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*Aristotle on Making Other Selves**

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I

There is still a relative paucity of discussion of the views on friendship that Aristotle presents in the *Nicomachean Ethics*,[1] although some recent work may indicate a new trend. One suspects that this paucity reflects a belief that those views are not very interesting; if true, this witnesses to an unfortunate underestimation of Aristotle's account. This account is in fact quite surprising, for – I shall argue – Aristotle believes that one makes one's friends in the most literal sense of the verb.

Aristotle takes virtue-friendship, i.e., the friendship of virtuous people who are friends for virtue, as 'friendship in the primary way.' Other 'friendships' – for utility and for pleasure – are only so-called by way of similarity to friendship proper, i.e., virtue-friendship (1157a30ff). Accordingly, proper friendship must be non-instrumental, or, more carefully, not *essentially* instrumental, unlike the friendship-analogs that fall outside the scope of friendship proper (1157a17-20). While 'friends of utility...were never friends of each other, but of what was expedient for them' (1157a14ff), a true 'friend is taken to be someone who wish-

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1 References, unless otherwise indicated, are to the *Nicomachean Ethics* (*NE*); the translations are generally those of Terence Irwin (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett 1985). Throughout this paper, 'friendship,' 'love' and their cognates will be used to translate '*philia*' and its relatives. A review of the difficulties in translating the term can be found in John Cooper, 'Aristotle on Friendship,' in A. Rorty, ed., *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press 1980) 301-40.

es and does goods or apparent goods to his friend for the friend's own sake' (1166a3). The theme of desiring and acting for the friend's own sake is repeated many times in the *Ethics*;[2] in the *Rhetoric* it is explicitly taken as definitive of friendship (1361b35-40). Since the contrast between true friendship and mere friendship-analogs is that between the not essentially instrumental (for the sake of the friend) and the essentially instrumental (using the friend as a means to pleasure or utility), a successful account of Aristotle's views on friendship must preserve and explain this contrast in all its centrality.[3]

In doing so, one must be careful not to take friendship for virtue in such a way as to render friends a fungible commodity.[4] The problem is this. Aristotle believes that one loves a friend *for* his virtue (cf., e.g., 1171a20, 1156b6ff). But there are (one hopes) many virtuous people, and, indeed, many persons who are more virtuous than the friends

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2 1155b31, 1156b7-10, 1159a10, 1164a34, 1166a3, 1168a34, 1168b3; cf. also 1156a13.

3 Cooper, 'Aristotle on Friendship,' argues that pleasure- and utility-friendships have a substantial non-instrumental component. This is the point of distinguishing between essentially instrumental friendships (that have non-instrumental features, as in Cooper's example of the businessman who becomes willing to do small favors for a regular customer) and friendships that are essentially non-instrumental. Although Cooper's treatment tends to assimilate the different kinds of friendships to one another (on this point, see also note 17), it is clear that utility- and pleasure-friendships fall on the essentially instrumental side of the divide. In section V we will see a more principled way of spelling out the distinction between these and friendship for the sake of the friend.

So this is not to say that (true) friends don't have their uses. Aristotle is aware that friends have instrumental value (most notably at 1099a31-b2). The friend is a benefactor in the hour of need, and an opportunity for the exercise of virtue when fortune is generous (1155a5ff, 1169b11-16). At one point, Aristotle describes having friends as 'the greatest external good' (1169b10), a characterization that may suggest to some instrumental rather than intrinsic value. It is thus worth recalling that Aristotle thinks that external goods (such as health) can have *both* intrinsic and instrumental value, and that the latter need not preclude the former. See note 6.

4 Now it might be objected that while this is a natural way for *us* to understand friendship, it is not obviously so for Aristotle. Aristotle takes friends to love one another for virtue, and since one virtuous person is, qua virtuous person, like another, friends must be, as it were, a fungible commodity. Such a position conflicts so strongly with our pretheoretical understanding of friendship and with the general tone of Aristotle's discussion of it that its only support can be our inability to find a preferred construal of the claim that one loves a friend for his virtue. As we shall see, an alternative is available. Moreover, this reading will be extremely hard put to solve the puzzle I am about to pose, i.e., to explain why one loves just those virtuous people that one does love out of the many that one might.

