INTRODUCTION

1. Aristotle's Life and Works

Aristotle was born in Stagira in Macedon (now part of northern Greece; see note to i 2.§8, v 7.§1) in 384 B.C. In his lifetime the kingdom of Macedon, first under Philip and then under his son Alexander ('the Great'), conquered the Greek cities in Europe and Asia, and then went on to conquer the Persian Empire. The Macedonian rulers made elaborate efforts to present themselves as Greeks; they were not entirely successful in these efforts, and many Greeks regarded them as foreign invaders. Though Aristotle spent much of his adult life in Athens, he was not an Athenian citizen; he was closely linked to the kings of Macedon (cf. note to vii 7.§6), and he was affected by the volatile relations between the Greek cities, especially Athens, and Macedon.

Aristotle was the son of Nicomachus, a doctor who had been attached to the Macedonian court. (See MEDICINE.[2]) In 367 B.C., Aristotle came to Athens and was a member of PLATO's Academy until the death of Plato in 347. Plato's successor as head of the Academy was his nephew SPEUSIPPUS. At that time, Aristotle left Athens, first for Assos (in Asia Minor), where the pro-Macedonian TYRANT Hermeias was a patron of philosophical studies. Aristotle married Pythias, a niece of Hermeias; they had a daughter, also called Pythias. After Hermeias was killed by the Persians, Aristotle traveled farther (cf. 1155a21–2); he moved on to Lesbos in the eastern Aegean (cf. note to v 10.§7), and then back to Macedon. He was a tutor of Alexander. In 334 he returned to Athens and founded his own school, the Lyceum. After the death of Pythias, Aristotle formed an attachment to Herpyllis, and they had a son Nicomachus (named, following the Greek custom, after his grandfather). In 323 Alexander died; in the resulting outbreak of anti-Macedonian feeling in Athens, Aristotle left for Chalcis, on the island of Euboea (cf. note to ix 6.§3), where he died in 322 B.C. In his will Aristotle directed that Pythias' bones were to be placed in his grave, in accordance with her wishes; he also made provision for the support of Herpyllis and Nicomachus.[3]

2. Words in SMALL CAPITALS refer to entries in the Glossary. Numbers in square brackets refer to items listed in Further Reading. For abbreviations, see the list of Abbreviations and Conventions.

3. Aristotle's will; see ROT, p. 2464.

2. Aristotle's Works

The nearly complete modern English translation of Aristotle's extant works (in ROT) fills about 2,450 pages. Many of his works, however, have been lost, and those that survive complete are quite different in character from many of the lost works.[4] Among the lost works are dialogues, probably similar in character to some of Plato's dialogues, and other treatises designed for publication. Aristotle may refer to some of the lost works when he speaks of his POPULAR writings.

The Aristotelian corpus, as we have it, largely consists of works that appear to be closely related to Aristotle's lectures. Sometimes he seems to refer (see note to ii 7.§1) to 'visual aids' of the sort that might be present in a classroom. Sometimes the grammatically incomplete sentences and compressed allusions suggest notes that a lecturer might expand.

We cannot tell how many of his treatises Aristotle regarded as finished. We probably ought not to treat them as finished literary works. They may be more like files that Aristotle revised, expanded, summarized, or combined, for different teaching purposes, or when new ideas struck him.

In the Greek manuscripts, the corpus is arranged as follows:[5]

1. *Catg., DI, APr, APo, Top.* These are traditionally known as the 'Organon' ('instrument') because they deal with logic (in Aristotle's broad sense), which is an instrument of philosophical thinking, not a discipline with its own specific subject matter.
2. *Phys., DC, GC, Metr., DA, PN, HA, PA, MA, IA, GA.* These belong to natural philosophy, dealing with different aspects of NATURE.
3. *Met.* This deals with 'first philosophy', the study of reality in general. (*EN* i 6 discusses metaphysical topics; cf. note to §13.)
4. *EN, MM, EE, Pol.* These belong to 'practical' philosophy, which deals with ACTION rather than PRODUCTION.
5. *Rhet., Poet.* These deal with PRODUCTION rather than ACTION.[6]

Aristotle presents ETHICS as a distinct discipline, relatively independent of other areas of philosophy (notes to i 6.§13, viii 1.§6; cf. *EE* 1216b35–1217a10). Nonetheless, he often refers to, or relies on, his other

4. Ancient lists of titles of Aristotle's works are printed in ROT, p. 2386.

5. This list excludes (a) works generally agreed to be spurious that have been included in the Aristotelian corpus; (b) the lost works; (c) the *Constitution of Athens* (probably not by Aristotle himself), which was discovered after the standard arrangement of Aristotle's works was established. All of (a) and (c), and some surviving fragments, or supposed fragments, of (b), are included in ROT.

6. For Aristotle's own division of disciplines, see *PA* 640a1; *Met.* 982b11, 993b20, vi 1.

philosophical doctrines. See ACTIVITY, CAPACITY, CAUSE, ETHICS, FUNCTION, HUMAN BEING, SCIENCE, SOUL. Readers will read the *EN* with more understanding if they also read the most immediately relevant parts of Aristotle's other works. For a start, they might try: *Catg.* 1–9 (the doctrine of categories); *APo* i 1–3, ii 19 (on SCIENCE); *Top.* i (on the dialectical method practiced in ETHICS); *Phys.* ii, iii 1 (on NATURE, CAUSE, and MOVEMENT); *DA* i 1, ii 1–4 (on SOUL), ii 5–11 (on PERCEPTION), iii 4 (on UNDERSTANDING), iii 9–11 (on DESIRE and ACTION); *PA* i 1 (on NATURE); *MA* 7 (on practical INFERENCE); *Met.* i 1 (on SCIENCE), 6, 9 (on SOCRATES and PLATO), iv 1–2, ix 1–8 (on CAPACITY and ACTIVITY), xii (on GOD).

3. The Ethical Treatises

Aristotle's ethical theory is mostly contained in three treatises: the *MM*, the *EE*, and the *EN*. The titles of the last two works may reflect a tradition that Eudemus (a member of the Lyceum) and Nicomachus (the son of Aristotle and Herpyllis) edited Aristotle's lectures.

It is widely agreed that the *MM* was not written by Aristotle. But it may well be substantially authentic in content; perhaps it contains a student's notes on a course of lectures by Aristotle earlier than the courses underlying the other two treatises. The *EE* is now widely agreed to be authentic; it is usually (not universally) and reasonably taken to be earlier than the *EN*.

The three books *EN* v–vii are also, according to manuscripts of *EN* and *EE*, the three books *EE* iv–vi. The manuscripts do not say which treatise these three 'common' books originally belonged to, or how they came to belong to both treatises. Stylistic and doctrinal evidence links these books with the rest of the *EE*; but it does not follow that Aristotle did not also intend them to be part of the *EN*. If the *EE* is earlier than the *EN*, Aristotle may have used these books, perhaps revised, in his new course of lectures. A decision on this issue is related to a decision on the relative date of the two treatises. (See further the notes to vii 11.§1, x 6.§1.)

We should not infer, then, that the *EN* has reached us in exactly the form in which Aristotle intended to leave it. If it is unfinished, we can more easily understand the presence of two discussions of pleasure, and of two discussions of the VOLUNTARY in iii 1 and v 8 (a common book).

4. Outline of the *Ethics*

We can gain some idea of the contents and structure of the *EN* from this outline:

A. i 1–12. HAPPINESS, the ultimate human good.

B. i 13. Happiness requires VIRTUES of character and of thought.

C. ii 1–9. Virtue of character: the STATES of human beings that secure their happiness.

D. iii 1–5. Preconditions of virtue: VOLUNTARY action and responsibility.

E. iii 6 to v 11. The individual virtues of character.

F. vi 1–13. Virtues of thought.

G. vii 1–10. INCONTINENCE and related conditions.

H. vii 11–14. PLEASURE.

I. viii–ix. Friendship.

J. x 1–5. Pleasure.

K. x 6–8. Happiness and theoretical STUDY.

L. x 9. Ethics, moral education, and politics.

This outline suggests that in some places the standard division into books represents the natural divisions in Aristotle's argument, and in other places it does not. The division into books goes back to the early editors of Aristotle's works in antiquity. It was partly determined by the requirements of ancient book production; and so we should not be surprised if it fails to match the argument of the work.

This order is similar to the order of the *EE*, up to the end of H; shortly after H our manuscripts of the *EE* break off, and we do not know what, if anything, corresponded to J to L above. The *MM* is less similar in structure, but it covers these topics in more or less the same order up to I; it breaks off in the discussion of friendship. Hence the order of treatment in A through I is likely to be Aristotle's own order.

We can follow the development of Aristotle's argument if we examine the main themes. The following sections of this introduction briefly present the main themes, without considering all the relevant questions of interpretation; some of these questions are taken up in the Notes.

5. Happiness

Aristotle conceives ETHICS as a part of POLITICAL SCIENCE; he treats the *EN* and the *Politics* as parts of a single inquiry (*EN* x 9; cf. note to i 2.§9). Ethics seeks to discover the good for an individual and a community (*EN* i 2), and so it begins with an examination of happiness. Happiness is the right starting point for an ethical theory because, in Aristotle's view, rational agents necessarily choose and deliberate with a view to their ultimate good, which is happiness; it is the ultimate end, since we want it for its own sake, and we want other things for its sake. If it is to be the ultimate end, happiness must be COMPLETE.

To find a more definite account of happiness, Aristotle argues from the human FUNCTION, the characteristic activity that is essential to a human being, in the same way as a purely nutritive life is essential to a plant, and a life guided by sense perception and desire is essential to an animal (see notes to i 7.§12–13). Since a human being is essentially a rational agent, the function of a human being is a life guided by practical reason. The good life for a human being must be good for a being with the function of a human being; hence it must be a good life guided by practical reason, and hence it must be a life in accordance with the VIRTUE that is needed for achieving one's good. The human good, therefore, is an ACTIVITY of the SOUL in accordance with complete virtue in a complete life.

Aristotle believes that this outline of happiness (1098a20–2) is definite enough to rule out three serious errors and to point us in the right direction. He develops these points in i 5, 8–12. (1) We must reject the life devoted purely to pleasure (1095b19–20), for reasons that Aristotle makes clear only in x 2–5. This life is incomplete because it allows no essential role to rational activity; and mere pleasure without rational activity is not the good for a rational agent (cf. 1174a1–4). Since a life of pleasure can be improved on in this way, pleasure cannot be the good (1172b28–32). Hence Aristotle rejects hedonism. (2) SOCRATES' view that virtue is sufficient for happiness conflicts with common beliefs (1096a2). Virtue alone does not constitute a complete and self-sufficient life. For external misfortunes impede rational activity (1100b29–30, 1153b14–25), and therefore preclude happiness (1100a5–9). (3) Still, no matter what we have to lose as a result of being virtuous, we have better reason to choose virtue than we have to choose any combination of other goods that are incompatible with it (1100b30–1101a8). Hence Aristotle claims that virtuous activity CONTROLS happiness.

6. Virtue of Character

If virtuous activity controls happiness, we need to know what the relevant virtues are to secure happiness (i 13). Since Aristotle recognizes both rational and nonrational DESIRES, he argues that the excellent and virtuous condition of the soul will include virtues of both the rational and the nonrational parts. The virtues of the rational part are the virtues of thought, discussed in Book vi. The virtues of character are the various ways in which the nonrational elements cooperate with reason, so that human beings fulfill their function well and in accordance with complete virtue. Aristotle discusses these virtues in Books ii–v.

He defines a virtue of character as a STATE, in order to distinguish a virtue from a CAPACITY and from a FEELING (ii 5). I may have a capacity without using it properly on the right occasions; for instance, I may have medical skill even if I do not bother to use it at all, or if I use it to poison my patients. Similarly, I may have a feeling (of sympathy, hatred, anger,

etc.) without guiding it properly to the right objects. To be a generous person, I must not only know how to give money on the right occasions, and have generous impulses; I must also direct my capacities and feelings to the right goals, so that I act from the right desires, for the right reasons, and on the right occasions (cf. *Met.* 1025a1–13).

Aristotle does not treat virtues as simply means to virtuous action. Actions may be virtuous even though they are not done for the virtuous person's reasons (1105a26–b9, 1144a11–20). But agents are not virtuous unless they do the virtuous action because they have decided to do it for its own sake. Aristotle assumes that in praising and valuing virtuous people we do not value simply their reliable tendency to produce virtuous actions; we also value the state of character that they display in their actions. The discussion of VOLUNTARY action shows us the circumstances in which the praiseworthy state is displayed in actions.

In arguing that a virtue of character must be a 'mean' or an 'intermediate' state, Aristotle does not recommend moderation in actions or in feelings for its own sake. He does not suggest, for instance, that if we achieve the mean in relation to anger, we will never be more than moderately angry; on the contrary, the virtuous person will be extremely angry on the occasions when extreme anger is called for. (He discusses anger more fully in iv 5.) Still, Aristotle's doctrine is more than the trivial advice that we should do what is appropriate to the occasion. For in claiming that a mean state in relation to nonrational impulses and appetites is possible and desirable, he rejects other views about the desirable condition of FEELINGS. The views he rejects include these: (1) Virtue consists in indulgence of nonrational impulses, leaving them completely unchecked. (2) Virtue requires suppression of nonrational impulses (1104b24–6). (3) Virtue is nothing more than control of nonrational impulses by rational desire. (cf. 1102b13–20). In Aristotle's view, (3) is closest to being right, but is nonetheless mistaken, because it confuses virtue with continence (see INCONTINENCE). Contrary to (3), virtue also demands harmony and agreement between the nonrational and the rational part, under the guidance of the rational part.

