

PHIL 260: Ethics

Winter 2006; David O. Brink

Persons & Values

Handout #7: Persons, Eudaimonia, and Friendship in Aristotle's Ethical Theory

There are many traditions in the history of ethics that make prominent use of assumptions about persons and their persistence. One such tradition is Greek ethics and Aristotelian ethics, in particular. Aristotle's discussions of the final good – eudaimonia – and the virtue of friendship appear to give a prominent role to assumptions about persons and their persistence. Our discussion will focus on these two aspects of Aristotle's ethical theory, but I will try to provide enough background and context to indicate the roles that these discussions play in Aristotle's overall ethical theory.

THE FINAL GOOD

Though three works on ethics are often attributed to Aristotle -- the Nicomachean Ethics (NE), Eudemian Ethics (EE), and the Magna Moralia (MM) -- the NE appears to be the most comprehensive and mature, as well as the most clearly authentic of the works. We shall focus on it, for the most part. As NE i makes clear, Aristotle shares the eudaimonism of his predecessors; his conception of ethics is based upon a conception of what sort of life will secure the agent's own eudaimonia or happiness. Like Socrates and Plato, Aristotle believes that virtue (arete) is a state of character whose exercise promotes the agent's happiness.

Why a final good? He begins the NE by arguing that

... every action and decision seems to aim at some good; hence the good has been well described as that at which everything aims [1094a2-3].

However, it doesn't seem to follow from the fact that we always aim at a good that there is one good at which we always aim; we might have a number of distinct ultimate aims. Understood as a straightforward psychological claim, eudaimonism may seem somewhat dubious. But we should notice two things.

First, Aristotle insists that our ultimate aim can be a complex whole whose parts we desire both for their own sakes and for their role in a good life (1097a31-b6). If so, psychological eudaimonism need not assume all our desires are instrumental to some unitary end; we can recognize a number of distinct things as intrinsically valuable. Second, Aristotle's initial concern is normative, not simply descriptive. He thinks that a rational person will impose structure on the goods she seeks.

On these points we must first notice that everyone who is capable of living in accordance with his own decision sets up some goal of living finely - either honor or reputation or wealth or education - with reference to which he will do all his actions; for not having one's life organized with reference to some end is a sign of much folly [EE 1216b6-11].

An overall structure of goods is arguably part of rational action. The demand for a well integrated, diachronic conception of the good is the demand for a final good. The final good is that for whose sake we pursue other things but which -- alone -- we pursue for its own sake (1094a18 19). If it's true that action is rational insofar as it aims at one's final good and we

conceive of ourselves as rational agents, then it may be appropriate to see our all actions as implicitly and imperfectly directed at a final good. If one fails to promote one's own final good, this will be due to mistakes of fact (e.g. about the appropriate means to the good), mistaken beliefs about the final good (e.g. about its constituents), or weakness of will.

EUDAIMONIA

Everyone agrees that eudaimonia is the final good; they disagree in their conceptions of eudaimonia (1095a17-21, 1097b22-3). Here, as elsewhere, his method is dialectical: he begins by examining the appearances (phainomena), especially common and respected beliefs (endoxa), including those of his predecessors.

As in other cases we must set out the appearances, and first of all go through the puzzles. In this way we must prove the common beliefs ... ideally, all of the common beliefs, but if not all, then most of them and the most important. For if the objections are solved, and the common beliefs are left, it will be an adequate proof [NE vii 1 1145b4-7].

Aristotle examines three common conceptions of eudaimonia:

- pleasure
- honor
- virtue

Though each conception provides part of a plausible conception, none is adequate by itself (1095b16-1096a4).

- a) The life of (pure) pleasure is fit for grazing animals, not for humans.
- b) The life of honor is too passive and is too much outside agent's control.
- c) The life of virtue is close to being right, but is not complete because it may lack of various goods that are not within our control, viz. external goods (e-goods).

These criticisms reflect three assumptions about eudaimonia:

1. The final good must be complete.
2. The final good must be an appropriate life for human beings.
3. The final good should be relatively stable and within our control.

These assumptions are then elaborated in the rest of book i of the NE.

FORMAL CRITERIA

Aristotle links completeness with related formal criteria (1097a27-b22). A complete good is:

- Self-sufficient
- Most choiceworthy
- Lacking in nothing

Incomplete goods are not chosen for their own sakes; they are mere instrumental goods. By contrast, complete goods are chosen for their own sakes; they are intrinsic goods. Unconditionally complete goods are chosen for their own sakes and not chosen for the sake of anything else. Eudaimonia is the only unconditionally complete good. This means that merely complete goods are good in themselves but are also chosen for the sake of eudaimonia, perhaps as parts are chosen for the sakes of the wholes of which they are parts. It follows that there are two different ways in which something may be chosen for the sake of something else.

- Sometimes when x is chosen for the sake of y, x has no value itself and is a mere instrumental means to producing something else that is valuable. Here, x is an incomplete good.
- However, in other cases, x is chosen for the sake of y, where x is valuable as constituent of y. Here, x has contributory value, is good in itself, and is, therefore, a complete good.

Aristotle will claim that the virtues are complete goods. In this he makes explicit the sort of assumptions Plato must make about the relationship between justice and eudaimonia in Republic ii.

We might suppose that a self-sufficient good will be one which one can have all on one's own. But Aristotle denies this, insisting that we are political animals and that our happiness depends upon family, friends, and fellow citizens (1097b10-11). Instead, he means that a complete good contains everything within itself; it must be lacking in nothing (MM 1184a7-13).

