is that one’s friends must also be the friends of one another, if they are to pass the time in each other’s company ... perhaps therefore it is a good rule not to seek to have as many friends as possible, but only as many as are enough to form a circle of associates ... it is true that one may be friendly with many fellow-citizens and not be obsequious, but a model of excellence; but it is

\(^{237}\) The distinction between civic friendship in the best polis and civic friendships in political communities governed according to a constitution which does not have the human good as its good and end has been missed, in different ways, by a number of prominent Aristotelian commentators. In a series of articles published in *Aristoteles’ Politik: Akten des XI. Symposium Aristotelicum*, ed. Gunther Patzig (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1990) Cooper and Irwin fail to appreciate the distinction between these two kinds of civic friendship and thus fail to appreciate the nature of civic friendship in the best polis as a perfect friendship of citizens as virtuous men. Cooper, 220-41, consistent with his (mistaken) notion that *eunoia* is found in all three types of friendship in Aristotle, argues that *eunoia* and affectionate cooperation is found in civic friendship regardless of the kind of constitution a polis may have. Aristotle is clear, however, that *eunoia* is found only in a friendship of the virtuous, and *homoeroneia* primarily in virtuous friendship. Irwin, 73-100, on the other hand, by insisting on the nature of civic friendship as a utility friendship, fails to see that civic friendship in the best polis is a friendship of virtuous men, that is, a perfect friendship. Irwin, 87-9, thinks Aristotle has a problem in reconciling political friendship as ‘the unique value of cooperative political activity’ with what Irwin takes to be Aristotle’s understanding of civic friendship in the Ethics as a friendship of mere advantage. If civic friendship were indeed simply that of this kind of utility then, Irwin reasons, cooperative political activity between citizens would be nothing more than an instrumental good, which Irwin insists is not what Aristotle holds. But as we have seen, Aristotle’s understanding of civic friendship as a utility friendship does not exclude the possibility that civic friendship could be a perfect friendship of citizens who are virtuous men. So Aristotle does not have the problem of reconciling cooperative political activity between citizens with the utility of civic friendship that Irwin thinks he has. Annas, 243-8, on the other hand, calls civic friendship as Cooper describes it, ‘personal friendship’ and denies that all the citizens of a polis can be friends in this way. She argues that at best a good polis is a community of utility friends which can still foster ‘personal friendship’ among small groups of citizens. Annas’ ‘personal friendship’ is in effect a civic friendship of the virtuous. While Annas argues for a distinction between civic friendships of the virtuous, or ‘personal friendships’ and ordinary civic friendships in a good polis, I am arguing that in Aristotle’s best polis all the mature citizens, as rulers, are virtuous and can be civic, or perfect, friends.
not possible to have many friends whom we love for their virtue and for themselves. We may be glad to find even a few friends of this sort.  

In this passage although Aristotle is concerned with the question of the number of friends one could have and not with the kind of friendship citizens of a polis can have, he does allude to the friendship of citizens. Many citizens, he observes, can be friends with each other and not simply in an obsequious way but even as truly virtuous men (hos alēthos epieikē). This friendship of many citizens is contrasted with the fact that there cannot be many people who are the kind of friends who love each other because of their virtue and for themselves. The friendship of many citizens, in other words, is contrasted with a perfect friendship of the virtuous. The implication here is that while many citizens can be friends, they cannot be perfect friends. For perfect friends must not only be virtuous but they must live together and constantly associate with one another. Citizens in a large polis might be friends with one another but they could not be perfect friends with each other.

However, if we examine what Aristotle conceives as right limit to the size of the best polis in Politics VII, we see that this kind of polis could be a perfect friendship of its citizens. For the number of citizens, he tells us there, must be limited to that which allows them to know each other well - well enough to rule together:

The actions of the polis are those of the rulers and those who are ruled, and the work of a ruler is to direct the administration and to judge law-suits; but in order to decide questions of justice and in order to distribute the offices according to merit it is necessary for the citizens to know each other’s personal characters, since where this does not happen to be the case the business of electing officials and trying law-suits is bound to go badly; haphazard decision is unjust in both matters, and this must obviously prevail in an excessively numerous community ... it is clear therefore that the best limiting principle for a state is the largest expansion of the population with a view to self-sufficiency that can be well taken in at one view.  

That the whole polis be able to be taken in at one view (eusunoptos) certainly limits the population and makes the identification of the polis as a perfect friendship of its citizens

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238 ibid. 1170b29-1171a20  
239 Pol 1326b13-24
more plausible. Further, if we remember that for Aristotle the majority of the population of the polis will not be citizens, but rather those who perform the kinds of service necessary for the citizens to have the leisure to rule well, the number of the population of the polis who qualify as citizens becomes appreciably smaller. And then, even among those who qualify as citizens - those who are capable of ruling their polis - only a limited number of these are full citizens, those who actually rule. It is possible, then, that in the best polis as Aristotle conceives it, the number of citizens who actually rule will be of such a limited number that those citizens could indeed be perfect friends with one another. And if we consider the nature of the best polis and the citizens of that polis as presented in Politics VII it appears that for Aristotle the citizens of this polis are perfect friends one with another. For in such a polis as Aristotle understands it, with the best constitution and an effective educational system with the real human good as its end and a concern that its citizens be friends with one another, all citizens who rule will be virtuous men and friends. And they will have the leisure to rule well. Their upbringing in the polis, their virtue, their leisure, and their limited number make their friendship in rule a perfect friendship.

But for a civic friendship to be a perfect friendship among citizens of a polis, that polis would have to be governed by the best constitution. For a civic friendship to be a perfect friendship of the virtuous, the citizens themselves would have to be virtuous not simply relative to their constitution, but absolutely, that is, relative to the best constitution, the constitution which embodies the human good of virtuous action.

In summary then, the Politics presents the human being as by nature social and naturally flourishing in a political community which is an action of justice and friendship among its citizens. The polis is a friendship of its citizens, a civic friendship, and it is in this friendship that the human being finds his telos as a political animal. Civic friendship is a friendship of utility but is not confined to the kind of friendship of those unconcerned

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240 ibid. 1328b2-1329a34
with virtue - that is those who are interested only in what is useful for themselves. In a polis in which the constitution has the human good of a life of virtuous action as its good and end and governed by citizens who are virtuous men, civic friendship is a utility friendship which is useful for the sake of a life of virtuous action. Such a civic friendship would be, in effect, a perfect friendship of the virtuous as the latter is presented in the *NE*. In the following section we shall take what we have learned so far and argue that for Aristotle the citizens of the best polis are indeed perfect friends and the best polis a perfect friendship of its citizens.