The task of moral education, therefore, is not merely to subject the nonrational part of the soul to practical reason. Virtuous people allow reasonable satisfaction to their appetites; they do not suppress all their fears; they do not disregard all their feelings of pride or shame or resentment (1126a3–8), or their desire for other people's good opinion. Brave people are appropriately afraid of serious danger (1115b10–20), and if the cause is not worth the danger they withdraw; but when the cause justifies their standing firm, their fear is not so strong that they have to struggle against it.

In claiming that the virtuous person makes a DECISION (iii 2–3) to do the virtuous action for its own sake, Aristotle implies that a certain pattern of

desire and deliberation (1113a2–12, 1139a21–b5) is characteristic of the virtuous person.

In claiming that the mean is determined by the PRUDENT person, he refers to the intellectual virtue that is responsible for good deliberation (1140a24–31). These aspects of his definition of virtue of character imply that it is inseparable from virtue of intellect.

Aristotle illustrates and explains these different aspects of virtue of character in Books iii–vii.

7. Voluntary Action and Responsibility

Aristotle discusses VOLUNTARY action and conditions for moral responsibility (iii 1–5), because he wants to show how his account of the nature of virtue supports the common belief that we are justly praised and blamed both for virtuous and vicious actions and for being virtuous and vicious people. He agrees that the proper objects of praise and blame are the things that we ourselves, rather than necessity or fortune, are responsible for (see CAUSE; *EE* 1223a9–15); he tries to show that we are responsible for our virtuous and vicious actions and characters.

He claims that we are open to praise and blame for our voluntary actions, and that voluntary actions are those that are caused neither by force nor ignorance, but have their 'PRINCIPLE in us', insofar as we know the particular circumstances of the action (1111a22–4). These actions are the appropriate objects of praise and blame.

According to Aristotle, these criteria for voluntary action imply that nonrational animals also act voluntarily (1111a24–6). These nonrational agents, however, are not open to praise or blame. Ordinary human voluntary action is open to praise and blame, because its principle is 'in us' (1110a17–18, 1111a22–4, 1113b20–1) as rational agents. (That is why a mere bodily process, such as aging, over which we have no rational control, has no principle in us; cf. v 8.§3 and note.) Voluntary action is in our control as rational agents; hence we are justly praised and blamed for it.

It follows that we are held responsible for our actions insofar as they reflect our character, decisions, and hence (given Aristotle's analysis of DECISION in ii 2–3) our deliberation about the good. For similar reasons, Aristotle believes that our character and outlook are also open to justified and effective criticism, since we are responsible for our characters. He appeals to the process of acquisition of the virtues to show that we are responsible for becoming virtuous or vicious (iii 5). He implies that it is in our rational control (when, presumably, we pass beyond the pure habituation of early childhood, discussed in Book ii; see note to iii 5.§10) to affect the way our character develops; and insofar as this is in our rational control, we are justly held responsible for the resulting state of our character.

8. Prudence and Virtue

Why does Aristotle take prudence to be necessary for virtue of character? (See 6, Virtue of Character, above; notes to vi 12.§6, 8; 13.§2, 7.) If correct decision and prudence are expressed in action on good deliberation, then the special role of practical reason in virtue seems to be its role in deliberation. But in Aristotle deliberation seems to have a rather narrow scope, insofar as it is concerned with what 'promotes' an end (see DECISION). If 'x promotes y' is interpreted as 'x is an instrumental means to y', Aristotle claims that deliberation and prudence are concerned only with instrumental means to ends. In that case, they tell us how to find the means to happiness, but they do not tell us anything about what happiness is.

Aristotle need not, however, restrict the scope of practical reason in this way, if 'x promotes y' is not confined to instrumental means. If he allows deliberation about components of ends, prudence finds the actions that promote happiness insofar as they are parts of the happy life. Such actions are (a) to be chosen for their own sake, as being their own end, rather than (b) to be chosen simply as instrumental means to some further end. See ACTION (3), note to vi 5.§1.

The wide scope of deliberation makes it clearer why decision is an essential element in virtue and why Aristotle claims—surprisingly at first sight—that we can decide on an action for its own sake, even though decision is always about what promotes an end. For the virtuous person's decision is the result of deliberation about the composition of happiness; and this deliberation results in specific claims about which actions are noninstrumentally good components of happiness. These are the actions that the virtuous person decides on, both for their own sakes and for the sake of happiness (cf. notes to i 7.§5, vi 9.§7).

In claiming that prudence involves deliberation, Aristotle also emphasizes the importance of its grasping the relevant features of a particular situation, since this is necessary if deliberation is to result in a correct decision about what to do here and now. The right moral choice requires experience of particular situations, since general rules cannot be applied mechanically to particular situations (see notes to ix 2). The relevant aspect of prudence is a sort of PERCEPTION or intuitive UNDERSTANDING of the right aspects of particular situations (see notes to vi 8.§9, 11.§5).

cf. Bergson; cf. Plato

9. Incontinence

After describing the virtues of character and thought, Aristotle discusses the problem of incontinence (vii 1–10). Incontinence (or 'weakness of will') is usually taken to consist in knowing that x is better than y, but choosing y nonetheless. SOCRATES, as Aristotle understands him, denies the possibility of incontinence and explains apparently incontinent behavior as the result of ignorance of the good. In i 13 and iii 2, Aristotle

suggests an account of incontinence much closer to the one that Plato offers in *Republic* iv: Incontinence results when an agent's nonrational desires are stronger than his rational desire and overcome it. His full account of incontinence, however, includes both Socratic and Platonic elements in a rather puzzling combination. This is one of the most difficult parts of the *EN*; the notes on vii 3 try to set out some of the questions of interpretation.

It is clear, at any rate, that Aristotle rejects Socrates' position; he takes it to go wrong in treating the allegedly incontinent person's error as simple ignorance about what is better and worse. Contrary to Socrates' view, the incontinent person makes the right DECISION and draws the right conclusion from his practical inference. His nonrational desires cause him to choose what will satisfy these desires, and to act against his correct decision.[7]

Nonetheless, Aristotle accepts part of the Socratic account, because he thinks incontinent action must be explained by some sort of ignorance. The relevant sort of ignorance is caused by disordered nonrational desires; it is not ignorance of general principles (that we ought not to steal, for example), but of the application of these principles to particular cases. Aristotle seems to suggest that the incontinent is someone who agrees that he ought not to overindulge his appetites, agrees that eating these six cakes would be overindulgence, and hence makes the correct decision not to eat them, but nonetheless, when he eats them, fails to recognize that this is really a case of overindulgence.

One might reasonably ask (i) whether this is a satisfactory account of incontinence; (ii) why Aristotle believes that a true account ought to attribute some role to ignorance; and (iii) whether he has identified a plausible type of ignorance.

10. Pleasure

Aristotle's demand for the virtuous person to decide on the virtuous action for its own sake is connected with two further claims. (1) The virtuous person must take pleasure in virtuous action as such (1099a7–21, 1104b3–11). (2) In doing so, the virtuous person has the most pleasant life. In these claims Aristotle relies on his views about the nature of pleasure and its role in happiness.

To begin with, Aristotle identifies the life of pleasure with the life devoted to the life of rather gross sensual pleasures (i 5; see 5, Happiness, above). Books vii and x, however, contain quite elaborate discussions of the nature of pleasure and the different values of different types of pleasure (see end of 3, The Ethical Treatises, above). Aristotle believes that true judgments about pleasure imply that the virtuous person's life is also

7. On the use of pronouns, and of 'man' and 'person', see PERSON.

the most pleasant life. (On some apparent differences between the two discussions, see notes to x 3.§11, 5.§7.)

He rejects the view that pleasure is some uniform sensation to which different kinds of pleasant action are connected only causally and externally (in the way that reading many boring books might induce the same feeling of boredom). Instead he argues that the specific pleasure taken in x rather than y is internally related to doing x rather than y, and essentially depends on pursuing x for x's own sake. In that case, different pleasures—for instance, the pleasure of lying on the beach in the sun and the pleasure of solving a crossword puzzle—are not two instances of the same sensation that just happen to have different causes. The two different objects (i.e., the activities we take the pleasure in) are essential to the character of the pleasures themselves.

Aristotle tries to express this relation of a pleasure to the activity that is its object by describing the pleasure as a 'consequent end' (see note to x 4.§8) resulting from an ACTION or ACTIVITY, not from a PRODUCTION or process (see MOVEMENT), as such. The value of this pleasure depends on the value of the activity on which the pleasure follows (see notes to x 5). The virtuous person has the most pleasant life; but this life cannot be devoted exclusively to the pursuit of pleasure.

diversity of pleasure

the activity on which the pleasure follows

11. The Scope of the Virtues

Aristotle's Greek for 'virtue of character', *ēthikē aretē*, rendered into Latin as 'virtus moralis', is the origin of the English 'moral virtue'. Some readers, however, suggest that the Aristotelian virtues described in Books iii, iv, and v are not really moral virtues at all. If we assume that morality and moral virtue are essentially concerned with the good of others, we might think Aristotle is relatively unconcerned with morality. Some of the virtues seem to be largely self-regarding (e.g., temperance, magnanimity); some seem to involve good manners or good taste rather than strictly moral qualities (e.g., magnificence, truthfulness, wit), and only some seem to deal with the good of others (bravery, mildness, generosity). Only one virtue—justice (in its general form)—is clearly focused on the good of others in its own right (1129b25–1130a5).

This description of the virtues, however, underestimates ways in which the virtues of character as a whole display the impartial concern for others that is often ascribed to morality. The virtuous person decides on the virtuous action because it is FINE; indeed, fine action is the action that achieves the mean (see notes to iv 1.§7, 2.§7). The fine systematically promotes the good of others. This is why Aristotle takes general justice to be nothing more than the exercise of the other virtues of character (see note to v 1.§20).

Happiness, as Aristotle conceives it, requires activity in accordance with complete virtue (see note to i 7.§15). Why should complete virtue

require concern for the good of others? In Aristotle's view, a human being is a political animal insofar as human capacities and aims are completely fulfilled only in a community; the individual's happiness must involve the good of fellow members of a community (1097b8–11, 1169b16–19).

Aristotle defends this claim in his discussion of FRIENDSHIP. All three of the main types of friendship (for pleasure, for advantage, and for the good) are concerned with the good of the other person; but only the best sort of friendship—friendship for the good between virtuous people—involves A's concern for B's good for B's own sake and for B's essential character (see notes to viii 3.§1–6).

In the best sort of friendship the friend is 'another himself', so that if A and B are friends, A takes the attitudes to B that A also takes to A. Aristotle uses this feature of friendship to explain why friendship is part of a complete and self-sufficient life (see ix 9 and notes). Friendship involves 'living together' (i.e., sharing the activities one counts as especially important in one's life; see note to viii 5.§3), and especially the sharing of reasoning and thinking. Friends cooperate in deliberation, decision, and action; and the thoughts and actions of each provide reasons for the future thoughts and actions of the other. If A regards B as another self, then A will be concerned about B's aims and plans, and pleased by B's successes no less than by A's own. The cooperative aspects of friendship with B more fully realize A's own capacities as a rational agent, and so promote A's happiness more fully.

For this reason Aristotle thinks that the full development of a human being requires concern for the good of others. He defends his claim initially for friendship between individuals, but also for the type of friendship that forms a CITY, the 'complete COMMUNITY' (*Pol.* 1252a1–7, b27–30) that achieves the complete life that is identified with happiness.

12. Two Conceptions of Happiness?

In x 6–8, Aristotle returns to the discussion of happiness. He argues that the human FUNCTION is especially realized by the pure intellectual activity of STUDY—the contemplation of scientific and philosophical truths, apart from any attempt to apply them to practice. Since human happiness consists in the fulfillment of the human function, study is a supremely important element in happiness. For it is the highest fulfillment of our nature as rational beings; it is the sort of rational activity that we share with the gods, who are rational beings with no need to apply reason to practice. Aristotle infers that study is the happiest life available to us, insofar as we have the rational intellects we share with the gods (see notes to x 7).

One might conclude that Aristotle actually identifies study with happiness: Study is the only noninstrumental good that is part of happiness, and the moral virtues are to be valued, from the point of view of

happiness, simply as means to study. It is natural to take x 6–8 in this way; if one does, it is tempting to understand the argument in i 7 from the human FUNCTION as an argument to show that happiness is to be identified with the theoretical reasoning involved in study (see, especially, x 7.§9, 8.§8, and notes).

If this is Aristotle's view, however, two difficulties arise. (1) It is difficult to see how the purely instrumental status that seems to be ascribed to virtue of character in x 6–8 is compatible with Aristotle's repeated claims in the rest of the *EN* that virtues and virtuous actions are to be chosen for their own sake. (2) It is even difficult to see how the virtues of character are even the best instrumental means to happiness. Even if some virtuous actions are instrumental means to study, the motives demanded of the virtuous person do not seem useful for those who aim at study.

