Conflicting Parts of Happiness in Aristotle's Ethics*

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One of the most important developments in recent ethics, not only in the English-speaking world but on the European continent as well, has been the resurgence of interest in the ethics of Aristotle, not only as a relic of ancient history but also as food for modern philosophical thought. I want to try here to shed some light on the philosophical, historical, and historigraphical questions that are raised by this development.

I want to articulate and justify some reservations about the widely accepted ascription of certain aims to Aristotle's ethics. To explain these matters fully, I shall have to give a broad view of both historiographical background and interpretative problems, skirting a number of detailed exegetical problems. Nevertheless I hope that my synoptic account will, without resolving questions definitively, help make resolution possible in due course.

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When the modern historiography of ancient Greek ethics began in the latter half of the eighteenth century, there emerged two main interpretations of Greek views about the relation of a person's good to such considerations as the good of others and conformity to ethical standards. I shall call these latter—just for brevity, and not to exploit the connotations of the labels—"ethical and altruistic considerations" or, simply, "the broader considerations." Issues of "ethics" and "altruism" are closely linked, and on some views are even identical, but the relationship between them can be ignored here. I use the term "ethics"

* I treat most of these matters more fully in a forthcoming book, tentatively entitled "Individual and Conflict in Greek Ethics," and some of them also in an article, "Neoaristotelian Inclusivist Eudaimonism: Some of Its Problems," *Internationale Zeitschrift für Philosophie* (1994), pp. 129–44. For very helpful critical comments on an earlier draft of this article I am much indebted to Julia Annas, Terence Irwin, and especially William Frankena.

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rather than "morals" because the latter has irrelevant connotations, especially in recent philosophical discussion, and is anyway too restrictive.[1]

It is convenient to think of the two interpretations that I have mentioned as the *Kantian* and the *Hegelian Interpretations*. They were not originated by Kant or Hegel, but they involve ideas that are standardly—whether rightly or wrongly—associated with them. The mnemonic value of the labels is worth the inaccuracies that they may embody. Each of these two interpretations is based on a view—for short, the *Kantian* and the *Hegelian Views*, which are nearly enough for our purposes the views held by their respective namesakes—about the relationship between a person's good and those two sorts of broader consideration.

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The *Kantian View* is dualistic. It regards one's own good (or happiness or well-being) and the broader considerations as two independent types of consideration that a person may take into account in deliberation. For present purposes we may abstract from many details of the distinction. For instance, it is insignificant here whether one's own happiness is a strictly rational consideration or simply a matter of "inclination." For now the important points are simply these: first, that each of the two types of consideration is thought of as having its own independent force, not derivative from that of the other, and, second, that they might conceivably conflict, in the sense of sometimes recommending different courses of action or ways of being. If they do conflict, a person would have to follow only one and not the other. And even if they do not conflict, a philosopher might feel called upon to decide which is the more basic.

The *Kantian Interpretation* presupposes the existence of the two types of consideration admitted by the Kantian View. On this basis the Kantian Interpretation holds that Greek ethics is *eudaimonistic*, in the sense of taking a person's sole rational end to be his own happiness. From the Kantian standpoint, however, this is to say that the Greeks recognized only one side of the dualism, the side involving one's own happiness, and did not realize that the broader considerations have their own quite independent force. A strict adherent of the Kantian View would believe, too, that ethical considerations are always overriding, while an even more extreme Kantian (more extreme, perhaps, than Kant) would deny that one's own happiness is a rational consider-

1. I shall also avoid the term "prudence," though what I shall say covers the topics that that term is used to discuss. Prudence involves aiming for one's good. Different conceptions of one's good generate correspondingly different conceptions of prudence.

ation at all. But apart from these variations, the main element of the Kantian Interpretation is that Greek ethics fails, at the start, to acknowledge anything except one's own happiness as an independent consideration governing action or deliberation.

Greek ethics only compounds this mistake, the Kantian Interpretation says, when it tries to justify ethical considerations by appeal to one's own good. This, the charge runs, is the wrong kind of justification for ethics, which has its own independent type of justification anyway. On the Kantian View it is a mistake not to recognize that ethical considerations can genuinely weigh against one's happiness and should be sought for their own sake.[2]

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The *Hegelian View,* on the other hand, disagrees with the Kantian View about the existence of a genuine dualism. Denying that one's own happiness and the broader considerations really constitute two independent types of consideration, the Hegelian View holds that where the Kantian View sees a difference between them, and thus a possibility of conflict, there really is neither.

The contrast between the Hegelian View and the Kantian View can be best seen by focusing on how an individual's happiness or good is understood. As I have just said, the Kantian View conceives of happiness in such a way that there can turn out to be a conflict between one's own happiness and the broader considerations. On the Hegelian View, however, happiness is from the start conceived as so constituted that the broader considerations are in harmony with it.

The Hegelian View has been developed in two main ways. One way is to hold that one's well-being is in some sense identical with the well-being of others and/or one's own conformity to ethical standards. Call that view *fusionism.* The other way is to maintain that one's own well-being in some sense "includes" these two things. Call that *inclusivism.*[3] A central aim of the Hegelian View is to explain how such an identity or inclusion can hold.

The *Hegelian Interpretation* of Greek ethics says simply that Greek ethics accepted the Hegelian View, with its denial of the Kantian contrast between the two types of consideration. (Notice that the Kantian Interpretation does not say that the Greeks adopted the Kantian View; on the contrary.) Under the Hegelian Interpretation, as under the Kantian Interpretation, the Greeks are said to be *eudaimonists.* However, according to the Hegelian Interpretation, Greek eudaimonism

2. Kant himself, of course, often denied that happiness is a well-defined notion at all (*Groundwork,* sec. 399) and also usually denied that it is a consideration entertained by reason.

3. The term is used by Richard Kraut in *Aristotle on the Human Good* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), in a slightly different sense from mine.

did not and could not generate any conflict with ethical and altruistic considerations, nor—one should also note—could it be egoistic or selfish by virtue of ignoring them.

Under the Hegelian Interpretation, moreover, the Greek philosophical project of trying to show that happiness and ethical action go together is not, as it is under the Kantian Interpretation, a business of providing ulterior egoistic reasons for abiding by ethical standards. Instead it is a matter of demonstrating the intimate constitutive relation—whether identity or inclusion—between happiness and conformity to the broader standards.

In general, advocates of the Hegelian View claim for it the signal advantage of not regarding ethical considerations as somehow external or alien to the individual's concern about his own well-being. The Kantian View, they think, makes morality out to be an external force that hems the individual in. While wishing to ascribe all due importance to ethical considerations, inclusivist and fusionist accounts of happiness both aim to reconcile that ascription with granting to the individual a relatively unrestricted commitment to his own good. The Hegelian Interpretation, for its part, ascribes to Greek ethics this same aim and also considerable success in showing how to reach it.