But then a complete good must be most choiceworthy. A good that could be improved by adding other elements would not be complete and would not be most choiceworthy.

THE HUMAN FUNCTION

An account of x's good must reflect what x's function is or what x essentially is. De Anima gives an account of the functions (souls) of different organisms and beings. In giving an account of the soul, Aristotle criticizes the Presocratics for offering material-efficient accounts of the soul (DA i 2). Though Plato comes closer to thinking of soul as form, he treats the soul as a mysterious substance, separable from the body (ii 1). The correct view identifies soul with function (412b10-413a2). He explains this idea beginning with places where his talk of form and function is clearest.

- If an axe were a natural body, then chopping would be its soul (412b12-5).
- If an eye were a natural body (rather than a part of one), then seeing would be its soul (412b17-21).

Only things that are living -- natural organisms -- have souls, and their souls are their functions (cf. 415a29-30, 415b15). So one thing that's necessary in the study of the soul is to identify different natural functions; this will allow us to identify different sorts of souls (ii 2-4). Aristotle identifies three main functions:

- a) Self-movement (413a20-35), including growth, reproduction, and nutrition
- b) Sensation (413b1-25), including perception, imagination (?), pleasure and pain, desire, and action
- c) Reflection (413b25-34), including practical and theoretical reasoning (which depend upon imagination).

Notice that in claiming that plants have souls, Aristotle is not assuming that plants are conscious, but only that they are organisms that fit within his formal-final system of explanation as goal-directed systems.

Aristotle wants to claim that the later functions typically involve or presuppose the earlier one(s) (414a30-b15), and that different sorts of souls correspond to these three functions.

- Plants are beings that exercise only (a)-type functions.
- Animals are beings that exercise both (a)-type and (b)-type functions.
- Humans are beings that exercise (a)-(c)-type functions.
- Gods are beings that exercise only (c)-type functions.

But we should not think of higher-order functions as mere conjunctions of lower-order functions. Additional capacities structure the way the organism that has them exercises the original ones. So animals are self-movers whose movement reflects the interaction of informational states (e.g. beliefs) about itself and its relation to its environment and motivational states (e.g. desires). And humans are self-movers whose movement reflects reasoning about its beliefs and desires.

The distinction between rational and non-rational animals is complicated by the fact that Aristotle associates imagination with both sorts of souls, but gives it a greater role in the souls of rational animals. This is not too hard to understand. Imagination involves the representation of possible states of affairs that are not part of one's current sensory experience. The dog uses imagination when it digs for a bone it hid earlier. But rational animals use it much more systematically when they reason about which hypothesis to accept or what course of action to adopt.

Aristotle looks for the "peculiar" function of human beings. But the peculiar function of humans is not the single activity that they and they alone perform (most kinds of souls have no function that is peculiar in this sense), but the organized cluster of activities that they and they alone perform (cf. the peculiar function of a swiss army knife).

Though Aristotle talks about the peculiar function of human beings, he is not really grounding the good in an appeal to a biological essence. For he characterizes human beings as rational animals. Here he appeals to philosophical psychology, rather than biology. If he appeals to essential properties, it is the essential properties of moral personality, rather than anything that we can recognize as the essence of a biological species.

Aristotle claims that it is good for humans or people to exercise their peculiar function well. Is this reasonable? Does it follow from x's performing its function well that this is good for x?

- The function of a purebred golden retriever may be to display a long waist, but this may not be good for the dog if it leads to hip dysplasia.
- The function of the king's food taster may be to thwart attempts to poison the king, but performing this function well may not be good for the food taster.

x's performing her function F well may benefit her qua F, but may not benefit her as a person or human being. However, Aristotle may claim that this gap between the good F and the good of that which is F cannot arise when we are talking about the good person.

EXTERNAL GOODS

Some goods (e.g. health, wealth, worldly success, good luck for oneself and one's special relations) are externals, because they are not fully within our control. Though e-goods are not fully within our control, completeness requires them.

However, many events are matters of fortune, and some are smaller, some greater. Hence, while small strokes of good or ill fortune clearly will not influence his life, many great strokes of good fortune will make it more blessed, since in themselves they naturally add adornment to it, and his use of them proves to be fine and excellent. Conversely, if they are great misfortunes, they oppress and spoil his blessedness, since they involve pain and impede many activities [1100b23-30].

Externals are essential both as necessary conditions of exercising some virtues (e.g. magnificence) (1099a31-3) and as parts of happiness (1099b1-7, 1100a6-8, 1100b27). Only a philosopher concerned to defend his theory in the face of common sense would deny the value of externals (1096a1-3).

That is why the happy person needs to have goods of the body and external goods added, and needs fortune also, so that he will not be impeded in these ways. Some maintain, on the contrary, that we are happy when we are broken on the rack, or fall into terrible misfortunes, provided that we are good [virtuous]. Whether they mean to or not, these people are talking nonsense [vii 13 1153b17-21].

Aristotle seems to have Socrates in mind here.

THE DOMINANCE OF VIRTUE

Severe misfortunes may rob a virtuous person of happiness, but (a) they cannot make a virtuous person miserable, and (b) a person is always better off choosing virtue over any amount of e-goods (1098b15-16, 1099b17-27, 1100b1-11, 1100b31-34). Here, Aristotle embraces Plato's Comparative or Dominance Thesis, not Socrates's Sufficiency Thesis, about the role of virtue in happiness.

Suitability (2) and control (3) support the dominance of virtue. We can see a tension, though not inconsistency, between control (3) and completeness (1).