III. The Best Polis is a Civic Friendship of Citizens Who are Virtuous: The Best Polis is a Perfect Friendship of its Citizens

As we have seen, the nature of the polis is that of a koinōnia of just and friendly action among its citizens. The citizen (politeis) of a polis chooses to take part (metechein), or share (koinonein) in, the life of the polis by governing according to the good of the polis as that good is formulated in the constitution (politeia), a practice of just and friendly action in governing and in the mutual exchange of the necessary goods of human life with each other and with others in the polis. But just as actions are defined according to the good for the sake of which they are chosen, and vary as that good varies, so the polis as an action is defined according to its good and end as that is formulated in its constitution and the nature of the polis varies as that good and end varies. And just as there are different conceptions of the human good, only one of which is the real human good, so there are different kinds of political communities, only one which is the best.

1. The Different Kinds of Constitutions and Civic Friendships

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241 Irwin, (1990) argues that according to Aristotle’s understanding of ‘the unique value of political activity’ all the citizens of the best polis would be virtuous - a conclusion which he understands Aristotle as denying. Supra note 237.

242 *Pol* 1278a35-6, 1283b42-1284a1, 1289a15-8, 1331b24-9. Although Aristotle defines a citizen as one who actually governs or who is capable of governing: ibid. 1283b42, a citizen in the strict sense is one who actively governs, or shares in governing, his polis: ibid. 1277a25-32, b11-32, cf. ibid. 1278b1-5.

243 *Pol* 1276a3-4, b30-1, 1278a15-6
Every activity, Aristotle tells us in the *NE*, aims at the end which corresponds to the disposition of which it is a manifestation; if the end is good, the action is fine because it is defined by its end.\(^{244}\) In the *Politics* this principle is repeated:

In regard to what is fine and not fine, actions do not differ so much in themselves as in their end and object.\(^{245}\)

Aristotle applies this principle throughout the *Politics*. The difference, for instance, between the right and wrong acquisition of wealth,\(^{246}\) a polis and an alliance,\(^{247}\) or liberal and illiberal learning,\(^{248}\) is determined by the ends for which these actions are chosen. The polis as an action is also defined by its good and end. The good and end of the polis is found in its constitution. According to Aristotle, the constitution is the formal articulation of the supreme good and final end of the polis and of the regulation of offices as the necessary means of ruling well to attain that good.\(^{249}\) There are, however, a number of constitutions differing in kind according to whether they aim at the common advantage (*to koinei sumpheron*), or good of the citizens. The common advantage of the citizenry is the justice *haplōs* that is maintained in their dealings with one another.\(^{250}\) 'Correct' (*orthai*) constitutions aim at this common advantage, or good, and are administrated by virtuous citizens,\(^{251}\) while the 'erroneous' (*hēmartēmenai*) or 'deviant' (*parabebēkuai*) have as their goal the advantage, or good, only of the ruler(s) of the polis, rulers who are therefore less than virtuous. These two different constitutions form no common genus but are related to each other as the prior (*proterai*) and the posterior (*husterai*).\(^{252}\)

\(^{244}\) *NE* 1115b20-4

\(^{245}\) *Pol* 1333a9-11

\(^{246}\) Ibid. 1257b19-22

\(^{247}\) Both the polis and, by implication, the alliance are described as a multitude (*plēthos*): *Pol* 1261a18-25. The polis is a multitude united for the sake of life and the good life: ibid. 1252b27-30, whereas an alliance is one united for the sake of economic or military ends: ibid. 1261a26ff

\(^{248}\) *Pol* 1337b17-21

\(^{249}\) Ibid. 1289a15-8. Or, as he puts it in Book VII, the constitution of a polis contains two things in which the welfare of all men consists: the correct establishment of the aim and end of their actions and the ascertainment of the actions leading to that end: ibid. 1331b24-9

\(^{250}\) Ibid. 1282b7-21; *NE* 1160a11-4

\(^{251}\) Ibid. 1288a32-6

\(^{252}\) *Pol* 1275a38-b2. As Aristotle explains at *Meta* 999a13-4, where there is a question of multitude of things better and worse, there is no common genus among them, but the better is always prior.
prior constitution as ‘primary’ (proton) and the posterior as ‘secondary’ (deuteron). This description of the constitution suggests that Aristotle understands the constitution as homonymous, that is, a group of different kinds which share no common genus but can be understood to be united in reference to one as to a primary instance. The constitution so understood includes both incorrect and correct kinds with the correct constitution as its primary instance.253

Although correct constitutions are of one kind in so far as they all aim at the common good of the polis and are administered by the virtuous, they can yet vary among themselves according to the number of those who rule. Correct constitutions can be types of kingship (basileia), aristocracy (aristokratia), and constitutional republic or polity (politeia). This difference between constitutions of a single kind applies to the deviant constitutions as well. Although one in kind, these constitutions too can vary according to the number of those who rule, creating thereby different types of the same kind: tyranny (turrani), oligarchy (oligarchia), and democracy (demokratia).254

Of the correct constitutions, kingship may be considered the best constitution if the king be someone endowed with superior, even divine, goodness.255 Short of that, it is an aristocracy which is best.256 A constitutional republic, on the other hand, ranks below either kingship or aristocracy for the empirical reason that a large number of citizens simply cannot, or at least cannot easily, become fully virtuous so as to rule well.257

Different kinds of constitutions involve different conceptions of justice and friendship.258 Though every kind of political community, even one governed according to

253 Here in Book III we see evidence suggesting that the constitution may be understood as a pros hen legomenon similar to that of friendship in Book VII of the EE.
254 ibid. 1289a26-b26
255 NE 1160a35; Pol 1289a40
256 Pol 1286b3-7, 1289a30-3
257 ibid. 1279a37-b2, 1293b23-7
258 Pol 1280a7ff, 1301b35ff, 1309a36-9; NE 1159b25-1160a30

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a deviant constitution, maintains some type of justice and friendship, only under the correct forms of constitution will justice haplōs be practiced.