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It would be wrong, of course, to represent either the Kantian Interpretation or inclusivism as a purely German phenomenon. It would be especially mistaken to think that the presence of inclusivism in recent interpretations of Aristotle is purely the result of Hegelian influence. Inclusivism has a long and influential history in British philosophy as well. As a part of his famous argument that we do not desire everything that we desire simply for the sake of our own happiness, Joseph Butler holds that "happiness consists in the gratification of certain affections, appetites, passions, with objects which are by nature adapted to them," and that "love of our neighbor is one of those affections" in whose gratification happiness consists.[4] Mill, too, holds something very similar. He says "the ingredients of happiness are very various," a plurality of things being "desired as part of happiness." He then says that virtue, which includes benevolence, is one of those ingredients. These ideas of Butler and Mill have made themselves familiar and have had their effect on readings of Greek philosophers.[5]

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During the first half of this century the Kantian Interpretation of Greek ethics was quite popular among Anglo-American philoso-

4. Joseph Butler, sermon 11, sec. 16; cf. sec. 9.
5. John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, chap. 4.

phers. In recent years, however, with the revival of philosophical support for eudaimonism, and with a concomitant reaction against Kantian and allied views about the relation of morality to individual well-being, a Hegelian Interpretation of Greek ethics, funded also by the inclusivist thoughts of Butler and Mill, has become much more widespread than it used to be.

Latter-day eudaimonists have taken pains to deny that the eudaimonism that many of them take themselves to share with the Greeks is in any objectionable sense egoistic. They think that, on the contrary, through an either fusionist or inclusivist development, a reasonable eudaimonism accords due importance to ethical and altruistic considerations. Of these two options, however, inclusivism has recently been the more popular and important, especially among interpreters of Aristotle, though fusionism has some status as an interpretation of other Greek philosophers.[6] Because I am treating Aristotle, I shall concentrate on inclusivism here.

Inclusivism as I am using the term comprises two theses. The first says that an individual's happiness "includes," as in some sense "parts" or "constituents," a plurality of activities and states of affairs—not (standardly) the feelings occasioned in oneself by them, but the very activities and states of affairs in the external world themselves. The second thesis holds that among these component states of affairs are the good of others and one's own actions in conformity with ethical standards. The senses of "includes," "parts," and the other terminology are somewhat unclear, but the basic idea is for now probably understandable enough.

The use of inclusivism for defending eudaimonism appears at first sight quite straightforward. Since happiness can be held to include such things as ethical and altruistic actions and states of affairs, eudaimonism need not be objectionably egoistic. For if happiness does include those things, then seemingly in pursuing or attaining the first, one is *eo ipso* pursuing or attaining the other two as well. Happiness seems in this way to harmonize with the broader considerations. Thus it is held that although eudaimonism is "formally" egoistic, in that it represents one's ultimate aim as a state of oneself, it need not be "substantively" egoistic, because one's good can comprise ethical and altruistic components.[7]

6. Fusionism finds a use in interpretations of Plato and the Stoics, e.g., to interpret the Stoic idea that virtue is the only good. It has also been used to explain Plato's argument that justice and happiness go together: see, e.g., J. D. Mabbott, "Is Plato's *Republic* Utilitarian?" in *Plato II*, ed. Gregory Vlastos (Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday Anchor, 1971), pp. 57–65.

7. Bernard Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 32, 39, 51, 190–91; cf. Julia Annas, "The Good Life and the Good Lives of Others," *Social Philosophy and Policy* 9 (1992): 133–48, p. 135. The

Inclusivism and its use in this strategy have become common elements in interpretations of Aristotle's ethics. That was not always the case. Traditionally it has been more common to take Aristotle as holding that happiness is *theoria,* or philosophical contemplation, and that the best human life is the life devoted thereto. Much recent discussion, though, has taken a different line. W. F. R. Hardie suggested that Aristotle often uses an "inclusive" conception of the final human end, and J. L. Ackrill has argued that in Aristotle's view, "the best life will contain all the things generally recognized as desirable, notably pleasure and practical activity and thought." Many others have agreed, including (as I understand them) Julia Annas, John Cooper, Terence Irwin, and Bernard Williams.[8]

To a large extent, moreover, the desire to show that Aristotle's ethics is not unduly egoistic has been one of the main motivations of the inclusivist interpretation of Aristotle. For it has been feared that if Aristotle believed that the goal of a human being is contemplative activity, then he would be advocating an intolerably selfish neglect of the broader considerations. This fear has intensified the welcome extended to inclusivist interpretations, with their prospect of harmonizing the broader considerations with concern for self. Accordingly the defense of Aristotle against the charge of advocating egoism has often been carried out on an inclusivist basis.

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At this point we should not fail to note the full force of the tradition that has made harmonizing interpretations of Aristotle seem

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issue I am discussing is whether if one is happy one will necessarily conform to ethical standards or, in other words, whether one can be happy without conforming to those standards. But one may also raise the converse issue: whether one will necessarily be happy if one conforms to ethical standards or, in other words, whether conforming to those standards guarantees happiness. Though I say some things in this article bearing on the latter issue, I focus here mostly on the former.

8. The current discussion of the interpretative issue was initiated by W. F. R. Hardie; see "The Final Good in Aristotle's Ethics," *Philosophy* 40 (1965): 277–95. The quotation comes from J. L. Ackrill, *Aristotle the Philosopher* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), pp. 135–36; see also his "Aristotle on *Eudaimonia*," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 60 (1974): 339–59, reprinted in *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics,* ed. A. O. Rorty (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), pp. 15–33. For other inclusionist readings, see John Cooper, *Reason and Human Good in Aristotle* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975), chap. 1; Terence Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 241, 254–59, and *Aristotle's First Principles* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), chaps. 16–18, pp. 439–44; Annas, "The Good Life and the Good Lives of Others," pp. 136–39; and Williams. Explicit inclusionist defenses against the accusation of egoism are given by Williams, Annas, and Irwin. As is made clear by Ackrill, Annas, and Irwin, an inclusivist conception of happiness should not be thought of as given simply by a list of desirable things (cf. below, p. 281 and n. 52).

so attractive to many. This way of reading Aristotle is by no means new, and an awareness of its history helps us understand what is at stake in it.

Behind the Hegelian interpretation of Aristotle there lies an interpretative tradition directed not merely at Greek philosophical ethics but at Greek culture as a whole, including Greek political life and institutions. In the latter half of the eighteenth century, in work of Winckelmann, Herder, Schiller, and many others, the idea arose that Greek art, literature, and thought and life in general exhibited a harmony of motivation and purpose which has been lost in our—as it is often put—"fragmented" modern world.[9] Frequently, too, it was maintained—by Hegel but before him by Herder and others—that the Greeks achieved, at least in certain periods (Hegel invoked the so-called age of Pericles), a consonance of individual and public ends that supposedly eliminated from the Greek outlook the contrast between individual and social good.

This idealized picture of Greek life, it should be remarked, is today no longer widely accepted by students of Greek history. It held sway through the nineteenth century in Britain and continued to prevail there and elsewhere though much of the twentieth century. Some dissented from this view—such as the great classicist, Wilamowitz-Moellendorff—but only after World War II did historians begin in earnest the business of debunking it.[10] Now, ironically, the influence of the picture is probably stronger among philosophers and social theorists than anywhere else.