COMPREHENSIVE AND INTELLECTUALIST CONCEPTIONS OF HAPPINESS

NE i appears to endorse a comprehensive conception in the sense that it includes e-goods as well as virtue and both intellectual virtues and virtues of character (1103a5 6). Most of the rest of the NE is devoted to a study of the virtues of character, either to the nature and conditions of such virtues in general (e.g. NE ii iii, vii) or of specific such virtues -- assorted virtues in iii and iv (e.g. bravery and temperance in iii; generosity, magnificence, and magnanimity in iv), justice in v, and friendship in viii-ix. This apparently overwhelming commitment to a comprehensive conception of eudaimonia explains why many commentators wish that Aristotle had never written NE x 7-8.

There, he appears to endorse strict intellectualism, viz. the claim that theoretical reason or contemplation is not only the most, but indeed the exclusive good.

Hence the activity of the gods that is superior in blessedness will be an activity of study. And so the human activity that is most akin to the god's will, more than any others, has the character of happiness. A sign of this is the fact that other animals have no share in happiness, being completely deprived of this activity of study. For the whole life of the gods is blessed to the extent that it has something resembling this sort of activity; but none of the other animals is happy, because none of them shares in study at all. Hence happiness extends just as far as study extends, and the more someone studies, the happier he is, not coincidentally but insofar as he studies, since study is valuable in itself. And so happiness will be some kind of study [1178b22-31].

Why is Aristotle attracted to strict intellectualism? At one point, he appeals to the divinity of contemplation (1177a13-18, 1177b27-1178a10, 1178b8-31).

1. Happiness should be identified with the best or most divine elements.
2. Contemplation is most godlike, because it is the activity characteristic of gods.
3. Hence, our happiness should be identified with contemplation.

But this appeal seems to run afoul of the function argument. After all, we are humans or rational animals, not gods. Indeed, we are essentially rational animals; were we to be transformed into gods, this would be a substantial change. But that means it wouldn't be good for us to undergo such a transformation, even if gods have better lives than rational animals.

Hence there is this puzzle: do friends really wish their friend to have the greatest good, e.g. to be a god? For [if he becomes a god], he will no longer have friends, and hence no longer have goods, since friends are good. If, then, we have been right to say that one friend wishes good things to the other for the sake of the other himself, the other must remain whatever sort of being he is. Hence it is to the other as a human being that a friend will wish the greatest goods ... [NE viii 7, 1159a6-12].

Aristotle also appeals to our control over contemplation (1177a27-35, 1178a24-8).

1. The life of contemplation is most within our control.
2. Happiness must be within our control.
3. Hence, happiness must consist in contemplation alone.

Aristotle claims here that contemplation is a more "self-sufficient" good. Here, self-sufficiency is being understood in terms of control, rather than, as in book i, in terms of completeness. But complete control is inconsistent with the completeness requirement, as well as the function argument.

We can reconcile intellectualist and comprehensive claims if the former assert only **comparative** or **conditional** theses.

1. Contemplation is the single activity that best fits the criteria for happiness.
2. If happiness must be some single activity, contemplation is the best candidate.
3. If happiness includes more than one activity, contemplation will be the most important.
4. Happiness consists in contemplation alone.

Some endorsements of contemplation can be understood in comparative or conditional terms. However, other endorsements of contemplation seem to defy such analysis (e.g. 1178b25-29).

Hence the activity of the gods that is superior in blessedness will be an activity of study. And so the human activity that is most akin to the god's will, more than any others, has the character of happiness. *A sign of this is the fact that other animals have no share in happiness, being completely deprived of this activity of study.* For the whole life of the gods is blessed to the extent that it has something resembling this sort of activity; *but none of the other animals is happy, because none of them shares in study at all.* Hence happiness extends just as far as study extends, and the more someone studies, the happier he is, not coincidentally but insofar as he studies, since study is valuable in itself. *And so happiness will be some kind of study* [1178b22-31, italics added].

VIRTUE

The virtues of character concern both the part of the soul that has reason and the part that obeys reason (1098a3-5, 1102b13-1103a3); virtue is the condition in which the nonrational part of the soul that can obey reason does so and harmonizes with rational choice (1102b25-8). There are four possible relations between these two parts of the soul that are important to Aristotle's moral psychology (1102b14-28).

1. **Virtue**: the rational and nonrational parts agree in pursuing the right ends.
2. **Continence**: the rational and nonrational parts disagree; the rational part chooses the right ends; the nonrational part chooses the wrong ends; and the rational part wins.
3. **Incontinence**: the rational and nonrational parts disagree; the rational part chooses the right ends; the nonrational part chooses the wrong ends; and the nonrational part overcomes the rational part.
4. **Vice**: the rational and nonrational parts of the soul agree in pursuing the wrong ends.

This taxonomy avoids the familiar, but oversimple, two-fold classification of characters into virtuous or vicious. Note different patterns within this taxonomy.

- Virtue and vice both involve agreement between the rational and nonrational parts of the soul, whereas continence and incontinence both involve conflicts between these two parts.
- In the case of virtue and continence, the agent acts as he should, whereas in the case of incontinence and vice he does not.
- In the case of virtue, continence, and incontinence the agent makes the right judgment, whether or not he acts on it, whereas only the vicious person forms the wrong judgment.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE MEAN

Virtue is a mean between excess and deficiency of action or feeling (ii 6). The doctrine of the mean is not a decision procedure; the right decision determines the mean, not the other way

around (1106b36-1107b4, 1109a24-5). There is no mean with respect to base actions, such as adultery or murder, or base feelings, such as envy or childishness (1107a9-25; MM 1186a36-b3); where there is a mean it is not always the mid-point (cf. 1106a33 b6).