In the light of these difficulties, some readers who are convinced that x 6–8 identify happiness with study have inferred that Books i through ix defend a 'comprehensive' conception of happiness (as explained in notes to i 7.§3–8), and that x 6–8 defend an incompatible conception of happiness as study. One might argue that these are two alternative conceptions of happiness. Perhaps happiness as study is for those who are capable of it and in the conditions that allow single-minded devotion to it, and happiness as the exercise of the virtues of character is the best that is available to those who are less well endowed, or who are in less favorable circumstances.

Before we embrace any of these views about Aristotle's eventual conception of happiness, we ought to ask whether it is really certain that in x 6–8 he identifies happiness with study. The notes on these chapters suggest some grounds for uncertainty. One might take Aristotle to mean that study is the best component of happiness, but not the whole of happiness. If we were pure intellects with no other desires and no bodies, study would be the whole of our good. Since, however, we are not in fact merely intellects, our good is the good of the whole human being. Since study is not the complete good for a human being (see note to x 8.§6), it is not our complete good. Though study is the single most self-sufficient activity (insofar as it is the single activity that comes closest to being self-sufficient; see note to x 7.§4), this degree of self-sufficiency does not justify the identification of study with happiness. For Aristotle has argued that happiness must be complete, and for this reason he argues that neither virtue alone nor pleasure alone can be happiness. He should not, then, agree that study is happiness just because it is invulnerable and self-contained.

If this is Aristotle's view, study fits the account of happiness that we seem to find in the rest of the *EN*. According to this account, the virtues of character, and the actions that accord with them, deserve to be chosen for their own sakes as components of happiness. In the virtuous person, they regulate the choice of other goods, and so they also regulate choices about study. Admittedly, Aristotle does not explain how we should decide on

particular occasions whether to pursue study or to prefer one of the other components of happiness; but he does not seem to retreat from his conception of happiness as a compound of rational activities that assigns a central and dominant place to the moral virtues. The *Politics* may be taken to develop this conception of happiness, since it sets study in the context of a social order regulated by the virtues of character (see, especially, *Pol.* vii 3–4, 9, 13).

13. This Edition

Modern editions of the Greek text of the *EN* are based on Greek manuscripts copied in the Byzantine period (from the tenth to the fifteenth centuries)[8] from manuscripts derived indirectly from the edition of Aristotle's works produced by Andronicus in the first century B.C. Like every other editor and translator, I deviate from, or add to, the transmitted text in various ways. Readers, especially those unused to Greek and Latin texts, should bear these points in mind:

1. The transmitted text is usually fairly sound; but numerous variations and imperfections in the manuscripts require decisions by editors and translators. I have taken the OCT (see Further Reading [8]) as the basis of the translation, and have tried to mention deviations (on points other than punctuation) in the Notes. These deviations express different judgments (a) about which reading is to be preferred in cases where the manuscripts differ, or (b) about how to emend the manuscript reading, in cases where it does not seem to give satisfactory sense, or (c) about whether some words are intrusions into the manuscripts, not part of what Aristotle actually wrote, or (d) about whether something has fallen out of the manuscripts and needs to be supplied, or (e) about whether the manuscripts have the text in the right order.

2. Readers do not always realize that the division of books into chapters does not go back to antiquity, still less to Aristotle; it inevitably reflects the views of interpreters. This is especially clear in the case of the *EN*, since modern editions of the Greek text actually print two capitulations (both of medieval origin). I have included the first (marked by Roman figures in OCT) for reference. Where the other capitulation differs, I have left an extra space.

3. Modern editions also print the division of chapters (according to the first numeration) into sections (which go back at least to the edition by Carl Zell in 1820). I have also reproduced these sections (marked

8. On ancient manuscripts, see OCD, s.v. 'Books, Greek and Roman', 'Palaeography', 'Textual criticism'.

by §), since they reflect a generally sensible view of the structure of Aristotle's argument. In cases where I do not agree with them (where my paragraphs diverge from Zell's sections), it may be useful to readers to consider the alternative interpretation implied by Zell's division. The marginal line numbering is derived from Immanuel Bekker's edition of Aristotle (1831).[9] The Notes refer to Zell sections (so that 'i 7.§3' refers to Book i, chapter 7, section 3). References are given to Zell sections (or to Bekker lines, for greater precision).

4. The headings to each chapter, book, and section are mine and have no authority in the manuscripts; these titles are enclosed in square brackets.

This translation is intended for readers who want to understand the *EN* in detail, and not merely to acquire a general impression of it. Any translator who wants to be reasonably accurate in details that matter to the philosophical reader has to face some difficulties presented by the *EN*:

1. Aristotle's writing is often compressed and allusive; to convey in English the impression made by Aristotle's Greek, a translator would have to produce a version that would be hard to understand without a detailed commentary. If, however, translators set out to make Aristotle readily intelligible to the English reader, they will have to expand, interpret, and paraphrase to an extent that intrudes on the commentator's role. I have used bracketed supplements in cases where it seemed reasonable to point out to the reader that no precise equivalent for the bracketed words appears in the Greek text. Readers should by no means suppose that everything not enclosed in brackets uncontroversially corresponds to something in Aristotle's text. If they consult the Notes, they should be able to discover cases where my rendering is free or controversial.

2. Some of Aristotle's central philosophical terms cannot easily be translated uniformly; it is difficult, for instance, to translate *archē* (see PRINCIPLE) and *logos* (see REASON) by the same English term wherever they occur. But one's choice of rendering often requires a decision about the course of the argument. (See, e.g., notes to i 4.§5–7, 7.§20.)

3. Aristotle has come to us through medieval Latin philosophy, and some English equivalents of Latin terms (such as 'substance', 'essence', 'incontinence') have come to be standard renderings for

9. For instance, '1094a10' refers to line 10 of the left-hand column of page 1094 of Bekker's edition. Since Bekker's pagination is continuous, a Bekker page and line uniquely identify a particular passage. These Bekker pages and lines are standardly used to refer to passages in Aristotle. Since they refer to pages and lines of the Greek text, they correspond only roughly to an English translation.

some of Aristotle's Greek terms. These English terms, however, no longer convey in modern English what the medieval Latin terms conveyed, and so they may be misleading. Still, an attempt to purge a translation of these terms derived from Latin would conceal an important thread in the history of philosophy. (See PRUDENCE, VOLUNTARY.) I have been reluctant to discard these traditional renderings (though sometimes I have overcome this reluctance); though they may mislead readers who do not study the terms in their context (with the help of the Glossary), they are probably no more misleading than the superficially more contemporary renderings that one might choose instead.

4. Greek tolerates longer sentences than English; hypotactic constructions (with several long subordinate clauses) are common. The paratactic character of modern English often encourages the translator to break one complex Greek sentence into two or more English sentences. Sometimes, however, the structure of an argument can be more clearly expressed in a long sentence forming a logical unit; that is why some sentences in the translation are more complex than a contemporary English sentence would normally be (see, e.g., ix 9.§5).

5. It is characteristic of Greek to begin sentences with connecting particles. Concern for English style would require omitting many of these particles in a translation. Omission of them, however, may remove important information. When Aristotle connects two clauses or sentences with 'for', he normally indicates that the second clause gives some reason for what has been said in the first clause; such information about the structure of the argument is useful to the philosophical reader. Hence the translation includes more connectives ('for', 'but', 'however', and so on) than are usual in contemporary English, and also marks Aristotle's repeated use of a given connective with a special force (see note to i 1.§1 on 'that is why', and note to vii 2.§6 on 'further').

The Notes and Glossary are essential adjuncts to the translation. The Notes list textual variations from the OCT and give the sources for Aristotle's references to other authors. They suggest alternative translations (in some important passages), or more literal translations (in cases where expansion or paraphrase is needed for the sake of intelligibility; see, e.g., note to i 7.§8). The Notes also contain some very selective discussion of the course of Aristotle's argument, and some help in understanding passages that seem both difficult and important. In particular, they seek to help readers who are trying to grasp the connection of thought between one sentence and the next.

The Notes contain only a few comments on historical events, proper names (for example, Priam, Thales, Sparta), and so on. Readers must be

prepared to look these up in reference books, among which OCD is especially useful. A few references to OCD are included.

The Glossary indicates the correspondence between Greek terms and their English renderings. It also tries to explain some of Aristotle's terms and to sketch some of the philosophical doctrines and assumptions that they convey. A word in small capital letters in the Notes directs the reader to the relevant entry in the Glossary. One way to understand Aristotle better is to look up the passages cited in the entries in the Glossary and to examine them in their context.

An asterisk (*) in the translation marks the last word of a passage discussed in the Notes. Aristotle's works are cited throughout by the abbreviated titles given earlier in the list of Abbreviations and Conventions.

NICOMACHEAN ETHICS

BOOK I

[HAPPINESS]

1

[Ends and Goods]

§1 Every craft and every line of inquiry, and likewise every action and decision, seems to seek some good;* that is why some people were right to describe the good as what everything seeks.* §2 But the ends [that are sought] appear to differ; some are activities, and others are products apart from the activities.* Wherever there are ends apart from the actions, the products are by nature better than the activities. 1094a 5

§3 Since there are many actions, crafts, and sciences, the ends turn out to be many as well; for health is the end of medicine, a boat of boat building, victory of generalship, and wealth of household management. §4 But some of these pursuits are subordinate to some one capacity; for instance, bridle making and every other science producing equipment for horses are subordinate to horsemanship, while this and every action in warfare are, in turn, subordinate to generalship, and in the same way other pursuits are subordinate to further ones.* In all such cases, then,* the ends of the ruling sciences are more choiceworthy than all the ends subordinate to them, since the lower ends are also pursued for the sake of the higher. §5 Here it does not matter whether the ends of the actions are the activities themselves, or something apart from them, as in the sciences we have mentioned. 10 15

2

[The Highest Good and Political Science]

§1 Suppose, then, that the things achievable by action have some end that we wish for because of itself, and because of which we wish for the other things, and that we do not choose everything because of something else—for if we do, it will go on without limit, so that desire will prove to be empty and futile. Clearly, this end will be the good, that is to say, the best good.* 20

1094a §2 Then does knowledge of this good carry great weight for [our] way of life, and would it make us better able, like archers who have a target to
25 aim at, to hit the right mark?* §3 If so, we should try to grasp, in outline at any rate, what the good is, and which is its proper science or capacity.

§4 It seems proper to the most controlling science—the highest ruling science.* §5 And this appears characteristic of political science. §6 For it is the one that prescribes which of the sciences ought to be stud-
1094b ied in cities, and which ones each class in the city should learn, and how far; indeed we see that even the most honored capacities—generalship, household management, and rhetoric, for instance—are subordinate to
vs. 5 it. §7 And since it uses the other sciences concerned with action,* and
education? moreover legislates what must be done and what avoided, its end will include the ends of the other sciences, and so this will be the human good. §8 For even if the good is the same for a city as for an individual, still the good of the city is apparently a greater and more complete good to acquire and preserve. For while it is satisfactory to acquire and pre-
10 serve the good even for an individual, it is finer and more divine to acquire and preserve it for a people and for cities.* And so, since our line of inquiry seeks these [goods, for an individual and for a community], it is a sort of political science.*

3

[The Method of Political Science]

Our discussion will be adequate if we make things perspicuous enough
fine and just things to accord with the subject matter; for we would not seek the same degree
15 of exactness in all sorts of arguments alike, any more than in the products of different crafts.* §2 Now, fine and just things, which political science examines, differ and vary so much as to seem to rest on convention only, not on nature.* §3 But [this is not a good reason, since] goods also vary in the same way, because they result in harm to many people—for some have been destroyed because of their wealth, others because of their
20 bravery.* §4 And so, since this is our subject and these are our premises, we shall be satisfied to indicate the truth roughly and in outline; since our subject and our premises are things that hold good usually [but not universally], we shall be satisfied to draw conclusions of the same sort.

Each of our claims, then, ought to be accepted in the same way [as claiming to hold good usually]. For the educated person seeks exactness
25 in each area to the extent that the nature of the subject allows; for apparently it is just as mistaken to demand demonstrations from a rhetorician as to accept [merely] persuasive arguments from a mathematician.*
1095a §5 Further, each person judges rightly what he knows, and is a good judge about that; hence the good judge in a given area is the person

each person judges rightly what he knows, and is a good judge about that

educated in that area, and the unqualifiedly good judge is the person educated in every area. 1095a

This is why a youth is not a suitable student of political science; for he lacks experience of the actions in life, which are the subject and premises of our arguments. §6 Moreover, since he tends to follow his feelings, his study will be futile and useless; for the end [of political science] is action, not knowledge.* §7 It does not matter whether he is young in years or immature in character, since the deficiency does not depend on age, but results from following his feelings in his life and in a given pursuit; for an immature person, like an incontinent person, gets no benefit from his knowledge. But for those who accord with reason in forming their desires and in their actions, knowledge of political science will be of great benefit.

§8 These are the preliminary points about the student, about the way our claims are to be accepted, and about what we propose to do.*

4

[Common Beliefs]

Let us, then, begin again.* Since every sort of knowledge and decision* pursues some good, what is the good that we say political science seeks? What, [in other words,] is the highest of all the goods achievable in action?