The best polis has the best men as its rulers - citizens who by their phronēsis as philosophia understand the nature of the good and end of the polis as the real human good and who, by their phronēsis as politikē, or political intelligence, and ethical virtue are able to enact, execute and adjudicate according to the kind of laws which will help them and all the other members of the polis share the goods of human life with each other for the sake of that good and end. For the character of the laws of a political community depends upon the good and end of the polis as formulated in that community's constitution. The laws of the best polis are the right laws by which the citizens and all the members of the polis can be guided and educated. Moreover, the education of a political community's citizens as well as of other members of that community is of utmost importance if that polis is to achieve its good and end. In political communities governed by incorrect constitutions this education is often neglected, if not despised, but in the best polis the citizens will make sure that the education of the young and all other members of the polis will be according to the real human good as that good is formulated in the best constitution. Thus in the best polis not only are all the citizens virtuous men but all the other members of the polis are able to live as virtuously as their capacity and function in the polis permits.

The polis, then, is understood by Aristotle to include a number of different kinds as governed by the different kinds of constitutions. The best polis is among those political communities governed by a correct constitution. And as there are different kinds of kinds of political communities so there are different kinds of justice and friendship. In our next

259 ibid. 1280a7-14
260 NE 1161a10-1161b10; EE 1241b11-7
261 Pol 1279a17-21
262 Supra pp. 247-259
263 Pol 1282b8-13, 1289a13-25, 1333b35-8
264 Cf. ibid. 1269b14-9, 1287a25-7, 1326a29-33, 1336bff, Pol VIII
265 ibid. 1260b8-24, 1263b36-7, 1266b29-40, 1337a11-35
266 ibid. 1310a12-8
267 ibid. 1333a9-16, cf. 1288a32-b2
section we will examine the best political community which is a civic friendship of the best men.

2. The Best Polis is a Civic Friendship of the Best Men, that is, a Perfect Friendship of Citizens Who are Virtuous Men

As we have seen, in a polis governed by a correct constitution, and above all in the best polis, civic friendship is a friendship of utility among citizens who are virtuous. This civic friendship is a friendship of citizens who in the rule are finally interested in the virtuous life for themselves and for their political community.

As the nature of the citizen is dependent upon the constitution of the polis, and varies as the nature of those constitutions vary, so the nature of civic friendship in a polis will depend upon the nature of the constitution of the polis.

Of the three correct constitutions, the best has the human good of a life of virtuous action as the good of the polis and is governed by the best men. As the good and end of the polis formulated in the best constitution is the good absolutely, the citizens of such a polis will be good absolutely. As rulers, they will be endowed with, and will exercise, all the intellectual and ethical virtues of full citizens. The citizens will have the intellectual virtue of *philosophia* which will enable them to know the nature of the human good as end, the calculative virtue of *phronēsis* as *politike*, or political intelligence, to enact, execute and adjudicate the right laws whereby they and all the members of the polis may have the means of living well in the polis. Finally, they will have the ethical, or appetitive virtue to make the human good as known by *philosophia* their own good and final end and the deliberative desire to enact the laws as discerned by the exercise of their *phronēsis* as right. In short, the citizens of the polis whose constitution is best are the best men, those who are good absolutely. These citizens of the best polis are the political equivalent of the virtuous man as Aristotle presents him in the *NE* and their civic friendship is the political equivalent to the perfect friendship of the virtuous in the *NE*.

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268 Pol 1275b3-7, 1276b26-34

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The friendship of citizens in the best polis will in effect be a perfect friendship of the virtuous. The citizens of the best city, being the best men and governing according to the best constitution will be virtuous. They will, by their *philosophia*, know the good and end of their polis as that good is articulated in the constitution - that constitution which has the human good of a virtuous life of action as its good and end. By their ethical, or appetitive virtue, they will make the good and end of the polis their own good and end and by their political intelligence will enact, execute, and adjudicate the right laws by which they and the other members of the polis may exchange their goods justly. And, as we have argued in chapter three, with respect to the love perfect friends of virtue have for themselves and for each other as other selves, their mutual choice to rule for such a good and end is concomitantly motivated by a love for each others’ virtuous character.

Aristotle’s description of the best polis in *Politics* VII is that of a political community of citizens who are virtuous men and perfect friends. Like a perfect friendship of the virtuous, the citizens of the best polis will rule the polis together for the sake of the human good of the happy life of virtuous action - for themselves and for those whom they rule.269

IV. The Virtuous Man and Friendship in The Life of Contemplation and the Life of Virtuous Action in the Polis

For Aristotle, as we have seen, the virtuous man is the wise man (*ho sophos*) who knows that the nature of the human good is a happy life of virtuous activity as the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation and the secondarily happy life of virtuous action in the polis. Because the life of contemplation is perfect human happiness, the wise man will strive to immortalize himself as far as he can by living this life in the activity of *theōria*. And because his activity of *theōria* may be better, that is, more continuous and pleasant with ‘fellow workers’, friends who are also wise, the wise man will strive to immortalize himself as far as he can with such friends in a shared contemplative activity. It is the wise

269 Aristotle’s understanding of civic friendship, or the perfect friendship of the citizens in the best polis is, in effect, his answer to the communism of Plato’s guardians in the *Republic*. 

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man's activity of theoria, and that activity as shared with other wise friends, that is the happiest human life because it is a life that is most akin to the divine happiness of divine contemplation. But the wise man is also a human being, a composite of the rational and the non-rational, and so he will also at times have to choose action for the sake of the fineness of the secondarily happy life, a life of virtuous action in the polis desired as preserving or promoting the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation as the supreme good and most final end. In our previous chapter we saw that since the virtuous man knows that this secondarily happy life is social and that the fullest way to live this life is with friends like himself, he will seek to share this life with these men in perfect friendship. These men in their mutual choice to share good things with each other, out of their love for each other, constitute a community of virtuous action and in so doing live in the fullest way the secondarily happy life of virtuous action in the polis. In the Politics, as we have seen in this chapter, the fullest way of living the secondarily happy life of virtuous action in the polis is as a citizen in the best polis, that is, as a civic friendship of citizens who rule the polis well according to the best constitution. The virtuous man in the polis knows this and so when he must engage in activity for the sake of the fineness of a life of virtuous action in the polis, he will seek to do so as a ruler in the best polis.270 He will seek, in other words, a civic friendship with others like himself who will rule their polis together.