So what is the significance of the doctrine of the mean? In contrast with a Socratic account, it underscores the role of affective states in virtue. For example, magnanimity requires the proper mix of concern for self and the opinion of others; it requires not only curbing self-aggrandizement but also a healthy concern for oneself and pride in one's accomplishments. Virtue requires proper habituation and training of the nonrational parts of the soul. It also contrasts with a Kantian account of virtue or the good will.

[T]here are many persons who are so sympathetically constituted, that without any further motive of vanity or self interest, they find an inner joy around them and can rejoice in the satisfaction of others as their own work. But I maintain that in such a case an action of this kind, however dutiful and amiable it might be, has nevertheless no true moral worth. ... [It] accords with duty and is thus honorable, deserves praise and encouragement, but not esteem Further still, if nature has put little sympathy in this or that man's heart, if (while being an honest man in other respects) he is by temperament cold and indifferent to the sufferings of others ... if such a man (who would truly not be nature's worst product) had not been exactly fashioned by her a philanthropist, would he not yet find in himself a source from which he might give himself a worth far higher than any that a good natured temperament might have? By all means, because just here does the worth of the character come out; this worth is moral and incomparably the highest of all, viz. that he is beneficent, not from inclination, but from duty [Groundwork 398-9].

Whereas Kant's grudging moralist may display a good will, he would appear to display Aristotelian continence, rather than virtue.

Can the virtuous person experience conflict? This taxonomy, especially the distinction between virtue and mere continence, may suggest that the virtuous person experiences no conflict or regret. On one interpretation, the truly virtuous person sees no conflict between the demands of virtue and other options. Virtue, on this view, does not outweigh or override other reasons; it **silences** them altogether (cf. McDowell). Considerations that would otherwise provide reasons for action altogether lack practical significance when pitted against the demands of virtue. In matters of temperance and bravery, actions are not enough;

we must take as a sign of someone's state his pleasure or pain in consequence of his action. For if someone who abstains from bodily pleasures enjoys the abstinence itself, then he is temperate, but if he is grieved by it, he is intemperate. Again, if he stands firm against terrifying situations and enjoys it, or at least does not find it painful, then he is brave, and if he finds it painful, he is cowardly [1104b4-7].

This silencing interpretation need not make Aristotle fully Socratic. For while it implies, as Socrates claims, that virtue has no price, it can allow, as Socrates apparently cannot, that e-goods have value when not in competition with virtue. If so, this interpretation can allow, as Socrates cannot, that virtue is an incomplete good.

Nonetheless, the silencing interpretation is not compelling. It's quite clear that Aristotle does not think that virtue is a complete good. But if e-goods have value independently of virtue,

why should their value be limited by virtue so that they have no value whatsoever when they conflict with virtue? The common view is that virtue can have a price, even if it turns out to be a price well worth paying. Indeed, this seems to be Aristotle's view.

The brave person will find death and wounds [potential costs of bravery] painful, and suffer them unwillingly, but he will stand firm against them because that is fine or because failure is shameful. Indeed, the more he has every virtue and the happier he is, the more pain he will feel at the prospect of death. For this sort of person, more than anyone, finds it worthwhile to be alive, and is knowingly deprived of the greatest goods, and this is painful. But he is no less brave for all that; presumably, indeed, he is all the braver, because he chooses what is fine in war at the cost of all these goods [1117b8-15; cf. EE 1229a7, MM 1191a26-29].

The only reason for supposing that Aristotle ought to deny this common view is the assumption that he must make out his distinction between the virtuous and merely continent. But that distinction requires only that the virtuous person have a sufficiently steady and unwavering commitment to act as he judges best -- that he not be seriously tempted to act otherwise. But one can be steadfast in one's commitment to the virtuous course of action without insisting that virtue has no cost; one need only see that the cost is well worth paying, that is, as Aristotle says, that virtue is the controlling ingredient in eudaimonia.

AKRASIA?

On the one hand, Aristotle thinks that the Socratic denial of akrasia is hard to believe (1145b23-9) and seems to endorse the Platonic view that the incontinent person is overcome by appetites and pleasure (1147b23-34, 1149b26). On the other hand, Aristotle does concede the Socratic claim that the (putative) akrates lacks a kind of knowledge (1147b14-20).

Though (apparent) akrasia involves being overcome by appetite, it also involves a kind of ignorance; the ignorance of the incontinent is due to appetite. The incontinent has knowledge potentially (*dunamis*), but not actually (*no energia*). At the time of acting the incontinent is ignorant of the minor premise of the practical syllogism.

1. I ought not to do F-things.
2. This thing (x) is F.
3. Hence, I ought not to do x.

When all the beliefs are active, (3) produces the appropriate action (or omission). In the incontinent person, (1)-(3) do not produce the appropriate action, even though her beliefs are, at some point, all active (1147a34). When the incontinent person is affected by her appetites, Aristotle thinks that she no longer believes (2) actively (1147b9-12). At the time of acting, pleasure causes her knowledge of (2) to be merely potential.

But why is ignorance always of the minor premise? Don't I sometimes, through the influence of appetite or pleasure, make an exception to the generalization contained in the major premise? Also, is ignorance doing any real work in the explanation of (apparent) akrasia? Isn't to say that the akrates didn't have the right sort of knowledge consequential on her not acting on that knowledge? But, if so, lack of knowledge doesn't seem to explain akrasia.