§2 As far as its name goes, most people virtually agree; for both the many and the cultivated call it happiness, and they suppose that living well and doing well are the same as being happy.* But they disagree about what happiness is, and the many do not give the same answer as the wise.*

§3 For the many think it is something obvious and evident—for instance, pleasure, wealth, or honor. Some take it to be one thing, others another. Indeed, the same person often changes his mind; for when he has fallen ill, he thinks happiness is health, and when he has fallen into poverty, he thinks it is wealth. And when they are conscious of their own ignorance, they admire anyone who speaks of something grand and above their heads. [Among the wise,] however, some used to think that besides these many goods there is some other good that exists in its own right and that causes all these goods to be goods.*

§4 Presumably, then, it is rather futile to examine all these beliefs, and it is enough to examine those that are most current or seem to have some argument for them.

§5 We must notice, however, the difference between arguments from principles and arguments toward principles.* For indeed Plato was right to be puzzled about this, when he used to ask if [the argument] set out from the principles or led toward them*—just as on a race course the path may go from the starting line to the far end,* or back again. For we should 1095b

1095b certainly begin from things known, but things are known in two ways;* for some are known to us, some known without qualification. Presumably, then, *we* ought to begin from things known to *us*.

5 §6 That is why we need to have been brought up in fine habits if we are to be adequate students of fine and just things, and of political questions generally. §7 For we begin from the [belief] that [something is true]; if this is apparent enough to us, we can begin without also [knowing] why [it is true].* Someone who is well brought up has the beginnings, or can easily acquire them.* Someone who neither has them nor 10 can acquire them should listen to Hesiod:* 'He who grasps everything himself is best of all; he is noble also who listens to one who has spoken well; but he who neither grasps it himself nor takes to heart what he hears from another is a useless man.'

5

[The Three Lives]

But let us begin again from the point from which we digressed.* For, it would seem, people quite reasonably reach their conception of the good, 15 i.e., of happiness, from the lives [they lead]; §2 for there are roughly three most favored lives: the lives of gratification, of political activity, and, third, of study.*

The many, the most vulgar, would seem to conceive the good and happiness as pleasure, and hence they also like the life of gratification. 20 §3 In this they appear completely slavish, since the life they decide on is a life for grazing animals.* Still, they have some argument in their defense, since many in positions of power feel as Sardanapallus* felt, [and also choose this life].

§4 The cultivated people, those active [in politics], conceive the good as honor, since this is more or less the end [normally pursued] in the political life. This, however, appears to be too superficial to be what we 25 are seeking;* for it seems to depend more on those who honor than on the one honored, whereas we intuitively believe that the good is something of our own and hard to take from us.* §5 Further, it would seem, they pursue honor to convince themselves that they are good; at any rate, they seek to be honored by prudent people, among people who know them, 30 and for virtue. It is clear, then, that—in their view at any rate—virtue is superior [to honor].

§6 Perhaps, indeed, one might conceive virtue more than honor to be the end of the political life. However, this also is apparently too incomplete [to be the good]. For it seems possible for someone to possess virtue 1096a but be asleep or inactive throughout his life, and, moreover, to suffer the worst evils and misfortunes. If this is the sort of life he leads, no one would count him happy, except to defend a philosopher's paradox.*

Enough about this, since it has been adequately discussed in the popular works* as well. 1096a

§7 The third life is the life of study, which we shall examine in what follows.* 5

§8 The moneymaker's life is in a way forced on him [not chosen for itself];* and clearly wealth is not the good we are seeking, since it is [merely] useful, [choiceworthy only] for some other end. Hence one would be more inclined to suppose that [any of] the goods mentioned earlier is the end, since they are liked for themselves. But apparently they are not [the end] either; and many arguments have been presented against them.* Let us, then, dismiss them. 10

nor the third life of study

6

[The Platonic Form of the Good]

Presumably, though, we had better examine the universal good, and puzzle out what is meant in speaking of it.* This sort of inquiry is, to be sure, unwelcome to us, because those who introduced the Forms were friends* of ours; still, it presumably seems better, indeed only right, to destroy even what is close to us if that is the way to preserve truth. We must especially do this as philosophers, [lovers of wisdom]; for though we love both the truth and our friends, reverence is due to the truth first. 15

§2 Those who introduced this view did not mean to produce an Idea for any [series] in which they spoke of prior and posterior [members];* that was why they did not mean to establish an Idea [of number] for [the series of] numbers. But the good is spoken of both in what-it-is [that is, substance], and in quality and relative; and what exists in its own right, that is, substance, is by nature prior to the relative,* since a relative would seem to be an appendage and coincident of being. And so there is no common Idea over these. 20

§3 Further, good is spoken of in as many ways as being [is spoken of]:* in what-it-is, as god and mind;* in quality, as the virtues; in quantity, as the measured amount; in relative, as the useful; in time, as the opportune moment; in place, as the [right] situation; and so on. Hence it is clear that the good cannot be some common and single universal; for if it were, it would be spoken of in only one [of the types of] predication, not in them all. 25

§4 Further, if a number of things have a single Idea, there is also a single science of them; hence [if there were an Idea of good] there would also be some single science of all goods. But, in fact, there are many sciences even of the goods under one [type of] predication; for the science of the opportune moment, for instance, in war is generalship, in disease medicine. And similarly the science of the measured amount in food is medicine, in exertion gymnastics. [Hence there is no single science of the good, and so no Idea.] 30

1096a35 §5 One might be puzzled about what [the believers in Ideas] really
1096b mean in speaking of the So-and-So Itself,* since Man Itself and man* have one and the same account of man; for insofar as each is man, they will not differ at all. If that is so, then [Good Itself and good have the same account of good]; hence they also will not differ at all insofar as each is good, [hence there is no point in appealing to Good Itself].

§6 Moreover, Good Itself will be no more of a good by being eternal;
5 for a white thing is no whiter if it lasts a long time than if it lasts a day.

§7 The Pythagoreans would seem to have a more plausible view about the good, since they place the One in the column of goods. Indeed, Speusippus seems to have followed them. §8 But let us leave this for another discussion.

A dispute emerges, however, about what we have said, because the
10 arguments [in favor of the Idea] are not concerned with every sort of good. Goods pursued and liked in their own right are spoken of as one species of goods, whereas those that in some way tend to produce or preserve these goods, or to prevent their contraries, are spoken of as goods because of these and in a different way. §9 Clearly, then, goods are spoken of in two ways, and some are goods in their own right, and others
15 goods because of these.* Let us, then, separate the goods in their own right from the [merely] useful goods, and consider whether goods in their own right correspond to a single Idea.

§10 But what sorts of goods may we take to be goods in their own right? Are they the goods that are pursued even on their own—for instance, prudence, seeing, some types of pleasures, and honors?* For even if we also pursue these because of something else, we may nonethe-
20 less take them to be goods in their own right. Alternatively, is nothing except the Idea good in its own right, so that the Form will be futile?* §11 But if these other things are also goods in their own right, then, [if there is an Idea of good,] the same account of good will have to turn up in all of them, just as the same account of whiteness turns up in snow and in chalk.* In fact, however, honor, prudence, and pleasure have different
5 and dissimilar accounts, precisely insofar as they are goods. Hence the good is not something common corresponding to a single Idea.

§12 But how, then, is good spoken of? For it is not like homonyms resulting from chance.* Is it spoken of from the fact that goods derive from one thing or all contribute to one thing? Or is it spoken of more by analogy? For as sight is to body, so understanding is to soul, and so on for other cases.*

30 §13 Presumably, though, we should leave these questions for now, since their exact treatment is more appropriate for another [branch of] philosophy.* And the same is true about the Idea. For even if there is some one good predicated in common,* or some separable good, itself in its own right, clearly that is not the sort of good a human being can
35 achieve in action or possess; but that is the sort we are looking for now.

§14 Perhaps, however, someone might think it is better to get to know 1096b
the Idea with a view to the goods that we can possess and achieve in 1097a
action; for [one might suppose that] if we have this as a sort of pattern, we
shall also know better about the goods that are goods for us, and if we
know about them, we shall hit on them. §15 This argument certainly
has some plausibility, but it would seem to clash with the sciences. For 5
each of these, though it aims at some good and seeks to supply what is
lacking, leaves out knowledge of the Idea; but if the Idea were such an
important aid, surely it would not be reasonable for all craftsmen to know
nothing about it and not even to look for it.

§16 Moreover, it is a puzzle to know what the weaver or carpenter
will gain for his own craft from knowing this Good Itself, or how anyone 10
will be better at medicine or generalship from having gazed on the Idea
Itself. For what the doctor appears to consider is not even health [univer-
sally, let alone good universally], but human health, and presumably the
health of this human being even more, since he treats one particular
patient at a time.*

So much, then, for these questions.

7

[An Account of the Human Good]

But let us return once again to the good we are looking for, and con- 15
sider just what it could be.* For it is apparently one thing in one action or
craft, and another thing in another; for it is one thing in medicine, another
in generalship, and so on for the rest. What, then, is the good of each
action or craft? Surely it is that for the sake of which the other things are
done; in medicine this is health, in generalship victory, in house-building 20
a house, in another case something else, but in every action and decision
it is the end, since it is for the sake of the end that everyone does the other
actions.* And so, if there is some end of everything achievable in action,
the good achievable in action will be this end; if there are more ends than
one, [the good achievable in action] will be these ends.*

§2 Our argument, then, has followed a different route to reach the
same conclusion.* But we must try to make this still more perspicuous.* 25
§3 Since there are apparently many ends, and we choose some of them
(for instance, wealth, flutes, and, in general, instruments) because of
something else, it is clear that not all ends are complete.* But the best
good is apparently something complete. And so, if only one end is com-
plete, the good we are looking for will be this end; if more ends than one
are complete, it will be the most complete end of these.* 30

§4 We say that an end pursued in its own right is more complete than
an end pursued because of something else, and that an end that is never
choiceworthy because of something else is more complete than ends that

1097a are choiceworthy both in their own right and because of this end. Hence an end that is always choiceworthy in its own right,* never because of something else, is complete without qualification.

§5 Now happiness, more than anything else, seems complete without qualification.* For we always choose it because of itself,* never because of something else. Honor, pleasure, understanding, and every virtue we certainly choose because of themselves, since we would choose each of them even if it had no further result; but we also choose them for the sake of happiness, supposing that through them we shall be happy.* Happiness, by contrast, no one ever chooses for their sake, or for the sake of anything else at all.

§6 The same conclusion [that happiness is complete] also appears to follow from self-sufficiency. For the complete good seems to be self-sufficient.* What we count as self-sufficient is not what suffices for a solitary person by himself, living an isolated life, but what suffices also for parents, children, wife, and, in general, for friends and fellow citizens, since a human being is a naturally political [animal].* §7 Here, however, we must impose some limit; for if we extend the good to parents' parents and children's children and to friends of friends, we shall go on without limit; but we must examine this another time.

Anyhow, we regard something as self-sufficient when all by itself it makes a life choiceworthy and lacking nothing; and that is what we think happiness does. §8 Moreover, we think happiness is most choiceworthy of all goods, [since] it is not counted as one good among many.* [If it were] counted as one among many,* then, clearly, we think it would be more choiceworthy if the smallest of goods were added; for the good that is added becomes an extra quantity of goods, and the larger of two goods is always more choiceworthy.*

Happiness, then, is apparently something complete and self-sufficient, since it is the end of the things achievable in action.*

§9 But presumably the remark that the best good is happiness is apparently something [generally] agreed, and we still need a clearer statement of what the best good is.* §10 Perhaps, then, we shall find this if we first grasp the function of a human being. For just as the good, i.e., [doing] well, for a flautist, a sculptor, and every craftsman, and, in general, for whatever has a function and [characteristic] action, seems to depend on its function,* the same seems to be true for a human being, if a human being has some function.

§11 Then do the carpenter and the leather worker have their functions and actions, but has a human being no function?* Is he by nature idle, without any function?* Or, just as eye, hand, foot, and, in general, every [bodily] part apparently has its function, may we likewise ascribe to a human being some function apart from all of these?*

§12 What, then, could this be? For living is apparently shared with 1098a plants, but what we are looking for is the special function of a human

being; hence we should set aside the life of nutrition and growth.* The life 1098a
next in order is some sort of life of sense perception; but this too is apparently shared with horse, ox, and every animal.*

§13 The remaining possibility, then, is some sort of life of action* of the [part of the soul] that has reason.* One [part] of it has reason as obeying reason; the other has it as itself having reason and thinking.* Moreover, life is also spoken of in two ways [as capacity and as activity], and we must take [a human being's special function to be] life as activity, since this seems to be called life more fully.* §14 We have found, then, that the human function is activity of the soul in accord with reason or requiring reason.*

Now we say that the function of a [kind of thing]—of a harpist, for instance—is the same in kind as the function of an excellent individual of the kind—of an excellent harpist, for instance. And the same is true without qualification in every case, if we add to the function the superior achievement in accord with the virtue; for the function of a harpist is to play the harp, and the function of a good harpist is to play it well.* Moreover, we take the human function to be a certain kind of life, and take this life to be activity and actions of the soul that involve reason; hence the function of the excellent man is to do this well and finely.

§15 Now each function is completed well by being completed in accord with the virtue proper [to that kind of thing].* And so the human good proves to be activity of the soul in accord with virtue,* and indeed with the best and most complete virtue, if there are more virtues than one.* §16 Moreover, in a complete life.* For one swallow does not make a spring, nor does one day; nor, similarly, does one day or a short time make us blessed and happy.

§17 This, then, is a sketch of the good; for, presumably, we must draw the outline first, and fill it in later.* If the sketch is good, anyone, it seems, can advance and articulate it, and in such cases time discovers more, or is a good partner in discovery. That is also how the crafts have improved, since anyone can add what is lacking [in the outline].