The fact that this interpretation has purported to describe not just philosophical thinking but Greek society and culture as a whole has given it important extra prestige as an account of Greek philosophy. Not only did the picture of the broader culture first suggest the main philosophical application—namely, the idea that in the context of his culture a Greek might pursue his own happiness without pressure from other potentially conflicting rational considerations. Beyond that and more important, the supposition that this idea was actually embodied in Greek society made it seem reasonable to claim that the idea had actually at some particular time and place been put into practice and *lived*. That made it more plausible to regard the idea as a truly workable piece of political thinking, or even as a political program, than it would have been had it been presented merely as a

9. See Eliza M. Bishop, *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1935); Henry Hatfield, *Aesthetic Paganism in German Literature* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964); Charles Larmore, *Patterns of Moral Complexity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

10. See Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Reden und Vorträge* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1901), vol. 2, pp. 11–12.

philosophical ideal. To rebut the charge that it was a pipe dream, one could point to its supposed actualization, or at least partial actualization, in the actual world.

As a general matter I think that this picture of Greek culture and philosophy, as managing to harmonize individual happiness with social and ethical good, is a large mistake which the two-centuries-old cliché of Hellenic harmony has foisted on us. Indeed, I would argue that Greek philosophers did not all agree about whether such a harmony was at all possible. "The Greeks" as a group, in fact, did not hold a single, Hellenically correct position on this question at all.

That, however, is more than I can argue here where my concern, though related to the broader one, is with the particular matter of Aristotle's inclusivism.

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Although Aristotle does not say that he is attempting to avoid an egoistic position, there is nevertheless much to be said in favor of a harmonizing Hegelian interpretation of his view. For one thing, Aristotle sometimes gives the impression that happiness is a conflict-free goal. He does not, to be sure, explicitly say even this. Still, no one can fail to notice that by contrast to Plato's *Republic* in particular, Aristotle's exposition dramatically downplays conflicts like the one between justice and a person's own good, which provided the impetus for the whole *Republic,* and does not seem to regard it as a major issue. In addition, he says repeatedly both that we pursue for their own sakes both morally virtuous activity and the good of friends, and also that happiness is the end of everything that we do. These and other indications have seemed to some interpreters to indicate that in his view, the pursuit of happiness both includes and harmonizes fully with comformity to ethical and altruistic standards.

In spite of all this, however, one must distinguish the claim that Aristotle accepts some inclusivist account of happiness from the contention that he does so for the *particular* purpose of establishing either that his eudaimonism is not objectionably egoistic or that aiming ultimately for one's happiness is fully in harmony with ethical and altruistic considerations. I wish to maintain that although there is weighty evidence for the former thing, the latter is not implied by it and is more than likely false.

In particular, it seems to me that existing inclusivist interpretations of Aristotle's position have failed to take adequate account of conflicts, which are both serious and clearly acknowledged in the *Ethics,* between a person's own good and conformity to broader standards. Aristotle's way of dealing with these conflicts indicates, it seems to me, that even when he is inclined to view happiness along inclusivist lines, he expects inclusivism neither to bring harmony to conflicting parts

of the human good nor to serve as a defense against the charge of egoism. In other words, although he may sometimes accept some type of inclusivist view, he does not do so for these particular harmonizing reasons which have been so prominently attributed to him.[11]

The conflicts in question arise in passages that are well known to Aristotle's readers as problematical for non-egoistic accounts of his views. Much of what I shall say about them is not new, but it will serve to make clearer, I hope, the direction in which they ought to push our interpretative thinking. One passage concerns what he says about friendship and self-love in *Ethics* 9.8. The other deals with his views, as expressed in 10.6–8, about the best human life. In both of these places Aristotle seems to me to give clear indications that he recognizes a conflict between one's own good and the broader considerations, and both passages indicate, I would say, that he is not trying to establish a harmony between these two things, as a harmonizing inclusivist interpretation would have him do.

It is well to bear in mind that the objection that Kantian Interpreters bring against Greek thought as they understand it is twofold. One part attacks the Greeks for an alleged failure to recognize the fact (as they see it) that a person's own well-being can be opposed or even outweighed by some other independent consideration. The second part says that ethical considerations are to be valued for their own sake, and not merely for the sake of the well-being that they might contribute to. Inclusivist defenders of eudaimonism have usually felt called upon to defend their view against objections on both of these fronts.

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First of all, we have to clear away one issue about where we should look for the controlling evidence concerning what Aristotle's position is.

Many who support a harmonizing interpretation—whether inclusivist or of some other kind—appeal not mainly to the *Ethics* but to the *Politics,* and often they hold that it supersedes the evidence of the *Ethics*. For Aristotle seems to maintain that ethics itself is in some sense subsumed by politics, and thus he perhaps hints that our reading of the treatise on the former must be governed by the treatise on the latter. Readers cleaving to this view, moreover, have often taken the *Politics* to support a harmonizing interpretation of all of Aristotle's political and ethical views. The first book of the *Politics* contains his

11. In *Aristotle on the Human Good,* Richard Kraut defends a noninclusivist interpretation of Aristotle's position. Much of what he says, however, is compatible with the inclusivist interpretation presented here. The points of disagreement are too complex to be treated adequately here.

famous dictum that man is by nature a political animal, as well as numerous statements that chime both with his related claim in the *Ethics,* that an individual human being is not self-sufficient but requires other people with whom to realize his good, and also with his contention that in the best *polis* or city-state, the good man and the good citizen are one and the same.[12] All of these points seem to support the idea of a coincidence between a person's good and the good of, even if not the whole of humankind, at least his own community.[13]

There are several reasons, however, not to use the *Politics* to support a general attribution of this idea of such a coincidence to Aristotle. First, the statement that in the best *polis* the good man is the good citizen is far from a general statement of the coincidence. On the contrary, it clearly indicates that in other political situations—which are by far the most common—the good man is *not* the good citizen, and that exercising virtue is not automatically consistent with conforming to the demands of citizenship in less satisfactory communities.[14]

Second, the dependence of an individual on the *polis* for his development and human existence does not imply a harmony or coincidence of goods between them. Severe clashes can occur between the interests of a person and his community even if the latter is essential for the former's life, identity, or self-realization.[15] When Aristotle stresses the connection between the individual's life and his *polis,* he is not committing himself to a harmony of goods between them.

Thus, even if we take Aristotle's statement that ethics is subsumed under the larger enterprise of politics to imply that claims of the *Ethics* are canceled by conflicting things that are said in the *Politics*—itself a thoroughly unwarranted inference—that would not mean that the latter asserts a harmony of individual and communal good that must be read into the former. The question of such a harmony, or the lack of it, must be examined within the relevant passages of the *Ethics* itself.

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This examination requires clarity on a philosophical point. If an inclusivist view is to avoid the charge of egoism, it must be more

12. Aristotle *Politics* 1253a2–3, 1288a34–b3, *Ethics* 1.2, 10.9.

13. Harmonizing interpreters can be divided into those who, like Annas, regard it as a drawback of Aristotle's position that his ethical concerns do not extend to all humankind, and those who, like Hegel, think that ethical concerns really are bound to the limits of particular historical communities and therefore agree with what they take to be Aristotle's view on this matter. I shall not deal with this issue here (see, however, my "Individual and Conflict in Greek Ethics.")