Perhaps we can answer both worries by attending to Aristotle's suggestion that the incontinent person forms the wrong perceptual belief only coincidentally (1147b2). What he may have in mind is that appetite focuses the akrate's attention on some other desirable feature (G) of x -- for instance, its pleasurableness -- blocking or occluding her recognition of x as F (where F-things are to be avoided). In this way, poorly trained appetites can result in knowledge that the thing is to be avoided residing in the background, rather than the foreground. On this reading, Aristotle's treatment of akrasia bears comparison with Socratic claims about temporal bias in Plato's Protagoras.

VIRTUE, FINE, AND THE GOOD OF OTHERS

The aspects of Aristotelian virtue that we have examined so far do not make explicit reference to the good of others. However, Aristotle does think of the virtues as beneficial to others. In Rhetoric i 9 he links virtue with what is fine (kalon) and praiseworthy (1103a10, 1120a24, 1122b6-8). To be fine, something must be both intrinsically valuable and praiseworthy (1103a10). He suggests that actions that benefit others are most likely to elicit praise and seem praiseworthy.

Virtue is, according to the usual view, a faculty of providing and preserving good things; or a faculty of conferring many great benefits, and benefits of all kinds on all occasions. The parts of virtue are justice, courage, temperance, magnificence, magnanimity, liberality, gentleness, prudence, wisdom. If virtue is a faculty of beneficence, the highest kinds of it must be those which are most useful to others, and for this reason men honor most the just and the courageous ... [1366a36-b6].

[Also fine are] all those actions done for the sake of others, since these less than other actions are done for one's own sake; and all successes which benefit others and not oneself; and services done to one's benefactors, for this is just; and good deeds generally, since they are not directed to one's own profit [1367a4-6].

Here Aristotle identifies the virtues, or at least the most important among the virtues, with other regarding character traits. The Rhetoric contains Aristotle's reconstruction of common views, here common views about the virtues. But the Rhetoric's account of the other-regarding character of the virtues accentuates, rather than resolves, the worry about whether conventional virtues are genuine eudaimonic virtues. Though Aristotle's own ethical views in the NE begin from reflection on common beliefs, his own views sometimes revise common sense, even a reconstructed common sense. Though the NE agrees in some ways with the Rhetoric's account of the relation between virtue, the fine, and the good of others (1120a9-13, 1120a22-3, 1121a27-30, 1168a9-12, 1171a25-b16), there is an important difference between the two accounts. In the NE the fine action is not simply one that benefits others; it must also benefit the agent. Aristotle brings this feature out most clearly in a number of places where he insists that the virtues are fine because they aim at and secure a common good. The magnificent person spends money to the benefit of the community (1122b21) and the common good (1123a5). And general justice, which is complete virtue (in relation to another) (1129b20-30), aims at the benefit of the community and the common good (1129b15-18). Aristotle makes the connections between the fine, the common good, and the agent's own good clearest in discussing true self-love in NE ix 8.

And when everyone competes to achieve what is fine and strains to do the finest actions, everything that is right will be done for the common good, and each person individually will receive the greatest of goods, since that is the character of virtue [1169a8 12].

In linking virtue, with the fine, with the common good, with the agent's own good Aristotle is rejecting the popular contrast, noted in the Rhetoric, between other-regarding concern and the agent's own good. For Aristotle, as for Socrates and Plato, the real test case for this claim is justice, because justice, both for Aristotle and for us, is perhaps the most clearly other-regarding virtue (1366a36-b6).

FRIENDSHIP

Aristotle's insistence on the connection among justice, the good of a community, and the common good suggests that we look to his justification of friendship for help in justifying justice, because friendship is the virtue appropriate to communities or associations in general and includes the perfection of justice (1155a22-28, 1159b25-1160a8). Moreover, appeal to friendship here seems promising because of two claims Aristotle makes about some forms of friendship.

- (a) Friendship involves concern for another's own sake.
- (b) The friend is "another self" or second self.

(a) would seem to secure the other-regarding concern characteristic of justice and moral virtue in general, whereas (b) promises to show such concern is in some way in the agent's own interest. If so, this gives an importance to Aristotle's discussion of friendship that could explain why he devotes what might otherwise seem to be disproportionate attention (two whole books) to friendship.

Aristotle identifies three main kinds of friendship (viii 3-8).

- friendship for advantage
- friendship for pleasure
- complete friendship found between virtuous people

Both advantage-friendship and pleasure-friendship, Aristotle then claims, involve something less than concern for the other's own sake (1156a11-13). Aristotle insists that virtue-friendship supplies the "focal meaning" of friendship. In calling virtue-friendship the best or most complete kind of friendship, he signals that it is friendship to the fullest extent and that other associations are friendship by virtue of their approximation to it (1157a26-32).

Virtue-friendship cannot be widespread inasmuch as virtuous people are rare (1156b25) and this sort of friendship requires a degree of intensity that cannot be maintained on a large scale (1158a11-17, 1171a1-20). Complete friends share similar psychological states, such as aims and goals (1170b16 17) and live together, sharing thought and discussion (1157b8-19, 1159b25-33, 1166a1-12, 1171b30-1172a6). Virtue-friendship "reflects the comparative worth of the friends" (1158b28). The true friend aims at what is good (1162a5, b12, 1165b14-16) and fine (1168b28-1169a12). Because virtue is fine, the friend is concerned with his friend's virtue. This explains why Aristotle thinks that one cannot remain friends with someone who becomes irredeemably vicious (1165b14-21), that the vicious cannot even love themselves (1166b2-27),

and that the person who values and aims to promote his own virtue is the true self-lover (1168a28-1169a12).