§18 We must also remember our previous remarks, so that we do not look for the same degree of exactness in all areas, but the degree that accords with a given subject matter and is proper to a given line of inquiry.* §19 For the carpenter's and the geometer's inquiries about the right angle are different also; the carpenter restricts himself to what helps his work, but the geometer inquires into what, or what sort* of thing, the right angle is, since he studies the truth. We must do the same, then, in other areas too, [seeking the proper degree of exactness], so that digressions do not overwhelm our main task.

§20 Nor should we make the same demand for an explanation in all 1098b
cases. On the contrary, in some cases it is enough to prove rightly that [something is true, without also explaining why it is true]. This is so, for

1098b instance, with principles, where the fact that [something is true] is the first thing, that is to say, the principle.* (versus hypotheses in Plato's "thought" not reason/understanding)

§21 Some principles are studied by means of induction, some by means of perception, some by means of some sort of habituation, and others by other means.* §22 In each case we should try to find them out by means suited to their nature, and work hard to define them rightly. §23 For they carry great weight* for what follows; for the principle seems to be more than half the whole,* and makes evident the answer to many of our questions.

8

[Defense of the Account of the Good]

We should examine the principle, however, not only from the conclusion and premises [of a deduction], but also from what is said about it;* for all the facts harmonize with a true account, whereas the truth soon clashes with a false one.*

external soul body

§2 Goods are divided, then, into three types, some called external, some goods of the soul, others goods of the body.* We say that the goods of the soul are goods most fully, and more than the others, and we take actions and activities of the soul to be [goods] of the soul. And so our account [of the good] is right, to judge by this belief anyhow—and it is an ancient belief, and accepted by philosophers.

actions and activities are the end

§3 Our account is also correct in saying that some sort of actions and activities are the end; for in that way the end turns out to be a good of the soul, not an external good.

§4 The belief that the happy person lives well and does well also agrees with our account, since we have virtually said that the end is a sort of living well and doing well.

§5 Further, all the features that people look for in happiness appear to be true of the end described in our account.* §6 For to some people happiness seems to be virtue; to others prudence; to others some sort of wisdom; to others again it seems to be these, or one of these, involving pleasure or requiring it to be added;* others add in external prosperity as well. §7 Some of these views are traditional, held by many, while others are held by a few men who are widely esteemed. It is reasonable for each group not to be completely wrong, but to be correct on one point at least, or even on most points.

§8 First, our account agrees with those who say happiness is virtue [in general] or some [particular] virtue; for activity in accord with virtue is proper to virtue. §9 Presumably, though, it matters quite a bit whether we suppose that the best good consists in possessing or in using—that is to say, in a state or in an activity [that actualizes the state].* For someone

state vs. activity actively illuminated by the good (cf. Plato)

may be in a state that achieves no good—if, for instance, he is asleep or 1099a
inactive in some other way—but this cannot be true of the activity; for it
will necessarily act and act well. And just as Olympic prizes are not for
the finest and strongest, but for the contestants—since it is only these who 5
win—the same is true in life; among the fine and good people, only those
who act correctly* win the prize.

§10 Moreover, the life of these active people is also pleasant in itself.*
For being pleased is a condition of the soul, [and hence is included in the
activity of the soul]. Further, each type of person finds pleasure in what-
ever he is called a lover of; a horse, for instance, pleases the horse-lover, a
spectacle the lover of spectacles. Similarly, what is just pleases the lover of 10
justice, and in general what accords with virtue pleases the lover of virtue.

§11 Now the things that please most people conflict,* because they are
not pleasant by nature, whereas the things that please lovers of the fine
are things pleasant by nature. Actions in accord with virtue are pleasant
by nature, so that they both please lovers of the fine and are pleasant in 15
their own right.

§12 Hence these people's life does not need pleasure to be added [to
virtuous activity] as some sort of extra decoration; rather, it has its plea-
sure within itself.* For besides the reasons already given, someone who
does not enjoy fine actions is not good; for no one would call a person
just, for instance, if he did not enjoy doing just actions, or generous if he
did not enjoy generous actions, and similarly for the other virtues.

§13 If this is so, actions in accord with the virtues are pleasant in their
own right. Moreover, these actions are good and fine as well as pleasant;
indeed, they are good, fine, and pleasant more than anything else is, since
on this question the excellent person judges rightly, and his judgment
agrees with what we have said.

§14 Happiness, then, is best, finest, and most pleasant, and the Delian 25
inscription is wrong to distinguish these things: 'What is most just is fin-
est; being healthy is most beneficial; but it is most pleasant to win our
heart's desire.'* For all three features are found in the best activities, and
we say happiness is these activities, or [rather] one of them, the best one.*

§15 Nonetheless, happiness evidently also needs external goods to be
added, as we said, since we cannot, or cannot easily, do fine actions if we
lack the resources.* For, first of all, in many actions we use friends, 1099b
wealth, and political power just as we use instruments. §16 Further,
deprivation of certain [externals]—for instance, good birth, good chil-
dren, beauty—mars our blessedness. For we do not altogether have the
character of happiness* if we look utterly repulsive or are ill-born, soli-
tary, or childless; and we have it even less, presumably, if our children or 5
friends are totally bad, or were good but have died.

§17 And so, as we have said, happiness would seem to need this sort
of prosperity added also. That is why some people identify happiness
with good fortune, and others identify it with virtue.

happiness is a certain sort of activity of the soul in accord with virtue

9

[How Is Happiness Achieved?]

1099b This also leads to a puzzle: Is happiness acquired by learning, or habituation, or by some other form of cultivation? Or is it the result of some divine fate, or even of fortune?*

§2 First, then, if the gods give any gift at all to human beings, it is reasonable for them to give us happiness more than any other human good, insofar as it is the best of human goods. §3 Presumably, however, this question is more suitable for a different inquiry.

But even if it is not sent by the gods, but instead results from virtue and some sort of learning or cultivation, happiness appears to be one of the most divine things, since the prize and goal of virtue appears to be the best good, something divine and blessed. §4 Moreover [if happiness comes in this way] it will be widely shared; for anyone who is not deformed [in his capacity] for virtue will be able to achieve happiness through some sort of learning and attention.

§5 And since it is better to be happy in this way than because of fortune, it is reasonable for this to be the way [we become] happy. For whatever is natural is naturally in the finest state possible. §6 The same is true of the products of crafts and of every other cause, especially the best cause; and it would be seriously inappropriate to entrust what is greatest and finest to fortune.*

§7 The answer to our question is also evident from our account. For we have said that happiness is a certain sort of activity of the soul in accord with virtue, [and hence not a result of fortune]. Of the other goods, some are necessary conditions of happiness, while others are naturally useful and cooperative as instruments [but are not parts of it].

§8 Further, this conclusion agrees with our opening remarks. For we took the goal of political science to be the best good; and most of its attention is devoted to the character of the citizens, to make them good people who do fine actions.*

§9 It is not surprising, then, that we regard neither ox, nor horse, nor 1100a any other kind of animal as happy; for none of them can share in this sort of activity. §10 For the same reason a child is not happy either, since his age prevents him from doing these sorts of actions. If he is called happy, he is being congratulated [simply] because of anticipated blessedness; for, as we have said, happiness requires both complete virtue and a complete life.*

§10 It needs a complete life because life includes many reversals of fortune, good and bad, and the most prosperous person may fall into a terrible disaster in old age, as the Trojan stories tell us about Priam. If someone has suffered these sorts of misfortunes and comes to a miserable end, no one counts him happy.

10

[Can We Be Happy during Our Lifetime?]

Then should we count no human being happy during his lifetime, but follow Solon's advice to wait to see the end?* §2 But if we agree with Solon, can someone really be happy during the time after he has died? Surely that is completely absurd, especially when we say happiness is an activity. 1100a10

§3 We do not say, then, that someone is happy during the time he is dead, and Solon's point is not this [absurd one], but rather that when a human being has died, we can safely pronounce [that he was] blessed [before he died], on the assumption that he is now finally beyond evils and misfortunes.* But this claim is also disputable. For if a living person has good or evil of which he is not aware, a dead person also, it seems, has good or evil, if, for instance, he receives honors or dishonors, and his children, and descendants in general, do well or suffer misfortune.*

§4 However, this conclusion also raises a puzzle. For even if someone has lived in blessedness until old age, and has died appropriately, many fluctuations of his descendants' fortunes may still happen to him; for some may be good people and get the life they deserve, while the contrary may be true of others, and clearly they may be as distantly related to their ancestor as you please. Surely, then, it would be an absurd result if the dead person's condition changed along with the fortunes of his descendants, so that at one time he would turn out to have been happy [in his lifetime] and at another time he would turn out to have been miserable.* §5 But it would also be absurd if the condition of descendants did not affect their ancestors at all or for any length of time.

§6 But we must return to the previous puzzle, since that will perhaps also show us the answer to our present question. §7 Let us grant that we must wait to see the end, and must then count someone blessed, not as now being blessed [during the time he is dead] but because he previously was blessed. Would it not be absurd, then, if, at the very time when he is happy, we refused to ascribe truly to him the happiness he has?* Such refusal results from reluctance to call him happy during his lifetime, because of its ups and downs; for we suppose happiness is enduring and definitely not prone to fluctuate, but the same person's fortunes often turn to and fro.* §8 For clearly, if we take our cue from his fortunes, we shall often call him happy and then miserable again, thereby representing the happy person as a kind of chameleon, insecurely based. 1100b

§9 But surely it is quite wrong to take our cue from someone's fortunes. For his doing well or badly does not rest on them.* A human life, as we said, needs these added, but activities in accord with virtue control happiness, and the contrary activities control its contrary. §10 Indeed, the present puzzle is further evidence for our account [of happiness]. For no human achievement has the stability of activities in accord with virtue, since these seem to be more enduring even than our knowledge of

the stability of activities

1100b15 the sciences.* Indeed, the most honorable among the virtues themselves are more enduring than the other virtues, because blessed people devote their lives to them more fully and more continually than to anything else—for this continual activity would seem to be the reason we do not forget them.

§11 It follows, then, that the happy person has the [stability] we are looking for and keeps the character he has throughout his life. For 20 always, or more than anything else, he will do and study the actions in accord with virtue, and will bear fortunes most finely, in every way and in all conditions appropriately, since he is truly 'good, foursquare, and blameless'.*

§12 Many events, however, are subject to fortune; some are minor, some major. Hence, minor strokes of good or ill fortune clearly will not 25 carry any weight for his life. But many major strokes of good fortune will make it more blessed; for in themselves they naturally add adornment to it, and his use of them proves to be fine and excellent.* Conversely, if he suffers many major misfortunes, they oppress and spoil his blessedness, 30 since they involve pain and impede many activities. And yet, even here what is fine shines through, whenever someone bears many severe misfortunes with good temper, not because he feels no distress, but because he is noble and magnanimous.*

§13 And since it is activities that control life, as we said, no blessed 35 person could ever become miserable, since he will never do hateful and 1101a base actions. For a truly good and prudent person,* we suppose, will bear strokes of fortune suitably, and from his resources at any time will do the finest actions, just as a good general will make the best use of his forces in 5 war, and a good shoemaker will make the finest shoe from the hides given to him, and similarly for all other craftsmen.

§14 If this is so, the happy person could never become miserable, but neither will he be blessed if he falls into misfortunes as bad as Priam's.* Nor, however, will he be inconstant and prone to fluctuate, since he will 10 neither be easily shaken from his happiness nor shaken by just any misfortunes.* He will be shaken from it, though, by many serious misfortunes, and from these a return to happiness will take no short time. At best, it will take a long and complete length of time that includes great and fine successes.

§15 Then why not say that the happy person is the one whose activities accord with complete virtue, with an adequate supply of external goods, not for just any time but for a complete life? Or should we add that he will also go on living this way and will come to an appropriate end, since the future is not apparent to us, and we take happiness to be the end, and altogether complete in every way? §16 Given these facts 20 [about the future and about happiness], we shall say that a living person who has, and will keep, the goods we mentioned is blessed, but blessed as a human being is.* So much for a determination of this question.

11

[How Happiness Can Be Affected after One's Death]

Still, it is apparently rather unfriendly and contrary to the [common] beliefs to claim that the fortunes of our descendants and all our friends contribute nothing. §2 But since they can find themselves in many and various circumstances, some of which affect us more, some less, it is apparently a long—indeed endless—task to differentiate all the particular cases. Perhaps a general outline will be enough of an answer. 1101a 25

§3 Misfortunes, then, even to the person himself, differ, and some have a certain gravity and weight for his life, whereas others would seem to be lighter. The same is true for the misfortunes of his friends; §4 and it matters whether they happen to living or to dead people—much more than it matters whether lawless and terrible crimes are committed before a tragic drama begins or in the course of it.* 30

§5 In our reasoning, then, we should also take account of this difference, but even more account, presumably, of the puzzle about whether the dead share in any good or evil. For if we consider this, anything good or evil penetrating to the dead would seem to be weak and unimportant, either without qualification or for them. Even if the good or evil is not so weak and unimportant, still its importance and character are not enough to make people happy who are not already happy, or to take away the blessedness of those who are happy. §6 And so, when friends do well, and likewise when they do badly, it appears to contribute something to the dead, but of a character and size that neither makes happy people not happy nor anything of this sort. 35 1101b 5

12

[Praise and Honor]

Now that we have determined these points, let us consider whether happiness is something praiseworthy, or instead something honorable; for clearly it is not a capacity [which is neither praiseworthy nor honorable]. 10

§2 Whatever is praiseworthy appears to be praised for its character and its state in relation to something.* We praise the just and the brave person, for instance, and in general the good person and virtue, because of their actions and achievements; and we praise the strong person, the good runner, and each of the others because he naturally has a certain character and is in a certain state in relation to something good and excellent. §3 This is clear also from praises of the gods; for these praises appear ridiculous because they are referred to us, but they are referred to us because, as we said, praise depends on such a reference. 15 20

§4 If praise is for these sorts of things, then clearly for the best things there is no praise, but something greater and better. And indeed this is

eudaimonia is above praise (honorable and complete)

how it appears. For the gods and the most godlike* of men are [not praised, but] congratulated for their blessedness and happiness. The same is true of goods; for we never praise happiness, as we praise justice, but we count it blessed, as something better and more godlike [than anything that is praised].