The virtuous man and his friends, then, function in two ways in the polis. First, and primarily, as wise men who strive to immortalize themselves as far as they can, they will live a life of contemplation as the perfectly happy life of virtuous activity. When they do this individually, and even better when they do this together as friends, the wise live the happiest human life, a life most akin to the happiness of the divine life of contemplation. Insofar as the wise strive to immortalize themselves as far as they can in this way they will not be directly concerned with ruling the polis. They will rather be engrossed in theoretical knowledge of the divine, a theoretical activity akin to the transcendentally happy activity of

270 Because he will always seek that which is better, or best, cf. Pol 1324a33-5
the divine mind. But when they choose to rule their polis for the fineness of preserving or promoting the supreme good and most final end of a life of wisdom, or *philosophia*, for themselves and their polis, they will also, in this secondarily happy way, live not only the most self-sufficient of human lives but a life akin to the happy activity of the divine mind. Let us see how.

In the *Politics*, in his discussion of law as a form of order, Aristotle alludes to the divine power which holds together the universe:

> Law is a form of order, and good law must necessarily mean good order; but an excessively large number cannot participate in order: to give it order would surely be a task for divine power, which holds even this universe together. 271

Does Aristotle understand this divine power as a ruler ruling? At the conclusion of EE VIII, Aristotle tells us that:

> God (*ho theos*) is not a ruler in the sense of issuing commands, but is the end for the sake of which *phronēsis* gives commands. 272

The divine power for Aristotle is not a ruler in the sense of a legislator who rules his polis by enacting and enforcing laws. Yet this does not mean that the divine power could not be understood as a ruler in another sense, that is, as the supreme good and final cause of order in the universe and the end for the sake of which human rulers issue commands in their enactment and enforcement of laws.

In the *Metaphysics* Aristotle understands the happiness of the divine life of *nous* in *theōria* as the supreme good (*ariston*):

> ... it is actuality rather than potentiality that is held to be the divine possession of *nous* and its *theōria* is that which is most pleasant and *ariston* ... Moreover, life belongs to God. For the actuality of *nous* is life, and God is that actuality; and the essential actuality of God is life most good and eternal. We hold, then, that God is a living being, eternal, *ariston*. 273

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271 Pol 1326a29-33
272 EE 1249b13-15
273 Meta 1072b26-9
The divine life of *nous* as good is the principle of all things\(^{274}\) and the final cause (*to hou heneka*).\(^{275}\) which causes motion as being an object of love (*kinei de hōs erwēmenon*).\(^{276}\) In this way all things are finally ordered to the divine power of supreme goodness. *That* this is so is implied in Aristotle's reflections on *how* all things are ordered to this good:

We must also consider in which sense the nature of the universe contains the good or the supreme good (*to agathon kai to ariston*); whether as something separate or independent, or as the orderly arrangement of parts. Probably in both sense, as an army does; for the efficiency of an army consists partly in the order and partly in general; but chiefly in the latter, because he does not depend on the order but the order depends on him. All things, both fishes and birds and plants, are ordered together in some way, but not in the same way; and the system is not such that there is no relation between one thing and another; there is a definite connection. Everything is ordered together to some one thing (*pros men gar hen hapanta suntetaktai*); but the arrangement is like that in a household, where the free persons have the least liberty to act at random and have all or most of their actions preordained for them, whereas the slaves and animals have little common responsibility and act for the most part at random.\(^{277}\)

Everything is together ordered to one thing, the supreme goodness of the divine *nous* in *theōria*, as final cause. This, for Aristotle, is finally the one principle of the universe. Any philosophical conception of the world which ends in two or more principles cannot be right:

Further, if there is to be nothing else besides sensible things, there will be no first principle, no order, no generation, and no celestial motions, but every principle will be based on another, as in the accounts of all the cosmologists and physicists. And if the forms or numbers are to exist, they will be causes of nothing; or if not of nothing, at least not of motion ... as for those who maintain that mathematical number is the primary reality, and so go on generating one substance after another and finding different principles for each one, they make the substance of the universe incoherent (for one substance in no way affects another by its existence or non-existence) and gives us a great many governing principles. But the world must not be governed badly: 'The rule of many is not good: let one be the ruler'.\(^{278}\)

\(^{274}\) ibid. 1075a37
\(^{275}\) ibid. 982b10
\(^{276}\) ibid. 1072b1-4
\(^{277}\) ibid. 1075a11-22
\(^{278}\) ibid. 1075b24-28, b37-1076a4
This one principle of supreme goodness is the primary being (to prōtōn tôn ontōn), form (to ti ēn einai) without matter (ouk echei hulēn) and complete actuality (entelecheia), which Aristotle ultimately identifies as wisdom (sophia). That the supreme good and principle of the universe is wisdom for Aristotle is apparent in the contrast he makes between other philosophers’ notions of nous as the good (to agathon) and his own:

Anaxagoras makes the good a principle as causing motion; for nous moves things, but moves them for some end, and therefore there must be some other good ... moreover those who posit two principles must admit another superior principle, and so must the exponent of the forms; for what made or makes particulars participate in the forms? And on all other views it follows necessarily that there must be something which is contrary to wisdom (sophia), or supreme knowledge (timiōtātē epistēmē), but on ours it does not. For there is no contrary to that which is primary, since all contraries involve matter, and that which has matter exists potentially; and the ignorance which is contrary to wisdom would tend towards the contrary of the object of wisdom: but that which is primary has no contrary.  

Wisdom, as the life of nous in theōria, is the supreme goodness and the one principle of the universe as final cause. Aristotle describes the universe as ‘governed’ (politeuesthai) by this one principle. In this sense Aristotle’s allusion in the Politics to the divine power which holds the universe together, is the ordering, or rule, of the supreme goodness of divine wisdom.

The wise in the perfect happiness of their contemplative activity most closely approximate this rule of divine wisdom. By their sheer example to others in their polis of a life of activity dedicated as far as possible to a theoretical knowledge of the divine, the wise man (along with his friends in shared contemplation) best portrays the divine rule of goodness as a final cause. Yet in the secondarily happy life of their rule together as civic friends in the best polis, the virtuous approximate the divine wisdom insofar as their rule orders the polis according to law. By the virtuous action of their ruling the polis, the citizens of the best polis order the polis by issuing commands for the sake of the human good. God rules the universe by the goodness of the divine activity of nous in wisdom,
the citizens of the best polis rule their polis by understanding the nature of the good of their polis by their wisdom, and, by their political intelligence and ethical virtue, enact laws so that they and the whole polis might put that good into practice in their choices of action. The divine rule is the goodness of a wisdom of simple and eternal theoria - a happy life of nous whose object of concern is its own activity; the citizens' rule is the fineness of the secondarily happy life - a life concerned, by means of right legislation, with all the citizens and members of the polis living as well as they can in their choices of action.