one actually has. If the friend's virtue provides the reason for the friendship, it would seem that one has identical reason to love *all* virtuous persons, or, if this is not possible, to replace one's virtuous friends with still more virtuous persons. But it is something like a conceptual truth about friendship that one has relatively few friends (according to Aristotle, roughly the number that one can live with – 1171a1-3). A similar truth is that one does not rush off to replace one's somewhat virtuous friends with still more virtuous acquaintances. Friends are not replaceable: even when one loses old friends and makes new ones, it is not accurate to think of the new as *replacing* the old; moreover Aristotle takes virtuous friendship to be (pretty much) permanent (1156b18). There are many individuals who cannot claim the prerogatives of one's friendship, even though they may share in the admirable properties of those who can. This requires explanation. Why does one (appropriately) love one virtuous acquaintance rather than another? And why can one not simply replace a virtuous friend with some other, equally virtuous person?

II

With these constraints in mind, let's turn to Aristotle's account of friendship. Certain Aristotelian expressions – to the effect that one wishes goods to one's friend for his own sake, and that the friend is another self – appear too many times to be dismissed as less than central.[5] It is worth trying to take them seriously, which – at the risk of sticking to a stuffy notion of seriousness – suggests taking them as literally as possible.

How are we to understand these expressions? The claim that the friend is another self suggests that the right way to do so is to think about one's own self. In one's own case, one has that special concern for one's projects and one's future that expresses itself in, among other things, prudence. This special concern is often felt to be one that terminates justification: 'Why do X?' can be answered by 'X is good for me,' whereas 'Why do what's good for you?' seems like a non-question. One way of putting this fact about us is to say that one desires the good for oneself for one's own sake (rather than for the sake of anything else). When Aristotle says that the friend is another self, that one desires the good for one's friend for the friend's sake, Aristotle

5 For the former, see note 2. For the latter, 1166a30-33, 1166b1, 1169b6, 1170b6f, 1171b33; cf. also 1171a20.

is at least saying that one has for one's friend the same kind of special concern that one has for oneself, that the concern for the friend is justification-terminating in the same way that one's concern for oneself is justification-terminating.

The reading that takes concern for the friend, like self-concern, to be justification-terminating is supported by Aristotle's description of one's relation to oneself as the paradigmatic case of friendship: 'one is a friend to himself most of all' (1168b9). Aristotle thinks that the defining features of friendships with others are derived from friendship with oneself, and takes as the central instance of this the desire one has for goods and apparent goods for one's own sake (1166a1-5, 15-17). '[A]n extreme degree of friendship resembles one's friendship to oneself' (1166b1; see also 1171b33). On this interpretation, friendships are not essentially instrumental, any more than one's relation to oneself is merely or essentially instrumental. Part of what it is for a tool to be (solely) a tool is that it is always used *for* something: there is always a reason extrinsic to the tool for what one does to and with it. This is precisely what justification-termination in the friend does not permit.[6]

We have here two apparently distinct notions: that of wanting the good for one's friend for his own sake, and that of the friend's being another self. How are they related? One might think that the fact that one desires the good for one's friend for the friend's sake is constitutive, perhaps exhaustively constitutive, of the friend's being another self: to say that the friend is another self *is just to say* that one desires the good for one's friend for his own sake.[7] As a treatment of friendship, I think this approach to have many merits; however, I doubt that it can be successfully imported into Aristotle exegesis.

There are two reasons for thinking this. Recall that we are trying to take the Aristotelian locutions as seriously (and as literally) as possible. If the friend is another self, then what makes one's friend, one's friend, is the same thing that makes oneself, oneself. This can be main-

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6 To be sure, there do appear to be instrumental uses of one's friends: Aristotle states (to translate as literally as possible) that 'many things are done just as through instruments also as through friends and political power' (1099b1f), and that 'your friend, since he is another yourself, supplies what your own efforts cannot supply' (1169b6). But in the same, somewhat stilted way, one can make instrumental use of oneself (as in 'the movement of limbs that are the instruments' – 1110a16). It is probably more appropriate to regard this kind of instrumentality as a sort of extended agency: 'what our friends achieve is, in a way, achieved through our agency, since the origin is in us' (1112b28). See note 3.