§5 Indeed, Eudoxus seems to have used the right sort of argument in defending the supremacy of pleasure.* By not praising pleasure, though it is a good, we indicate—so he thought—that it is superior to everything praiseworthy; [only] the god and the good have this superiority since the other goods are [praised] by reference to them.

§6 [Here he seems to have argued correctly.] For praise is given to virtue, since it makes us do fine actions; but celebrations are for achievements, either of body or of soul. §7 But an exact treatment of this is presumably more proper for specialists in celebrations. For us, anyhow, it is clear from what has been said that happiness is something honorable and complete. cf. Karma by Taylor Swift, justice of the soul

§8 A further reason why this would seem to be correct is that happiness is a principle; for [the principle] is what we all aim at in all our other actions;* and we take the principle and cause of goods to be something honorable and divine.

happiness is a principle

13

[Introduction to the Virtues]

Since happiness is a certain sort of activity of the soul in accord with complete virtue, we must examine virtue; for that will perhaps also be a way to study happiness better.* §2 Moreover, the true politician* seems to have put more effort into virtue than into anything else, since he wants to make the citizens good and law-abiding. §3 We find an example of this in the Spartan and Cretan legislators and in any others who share their concerns. §4 Since, then, the examination of virtue is proper for political science, the inquiry clearly suits our decision at the beginning.*

§5 It is clear that the virtue we must examine is human virtue, since we are also seeking the human good and human happiness. §6 By human virtue we mean virtue of the soul, not of the body, since we also say that happiness is an activity of the soul. §7 If this is so, it is clear that the politician must in some way know about the soul, just as someone setting out to heal the eyes must know about the whole body as well.* This is all the more true to the extent that political science is better and more honorable than medicine; even among doctors, the cultivated ones devote a lot of effort to finding out about the body. Hence the politician as well [as the student of nature] must study the soul.* §8 But he must study it for his specific purpose, far enough for his inquiry [into virtue];

for a more exact treatment would presumably take more effort than his purpose requires.* 1102a

§9 [We] have discussed the soul sufficiently [for our purposes] in [our] popular works as well [as our less popular],* and we should use this discussion. We have said, for instance, that one [part] of the soul is nonrational, while one has reason. §10 Are these distinguished as parts of a body and everything divisible into parts are? Or are they two [only] in definition, and inseparable by nature, as the convex and the concave are in a surface? It does not matter for present purposes.*

§11 Consider the nonrational [part]. One [part] of it, i.e., the cause of nutrition and growth, would seem to be plantlike and shared [with all living things]; for we can ascribe this capacity of the soul to everything that is nourished, including embryos, and the same capacity to full-grown living things, since this is more reasonable than to ascribe another capacity to them.* 1102b

§12 Hence the virtue of this capacity is apparently shared, not [specifically] human. For this part and this capacity more than others seem to be active in sleep, and here the good and the bad person are least distinct; hence happy people are said to be no better off than miserable people for half their lives. §13 This lack of distinction is not surprising, since sleep is inactivity of the soul insofar as it is called excellent or base, unless to some small extent some movements penetrate [to our awareness], and in this way the decent person comes to have better images [in dreams] than just any random person has. §14 Enough about this, however, and let us leave aside the nutritive part, since by nature it has no share in human virtue.

§15 Another nature in the soul would also seem to be nonrational, though in a way it shares in reason. For in the continent and the incontinent person we praise their reason, that is to say, the [part] of the soul that has reason, because it exhorts them correctly and toward what is best; but they evidently also have in them some other [part] that is by nature something apart from reason, clashing and struggling with reason. For just as paralyzed parts of a body, when we decide to move them to the right, do the contrary and move off to the left, the same is true of the soul; for incontinent people have impulses in contrary directions. §16 In bodies, admittedly, we see the part go astray, whereas we do not see it in the soul; nonetheless, presumably, we should suppose that the soul also has something apart from reason, countering and opposing reason. The [precise] way it is different does not matter.

§17 However, this [part] as well [as the rational part] appears, as we said, to share in reason. At any rate, in the continent person it obeys reason; and in the temperate and the brave person it presumably listens still better to reason, since there it agrees with reason in everything.*

§18 The nonrational [part], then, as well [as the whole soul] apparently has two parts. For while the plantlike [part] shares in reason not at

1102b all, the [part] with appetites and in general desires* shares in reason in a way, insofar as it both listens to reason and obeys it. This is the way in which we are said to 'listen to reason' from father or friends, as opposed to the way in which [we 'give the reason'] in mathematics.* The nonrational part also [obeys and] is persuaded in some way by reason, as is 1103a shown by correction, and by every sort of reproof and exhortation.

§19 If, then, we ought to say that this [part] also has reason, then the [part] that has reason, as well [as the nonrational part], will have two parts. One will have reason fully, by having it within itself; the other will have reason by listening to reason as to a father.*

5 The division between virtues accords with this difference. For some virtues are called virtues of thought, others virtues of character; wisdom, comprehension, and prudence are called virtues of thought, generosity and temperance virtues of character.* For when we speak of someone's character we do not say that he is wise or has good comprehension, but that he is gentle or temperate. And yet, we also praise the 10 wise person for his state, and the states that are praiseworthy are the ones we call virtues.

Book II

[Virtue of Character]

1

[How a Virtue of Character Is Acquired]

15 Virtue, then, is of two sorts, virtue of thought and virtue of character. Virtue of thought arises and grows mostly from teaching; that is why it needs experience and time. Virtue of character [i.e., of *ēthos*] results from habit [*ethos*]; hence its name 'ethical', slightly varied from 'ethos'.*

§2 Hence it is also clear that none of the virtues of character arises in 20 us naturally. For if something is by nature in one condition, habituation cannot bring it into another condition. A stone, for instance, by nature moves downwards, and habituation could not make it move upwards, not even if you threw it up ten thousand times to habituate it; nor could habituation make fire move downwards, or bring anything that is by nature in one condition into another condition. §3 And so the virtues 25 arise in us neither by nature nor against nature. Rather, we are by nature able to acquire them, and we are completed through habit.*

§4 Further, if something arises in us by nature, we first have the capacity for it, and later perform the activity. This is clear in the case of the 30 senses; for we did not acquire them by frequent seeing or hearing, but we already had them when we exercised them, and did not get them by exercising them. Virtues, by contrast, we acquire, just as we acquire crafts, by

having first activated them. For we learn a craft by producing the same 1103a
product that we must produce when we have learned it; we become
builders, for instance, by building, and we become harpists by playing
the harp. Similarly, then, we become just by doing just actions, temperate 1103b
by doing temperate actions, brave by doing brave actions.

§5 What goes on in cities is also evidence for this. For the legislator
makes the citizens good by habituating them, and this is the wish of every 5
legislator; if he fails to do it well he misses his goal.* Correct habituation
distinguishes a good political system from a bad one.

§6 Further, the sources and means that develop each virtue also ruin it,
just as they do in a craft. For playing the harp makes both good and bad
harpists, and it is analogous in the case of builders and all the rest; for 10
building well makes good builders, and building badly makes bad
ones. §7 Otherwise no teacher would be needed, but everyone would
be born a good or a bad craftsman.

It is the same, then, with the virtues. For what we do in our dealings
with other people makes some of us just, some unjust; what we do in ter- 15
rifying situations, and the habits of fear or confidence that we acquire,
make some of us brave and others cowardly. The same is true of situa-
tions involving appetites and anger; for one or another sort of conduct in
these situations makes some temperate and mild, others intemperate and 20
irascible. To sum it up in a single account: a state [of character] results
from [the repetition of] similar activities.*

§8 That is why we must perform the right activities, since differences
in these imply corresponding differences in the states.* It is not unimpor-
tant, then, to acquire one sort of habit or another, right from our youth.
On the contrary, it is very important, indeed all-important. 25

good habits could preclude wisdom through suffering (understanding vs. thought)

2

[Habituation]

Our present discussion does not aim, as our others do, at study; for the not about
purpose of our examination is not to know what virtue is, but to become study
good, since otherwise the inquiry would be of no benefit to us.* And so 30
we must examine the right ways of acting; for, as we have said, the
actions also control the sorts of states we acquire. actions ⇒ states

§2 First, then, actions should accord with the correct reason.* That is a
common [belief], and let us assume it. We shall discuss it later, and say
what the correct reason is and how it is related to the other virtues.

§3 But let us take it as agreed in advance that every account of the 1104a
actions we must do has to be stated in outline, not exactly. As we also said
at the beginning, the type of accounts we demand should accord with the
subject matter; and questions about actions and expediency, like ques-
tions about health, have no fixed answers.*

stated in outline, not exactly

1104a5 §4 While this is the character of our general account, the account of particular cases is still more inexact. For these fall under no craft or profession; the agents themselves must consider in each case what the opportune action is, as doctors and navigators do.* §5 The account we offer, then, in our present inquiry is of this inexact sort; still, we must try to offer help.*

§6 First, then, we should observe that these sorts of states naturally tend to be ruined by excess and deficiency. We see this happen with strength and health—for we must use evident cases [such as these] as witnesses to things that are not evident.* For both excessive and deficient exercise ruin bodily strength, and, similarly, too much or too little eating or drinking ruins health, whereas the proportionate amount produces, increases, and preserves it.

§7 The same is true, then, of temperance, bravery, and the other virtues. For if, for instance, someone avoids and is afraid of everything, standing firm against nothing, he becomes cowardly; if he is afraid of nothing at all and goes to face everything, he becomes rash. Similarly, if he gratifies himself with every pleasure and abstains from none, he becomes intemperate; if he avoids them all, as boors do, he becomes some sort of insensible person. Temperance and bravery, then, are ruined by excess and deficiency, but preserved by the mean.*

§8 But these actions are not only the sources and causes both of the emergence and growth of virtues and of their ruin; the activities of the virtues [once we have acquired them] also consist in these same actions.* For this is also true of more evident cases; strength, for instance, arises from eating a lot and from withstanding much hard labor, and it is the strong person who is most capable of these very actions. §9 It is the same with the virtues. For abstaining from pleasures makes us become temperate, and once we have become temperate we are most capable of abstaining from pleasures. It is similar with bravery; habituation in disdain for frightening situations and in standing firm against them makes us become brave, and once we have become brave we shall be most capable of standing firm.

3

[The Importance of Pleasure and Pain]

But we must take someone's pleasure or pain following on his actions to be a sign of his state.* For if someone who abstains from bodily pleasures enjoys the abstinence itself, he is temperate; 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, he is brave; if he finds it painful, he is cowardly. For virtue of character is about pleasures and pains.*

For pleasure causes us to do base actions, and pain causes us to abstain from fine ones. 1104b10
§2 That is why we need to have had the appropriate upbringing—right from early youth, as Plato says*—to make us find enjoyment or pain in the right things; for this is the correct education.

§3 Further, virtues are concerned with actions and feelings; but every feeling and every action implies pleasure or pain;* hence, for this reason too, virtue is about pleasures and pains. §4 Corrective treatments also indicate this, since they use pleasures and pains; for correction is a form of medical treatment, and medical treatment naturally operates through contraries.

§5 Further, as we said earlier, every state of soul is naturally related to and about whatever naturally makes it better or worse; and pleasures and pains make people base, from pursuing and avoiding the wrong ones, at the wrong time, in the wrong ways, or whatever other distinctions of that sort are needed in an account. These [bad effects of pleasure and pain] are the reason why people actually define the virtues as ways of being unaffected and undisturbed [by pleasures and pains].* They are wrong, however, because they speak of being unaffected without qualification, not of being unaffected in the right or wrong way, at the right or wrong time, and the added qualifications.

§6 We assume, then, that virtue is the sort of state that does the best actions concerning pleasures and pains, and that vice is the contrary state.

§7 The following will also make it evident that virtue and vice are about the same things. For there are three objects of choice—fine, expedient, and pleasant—and three objects of avoidance—their contraries, shameful, harmful, and painful.* About all these, then, the good person is correct and the bad person is in error, and especially about pleasure. For pleasure is shared with animals, and implied by every object of choice, 1105a since what is fine and what is expedient appear pleasant as well.

§8 Further, pleasure grows up with all of us from infancy on. That is why it is hard to rub out this feeling that is dyed into our lives. We also estimate actions [as well as feelings]—some of us more, some less—by pleasure and pain. §9 For this reason, our whole discussion must be about these; for good or bad enjoyment or pain is very important for our actions.