FRIENDSHIP AS SELF-LOVE

Aristotle anticipates some of his claims about the justification of virtue-friendship (which begins at ix 4) in viii 12, where he suggests that we should take parental-friendship as our model of friendship. The parent is concerned with the child's welfare for the child's own sake. This concern is appropriate on eudaimonist grounds, because the parent can regard the child as "another self" (1161b19, 28). The child can be regarded as another self of the parent, because the child owes its existence and physical and psychological nature in significant part to the parent; this both echoes and helps explain the common view that a parent's interests are extended by the life of the child. Aristotle suggests similar claims can be made about friendship between siblings. In virtue of living together, siblings causally interact in important ways and share many things in common and so can regard each other as other selves (1161b30-35).

The account of familial-friendship brings out clearly what is crucial to justifying the other regarding concern of virtue-friendship. Aristotle explains the justification of virtue-friendship in terms of proper self-love (1166a1-2, 10, 1166a30-32, 1168b1-1169a12).

For 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 own 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 of the features of friendship extend from oneself to others [1168b2-6].

The excellent person is related to his friend in the same way as he is related to himself, since a friend is another self; and therefore, just as his own being is choiceworthy for him, the friend's being is choiceworthy for him in the same or a similar way [1170b6-9].

One plausible interpretation of Aristotle's claims about the relation between friendship and self-love is reminiscent of Plato's analogy between intrapersonal and interpersonal reproduction in his account of philosophical eros in the Symposium. Aristotle believes that proper self-love requires a proper conception of the self and of what is beneficial for the self.

Hence he [the virtuous person] wishes goods and apparent goods to himself He wishes and does them for his own sake, since he does them for the sake of his thinking part, and that is what each person seems to be. He wishes himself to live and to be preserved. And he wishes this for the part by which he has intelligence more than any other part. For being is a good for the good person, and each person wishes for goods for himself. And no one chooses to be another person even if that other will have every good when he has come into being Rather [each of us chooses goods] on condition that he remains whatever he is; and each person would seem to be the understanding part, or that most of all [1166a15-23].

Later in distinguishing proper from vulgar self-love, Aristotle makes a similar claim.

However, it is this [the virtuous person] more than any other sort of person who seems to be a self-lover. At any rate, he awards himself what is finest and best of all, and gratifies the most controlling part of himself, obeying it in everything. And just as a city and every other composite system seems to be above all its most controlling part, the same is true of a human being; hence someone loves himself most if he likes and gratifies this part [1168b28-34].

In these passages Aristotle wants, in part, to identify a person with the controlling part of his soul or his understanding. We know that Aristotle thinks a human is essentially a psycho-physical compound in which reason can regulate thought and action (1097b24-1098a16, 1102b13-1103a3). If so, it would be reasonable for him to think that the persistence of an individual consists in the continuous employment of his rational faculties to regulate his thought and action. This would explain why Aristotle thinks that proper love for oneself involves a concern for one's practical reason and its virtuous exercise.

If this is what underlies Aristotle's account of proper intrapersonal love, we can see how he thinks interpersonal love or friendship might be modeled on it. I preserve or extend myself by exercising my practical reason -- forming beliefs and desires, deliberating about them, and acting as the result of deliberate choice. But the same sort of psychological interaction and interdependence can be found, presumably to a lesser extent, between two different persons. On Aristotle's view, friends share similar psychological states, such as aims and goals (1170b16-17) and live together (1159b25-33, 1166a1-12, 1171b30-1172a6). Even if psychological similarity is necessary for friendship, it is clearly insufficient; it should be produced and sustained by living together and sharing thought and discussion (1157b5-12, 18-21).

He must, then, perceive his friend's being together [with his own], and he will do this when they live together and share conversation and thought. For in the case of human beings what seems to count as living together is this sharing of conversation and thought, not sharing the same pasture, as in the case of grazing animals [1170b10-14].

This account of interpersonal psychological dependence among friends allows us to see how Aristotle thinks we can view a friend as another-self and so how he can view the justification of friendship in terms of self-love.

Indeed, Aristotle can extend the scope of his eudaimonist justification of interpersonal concern from friends to other members of a just political community. It's true that he recognizes that virtue-friendship can't hold on the scale of a political community that is just (1158a11-12, 1170b29-1171a20; Pol 1262b3-20) and that political communities are associations for mutual advantage and do not involve the best sort of friendship (1160a11-15). Nonetheless, political communities that are just have to a significant degree the two features that are crucial to the justification of virtue-friendship and familial-friendship: there is commonality of aims and aspirations among members of the political association, and this commonality is produced by members of the association living together in the right way, in particular, by defining their aims and goals consensually (1167a25-28, 1155a24-28). Insofar as this is true, members of such a political association can see the interests of other members implicated in their own interests. And members of such a community can aim at justice for its own sake, because justice, Aristotle believes, promotes the common good, which is presumably the good common to them insofar as they are members of an interdependent political community (1129b15-18). This begins to

explain Aristotle's reasons for his well known belief that we are essentially political animals (NE 1097b9-12, Pol 1253a2) and that, as a result, the complete good for an individual can only be realized in a political community.

THE GOOD OF FRIENDSHIP

We can perhaps see why I have reason to care about those who are already my friends. By why have friends in the first place? Aristotle can claim that friendship is a good because it allows me to exercise more fully my rational or deliberative capacities. Aristotle recognizes that I am not self-sufficient at producing a complete deliberative good (NE 1162a20-24, 1170a5-7; Pol 1253a25-7, 1261b10-15). He focuses on the sharing of thought and discussion, especially about how best to live, as well as cooperative interaction. Sharing thought and discussion with another diversifies my experiences and provides me with additional perspectives on the world. In part friendship contributes to my self-understanding by providing a "mirror" on the self (NE 1169b34-35; cf. Plato Phdrs 255d5).