Because the good of the polis is finer and more divine than simply the good of the individual, the citizens of the best polis in their choice to rule together for the sake of the good of the polis perform the finest and most divine of virtuous actions.

V. The Nature and Place of Friendship of the Best Men in the Best, Next Best, and Bad Political Communities

In all arts and sciences, Aristotle tells us at the beginning of Book IV of the Politics, it is the function of each art or science in studying its particular subject as a class to study that which is the best in that class. In the practical science of politics, if that science is indeed to be of practical use, we and the true statesman (ho politikos) need not only to know what form of constitution is best simply, but also that constitution which is the best that can be achieved. In addition, we need to know that constitution which is easier and more generally shared by all the political communities. Of the three correct constitutions, those constitutions which have as their aim the common good, or justice haplos of their citizens, Aristotle considers monarchy and aristocracy, which have, respectively, one or the few as virtuous rulers, to be the best government, while polity, which has a large number of citizens as rulers, is next best due to the difficulty of having a large number of virtuous citizens. By having a larger number of citizens as rulers, a number which cannot all be virtuous, the polity in effect opens its qualification of citizenship to qualities other than that

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282 Pol 1326a29-33
283 Cf. Meta 1072b18-21, 1074b15-1075a5
284 NE 1094b7-10
285 Pol 1288b10-5, cf. 1254a36-9, 1260b27-9

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of strict virtue. We will conclude our study of the nature and place of virtue friendship in the polis by examining the nature and place of a perfect friendship among citizens of the best polis governed according to a monarchic and aristocratic constitution, the next best constitution of polity, and whatever place a perfect friendship can have in a bad constitution.

1. The Best Polis as a Virtuous Community of Citizens Who are Perfect Friends is an Aristocracy

In one form of state the good man and the good citizen are the same, but in another they are different, and also in the former case it is not every citizen but only the statesman, the man who controls or is competent to control, singly, or with colleagues, the administration of the commonwealth, that is essentially also a good man.\(^{287}\)

If the argument of this thesis has been correct, that in the NE the happy life of virtuous action in the polis is best practiced in a community of virtue that is the perfect friendship of the virtuous and that in the Politics the nature of the human being as political requires that the happy human life be that of a community of citizens ruling in the best polis as civic, or perfect friends, then the best polis should be an aristocratic form of government for an aristocracy is precisely the rule of a virtuous community of citizens. But in fact, Aristotle sometimes maintains that the best government of the best polis can be either an aristocracy or a monarchy,\(^{288}\) and at other times he appears to hold that it is monarchy rather than aristocracy which is the best form of government for the best polis.\(^{289}\) If Aristotle favors monarchy over aristocracy it may be due to the influence of his theoretical understanding of the universe and its divine cause. And in the Metaphysics, the supreme goodness of the life of divine nous in theoria, which naturally attracts all things by final causality, is Aristotle's paradigm, or primary instance, of wise rule.\(^ {290}\) In his practical philosophy of human concerns Aristotle conjectures that if there were a ruler of almost

\(^{286}\) ibid. 1288b21-38

\(^{287}\) ibid. 1278b2-5

\(^{288}\) In Book IV of the Politics, Aristotle refers to the account of the best regime as the 'discourses of aristocracy': Pol 1290a1-3, cf. 1293b1-7, or as an account of kingship and aristocracy: ibid. 1289a30-8.

\(^{289}\) NE 1160a35-6; Pol 1261a29-b6, 1284b25-34, 1288a15-29, 1325b7-14, 1332b16-27. In the EE, however, Aristotle holds that aristocracy is the best: EE 1241b36-7

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divine goodness with the self-sufficiency to devote himself exclusively to the true welfare of the polis.\textsuperscript{291} the rule of such a one would be best. If we gloss this with what Aristotle has told us about the wise man and the human good of a life of virtuous activity we might say that if the true welfare of the polis is the human good of a happy life of virtuous activity and that life is the perfect happiness of contemplation, then the monarch may be understood by Aristotle to be the best ruler, or statesman, because he would be a philosopher, that is, one who is exclusively concerned with the human good of perfect happiness in contemplation. This philosopher-king would rule not by interrupting his contemplative activity to attend to the practical concerns of administrating the polis, rather, by his own goodness as a final cause of the goodness of others, he would rule much as the goodness of divine contemplation rules the universe. That is, the monarch, simply by the example of his perfect happiness in contemplative activity, would exert a good influence on those who are practically concerned with the running of the polis. Such a monarch would be the supreme statesman of his polis simply by being its philosopher. And yet as a human being, if he were to choose to rule the polis for the sake of the fineness of such a life, this monarch would have the political intelligence and ethical virtue to most effectively administer the polis so that all might have the laws and education to live a happy life of virtuous action.\textsuperscript{292} The mutual exchange of goods and affection among the members of the

\textsuperscript{290} \textit{Meta} XII 7-10

\textsuperscript{291} \textit{Pol} 1284a10, 1289a40; \textit{NE} 1160a35-b7

\textsuperscript{292} For a different story about the monarch in the best polis see: P. Vander Waerdt. (1985) 249-73. Vander Waerdt recognizes that the life of philosophy is the good and end of Aristotle’s best polis but argues that in this best of regimes governed by a monarch of superhuman virtue, the monarch’s virtue is not conducive to a life of philosophy but is rather political, that is, the monarch’s virtue is exercised in ruling the polis so that not he but the citizens are able to have the leisure to live a life of ‘public philosophy’. Vander Waerdt seems compelled to separate the monarch’s virtue and action of ruling the polis from a life of philosophy because he understands the political activity of ruling to be unenlightened and therefore incapable of philosophy. But according to Aristotle in the \textit{Politics}, in the best polis, freed from the necessities of war and business, the citizens (who are, of course, its rulers) will have the leisure for the virtues of temperance, justice, and \textit{philosophia}; \textit{Pol} 1334a1ff, cf. 1329a1-2, 1337b29-35. Furthermore, the citizens of the best polis as wise, will, when they do choose to rule, desire the fineness of that activity as that good and end which preserves and promotes the supreme good and most final end of the perfect happiness of contemplation for the polis and the polis includes themselves as its citizens well as all its other members. Vander Waerdt’s interpretation of the monarch and his rule derives ultimately from his view that Aristotle separates the life of philosophy from that of political virtue in Book X of the \textit{NE}. 