§10 Further, it is more difficult to fight pleasure than to fight spirit—and Heracleitus tells us [how difficult it is to fight spirit].* Now both craft and virtue are in every case about what is more difficult, since a good result is even better when it is more difficult. Hence, for this reason also, the whole discussion, for virtue and political science alike, must consider pleasures and pains; for if we use these well, we shall be good, and if badly, bad.

§11 To sum up: Virtue is about pleasures and pains; the actions that are its sources also increase it or, if they are done badly, ruin it; and its activity is about the same actions as those that are its sources.

Definition of virtue

4

[Virtuous Actions versus Virtuous Character]

1105a Someone might be puzzled, however, about what we mean by saying that we become just by doing just actions and become temperate by doing temperate actions.* For [one might suppose that] if we do grammatical or 20 musical actions, we are grammarians or musicians, and, similarly, if we do just or temperate actions, we are thereby just or temperate.

§2 But surely actions are not enough, even in the case of crafts;* for it is possible to produce a grammatical result by chance, or by following someone else's instructions. To be grammarians, then, we must both pro- 25 duce a grammatical result and produce it grammatically—that is to say, produce it in accord with the grammatical knowledge in us.

§3 Moreover, in any case, what is true of crafts is not true of virtues.* For the products of a craft determine by their own qualities whether they have been produced well; and so it suffices that they have the right qualities when they have been produced.* But for actions in accord with the 30 virtues to be done temperately or justly it does not suffice that they themselves have the right qualities.* Rather, the agent must also be in the right state when he does them. First, he must know [that he is doing virtuous actions]; second, he must decide on them, and decide on them for themselves; and, third, he must also do them from a firm and unchanging state.

1105b As conditions for having a craft, these three do not count, except for the bare knowing.* As a condition for having a virtue, however, the knowing counts for nothing, or [rather] for only a little, whereas the other two conditions are very important, indeed all-important. And we achieve 5 these other two conditions by the frequent doing of just and temperate actions.

§4 Hence actions are called just or temperate when they are the sort that a just or temperate person would do. But the just and temperate person is not the one who [merely] does these actions, but the one who also does them in the way in which just or temperate people do them.

10 §5 It is right, then, to say that a person comes to be just from doing just actions and temperate from doing temperate actions; for no one has the least prospect of becoming good from failing to do them.

§6 The many, however, do not do these actions. They take refuge in arguments, thinking that they are doing philosophy, and that this is the 15 way to become excellent people. They are like a sick person who listens attentively to the doctor, but acts on none of his instructions. Such a course of treatment will not improve the state of the sick person's body; nor will the many improve the state of their souls by this attitude to philosophy.*

5

[Virtue of Character: Its Genus]

Next we must examine what virtue is. Since there are three conditions 1105b20
arising in the soul—feelings, capacities, and states—virtue must be one of these.*

§2 By feelings I mean appetite, anger, fear, confidence, envy, joy, love, hate, longing, jealousy, pity, and in general whatever implies pleasure or pain. By capacities I mean what we have when we are said to be capable 25
of these feelings—capable of being angry, for instance, or of being afraid* or of feeling pity. By states I mean what we have when we are well or badly off in relation to feelings.* If, for instance, our feeling is too intense or slack, we are badly off in relation to anger, but if it is intermediate, we are well off; the same is true in the other cases.

§3 First, then, neither virtues nor vices are feelings. For we are called 30
excellent or base insofar as we have virtues or vices, not insofar as we have feelings. Further, we are neither praised nor blamed insofar as we have feelings; for we do not praise the angry or the frightened person, and do not blame the person who is simply angry, but only the person 1106a
who is angry in a particular way. We are praised or blamed, however, insofar as we have virtues or vices.* §4 Further, we are angry and afraid without decision; but the virtues are decisions of some kind, or [rather] require decision.* Besides, insofar as we have feelings, we are said to be 5
moved; but insofar as we have virtues or vices, we are said to be in some condition rather than moved.

§5 For these reasons the virtues are not capacities either; for we are neither called good nor called bad, nor are we praised or blamed, insofar as we are simply capable of feelings. Further, while we have capacities by 10
nature, we do not become good or bad by nature; we have discussed this before.*

§6 If, then, the virtues are neither feelings nor capacities, the remaining possibility is that they are states. And so we have said what the genus of virtue is.

6

[Virtue of Character: Its Differentia]

But we must say not only, as we already have, that it is a state, but also 15
what sort of state it is.*

§2 It should be said, then, that every virtue causes its possessors to be in a good state and to perform their functions well.* The virtue of eyes, for instance, makes the eyes and their functioning excellent, because it makes us see well; and similarly, the virtue of a horse makes the horse 20
excellent, and thereby good at galloping, at carrying its rider, and at

1106a standing steady in the face of the enemy. §3 If this is true in every case, the virtue of a human being will likewise be the state that makes a human being good and makes him perform his function well.

§4 We have already said how this will be true, and it will also be evident from our next remarks, if we consider the sort of nature that virtue has.*

In everything continuous and divisible we can take more, less, and equal, and each of them either in the object itself or relative to us; and the equal is some intermediate between excess and deficiency. §5 By the intermediate in the object I mean what is equidistant from each extremity; this is one and the same for all. But relative to us the intermediate is what is neither superfluous nor deficient; this is not one, and is not the same for all.*

§6 If, for instance, ten are many and two are few, we take six as intermediate in the object, since it exceeds [two] and is exceeded [by ten] by an equal amount, [four]. §7 This is what is intermediate by numerical proportion. But that is not how we must take the intermediate that is relative to us. For if ten pounds [of food], for instance, are a lot for someone to eat, and two pounds a little, it does not follow that the trainer will prescribe six, since this might also be either a little or a lot for the person who is to take it—for Milo [the athlete] a little, but for the beginner in gymnastics a lot; and the same is true for running and wrestling. §8 In this way every scientific expert avoids excess and deficiency and seeks and chooses what is intermediate—but intermediate relative to us, not in the object.

§9 This, then, is how each science produces its product well, by focusing on what is intermediate and making the product conform to that.* This, indeed, is why people regularly comment on well-made products that nothing could be added or subtracted; they assume that excess or deficiency ruins a good [result], whereas the mean preserves it. Good craftsmen also, we say, focus on what is intermediate when they produce their product. And since virtue, like nature, is better and more exact than any craft, it will also aim at what is intermediate.*

§10 By virtue I mean virtue of character; for this is about feelings and actions, and these admit of excess, deficiency, and an intermediate condition. We can be afraid, for instance, or be confident, or have appetites, or get angry, or feel pity, and in general have pleasure or pain, both too much and too little, and in both ways not well. §11 But having these feelings at the right times, about the right things, toward the right people, for the right end, and in the right way, is the intermediate and best condition, and this is proper to virtue. §12 Similarly, actions also admit of excess, deficiency, and an intermediate condition.

Now virtue is about feelings and actions, in which excess and deficiency are in error and incur blame, whereas the intermediate condition is correct and wins praise,* which are both proper to virtue. §13 Virtue, then, is a mean, insofar as it aims at what is intermediate.

§14 Moreover, there are many ways to be in error—for badness is proper to the indeterminate, as the Pythagoreans pictured it, and good to

midterm passage

the determinate. But there is only one way to be correct. That is why error 1106b
is easy and correctness is difficult, since it is easy to miss the target and
difficult to hit it. And so for this reason also excess and deficiency are
proper to vice, the mean to virtue; 'for we are noble in only one way, but 35
bad in all sorts of ways.'*

Definition of virtue

§15 Virtue, then, is a state that decides, consisting in a mean, the mean 1107a
relative to us, which is defined by reference to reason, that is to say, to the
reason by reference to which the prudent person would define it.* It is a
mean between two vices, one of excess and one of deficiency.

§16 It is a mean for this reason also: Some vices miss what is right
because they are deficient, others because they are excessive, in feelings 5
or in actions, whereas virtue finds and chooses what is intermediate.

§17 That is why virtue, as far as its essence and the account stating
what it is are concerned, is a mean, but, as far as the best [condition] and
the good [result] are concerned, it is an extremity.— (superlative)

§18 Now not every action or feeling admits of the mean.* For the 10
names of some automatically include baseness—for instance, spite,
shamelessness, envy [among feelings], and adultery, theft, murder,
among actions.* For all of these and similar things are called by these
names because they themselves, not their excesses or deficiencies, are
base. Hence in doing these things we can never be correct, but must 15
invariably be in error. We cannot do them well or not well—by commit-
ting adultery, for instance, with the right woman at the right time in the
right way. On the contrary, it is true without qualification that to do any
of them is to be in error.

§19 [To think these admit of a mean], therefore, is like thinking that
unjust or cowardly or intemperate action also admits of a mean, an excess 20
and a deficiency. If it did, there would be a mean of excess, a mean of defi-
ciency, an excess of excess and a deficiency of deficiency. §20 On the
contrary, just as there is no excess or deficiency of temperance or of brav-
ery (since the intermediate is a sort of extreme), so also there is no mean
of these vicious actions either, but whatever way anyone does them, he is
in error. For in general there is no mean of excess or of deficiency, and no 25
excess or deficiency of a mean.

7

[The Particular Virtues of Character]

However, we must not only state this general account but also apply it to
the particular cases. For among accounts concerning actions, though the
general ones are common to more cases, the specific ones are truer, since
actions are about particular cases, and our account must accord with
these.* Let us, then, find these from the chart.*

1107b §2 First, then, in feelings of fear and confidence the mean is bravery. The excessively fearless person is nameless (indeed many cases are nameless), and the one who is excessively confident is rash. The one who is excessive in fear and deficient in confidence is cowardly.

5 §3 In pleasures and pains—though not in all types, and in pains less than in pleasures*—the mean is temperance and the excess intemperance. People deficient in pleasure are not often found, which is why they also lack even a name; let us call them insensible. – (prudish, ascetic)

10 §4 In giving and taking money the mean is generosity, the excess wastefulness and the deficiency ungenerosity. Here the vicious people have contrary excesses and defects; for the wasteful person is excessive in spending and deficient in taking, whereas the ungenerous person is excessive in taking and deficient in spending. §5 At the moment we are 15 speaking in outline and summary, and that is enough; later we shall define these things more exactly.

§6 In questions of money there are also other conditions. Another mean is magnificence; for the magnificent person differs from the generous by being concerned with large matters, while the generous person is 20 concerned with small. The excess is ostentation and vulgarity, and the deficiency is stinginess. These differ from the vices related to generosity in ways we shall describe later.

§7 In honor and dishonor the mean is magnanimity, the excess some- 25 thing called a sort of vanity, and the deficiency pusillanimity. §8 And just as we said that generosity differs from magnificence in its concern with small matters, similarly there is a virtue concerned with small honors, differing in the same way from magnanimity, which is concerned with great honors. For honor can be desired either in the right way or more or less than is right. If someone desires it to excess, he is called an 30 honor-lover, and if his desire is deficient he is called indifferent to honor, but if he is intermediate he has no name. The corresponding conditions have no name either, except the condition of the honor-lover, which is called honor-loving.

This is why people at the extremes lay claim to the intermediate area. Moreover, we also sometimes call the intermediate person an honor-lover, and sometimes call him indifferent to honor; and sometimes we 1108a praise the honor-lover, sometimes the person indifferent to honor.* §9 We will mention later the reason we do this; for the moment, let us speak of the other cases in the way we have laid down.

5 §10 Anger also admits of an excess, deficiency, and mean. These are all practically nameless; but since we call the intermediate person mild, let us call the mean mildness. Among the extreme people, let the excessive person be irascible, and his vice irascibility, and let the deficient person be a sort of inirascible person, and his deficiency inirascibility.

10 §11 There are also three other means, somewhat similar to one another, but different. For they are all concerned with common dealings

in conversations and actions, but differ insofar as one is concerned with truth telling in these areas, the other two with sources of pleasure, some of which are found in amusement, and the others in daily life in general. Hence we should also discuss these states, so that we can better observe that in every case the mean is praiseworthy, whereas the extremes are neither praiseworthy nor correct, but blameworthy. Most of these cases are also nameless, and we must try, as in the other cases also, to supply names ourselves, to make things clear and easy to follow. *1108a* 15

§12 In truth-telling, then, let us call the intermediate person truthful, and the mean truthfulness; pretense that overstates will be boastfulness, and the person who has it boastful; pretense that understates will be self-deprecation, and the person who has it self-deprecating. 20

§13 In sources of pleasure in amusements let us call the intermediate person witty, and the condition wit; the excess buffoonery and the person who has it a buffoon; and the deficient person a sort of boor and the state boorishness. 25

In the other sources of pleasure, those in daily life, let us call the person who is pleasant in the right way friendly, and the mean state friendliness. If someone goes to excess with no [ulterior] aim, he will be ingratiating; if he does it for his own advantage, a flatterer. The deficient person, unpleasant in everything, will be a sort of quarrelsome and ill-tempered person. 30

§14 There are also means in feelings and about feelings. Shame, for instance, is not a virtue, but the person prone to shame as well as [the virtuous people we have described] receives praise. For here also one person is called intermediate, and another—the person excessively prone to shame, who is ashamed about everything—is called excessive; the person who is deficient in shame or never feels shame at all is said to have no sense of disgrace; and the intermediate one is called prone to shame. 35 *1108b*

§15 Proper indignation is the mean between envy and spite; these conditions are concerned with pleasure and pain at what happens to our neighbors. For the properly indignant person feels pain when someone does well undeservedly; the envious person exceeds him by feeling pain when anyone does well, while the spiteful person is so deficient in feeling pain that he actually enjoys [other people's misfortunes].* 5

§16 There will also be an opportunity elsewhere to speak of these. We must consider justice after these.* Since it is spoken of in more than one way, we shall distinguish its two types and say how each of them is a mean. Similarly, we must also consider the virtues that belong to reason. 10

8

[Relations between Mean and Extreme States]

Among these three conditions, then, two are vices—one of excess, one of deficiency—and one, the mean, is virtue. In a way, each of them is

1108b opposed to each of the others, since each extreme is contrary both to the intermediate condition and to the other extreme, while the intermediate is 15 contrary to the extremes.