7 Jennifer Whiting presents such a view – although not as an interpretation of Aristotle – in 'Friends and Future Selves,' *Philosophical Review* 45 (1986), 547-80.

tained together with the reading that takes other-self-dom to be constituted by special concern provided that one believes[8] that one's own self is (at least partially) constituted by self-concern. But whatever the merits of this position, it is implausibly attributed to Aristotle, whose account of what makes oneself, oneself, will be a far more metaphysical story. This story is likely to have to do with species form and matter, and possibly with individual forms; the issue is controversial.[9] In any case, it is very unlikely to have much to do with concern. That's one reason.

Here's the other. If 'one's friend is another self' and 'one desires the good for one's friend for his own sake' are just different ways of saying the same thing (or if 'the friend is another self' merely abbreviates 'one desires the good for one's friend for his own sake' and some other statements about other-self-dom), then the fact that the friend is another self can no more cause, explain or justify one's desiring the good for one's friend for his own sake than synonyms can cause, explain or justify one another. Aristotle, however, thinks that the friend's being another self at least explains desiring the good for him for his own sake: 'The decent person, then, has each of these features (which include desiring goods for one's own sake) in relation to himself, and is related to his friend as he is to himself, *since* [*gar*] the friend is another self' (1166a30-32; cf. 1166a3, 15-17).

The suggestion that one desires the good for one's friend *because* he is another self[10] raises anew the question of where justification terminates. There does seem to be an answer to the question 'Why do what's good for your friend?' – namely, that he is another self. However, the analogy between friendship and self-love is preserved if we hear such an answer as spoken in the same tone of voice that the first-person question would elicit: 'I do what's good for me because I'm myself.' And it may be that these explanations do not provide additional justification – in the sense of adducing a further end for which the explanandum is an instrumental means – but rather explanation of another kind. At any rate, Aristotle seems to agree that we do desire the good for our own sakes because we are ourselves, although just

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8 As does Whiting, ibid.

9 Cf. Edwin Hartman, *Substance, Body and Soul* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1977) 10-56; Jennifer Whiting, 'Form and Individuation in Aristotle,' *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 3(1986), 359-77.

10 I'm not claiming that one desires the good for one's friend for his own sake *only* because he is another self. One might, for example, feel good will towards Masons, and so also to one's Masonic friends.

what this comes to is a tricky question.[11] This leaves us the tasks of elucidating the 'because,' and of saying what it is for the friend to be another self.

III

Elucidating the 'because' must wait on elucidating other-self-dom, and to do this, a detour is necessary. The 'friendship of kindred and that of companions' constitute a separate class, different from other kinds of friendship (1161b11f).[12] Kinship-friendship is uniformly derivative from the love of parents for their children (1161b16f), and importantly, parental love shares with comradely friendship the feature we are trying to understand: 'A parent loves his children as [he loves] himself. For what has come from him is a sort of other himself' (1161b27-30; cf. 1161b18f). By transitivity of identity, as it were, brothers are 'iden-

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11 Before mentioning the tricky question, a caveat: Actually, we desire *apparent* goods for our *apparent* selves, and the base, Aristotle recognizes, may, in addition to mistaking apparent goods for goods, mistake their apparent selves for their real selves, as when they try to 'gratify their appetites and in general their feelings and the non-rational parts of the soul' rather than reason (1168b20; cf. 1168b30-1169a3). Moreover, the very base may not even desire goods for themselves at all – partly because they find themselves unbearable, and partly because they may lack coherently organized personalities, i.e., full-fledged selves (1166b2-27). So, more precisely, *when* we desire the good for our own sakes, we do so because we are ourselves.

Now while Aristotle often enough seems to commit himself to the view that we desire the good for our own sakes because we are ourselves, other remarks indicate that we desire the good for ourselves for our own sakes on account of our own virtue. These views need not be taken as contradicting one another if the latter can be taken as sketching the internal structure of the former. Such a construal would also be convenient for the line of exegesis I am advocating in another way, since I am about to argue that it is causing the friend's virtues that makes him my friend. My attempt to be literal about the 'another self' locution should then make me want to say that it is causing my own virtues that makes me myself; and the kind of account of the relation between one's virtues and one's selfhood I have in mind would allow me to say something sufficiently like this. Providing a full-fledged account of this kind would take me too far afield, so I will not do it here. However, I'll defend a more modest version of the claim in section V.