14. Aristotle *Politics* 3.4–5, 1277a14–24.

15. At most it might be argued that the destruction of the community cannot be conducive to the good of the individual, but even this need not necessarily hold. See Ernst Tugendhat, *Vorlesungen über Ethik* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1993), pp. 202–3.

than merely inclusivist. That is, it must avail itself of a conception of happiness that does more than merely include the broader considerations. It needs also to establish something further.

This need arises from a point that requires far more attention than it receives in discussions of Aristotle or elsewhere. Because of the ineluctable fact that the time and energy available within a human life are limited, goods that do not conflict of themselves can turn out to conflict in fact, by virtue of competing for the time and resources that we do have. In the normal case, spending more time and resources on one activity will inevitably mean spending less on another.

Moreover it will often happen that ethical and altruistic activities compete for our time and resources against parts of happiness that are in some substantive sense self-regarding or selfish. These cases are the ones that raise issues about egoism and selfishness.

Some such notion of substantively self-regarding goods or parts of happiness is acknowledged by eudaimonists who draw the distinction between—to use Williams's terms—"substantive" and merely "formal" egoism. For purposes of thinking here about what an objectionable form of egoism might amount to, it seems pertinent to note that issues of selfishness arise out of questions about the distribution of things between oneself and others. Questions of distribution, in turn, concern goods that are scarce, in the sense that my getting more either entails or makes more probable others' getting less (either of those goods or of others). Accordingly, I propose to treat egoistic parts of happiness as those that are scarce in this rough sense.[16]

If it is granted that there is competition for a life's time and resources between goods that are acknowledged to be substantively egoistic, on the one hand, and broader considerations, on the other, it follows that merely by saying that happiness includes the latter one does not ensure that a happy life must contain any particular amount of ethical or altruistic activity. Conceivably such activity could be crowded out, either to a large degree or even completely, by the pursuit of other parts of happiness. If that happened, there might well be grounds for calling such a life objectionably egoistic. To prevent this, an inclusivist account needs to specify that a life must, if it is to count as happy, contain such activities in some appropriate manner and degree, whatever that may be.

To put the point another way, to escape the charge an inclusivist account needs to specify a certain structure into which the parts of happiness are to fit. Merely listing the constituents will not be enough

16. The issue of which things are parts of a person's well-being has sometimes been raised recently in connection with questions about personal identity. I do not here deal with those questions; nor are inclusivists always concerned with them either.

to specify what happiness is. Rather, if the account is to forestall an objectionable egoism, further structure must be insisted on so as to ensure that non-egoistic components are accorded an adequate place.

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Aristotle is unquestionably aware of this sort of competition among the good activities which he takes happiness to involve.[17] But in spite of many interpreters' hopes that he has some way of harmonizing these competing goods, the evidence seems to me to indicate that in his opinion, conflict among them is inevitable and we have to respond to it not by showing that they are really completely consistent with each other but by finding grounds for choosing some of them, at least to some extent, over others. Happiness may include various goods, but that does not mean that they are fully in harmony with each other.

In particular I do not see how to read *Ethics* 10.6–8 except as an expression of this idea. This passage has been the scene of intense interpretative battles, and I cannot treat all of the pertinent issues adequately here. I take it, however, that in those chapters Aristotle asks which of two different lives is the best for a human being. One is the life of virtuous activity; the other is the life of *theoria*. It seems clear that he chooses the latter. For the moment, though, the important thing is not the choice that he makes but the very fact that he thinks a choice must be made.

Aristotle's presentation of the alternatives indicates that in his view it is impossible, within a single life, to engage satisfactorily in all good activities or even, in a fully adequate way, in more than one. For this reason, each alternative life is dominated by a single type of activity.[18] Moreover, Aristotle thinks that he must choose one of them.

17. See Cooper, *Reason and Human Good in Aristotle*, pp. 129–30, and his "Aristotle on Friendship," in Rorty, ed., pp. 332, 338.

18. Compare my "Good as Goal," *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 27, suppl. (1989): 169–93. There I argue that this domination does not imply that the dominant activity is in a strict sense to be maximized, in the sense in which utilitarianism tells us to maximize happiness. That is, Aristotle does not tell us that at every turn one must choose the act that will cause one the greatest possible amount of *theoria*. Rather, the life of *theoria* is devoted to *theoria* in some looser sense. Thus I hold that when Aristotle says that "Those to whom *theoria* belongs more fully are more truly happy," he does not mean that, quite mathematically, the more theorizing one does, the happier one is (see 1178b24–32). Compare Daniel Devereux, "Comments," *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 27, suppl. (1989): 195–207, p. 197. (Between Devereux and me there is considerable agreement, which is masked by our differing uses of the term "maximize"—his looser and mine stricter—which he rightly remarks on in his n. 11.) Kraut, on the other hand, thinks that according to Aristotle a person's happiness is increased by each increase in the amount of *theoria* he engages in (see his *Aristotle on the Human Good*, chap. 1), though at the same time he also appears to hold that certain obligations to engage in ethically

If he thought that both could be combined without any loss, he would have written 10.6–8 very differently, with some acknowledgment that the need for a choice was based on a false dichotomy, and some indication, too, of how the best life might be constructed if it were not dominated by an activity of one single kind. However, he gives neither of these things.

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I take 10.6–8, then, not as a repudiation by Aristotle of the inclusivist idea that happiness contains a plurality of parts but as an acknowledgment that he must supplement that idea. The specification of happiness must consist not just in a list of its parts but also in a specification of the structure into which they fit. The best human life turns out to be dominated by *theoria,* as the activity to which that life is devoted and around which it is organized. But the best human life also contains other activities, which are valuable in a way that I shall explain below.[19]

Aristotle exhibits this conception in 10.8. Immediately after he reaches his conclusion that "happiness must be some form of *theoria,*" he adds a further specification of other features of the best life: "But, being a man, one will also need external prosperity; for our nature is not self-sufficient for the purpose of contemplation. . . . Still, we must not think that the man who is to be happy will need many things or great things . . . ; for self-sufficiency and action do not involve excess, and we can do noble acts without ruling earth and sea."[20] This passage shows that the best life, even though it is dominated by *theoria,* will contain ethically virtuous activity too. It will not, however, contain ethically virtuous activity to the same degree as would the life devoted to ethical virtue, whose claim to be the best life Aristotle has at this point just rejected.[21]

In spite, then, of the widespread idea that Aristotle's acceptance of an inclusivist conception must have been caused by harmonizing impulses, and that those impulses must have led him to the conception of an inclusive life not dominated by a single type of activity but instead combining all human goods in a single scheme so that they could be pursued without major sacrifice of one or some of them, I

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virtuous activity can in Aristotle's view override the considerations of happiness that dictate trying to engage in *theoria* as much as possible (pp. 9–10, 37, 39, 336, 344).