§2 For, just as the equal is greater in comparison to the smaller, and smaller in comparison to the greater, so also the intermediate states are excessive in comparison to the deficiencies and deficient in comparison to 20 the excesses—both in feelings and in actions. For the brave person, for instance, appears rash in comparison to the coward, and cowardly in comparison to the rash person; the temperate person appears intemperate in comparison to the insensible person, and insensible in comparison with the intemperate person; and the generous person appears wasteful in comparison to the ungenerous, and ungenerous in comparison to the wasteful person.* §3 That is why each of the extreme people tries to 25 push the intermediate person to the other extreme, so that the coward, for instance, calls the brave person rash, and the rash person calls him a coward, and similarly in the other cases.

§4 Since these conditions of soul are opposed to each other in these ways, the extremes are more contrary to each other than to the intermediate. For they are further from each other than from the intermediate, just 30 as the large is further from the small, and the small from the large, than either is from the equal.

§5 Further, sometimes one extreme—rashness or wastefulness, for instance—appears somewhat like the intermediate state, bravery or generosity. But the extremes are most unlike one another; and the things that 35 are furthest apart from each other are defined as contraries. And so the things that are further apart are more contrary.

1109a §6 In some cases the deficiency, in others the excess, is more opposed to the intermediate condition. For instance, cowardice, the deficiency, not rashness, the excess, is more opposed to bravery, whereas intemper- 5 ance, the excess, not insensibility, the deficiency, is more opposed to temperance.

§7 This happens for two reasons: One reason is derived from the object itself. Since sometimes one extreme is closer and more similar to the intermediate condition, we oppose the contrary extreme, more than this closer one, to the intermediate condition.* Since rashness, for 10 instance, seems to be closer and more similar to bravery, and cowardice less similar, we oppose cowardice, more than rashness, to bravery; for what is further from the intermediate condition seems to be more contrary to it. This, then, is one reason, derived from the object itself.

§8 The other reason is derived from ourselves. For when we ourselves have some natural tendency to one extreme more than to the other, this extreme appears more opposed to the intermediate condition. Since, for 15 instance, we have more of a natural tendency to pleasure, we drift more easily toward intemperance than toward orderliness. Hence we say that an extreme is more contrary if we naturally develop more in that direc-

tion; and this is why intemperance is more contrary to temperance, since 1109a
it is the excess [of pleasure].

9

[How Can We Reach the Mean?]

Definition of the Mean

We have said enough, then, to show that virtue of character is a mean and what sort of mean it is; that it is a mean between two vices, one of excess and one of deficiency; and that it is a mean because it aims at the intermediate condition in feelings and actions. — Feelings and actions

§2 That is why it is also hard work to be excellent. For in each case it is 25
hard work to find the intermediate; for instance, not everyone, but only one who knows, finds the midpoint in a circle. So also getting angry, or giving and spending money, is easy and everyone can do it; but doing it to the right person, in the right amount, at the right time, for the right end, and in the right way is no longer easy, nor can everyone do it. Hence doing these things well is rare, praiseworthy, and fine. 30

§3 That is why anyone who aims at the intermediate condition must first of all steer clear of the more contrary extreme, following the advice that Calypso also gives: 'Hold the ship outside the spray and surge.'* For one extreme is more in error, the other less. §4 Since, therefore, it is hard to hit the intermediate extremely accurately,* the second-best tack, as they say, is to take the lesser of the evils. We shall succeed best 35
in this by the method we describe. lesser evil 1109b

We must also examine what we ourselves drift into easily. For different people have different natural tendencies toward different goals, and we shall come to know our own tendencies from the pleasure or pain that 5
arises in us. §5 We must drag ourselves off in the contrary direction; for if we pull far away from error, as they do in straightening bent wood, we shall reach the intermediate condition.

§6 And in everything we must beware above all of pleasure and its pleasure bias
sources; for we are already biased in its favor when we come to judge it. 10
Hence we must react to it as the elders reacted to Helen, and on each occasion repeat what they said; for if we do this, and send it off, we shall be less in error.*

§7 In summary, then, if we do these things we shall best be able to reach the intermediate condition. But presumably this is difficult, especially in particular cases, since it is not easy to define the way we should 15
be angry, with whom, about what, for how long. For sometimes, indeed, we ourselves praise deficient people and call them mild, and sometimes praise quarrelsome people and call them manly.

§8 Still, we are not blamed if we deviate a little in excess or deficiency from doing well, but only if we deviate a long way, since then we are eas- 20
ily noticed. But how great and how serious a deviation receives blame is

1109b not easy to define in an account; for nothing else perceptible is easily defined either. Such things* are among particulars,* and the judgment depends on perception.*

§9 This is enough, then, to make it clear that in every case the intermediate state is praised, but we must sometimes incline toward the excess, sometimes toward the deficiency; for that is the easiest way to hit the intermediate and good condition.

BOOK III

[PRECONDITIONS OF VIRTUE]

1

[Voluntary Action]

Virtue, then, is about feelings and actions. These receive praise or blame if they are voluntary, but pardon, sometimes even pity, if they are involuntary.* Hence, presumably, in examining virtue we must define the voluntary and the involuntary. §2 This is also useful to legislators, both for honors and for corrective treatments.*

1110a §3 Now it seems that things coming about by force or because of ignorance are involuntary.*

What is forced has an external principle, the sort of principle in which the agent, or [rather] the victim,* contributes nothing*—if, for instance, a wind or people who have him in their control were to carry him off.

§4 But what about actions done because of fear of greater evils, or because of something fine?* Suppose, for instance, a tyrant tells you to do something shameful, when he has control over your parents and children, and if you do it, they will live, but if not, they will die.* These cases raise dispute about whether they are voluntary or involuntary.

§5 However, the same sort [of unwelcome choice] is found in throwing cargo overboard in storms.* For no one willingly throws cargo overboard, without qualification,* but anyone with any sense throws it overboard to save himself and the others.

§6 These sorts of actions, then, are mixed,* but they are more like voluntary actions. For at the time they are done they are choiceworthy, and the goal of an action accords with the specific occasion; hence we should also call the action voluntary or involuntary on the occasion when he does it. Now in fact he does it willingly. For in such actions he has within him the principle of moving the limbs that are the instruments [of the action]; but if the principle of the actions is in him, it is also up to him to do them or not to do them.* Hence actions of this sort are voluntary, though presumably the actions without [the appropriate] qualification are involuntary, since no one would choose any such action in its own right.

this will not matter, since [what appears good for him] will be what appears lovable.* 1155b

§3 There are these three causes, then, of love.* Now love for an inanimate thing is not called friendship, since there is no mutual loving, and no wishing of good to it. For it would presumably be ridiculous to wish good things to wine; the most you wish is its preservation so that you can have it. To a friend, however, it is said, you must wish goods for his own sake.* If you wish good things in this way, but the same wish is not returned by the other, you would be said to have [only] goodwill for the other. For friendship is said to be *reciprocated* goodwill. 30

§4 But perhaps we should add that friends are aware of the reciprocated goodwill. For many a one has goodwill to people whom he has not seen but supposes to be decent or useful, and one of these might have the same goodwill toward him. These people, then, apparently have goodwill to each other, but how could we call them friends, given that they are unaware of their attitude to each other? [If they are to be friends], then, they must* have goodwill to each other, wish goods and be aware of it, from one of the causes mentioned above.* 35 1156a 5

3

[The Three Types of Friendship]

Since these causes differ in species, so do the types of loving and types of friendship.* Hence friendship has three species, corresponding to the three objects of love. For each object of love has a corresponding type of mutual loving, combined with awareness of it.*

But those who love each other wish goods to each other [only] insofar as they love each other.* Those who love each other for utility love the other not in his own right, but insofar as they gain some good for themselves from him. The same is true of those who love for pleasure; for they like a witty person not because of his character, but because he is pleasant to them. 10

§2 Those who love for utility or pleasure, then, are fond of a friend because of what is good or pleasant for themselves, not insofar as the beloved is who he is,* but insofar as he is useful or pleasant. Hence these friendships as well [as the friends] are coincidental, since the beloved is loved not insofar as he is who he is, but insofar as he provides some good or pleasure. 15

§3 And so these sorts of friendships are easily dissolved, when the friends do not remain similar [to what they were]; for if someone is no longer pleasant or useful, the other stops loving him. 20

What is useful does not remain the same, but is different at different times.* Hence, when the cause of their being friends is removed, the friendship is dissolved too, on the assumption that the friendship aims at

1156a these [useful results]. §4 This sort of friendship seems to arise especially among older people, since at that age they pursue the advantageous, not the pleasant, and also among those in their prime or youth who pursue the expedient.*

Nor do such people live together very much. For sometimes they do not even find each other pleasant. Hence they have no further need to meet in this way if they are not advantageous [to each other]; for each finds the other pleasant [only] to the extent that he expects some good from him. The friendship of hosts and guests is taken to be of this type too.*

§5 The cause of friendship between young people seems to be pleasure. For their lives are guided by their feelings, and they pursue above all what is pleasant for themselves and what is at hand. But as they grow up [what they find] pleasant changes too. Hence they are quick to become friends, and quick to stop; for their friendship shifts with [what they find] 1156b pleasant, and the change in such pleasure is quick. Young people are prone to erotic passion, since this mostly accords with feelings, and is caused by pleasure; that is why they love and quickly stop, often changing in a single day.

These people wish to spend their days together and to live together; for this is how they gain [the good things] corresponding to their friendship.

§6 But complete friendship is the friendship of good people similar in virtue; for they wish goods in the same way to each other insofar as they are good, and they are good in their own right.* [Hence they wish goods to each other for each other's own sake.] Now those who wish goods to their friend for the friend's own sake are friends most of all; for they have this attitude because of the friend himself, not coincidentally.* Hence these people's friendship lasts as long as they are good; and virtue is enduring.*

Each of them is both good without qualification and good for his friend, since good people are both good without qualification and advantageous for each other.* They are pleasant in the same ways too, since good people are pleasant both without qualification and for each other.* [They are pleasant for each other] because each person finds his own actions and actions of that kind pleasant, and the actions of good people are the same or similar.

§7 It is reasonable that this sort of friendship is enduring, since it embraces in itself all the features that friends must have. For the cause of every friendship is good or pleasure, either unqualified or for the lover; and every friendship accords with some similarity. And all the features we have mentioned are found in this friendship because of [the nature of] the friends themselves. For they are similar in this way [i.e., in being good].* Moreover, their friendship also has the other things—what is good without qualification and what is pleasant without qualification;

and these are lovable most of all. Hence loving and friendship are found most of all and at their best in these friends. *1156b*

§8 These kinds of friendships are likely to be rare, since such people are few. Further, they need time as well, to grow accustomed to each other;* for, as the proverb says, they cannot know each other before they have shared their salt as often as it says,* and they cannot accept each other or be friends until each appears lovable to the other and gains the other's confidence. §9 Those who are quick to treat each other in friendly ways wish to be friends, but are not friends, unless they are also lovable, and know this. For though the wish for friendship comes quickly, friendship does not.

4

[Comparison between the Types of Friendship]

This sort of friendship, then, is complete both in time and in the other ways. In every way each friend gets the same things and similar things from each, and this is what must be true of friends. Friendship for pleasure bears some resemblance to this complete sort, since good people are also pleasant to each other. And friendship for utility also resembles it, since good people are also useful to each other.* *1157a*

With these [incomplete friends] also, the friendships are most enduring whenever they get the same thing—pleasure, for instance—from each other, and, moreover, get it from the same source, as witty people do, in contrast to the erotic lover and the boy he loves.

For the erotic lover and his beloved do not take pleasure in the same things; the lover takes pleasure in seeing his beloved, but the beloved takes pleasure in being courted by his lover.* When the beloved's bloom is fading,* sometimes the friendship fades too; for the lover no longer finds pleasure in seeing his beloved, and the beloved is no longer courted by the lover. Many, however, remain friends if they have similar characters and come to be fond of each other's characters from being accustomed to them.* §2 Those who exchange utility rather than pleasure in their erotic relations are friends to a lesser extent and less enduring friends.*

Those who are friends for utility dissolve the friendship as soon as the advantage is removed; for they were never friends of each other, but of what was expedient for them.*

Now it is possible for bad people as well [as good] to be friends to each other for pleasure or utility, for decent people to be friends to base people, and for someone with neither character to be a friend to someone with any character. Clearly, however, only good people can be friends to each other because of the other person himself;* for bad people find no enjoyment in one another if they get no benefit.