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polis, necessary for the formation of virtue friendships among them, would be guaranteed by the goodness of the monarch. Under the benign rule of this supremely virtuous ruler, the members of the polis would have the best opportunity to become perfect friends and in such a city comparatively many virtuous men would flourish. In the best of political communities the citizens would be virtuous and would without envy recognize and gladly follow such a man as their sole and the most effective governor in leading them in a life of virtue.

While Aristotle does not explain what he means by the divine or superhuman virtue of the perfect monarch and the nature of his self-sufficiency, presumably this monarch would still be a human being and judged as such, his solitary rule, whether in his life of undistracted contemplation or in his life of a practical administration of the polis, would appear to fall short of what Aristotle describes as perfect human happiness. For, as we have seen at NE X 7, if indeed contemplation with fellow workers as friends may better, that is, more continuous and pleasant, than contemplation alone by oneself, the philosopher king would be less happy as a human being than if he had friends with which to share that contemplation. And if he were to choose to practically administer the polis for the sake of the fineness of that life, his virtuous action in ruling would also be less continuous, less pleasant, and certainly less social, than if he were to share that practical rule with others in perfect friendship. Besides adversely affecting his own perfect happiness, the solitary rule of the monarch would also prove less satisfactory for the happiness of those he governed in the polis. For unlike the rule of a virtuous community of citizens in an aristocracy, where the citizens all exercise the virtue of politikē in putting the human good into practice in the virtuous action of ruling the polis together and thus fulfill their political nature, in the best polis governed by the monarch, the monarch alone is able to put the human good into practice in the exercise of the virtue of politikē in his rule. And because a citizen for Aristotle is finally one who rules in his polis, in the monarchic rule of the divinely good man, there could only be one citizen haplōs. So while the virtuous men in the best polis
governed by such a monarch may have the greatest opportunity for practicing the human
good together in virtuous action, they would be debarred from exercising their practical
intelligence in the virtuous action of ruling the polis. The monarchically governed, in other
words, in their virtuous action could exercise their _phronësis_ but not _politikë_. Because
these men could not be citizens _haplōs_ nor could their perfect friendships be civic
friendships in the rule of their polis, an action which achieves a more divine good, their
secondarily happy life of virtuous action in the polis would be less divine and therefore less
happy than if they were citizens and civic friends in an aristocracy.

The nature of friendship in a monarchy of the ruler of superior virtue would be
essentially the same as the perfect friendship described by Aristotle in his _NE except_ that
there is no implicit possibility (as there is in the _NE_) that this friendship could be a
friendship of virtuous _citizens_. The place of virtue friendship in the polis governed by a
monarchy would not be a friendship of citizens, those who rule, but of members of a polis
as those who are ruled. Perfect friendship of the virtuous in a monarchy could not be a
civic friendship and the best polis could not be a virtuous community of civic friendship.
Thus the best polis, if governed according to a monarchy, would be a virtuous community
not of citizens as civic, or perfect friends, but a virtuous community of men who are perfect
friends as subjects.

**Whether Aristotle believed a monarchy to be the absolutely best form of
government or not, because of the difficulty in finding a man of such divine goodness he
seems to hold finally that an aristocracy is the best government for the best polis.** An
aristocracy is best, for if all things were equal, that is, if the alternatives consisted of one
virtuous ruler and a community of such rulers, an aristocracy, that is, a community of the

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293 In effect, the members of the best polis governed by a monarchy, or at least those capable of virtue,
would be like the virtuous man described by Aristotle in his _NE_. In the latter work Aristotle presents the
good man apart from, because preliminary to, the explicitly political point of view of that man's being a
citizen in his polis. The virtuous men of the best polis governed by a monarch are certainly members of
their polis but to the extent that they are not citizens they can be understood as Aristotle understands the
virtuous man in the _NE_.

294 Cf. _NE_ 1094b7-10

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best (virtuous) men, would be the naturally best government. This appears to be Aristotle's conclusion of the matter, for in his comments in *Politics* VII, he states that 'in our polis all the citizens (*pantes hoi politai*) actively participate in governing'.

2. The Nature and Place of Perfect Friendship in the Polity

A polity is a correct constitution which has a large number of citizens as rulers. Because of the inherent difficulty of having a larger number of citizens ruling the polis, some of whom are not virtuous. Aristotle views the polity as the next best form of political community. The polity, in an effort to have more citizens rule, in effect opens its qualification of citizenship to qualities other than that of strict virtue. Empirically, the greater number of people in any polis is usually distinguished either by birth, economic standing, or freedom and it is on the strength of these qualities that they base their claim to rule. Without ignoring the importance of virtue, a polity can also respect other qualifications to rule and thereby open the government to more than just the virtuous. If these further qualifications can be carefully determined so that the correctness of the constitution is not threatened by the greater number of administrators, a polity can become more appealing to more people and therefore more practicable than either a monarchy or an aristocracy. But maintaining a well-governed polis with this greater number of administrators is not an easy task. The importance of virtue as a qualification must somehow be maintained along with other rightly determined qualifications. If either wealth or a certain conception of equality becomes the sole or predominant qualification to rule, the wealthy or well-born on the one hand or the lower class on the other would have administrative control of the constitution, and either group would then arrogate more political power than is constitutionally lawful, perverting the constitution into either an

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295 *Pol* 1261a29-b6, 1284b25-34, 1288a15-29, 1325b7-14, 1332b16-27
296 ibid. 1286b3-7, 1287b12-3
297 ibid. 1332a34-5
298 Cf. 1283aff
oligarchy or a democracy. The result of bad rule will be a perversion of the constitution itself as well as of the citizens who rule.

In order to appeal to a greater number, the polity attempts to take what is best in oligarchic and democratic claims without compromising its commitment to virtue. By adding certain qualifications taken from both oligarchy and democracy to that of virtue, it can steer a middle course between the extremes of either of those perverted governments by maintaining a citizenry which shares in what is amenable to a virtuous life in those extremes. Aristotle thinks this is possible with citizenry taken from the middle class who rule by the laws of a correct constitution. He conceives the polity as a correct constitution with citizens of the middle class as its administrators, a mixture of what is good in an oligarchy and a democracy and yet a mean between those two extremes.