19. See pp. 271–72, 279–81.

20. Aristotle *Ethics* 10.8, 1179a33ff.

21. Aristotle's claim that happiness is *theoria* is related in a complex and loose way to his claim that the best and happiest life is the life devoted to *theoria.* Neither claim means that ethically virtuous activity must be strictly minimized to the extent that more theorizing might thereby be made possible (cf. n. 18 above and my "Good as Goal").

can find no indication of what he could have thought such a scheme would look like, nor any sign that he ever seriously envisaged one. Not only in 10.6–8 but also in his other discussions of which lives are best, he regularly identifies the candidate lives by some dominant activity or aim, such as money or pleasure or virtue or reputation, to which the life is devoted. There is more to be said about why he held this view. At the moment, however, I simply maintain that he did hold it.

I also stress what it implies: that even though Aristotle believed that the best life includes various parts, his inclusivism recognized unavoidable conflict among them for a person's time and resources. Rather than regarding human goods as somehow harmonizable without sacrifice, Aristotle took them to be combinable only by the choice of one of them as the best and overriding one.[22]

* * *

Next we come to the question whether the conflicts that Aristotle recognized involve the particular opposition that I have described between substantively egoistic or selfish goods and the broader considerations.

He does not raise this issue in 10.6–8 or use labels alluding to it in his contrast between the lives of *theoria* and of virtuous activity. To our way of thinking, however, it would seem natural to do so. In contradistinction to the life of virtuous activity, the life of *theoria* might seem to us to be self-absorbed and even selfish. Since it requires engaging in a lesser amount of virtuous activity than the life in which that activity dominates, we may suppose that the life of *theoria* involves attending to one's own well-being and neglecting some good that one might do to others. It does not require a person to act in radical opposition to ethical virtue—or so Aristotle indicates.[23] Nor—I think it is clear—does it entail choosing at each and every turn to follow the course that will maximize the duration and optimize the quality

22. This presupposition underlies and explains Aristotle's much-discussed statement in 1098a17–19, to which he recurs in 1177a12–14, that if there is more than one virtue, then happiness must consist in activity in accordance with "*the best* and most complete" (my emphasis). In light of evidence for his inclusionist conception of happiness, interpreters have wondered why he does not say here that if there is more than one virtue, happiness must consist in activity in accordance with all of them together. I think that the right answer is given by those who say that he is there pointing to the presupposition that governs 10.6–8, namely, that the coordination of the plurality of activities envisioned in the inclusivist conception requires that dominance be given to one of them. In other passages in the *Ethics*, however (such as 1100a4–5, 1101a15, 1102a5–6; cf. Devereux, p. 204), he is focusing merely on his inclusive conception without highlighting this additional feature of it.

23. Aristotle *Ethics* 1178b33ff.

of one's theorizing.[24] Even so, it plainly does involve partially removing oneself from practical spheres, thus sharply reducing the circumstances in which ethical virtue calls upon one to act.[25] It thus will in all probability include considerably less ethically virtuous activity than might be necessary to rebut the charge that it is in some way egoistic. That is precisely why many interpreters have shied away from this way of reading Aristotle and have tried instead to ascribe to his inclusivism a harmonizing motive and effect.

Nevertheless, even though 10.6–8 does have what are to us substantively egoistic implications, Aristotle does not label them as such. That might lead us to conclude that, whatever we may believe he has done, he himself does not think of the views expressed here in this way at all.

* * *

Such an impression, however, seems to me to be dispelled by another passage which has also provoked exegetical controversy. This is 9.8, which deals with friendship and self-love.

Before attacking the issue of substantive egoism in this passage, we should focus on the issue—for my overall purpose, the more fundamental—of conflict of aims.

It seems to me evident that in 9.8, Aristotle maintains that there are situations in which only one of a pair of people can gain the greatest amount of good available. The chapter discusses "whether a man should love himself most, or someone else." Aristotle says that a friend is not a lover of self with respect to things like money or pleasure. (Note that here, as in bk. 10, Aristotle ignores the idea of some compound aim that harmoniously incorporates a plurality of goods.) At the end, however, he constructs a case designed to show that with regard to the best good, which is nobility or *to kalon*, "the good man should be a lover of self." About this case Aristotle says the following: "[The good man] may even give up actions to his friend; it may be nobler to be the cause of his friend's acting than to act himself. In all actions, therefore, that men are praised for, the good man is seen to assign himself the greater share in what is noble [*to kalon*]."[26]

What I am stressing here at the moment is not the suggestion of egoism. It is the fact that the passage straightforwardly allows that sometimes there are circumstances in which competition arises over nobility, and especially the fact that Aristotle looks to just such cases precisely in order to determine whether and how a good man is a

24. Compare n. 18.
25. Aristotle *Ethics* 1178a24–b5, 8–20.
26. Ibid., 1169a33–b1, in Ross's translation.

lover of self.[27] In these cases only one person can perform the virtuous act, and only one person can allow the other to perform it. According to Aristotle, the good man will allow his friend to perform it, because in that way he himself gets a greater share of nobility. If the friend reasoned in the same way, there would be a standoff. Each would say, "No, please, *you* do it." We would have the makings of a classic Prisoner's Dilemma.

For this reason, there is, according to Aristotle's view, no way for a person both to gain the greatest available amount of good for himself and to allow someone else to gain the greatest available amount of good. The aim of being maximally altruistic conflicts with the aim of maximizing one's own well-being. One must choose the one or the other.[28]

To appreciate the significance of this fact, just think about how extraordinarily easy it would have been for Aristotle to avoid this conflict, by saying that really there is no competition here between the friends at all. The world serves up plenty of opportunities for virtuous action, he could have said, so the seeming scarcity is an illusion. The friends could just go out and seize those ready opportunities. But Aristotle ignores this option. He persists in regarding the case as one in which only one person can have the best outcome.

Or is that impression the result of looking at the case in isolation? Perhaps it really is supposed to take place in a context that gives everyone ample scope for virtuous action without reducing anyone else's chances. That is the effect of Richard Kraut's interpretation. He holds that the case presupposes a "fair" competition, which spurs people on to more virtue. Moreover, Kraut maintains that the case also takes place in a context containing many opportunities for virtuous action, which must be divided up equally among equally virtuous people.[29] Viewed in this way, the competitive situation is really only a small and comparatively unimportant part of the overall picture, in which virtuous efforts are given equal scope on all sides.

Kraut concedes that his interpretation "reads something into this chapter that is not explicitly said," but I think that it does much more

27. This fact has been stressed by Richard Kraut, "Comments on Julia Annas' 'Self-Love in Aristotle,'" *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 27, suppl. (1989): 19–23. However, for reasons that will emerge below (see pp. 279–80 and n. 48), this is not to say that the good man seeks victory in such competitions for its own sake.

28. Aristotle might have said that the way to get the greatest good for oneself is to allow one's friend to allow oneself to perform the virtuous act, by performing the act with the acquiescence of one's friend. And one could reiterate this argument, with the result that there would in fact be no greatest good for either. Aristotle, however, does not follow this line of thought, perhaps because he would not find it intuitive to think of allowing someone to allow one to do something as a kind of act.