Since then it is ... a most difficult thing ... to attain a knowledge of oneself ... we are not able to see what we are from ourselves (and that we cannot do so is plain from the way in which we blame others without being aware that we do the same things ourselves; and this is the effect of favour or passion, and there are many of us who are blinded by these things so that we judge not aright); ... when we wish to see our own face, we do so by looking into the mirror, in the same way when we wish to know ourselves we can obtain that knowledge by looking at our friend. For the friend is, as we assert, a second self [MM 1213a13-24; cf. EE 1245a29-36].

Insofar as my friend is like me, I can appreciate my own qualities from a different perspective; this promotes my self-understanding. One need only think of the familiar way in which parents experience pride and sometimes chagrin when they see various habits and traits of their own manifested in their children. But interaction with another just like me does not itself contribute to self-criticism. This is why there is deliberative value in interaction with diverse sorts of people many of whom are not mirror images of myself. This suggests another way in which I am not deliberately self-sufficient. Sharing thought and discussion with others, especially about how to live, improves my own practical deliberations; it enlarges my menu of options, by identifying new options, and helps me better assess the merits of these options, by forcing on my attention new considerations and arguments about the comparative merits of the options. Here Aristotle might appeal to Socratic claims about the deliberative value of open and vigorous discussion with diverse interlocutors. Moreover, cooperative interaction with others allows me to participate in larger, more complex projects and so extend the scope of my deliberative control over my environment. In this way, I spread my interests more widely than I could acting on my own.

NON-INSTRUMENTAL CONCERN

Friendship and other special relations are supposed to involve concern for the other for the other's own sake. But if concern for my friend and intimates is a special case of self-love, because they extend my interests, then how can Aristotle claim that friendship involves concern for the friend's own sake? If friendship is based on self-love, mustn't concern for others be instrumental concern? If so, this is objectionable because it fails to justify concern for others for

their own sakes and because it threatens to make the justification of other-regarding concern insufficiently stable.

In the Lysis Socrates maintains that one who had a complete good would have no need of love or friendship and that friendship can only exist between people who stand to gain from association with each other (215ab). In this way, friendship is predicated on mutual benefit (214c). This view of love and friendship fits nicely with Socrates's eudaimonism, which implies that I have reason to care for another insofar as this contributes to my own eudaimonia. But for Socrates such concern must be instrumental.

1. Only an unconditionally complete good is intrinsically valuable (219e9-11).
2. Hence, those things desired for the sake of something else are not intrinsically, but only instrumentally, valuable (219c-220b).
3. A lover values his beloved for the sake of the lover's own eudaimonia.
4. Hence, it follows that a lover can love his beloved only instrumentally.

Whereas Socrates assumes that valuing something for the sake of another always reflects purely instrumental concern, Plato and Aristotle reject this assumption. On Aristotle's view, as we have seen, a good is complete if it is chosen for its own sake, and a good is unconditionally complete if other things are chosen for its sake and it is not chosen for the sake of something else (1094a18-19, 1097a27-b6). Aristotle believes that eudaimonia is the only unconditionally complete good; all other goods are chosen for its sake. Some goods chosen for the sake of eudaimonia, though not choiceworthy in themselves, are choiceworthy as causal means to some ingredient of eudaimonia; these goods are incomplete, instrumental goods. But other goods -- such as the virtues -- that are chosen for the sake of eudaimonia are also choiceworthy in themselves. They are chosen for the sake of eudaimonia in the sense that they are constituent parts of eudaimonia; they are valuable in their own right and for their constitutive contribution to a valuable life. Such goods are complete or intrinsic goods, not mere instrumental goods, though they are not unconditionally complete goods. Here Aristotle is making explicit the sort of assumptions Plato must make about justice in Republic ii-iv. In Aristotle's terms, Plato thinks justice is a complete good, but not an unconditionally complete good. If the lover treats the good of his beloved as a complete good that is also choiceworthy for the sake of his own eudaimonia, the lover is concerned for the other's own sake while valuing his beloved's well-being for the constitutive contribution this makes to his own eudaimonia. This is why Aristotle claims that a proper conception of how others figure in self-love undermines the popular contrast between self-love and altruism (NE ix 8).

SCOPE

Another worry concerns the scope of the Aristotelian justification of other-regarding concern. If its justification of other-regarding conduct and concern is limited to those to whom one is already psychologically related, then the scope of this egoist account of the authority of morality may seem disturbingly narrow. The scope of egoist concern will be especially narrow if the relevant relations obtain only among intimates and like-minded members of small associations, such as a polis. But Aristotle can claim that the relevant interpersonal relations do and should extend quite widely.

Interpersonal self-extension does not require like-mindedness. Though Aristotle sometimes speaks as if the relevant relations among friends must involve similar beliefs and

values (1159b3-5, 1161b35, 1162a13, 1165b17, 1166a7, 1167a23-b10, 1170b16), it's not clear that this is or should be an essential feature of his position, at least insofar as he seeks to model interpersonal concern on intrapersonal concern. For within my own life, I exercise deliberative control and establish psychological connections with my future self when I intentionally modify beliefs, desires, or values, as well as when I maintain them unchanged. Now it may be that my successive selves will typically be fairly similar; perhaps wholesale and instantaneous psychological change is impossible or at least would involve a substantial change, which I would not survive. But intrapersonal psychological dependence is compatible with significant qualitative change. This allows us to explain how it is that we have prudential reason to undertake changes in our characters that count as improvements; our persistence requires only deliberative control, not fixity, of character.