Aristotle favors a rule of the middle class in his polity for a number of reasons. The middle class enjoy comparatively the right amount of external goods necessary for a life of virtue and are more equal among themselves than are citizens of an oligarchy or a democracy. The equality which citizens of the middle class enjoy due to their similarity in economic position as a mean between the very wealthy and the poor protects them from the kind of faction which plagues both the wealthy and the poor classes: faction bred by disputes over the nature and extent of equality among them.

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299 ibid. 1296a22-b2
300 ibid. 1283a17-22
301 For example, the polity, as a mixture of what is good in an oligarchy and in a democracy, pays the poor in attendance and fines the rich in their absence from office: Pol 1294a1-b1. is a mixture of offices by lot and by election: ibid. 1300a30-6, with moderate or no property qualifications for the elected offices: ibid. 1294b7-10, 1298a35-40, with a judiciary taken partly from the citizens as a whole and partly from a select group: ibid. 1301a11-5
302 ibid. 1293b33-4, 1295b3, cf. 1290a23-6
303 ibid. 1301a37-8, b28-40. All three classes would agree that justice is distribution according to merit (axia) but differ as to what is to count as merit. The poor favor a democratic constitution by which the indigent are rulers, whereas the wealthy strive for an oligarchy in which the rulers are men of property: ibid. 1279a17-9. Democrats think that because they are equal in some respects they should be equal in all: oligarchs, on the other hand, think that because they are unequal (superior) in some respect they should be unequal in all. Thus the poor identify merit with the status of the freeman while merit for the wealthy is wealth: NE 1131a27-9. Further, democrats believe in an arithmetic equality in which everyone should be treated the same, whereas oligarchs believe in an equality of proportion based on wealth: Pol 1301b29, 1317b4. The overabundance or paucity of the goods necessary for the possibility of the practice of virtue

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the middle class shares also more nearly approaches the optimum condition of the best polis - a citizenry of friends as equals. Furthermore, this class is more stable than the other two classes and affords the polis the greatest security, for the citizens are not consumed with competing for more than their fair share of wealth and honor. Finally, the middle class is, in the best case, the largest of the classes within the polis and therefore strong enough to offset the extremes of the others. In addition, Aristotle notes the historical fact that the greatest number of the best lawgivers come from the middle class. For all these reasons he concludes that, next to the polis governed according to the naturally best constitution, a constitutional government, or polity, governed by citizens of the middle class, is the best and most likely to succeed.

What can we say about the nature and place of virtue friendship in the next best polis, the polis governed by the middle class? First, because the constitution of the polity is correct, the common advantage, or good, will be justice haplōs. If this constitution has the human good of virtuous action as its formulated good and end, then despite the fact that the qualifications for citizenship have been broadened to include the middle class, rather than simply those who are qualified by virtue, the citizens of this polis could still have the opportunity for being good men haplōs for the constitution of this polis allows the citizens to live the happy human life as virtuous men and virtuous friends. However, because the requirement for administration of the constitution is not restricted to the virtuous, as it is in the best polis, but rather extends to those who qualify on other grounds, the citizens of the polity are not all necessarily virtuous. Because they are not all virtuous, the citizens will

incites the wealthy and the poor classes to seek a greater material economic advantage in order to gratify their desires; ibid. 1295b15-8, 1310a22-4, and thus to clamor for a perverted constitution based on self-interest rather than on the common good: ibid. 1279b9-10. The mean position between wealth and poverty that the middle class occupies allows them a comparative freedom from the self-interest displayed among the wealthy and the poor and thus allows them to rule according to a correct constitution with a minimal distortion of the good that the constitution aims at and the offices that the constitution embodies; offices which are designed for the sake of ruling the polis well according to the human good.

304 Pol 1295b23-8
305 ibid. 1295b29-34
306 ibid. 1295b34-1296a7
307 ibid. 1296a13-21

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not all be able to rule well according to their correct constitution and so their enactment, execution, and adjudication of the laws will not necessarily be right. The system of educating the citizens according to the constitution will likewise be faulty. The citizens of a polity, while guided by a correct constitution, will not have the virtue to put the good and end of that constitution into practice in their rule.

Because the citizens of the polity are not necessarily virtuous men, their rule will be a mixture of what is virtuous and what is not and will therefore ultimately be the rule of the majority.\(^{308}\) a majority which, by a mixture of quality and sheer quantity of numbers, can trump any minority even if that minority were virtuous. Majority rule, while more appealing to more people and therefore practicable, cannot be necessarily right.\(^{309}\)

Not only are the citizens of the polity not necessarily virtuous men, all the virtuous will not necessarily be citizens for they may fail to qualify as citizens on grounds other than virtue. This is not to say that in a polity justice and virtue haplōs would be ignored, nor that virtue would prove threatening to the polis - as it probably would in a polis governed according to a deviant constitution. Rather, virtue in a polity would not be esteemed as the sole qualification for citizenship. In the polity the good citizen will not necessarily be the good man nor the good man necessarily a citizen - not because the good of the constitution is not the true human good of the virtuous, but because the governance of that constitution is not entrusted to citizens who are necessarily the best men of their polis.

The polity is a political community of citizens as civic friends who have a correct constitution but are unable to put the good and end of that constitution into practice in their rule. In effect, the citizens of this polis are akratic, knowing and rationally desiring the human good of the polis as a life of virtuous action for all the citizens but unable to put that

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\(^{308}\) While majority rule is characteristic of a democracy, it is not uniquely so: majority rule applies in any group in which members are treated equally: *Pol* 1294a11-4, 1318a28-30

\(^{309}\) That is, the rule of citizens of the polity is a rule of the collective group whose civic virtue will be understood, at least procedurally, to supersede the virtue of the few, even though those few could be experts or even good men haplōs. cf. *Pol* 1281a42-b38, 1282a17-23. Such rule falls short of that of citizens who qua citizens are necessarily virtuous.
good into practice in their choice of rule.\textsuperscript{310} Thus the polity is a civic friendship of good, but not virtuous men. What place then is there for perfect friendship in a polity?