29. Kraut, "Comments on Julia Annas' 'Self-Love in Aristotle,'" p. 22.

than that.[30] It appears to me to vitiate Aristotle's procedure at the end of the chapter. That procedure is to explain the sense in which a good man should be a lover of self, precisely by examining a case in which there is, as Kraut acknowledges, competition for the best good. Kraut's interpretation supposes that Aristotle's presentation of his procedure here is thoroughly misleading, since it must be supposed to be operating against a backdrop of overall noncompetition which the chapter itself ignores.

Kraut appeals to what he takes to be Aristotle's acceptance of the principle that equally virtuous people ought to be accorded equal opportunity to exercise their virtue, on the ground that "presumably he would say that equals must share equally."[31] Kraut finds support for attributing some such general principle to Aristotle, for instance, in the account of distributive justice in *Ethics* 5, and also in 8.7, where Aristotle explores connections between justice and friendship.

The question, though, is whether Aristotle would sanction the particular application of the principle of equality to this case. I doubt that. In the passage quoted above, the sentence, "In all actions, therefore, that men are praised for, the good man is seen to assign himself the greater share in what is noble," sounds to me too much like an explicit repudiation of such an application, rather than something that is supposed to be read in the light of it. Therefore, though recognizing that there is more to be said on this question, I hold that the competitive situation here is not to be placed against the globally conflict-free backdrop that Kraut proposes for it.

If anything could provide that backdrop, it would seem to be a chapter like 8.7, with its discussion of the relation of equality and justice to friendship. Toward the end of the chapter Aristotle points out that since a god is too far superior to a man for friendship to hold between them, one would not wish one's friend to become a god. That fact, he says, provokes the question whether one really wishes the greatest good for one's friend. Then he says, "The answer is that if we were right in saying that friend wishes good to friend for his sake, his friend must remain the sort of being he is, whatever that may be; therefore it is for the friend only so long as that friend remains a man that he will wish the greatest good," and then he concludes with the (as I interpret it) telling sentence, "But perhaps not *all* the greatest goods; *for it is for himself most of all that each man wishes what is good*" (my emphasis).

30. Ibid., p. 23; see also Julia Annas, "Self-Love in Aristotle," *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 27, suppl. (1989): 1–18, pp. 7–8, as well as her "Plato and Aristotle on Friendship and Altruism," *Mind* 86 (1977): 532–54.

31. Kraut, "Comments on Annas' 'Self-Love in Aristotle,'" p. 22. See also Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good*, pp. 97–103, 119.

I take it, then, that Aristotle is saying that we must focus on cases in which the good man must choose between gaining the most of the best good for himself and letting his friend gain it. Further, Aristotle says that the good man will choose the former course.

* * *

The next problem is whether this latter claim raises a question of substantive egoism. Aristotle certainly seems to think that it does. After all, the chapter is written precisely in order to respond to that question.[32]

Readers nowadays, however, might find it hard to see how that could be the case. The chief ground would be, I think, that the good that Aristotle thinks a person gains by being a lover of self is an ethical good, *to kalon,* and that it is gained by giving something to someone else.[33] But this, we tend to think, cannot fundamentally be a matter of substantive egoism at all.

However, the temptation to read Aristotle with this idea in mind seems to me to arise from a conflation of our notion of ethical (or even moral) good with the one that Aristotle indicates he is operating with. For us, ethical good is not scarce. Any case in which it briefly seems so, we think, should be regarded as taking place within a broader context in which that is not true. As Kraut's interpretation illustrates, we emphatically do not believe that within any important context, one person's having more ethical good means another person's having less. That could happen, we think, only in the very short term, in a way that allows ample further chances for opportunities to be equalized. Aristotle, on the other hand, insists on looking to an occasion of scarcity of *to kalon,* precisely in order to reach a verdict on the question whether a good man is a lover of self.

The reason why Aristotle thinks both that the good man can unobjectionably aim at the greatest amount of nobility and that doing

32. With the aim of blunting the impression of egoism that this passage conveys, Annas reads Aristotle as drawing a distinction between what "explains" the agent's action and what "motivates" him: the agent's beneficence toward his friend is "explained" by the ultimate aim of his own happiness, but what he (consciously) aims at is the friend's good. See "Self-Love in Aristotle," pp. 12–15. It does not seem to me that Aristotle is employing this distinction, nor in any case that it would blunt the effect of what he says in this passage. When he maintains that "the good man assigns himself the greater share in what is noble," it seems to me that he is talking as much about the good man's motivation as about the explanation of what he does.

33. Annas holds that Aristotle treats the good in question in this chapter as something that everyone equally can maximize without leaving any less for anyone else; see ibid., pp. 8, 11. It seems to me that she is moving too close to the conception of love that she cites from Shelley's *Epipsychidion.* The passage that I have quoted, however, seems to me explicitly to express the contrary view, that *to kalon* is sometimes scarce. See also Kraut, "Comments on Julia Annas' 'Self-Love in Aristotle,'" p. 21.

so is better than aiming at the greatest amount of money or pleasure is not that the former kind of self-love is really not substantively egoistic, nor that there is always enough nobility to go around, nor that rivalry over virtue is mutually beneficial whereas competition over other goods is not. Rather, I think that the reason is simply that money and pleasure are not in the true sense as genuinely goods, for oneself, as nobility is. That is a quite different kind of concern on his part from the one that a harmonizing interpretation would impute to him.

* * *

I conclude that Aristotle's intention in these passages, and also in the rest of the *Ethics,* is not to demonstrate a harmony of one's own good with broader considerations nor to vindicate inclusivist eudaimonism against a charge of egoism. He is not much worried about that charge—though 9.8 makes plain that he is fully aware of it. When he does deal with it, he does so with plenty of sangfroid and without betraying any sign that it could have been a principal aim of his doctrine to rebut the charge, or establish the harmony.

* * *

By this time the reader who recalls the Kantian Interpretation might well be coming to think that it, for all its current unfashionability, is starting to look pretty good. If Aristotle shows the degree of substantive egoism that his ideas about friendship seem to point to, then is it not, after all, entirely correct to regard him as an out-and-out egoist who aims at his own substantive happiness and for whom that is the sole justification for ethical and altruistic action, as well as for friendship?

However, this interpretation, too, runs into difficulty. According to Aristotle the good man benefits his friends "for their sake" and engages in virtuous activity "for itself." Taken at face value, this seems to preclude what he seems to say in *Ethics* 1, that we should choose these things for the sake of our own happiness. Moreover, he does not retract this view in the passage about self-love that we have examined. But if he really thought that our actions should be entirely self-regarding, that would have been the place to say so. How, then, do we square this idea with what we have already seen?

This problem does not affect the Kantian Interpretation alone. It is a problem for all interpretations. We all need to reconcile Aristotle's explicit claim that happiness is the end of all that we do with his equally explicit claim that friends' good and virtuous action are valued for themselves.

One tempting but (in my view) ultimately untenable solution to this problem is suggested by an idea of Mill to which I have already

alluded and which has been used to interpret a Greek inclusivist notion of happiness.[34] In expounding his own view Mill says, "The ingredients of happiness are very various, and each of them is desirable in itself, and not merely as swelling an aggregate." Slightly later he explains, "*In being* desired for its own sake [something] is . . . desired as part of happiness. . . . The desire of it *is not a different thing* from the desire of happiness."[35] His idea seems to be that the desire for a given part of happiness for its own sake is not to be distinguished from the desire for happiness itself.