Moreover, psychological influence can be exerted between people, on each other, even when they have not had direct interactions, as when two people influence each other through their conversations with a common third party. The ripple effects on others of our conversations, plans, actions, and relationships can extend quite widely.

In thinking about the proper scope of eudaimonist concern, it is worth thinking about differences between Aristotle and T.H. Green about the scope of the common good. Aristotle can extend the central elements of his eudaimonist defense of friendship to political association, because political communities that are just have to a significant degree the two features that are crucial to the justification of virtue-friendship and familial-friendship: there is commonality of aims among members of the political association, and this commonality is produced by members of the association living together in the right way, in particular, by defining their aims and goals consensually (1167a25-28, 1155a24-28). This establishes a common good among citizens, each of whom has a share in judging and ruling (Pol 1275a22-33). Justice aims at a common good (1129b15-18), and this, we said, is how Aristotle can construct a eudaimonist defense of justice. But this conception of the common good is still quite limited. Restricted as it is to those whom Aristotle thinks are fit for citizenship, it excludes women, barbarians, slaves, and manual laborers (1278a3-9); indeed, he thinks that manual laborers ought to be drawn exclusively from a pool of barbarians and natural inferiors (1329a24-26).

Green's own ethics of self-realization, developed in his Prolegomena to Ethics, is heavily influenced by his study of Plato and Aristotle. Whereas he thought that Aristotle was right to ground an agent's duties in an account of eudaimonia the principal ingredient of which is a conception of practical virtue regulated by the common good (PE §§253, 256, 263, 271, 279), he thought the Greeks had too narrow a conception of various virtues and the common good (§§257, 261-62, 265-66, 270, 279-80). It is Aristotle's restrictions on the common good that Green finds unacceptable.

The idea of a society of free and law-abiding persons, each his own master yet each his brother's keeper, was first definitely formed among the Greeks, and its formation was the condition of all subsequent progress in the direction described; but with them ... it was limited in its application to select groups of men surrounded by populations of aliens and slaves. In its universality, as capable of application to the whole human race, an attempt has first been made to act upon it in modern Christendom [§271].

As the last part of this passage suggests, Green's own conception of the common good is universal; full self-realization occurs only when each respects the claims made by other members of a maximally inclusive community of ends (§§214, 216, 244, 332).

There are good eudaimonist reasons for recognizing a more inclusive common good than Aristotle does. First, there already are significant forms of personal, social, and economic interaction and interdependence between Aristotle's citizens, on the one hand, and women, slaves, manual laborers, and resident aliens, on the other. This provides a backward-looking justification for recognizing a more inclusive conception of the common good.

But can the common good be genuinely universal in scope, as Green wants it to be, if it is the result of interpersonal association? The story of the Good Samaritan is supposed to illustrate the existence of duties toward others with one has no previous association (Luke 10: 29-37). Consider the proverbial remotest Mysian (Plato, *Theaetetus* 209b8), with whom one has no previous association, however indirect. Should it somehow come within my power to help the remotest Mysian, at little or no cost to myself, it might seem the eudaimonist cannot explain justified concern for him. This might seem like a defect in an account of the scope of morality or its authority.

If the remotest Mysian and I have had no direct or indirect psychological interaction, then his good is not already part of mine. So I can have no backward-looking eudaimonist reason to be concerned about him. But I can have forward-looking reasons. Even when the remotest Mysian and I have no prospect of further interaction, my assistance will enable or facilitate his pursuit of his own projects, and this will make his subsequent actions and mental states dependent upon my assistance. Indeed, other things being equal, the greater the assistance I provide the greater is my involvement in his life. To the extent that another's actions and mental states are dependent upon my assistance, I can view the assistance as making his good a part of my own. Assistance to the remotest Mysian earns me a share, however small, of his happiness, much the way care and nurture of my children grounds posthumous interests I have in their continued well-being. If so, it seems Aristotelian eudaimonism could seek a universal common good, of the sort Green contemplates.

WEIGHT

A final worry concerns the weight of the reasons for other-regarding concern. It might be useful to distinguish between psychological connectedness and continuity. Connectedness obtains between people who influence each other psychologically; continuity obtains between people who are linked by chains of connected people. Both connectedness and continuity are matters of degree. We can think of the degrees of connectedness and continuity in terms of a set of concentric circles with myself occupying the inner circle and the remotest Mysian occupying the outer circle. As we extend the scope of psychological interdependence, the strength of the relevant psychological relations appears to weaken and the weight of one's reasons to give aid and refrain from harm presumably weakens proportionately. Despite the wide scope of justified concern, it must apparently have variable weight. Is such an interpersonal discount rate acceptable?

Commonsense morality (then and now) recognizes more stringent obligations toward those to whom one stands in special relationships -- for instance, toward family and friends and toward partners in cooperative schemes -- than toward others. Aristotle clearly accepts this sort of moral discount rate; he thinks that, all else being equal, it is better to help and worse to harm those to whom one stands in special relations than it is to do these things to others (NE 1160a1-6,

1169b12; Pol 1262a27-30). We also saw such an interpersonal discount rate at work in Broad's reconstruction of commonsense morality as self-referential altruism. It seems a reasonable hypothesis that the interpersonal relationships that have special moral significance are just those relationships of psychological interaction and interdependence that extend one's interests. If so, then there will be a moral discount rate that is isomorphic to the eudaimonist's interpersonal discount rate. Indeed, it would be a virtue, rather than a defect, of Aristotle's justification of other-regarding concern that it embodies an interpersonal discount rate.