In the polity, because the good of the constitution is the good of the virtuous man, civic virtue and friendship will be the virtue and friendship of the virtuous man constitutionally. But because the citizens of this polis are not necessarily virtuous, the civic virtue and friendship of the citizens will not be that of the virtuous man in practice, except in some cases and accidentally. That is, because the requirements of citizenship are not restricted to the virtuous, the citizen is not necessarily a virtuous man and civic friendship is not necessarily perfect friendship. In this polis, if in fact there are citizens who are virtuous and who have formed perfect friendships, it will not be because they are citizens. Finally, there is the possibility, of course, that other members of this polis, those who may not qualify for citizenship, may yet be virtuous men. Should there be such men, they could become perfect friends within the polity even though their virtue would not be a civic virtue nor their friendship a civic friendship.

3. Perfect Friendship and the Bad Polis

Last, and least of all, is the bad polis - the political community governed by a perverted constitution. If a perfect friendship of the virtuous finds a place in this kind of polis it will be a threat to and be threatened by the government.\textsuperscript{311} For the very goodness of a life of virtue which is the good and end of the virtuous in their friendship is irrelevant at best to a deviant constitution, its offices, and laws. In these political communities other goods are substituted for the true human good of virtue, and the citizens who rule according to these deviant constitutions are not only not good men but actually evil to the extent that they exclude the true human good from their own lives and the lives of those they govern in their pursuit of other goods. The governments of these perverted constitutions are doubly perverse: perverse in the good and final end as formulated in the constitution (and the offices set up as means to secure that good), and perverse in the

\textsuperscript{310} Cf. \textit{NE} 1152a15-24
citizens who rule according to such a constitution. Whatever civic friendship there could be among citizens of this kind of polis would be a utility friendship not finally related to the real human good and thus a friendship open to all the competition, misunderstanding and recriminations possible among citizens who care only about securing goods for themselves. 312 If per mirabile the citizens of political communities with such deviant constitutions become virtuous men and perfect friends, it will not be simply accidental to their government but in spite of that government, for if a perfect friendship of virtuous men should exist in a such a state, it would pose a threat to that polis and everything it stands for.313

Conclusion of Chapter IV

In this chapter we have examined the nature of civic friendship in the best polis as a perfect friendship of its citizens as virtuous men by reading the Politics in the light of the Ethics, and especially in the light of the NE. We first argued that Aristotle’s understanding of the nature of the human good and of virtuous action in the NE and the Politics is the same, or similar enough, to warrant the conclusion that the human good of the happy ethical life of the virtuous man in the former work is the same as the citizen’s life in the best polis in the latter. As the virtuous man of the NE is the virtuous citizen in the Politics, the perfect friendship of the virtuous in the NE is the civic friendship of citizens in the best polis as that polis is presented in the Politics. We then studied the political nature of the human being and the nature of the polis as a community of civic friendship to show that the political nature of the human being requires life in a political community and that the nature of the political community is that of a civic friendship - an action of justice and friendship of its citizens - for the sake of living well. From there we considered the nature of civic friendship in the best polis and concluded that such a friendship is a perfect friendship of

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311 Cf. Pol 1313b29-32
312 Because the ruler(s) of such a polis has no concern for the human good as the end of the activity of his rule, the good things he would secure for himself could not be goods haplos but goods tini - things desirable to his perverted sense of happiness. cf. EE 1235b31-1236a7
313 ibid. 1286b3-7
the virtuous as presented in the *NE*. Virtuous men, then, as perfect friends, strive to immortalize themselves as far as possible in contemplation but when they chooses to rule the best polis for the sake of the fineness of that action, they do so for the sake of the perfect happiness of a life of contemplation for themselves and for all the members of polis.

Finally, by examining the nature and place a perfect friendship may have in a monarchy, a polity, and even in a bad polis, we have seen how a perfect friendship of the members of political communities governed by these different constitutions more or less approximates the nature and place of perfect friendship as a civic friendship in an aristocracy.
THESIS CONCLUSION

THE PERFECT HAPPINESS OF VIRTUOUS FRIENDS: THE NATURE AND PLACE OF PERFECT FRIENDSHIP IN THE HAPPY LIFE OF THE VIRTUOUS IN ARISTOTLE'S PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY

The subject of this thesis has been the nature and place of perfect friendship in the happy life of the virtuous in Aristotle's practical philosophy.

In our first chapter we argued that the happy life of the virtuous man is a life of virtuous action in focal connection to a life of contemplation as the virtuous man desires virtuous action as a good and final end for the sake of a life of contemplation as final happiness. The fineness of virtuous action is focally connected to the life of contemplation as that good and final end which preserves or promotes the contemplative life.

In our second chapter we argued that the virtuous man for Aristotle is wise, practically intelligent, and ethically virtuous. In his virtuous activity the virtuous man exercises his ethical virtue in a desire for the human good as end, his practical intelligence in discerning and choosing the action as the means to that end and his wisdom in a knowledge of the nature of that good and end. In this way the virtuous man actualizes the complete human function with all its intellectual and appetitive faculties and virtues.

In our third chapter we saw that perfect friendship is a virtuous activity and a character virtue which includes justice and all the other character virtues. As such it is a sumpraxis of virtue and the fullest way of living an ethically virtuous life. We also saw that perfect friendship as a mutual sharing of the goods which the virtuous friends hold most dear can be a sumphilosophia in which the friends can share knowledge of what is most honored and divine with each other in conversation. We argued that Aristotle's admission that contemplative activity might be more continuous and pleasant (and therefore better) with 'fellow-workers' than if done alone is an allusion to the sumphilosophia of virtuous friends in perfect friendship. Thus perfect friendship is for virtuous men a fuller
and more complete way of living the happy life of virtuous activity than if they were to live without each other as friends.

Finally in our fourth chapter after examining what Aristotle tells us in the *Politics* about the best polis and what he says about civic friendship in the Ethics, we infer that in the best polis as Aristotle conceives it the civic friendship of the citizens is a perfect friendship of the virtuous.

The nature of perfect friendship, then, is a virtuous activity of virtuous men sharing all good things with each other out of love for their virtuous characters and they desire the fineness of this activity as a good and final end which helps them live a life of contemplative activity together. Their perfect friendship enables the virtuous men to live the happiness of a life of virtuous activity better than if they were not friends and in the best polis the virtuous men are citizens and their civic friendship is a perfect friendship which enables them and their whole polis to live the happiness of a life of virtuous activity in the fullest, most complete way.
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