If we follow Mill, then we seemingly can hold that for Aristotle, aiming at virtuous action for itself and aiming at it for the sake of happiness are the very same thing. That would perhaps be a way of squaring those indications that happiness is supposed to be our final end with the evidence that we supposedly pursue ethical virtue and friends' good for themselves. But that result does not seem, after all, to fit the Kantian Interpretation, which presupposes a dualism of, and possible conflict between, one's own happiness and the broader considerations. Mill's idea, however, seems to be a form of inclusivism that is aimed at obliterating just that dualism. For that reason Mill's idea does not seem to offer aid to the Kantian Interpretation.

Reasoning about Mill's idea is made very difficult, I would say, by its obscurity. Contrary to what he says, it seems to me clear that to desire some part of happiness for itself and to desire it *as* a part of happiness are two quite different things. The distinction between the two is especially clear in view of the fact that distinct parts of happiness can, as aims, come into conflict with each other, as we have seen that in Aristotle's view they can. Unfortunately, Mill does not here mention the possibility of conflict,[36] so it is difficult to know how he would respond to it.

But whether or not Mill's idea can be made clear enough to avoid problems arising from conflicts among parts of happiness, I doubt that the idea was entertained by Aristotle. He never articulates the identity of desires that Mill's view asserts. When he draws the distinction between desiring something for itself and desiring it for something else, moreover, he does not seem to me even to hint that these two things can coincide in the way that Mill claims.[37] His silence on the

34. See, e.g., Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory*, p. 341, and (perhaps) *Aristotle's First Principles*, p. 606, n. 32.

35. Mill, chap. 4 (with my emphasis). I take the latter clause to be an explanation of the former, not to express a further point.

36. Butler does, though. He recognizes that one aim can "interfere" with others and thereby with self-love as a whole. That is why he says only that there is no "peculiar" contrariety between love of neighbor and self-love, not that there is no contrariety at all (secs. 12–13, 18–20).

37. See esp. *Ethics* 1.1–2, 4, 7; 10.6–7.

point, I think, tells against the hypothesis that Mill's idea is what he has in mind.

* * *

All the more so, too, because there is another way, which Aristotle articulates explicitly, for him to handle the matter. This is the idea that something can be desired or aimed at both for its own sake and for something else, in the sense of being aimed at partly for the sake of each.[38] For instance, he says, "honor, pleasure, reason, and every virtue we choose indeed for themselves (for if nothing else resulted from them we should still choose each of them), but we choose them also for the sake of happiness, judging that by means of them we shall be happy."[39] He also says of "intelligence, sight, and certain pleasures and honors," that "if we pursue these also for the sake of something else, yet one would place them among things good in themselves."[40]

Although the notion of desiring something partly for itself and partly for the sake of something else is not without obscurity, it seems to me a notion that we do try to operate with in everyday discourse.[41] It also fits what Aristotle wants to say. It seems to be plausible to say that in his view, one desires both virtuous action and one's friend's well-being, for example, partly for itself and partly for the sake of one's own happiness.[42]

When Aristotle says that one desires both of these things for themselves, he takes for granted that one also desires them for the sake of one's happiness. For he has made it explicit from very early on that one desires everything for the sake of happiness[43]—in part, that is, since some things are also desired for their own sakes, not just for happiness. This interpretation also fits Aristotle's way of singling out what is special about happiness. Happiness is not the only thing that is valued for itself; it is the only thing that is valued for itself and not for anything else.[44]

Rather than putting things Mill's way, then, Aristotle is better read as saying that some things are desired both as parts of happiness and also for themselves. That preserves the distinction that Aristotle

38. On this idea in Aristotle's ethics, see Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good,* pp. 43, n. 26; 207.

39. Aristotle *Ethics* 1.7 1097b1–5; cf. a30–34.

40. Ibid., 1096b18–19.

41. The main obscurity arises when one tries to explain what to say when there is conflict between the thing desired and that for the sake of which, in part, it is desired.

42. To this extent I would agree with Kraut, p. 22, concerning "mixed motivation"; and Cooper, "Aristotle on Friendship," p. 332 (but cf. pp. 309–10, which perhaps moves in a different direction).

43. Aristotle *Ethics* 1097a15–23, 1176b30–32.

44. Ibid., 1176b30–32.

draws and makes it rather clearer, it seems to me, than the idea that Mill suggests.

On this account the Kantian Interpretation turns out to be largely wrong but still contains some truth. One goal of virtuous action and beneficence toward friends is indeed one's own happiness, since according to Aristotle everything else is done for the sake of that.[45] Virtuous action and beneficence also, however, have value for themselves. For that reason it is wrong to picture Aristotle as thinking that one's own happiness is the sole basis of ethical and altruistic considerations. Even more, if one's virtuous action is to be a part of happiness, I take it, one must desire such action for itself, not merely as a part of happiness. Similarly, to be a friend and have the benefits of friendship, one must desire the good of one's friends for their sake.[46]

* * *

Given this fact, we can see that Kraut's interpretation of Aristotle's views on friendship has an implication that is importantly right. Although Aristotle says that the good man will assign himself the greater share of nobility in the sort of situation of scarcity described in 9.8, he certainly holds neither that the good man will try to maximize the number of occasions on which he may successfully compete with others for nobility nor that as a general policy he will try to maximize his superiority in virtue over them.[47]

To suppose that Aristotle meant such a thing would be to make two mistakes. First, Aristotle's good man is not interested in competition per se. It is not, in other words, that the good man has some positive attraction to outdoing his friend for the sake of the the outdoing itself nor a desire that whatever his friend gets, he get more.

45. Here a large issue arises, which I cannot treat adequately here. When Aristotle says that we desire everything for the sake of happiness, does he mean—when it all comes out in the wash in *Ethics* 10.6–8—that we desire everything for the sake of *theoria*, or that we desire everything for the sake of the life that is dominated by *theoria*? The answer is, I think, some of both. Aside from being valuable for themselves, other activities contribute as parts to the life that includes them and *theoria*, and some of them contribute causally to the activity of theorizing. (As is often noted, it is not plausible to suppose that all of them do the latter.) Aristotle subsumes both of these relations under the expression *pros* (see, e.g., W. F. R. Hardie, *Aristotle's Ethical Theory*, 2d ed. [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980], p. 256), though there is no reason to say that he confuses them.

46. Cooper, "Aristotle on Friendship," pp. 309–10, perhaps means to locate a problem at this point, but it seems to me that Aristotle's view as I interpret it is free of incoherence. What makes it so is precisely the fact that the friends' good is desired partly for itself, so that it would be desired even if it did not contribute to one's happiness (Aristotle *Ethics* 1097b1–5). So it is not, incoherently, "desired for itself for the sake of one's happiness." Compare n. 41 above.

47. See Kraut, "Comments on Julia Annas' 'Self-Love in Aristotle,'" p. 23.

That would make it an intrinsically competitive matter, which is not Aristotle's meaning. Rather, his view in 9.8 is that the good man, seeing that in certain circumstances he can get the greatest good only by getting more than his friend, chooses to do so.[48]

Second, Aristotle does not take the occurrence of competitive situations concerning virtue to point to any general policy. There is no evidence that he takes such situations to be common or easy to produce. Otherwise he would certainly have been obliged to explore issues about them further. For the most part, however, he thinks of relations among friends as characterized by cooperation, not competition, and as permitting beneficence toward one's friends for their sake. Competitive situations do sometimes occur, but they are not all-pervasive.[49] There is not always enough nobility to go around, but there usually is. On those occasions when scarcity arises, the good man seeks nobility even if others will have less. When there is no such scarcity, he aims for his friends' benefit for their sake.

* * *

We should conclude, I think, that neither the Kantian nor the Hegelian Interpretation satisfactorily describes Aristotle's position. Indeed, a reason why Aristotle's view strikes his reader as elusive is perhaps that it is such a subtle mixture of the things that the Kantian and Hegelian Interpretations, respectively, make us expect. On the one hand, Aristotle does not think that the value of every element of one's happiness consists in its contribution thereto.[50] Since he believes that ethical and altruistic action are valuable partly for themselves, he does not think that they are justified solely by their contribution to well-being. In that sense, he does not think of them simply as aspects of self-regarding prudence.

On the other hand, he also does not think that one's own well-being is in perfect harmony with ethical and altruistic considerations. These broader considerations can and sometimes do conflict with one's own good. When that happens, Aristotle's view seems to be that at

48. Here I would disagree with what seems to be Kraut's view at ibid., p. 20, and with his citation thereto of *Ethics* 1168b25–29, as well as the way in which his interpretation, so far as I understand it, seems to rely on the supposition of a large role for intrinsically competitive rivalry over nobility among the virtuous (cf. n. 27 above). See also Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good*, pp. 97, 119.

49. This fact, it seems to me, and not the principle of equality that Kraut adduces, is what limits people in their pursuit of virtue to the detriment of others' pursuit of the same thing and prevents a no-holds-barred competition from arising.

50. For this reason he does not fall afoul of Butler's argument against saying that every desire that one has is ultimately just a desire for one's own happiness. Compare n. 35 above. Indeed, what I think that Butler's argument shows is that for an inclusivist who does not try to adopt Mill's (to me very obscure) view, the parts of happiness must be regarded as aimed at partly for themselves.

least sometimes—as in the instance described in 9.8—the good man will aim for his own good. That does not imply that the friend's good is to be valued solely for one's own well-being—I have just explained why that is not so. But it does mean that the friend's good does not override one's own good, at least in this case, where the two conflict and *to kalon* is not to be evenly shared by all.

The Hegelian Interpretation is thus partially successful in defending Aristotle against the criticism that the Kantian Interpretation levels against him. But it is only very partially so, if I am right that Aristotle does not defend a harmony of one's own well-being with the broader considerations and does not particularly try to defend his view against the charge of substantive egoism.

* * *

But the inclusivist style of interpretation is born of the feeling that we can do better by Aristotle than I am saying we can, that a harmony can be found in his view, and that even if he does not fully develop his defense of it, it is a good idea that in charity ought to be attributed to him or at least be regarded as what he was driving at.

This final argument for an inclusivist interpretation aims at a charitable interpretation based on philosophical grounds, and it can be met partly by a philosophical reply. For it seems to me that in fact inclusivism is not a convincing way of establishing such a harmony of one's own good with the broader considerations. There is not enough space here for me to demonstrate this fully, but I shall briefly outline one of the arguments to this effect.[51]

* * *

Earlier I described the reasons why an inclusivist eudaimonism should hold that happiness needs to be described not just by a list of worthwhile things but also by specifying some structure by which its parts are organized. Otherwise ethical and altruistic considerations might play only a small role in comparison to substantively egoistic ones. The structure is necessary to ensure a form of eudaimonism that can be defended against the charge of egoism. It gives us a way of insisting that a life will count as happy only if it includes certain parts and only if substantively egoistic parts do not play too commanding a role in it. (This, as I have argued, is something that Aristotle's own view does not guarantee, even though it recognizes the need for the parts of happiness to be organized into some structure.)[52]

51. For more on this argument, see my "Neoaristotelian Inclusivist Eudaimonism."

52. Interpreters of Aristotle have frequently maintained that happiness must in Aristotle's view have some structure, though they have not cited this particular reason. See, e.g., Hardie, "The Final Good in Aristotle's Ethics" ("the orderly and harmonious

Different formulations might achieve this end, but a natural one for an inclusivist to adopt is to say that ethical activity and the good of others are so very, very good for a person, and so very much better than substantively egoistic parts of well-being are, that a life would be much less good if the former did not predominate than if they did. It would hardly seem selfish to seek one's well-being on these terms. This position seems to give due weight to broader considerations while at the same time not forcing one to limit one's own well-being in order to do so.

Still, we are left wondering whether there is any important difference between the inclusivist view and the position of the dualist, which treats the broader considerations as distinct from the individual's own substantive good. In both cases we find admittedly substantive egoistic considerations potentially in conflict with broader considerations. Dualism calls these latter external to one's good, while eudaimonism calls them a part of one's own good. Is that an important difference? On both views, something external to one's own admittedly substantive good weighs against it. Why, then, is this form of eudaimonism not simply a relabeling of dualism?

Various responses to this question are available, but there is room to question whether they yield any significant difference between the two formulations. For instance, the inclusivist may try to set his view off against dualism by saying that the broader considerations benefit one's "true self," or the element of one's self that is distinctly human. Plato sometimes talks in this way, as does Butler.[53]

I have not by any means demonstrated that there is nothing to choose between inclusivist eudaimonism and dualism. I have simply posed a challenge to the inclusivist to explain what the difference is—other than a relabeling of certain considerations as parts of one's good rather than further things potentially weighing against it—and why the difference should cut in favor of eudaimonism. The dualist, on the other hand, might claim it as a virtue of his position that it is more frank and open than eudaimonism is about the way in which the broader considerations diminish the scope for substantively self-benefiting pursuits.

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gratification of desires," p. 280); Ackrill, *Aristotle the Philosopher* ("priorities," pp. 135–36); and Annas, "The Good Life and the Lives of Others," ("an overall structure which gives her life coherence and direction," p. 134).

53. Some accounts depict Aristotle as arguing this way, though he ends up saying that *theoria*, not virtuous activity, appeals to the element that is most truly oneself (Aristotle *Ethics* 1178a2–7, 1166a17–18). But the dualist can maintain an analogous view, namely, that one's true self or reason is susceptible to appeals to goods that are not goods for oneself but are based instead on what is good non-self-referentially. Both positions say that the substantively egoistic goods are outbid by other considerations. In that respect the two views are the same.

At the least, the argument demonstrates that in and of itself, inclusivism by itself does not reach the goal of harmony and non-egoism, that is, not without very substantial supplementation. That conclusion, however, makes it harder to argue that the way to read Aristotle charitably is to say that that goal is the one that his inclusivist conception of happiness was designed to reach.