12 Aristotle seems to be contrasting companionly friendship with that of relatives and possibly with the political friendships of the immediately preceding passages, so I take the scope of 'companionly friendship' to be what we ordinarily take as friendship, with the proviso that Aristotle would have in mind genuine, i.e., virtue-friendship.

tical with each other,' since they are identical with their parents. They are 'in a sense the same thing, although in separate individuals' (1161b30-35). Since kinship-friendship and companion-friendship belong together, and share the features that we are trying to explain, and since kinship-friendship derives from parental friendship, we may be able to understand companion-friendship by way of parental friendship.

One can abstract from the parent-child relation to a relation that we shall call *procreation*. If A is a *procreator* of B, then (i) A is a creator of B in the sense that A is causally responsible for B's being,[13] and (ii) B has the same being that A does. Now before arguing that the friend-friend relation is an instance of the procreation relation, I will argue that procreation is well-suited to explain the link between other-selfdom and special concern.

Procreation – indeed, even its creation component – seems to cause the kind of special concern we have been considering. '[E]veryone likes his own products more than (other people's), as parents and poets do' (1120b13). In the parent-child case, this is especially clear: the parent comes to love his children as a causal consequence – perhaps even as a side-effect – of their being his children. Craftsmen also have this preferential attitude towards their products (1167b34f; cf. 1168a1-3). The procreative relation underlies the love of the benefactor for his beneficiary: 'the beneficiary is his product and *hence* he likes him...' (1168a4-6, my italics).

The explanation of this phenomenon is worth quoting in full:

> 1. Being is choiceworthy and lovable for all.
> 2. We are insofar as we are actualized, since we are insofar as we live and act.
> 3. The product is, in a way, the producer in his actualization.
> 4. Hence the producer is fond of the product, because he loves his own being. And this is natural, since what he is potentially is what the product indicates in actualization. (1168a5-10)

So far, this explains both the parent's love for his children and the potter's preferential fondness for his own pots. The difference between these can be accounted for by our second condition on procreation: The producer loves his *own* being, and in procreation the creator has the *same* being as the creature. The potter is not himself a pot, so that

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13 After comparing the relation between parents and children to that between gods and men, Aristotle brings to our attention the crucial fact that gods and parents are respectively 'the causes of [the] being' of men and children (1162a4-7). And at 1161a17 Aristotle describes the father as 'the cause of his children's being.'

pot and potter do not fully share the same being (except insofar as the pot is an actualization of the potter); but parent and child are both human beings, and share the (appropriate kind of) same being.

Now I don't want to try to reconstruct here the metaphysics that makes this way of thinking about these things plausible to Aristotle; suffice it that Aristotle *does* find it plausible. (At *Physics* 202b5 he explicitly states that '[i]t is not absurd that the actualization of one thing should be in another,' giving as example the actualization of the teacher in the student. Compare *Metaphysics* 1058a28-32.) For now, let's just say that the creature is the procreator's 'other self' because the procreator is responsible for the creature's having the being that they share, and it is natural for the procreator to have a special concern for his creature as an actualization of his being.

IV

The next item on our agenda is the claim that one is a procreator of one's friend. To be sure, one is not one's friend's procreator in the same way that a parent is his child's procreator: generally one's friends are living flesh and blood before they are one's friends. The force of the claim is rather that, over the course of a friendship, one becomes (causally) responsible for the friend's being who he is. Now Aristotle thinks that friendships are because of or for virtue. These positions coincide if virtue is (part of) what makes the virtuous man who he is. The being of a child for which his parent is causally responsible is, we can say, his *human* being; the being of one's friend for which one is responsible is his *virtuous* being. The former is, if you like, *what* he is; the latter is *who* he is.

This line of argument involves two subsidiary tasks. We must convince ourselves that Aristotle takes virtue to be (part of) what makes the virtuous man who he is. (I'll defer this to section V.) And we should say something about the causal role that the virtuous man plays in bringing about or maintaining his friend's virtue. A partial description can be appropriated from Cooper, who provides the following account of Aristotle's 'arguments to show that friendship is an essential constituent of a flourishing human life':

> [F]irst...to know the goodness of one's life, which [Aristotle] reasonably assumes to be a necessary condition of flourishing, one needs to have intimate friends whose lives are similarly good, since one is better able to reach a sound and secure estimate of the quality of a life when it is not one's own. Second,...the fundamental moral and intellectual activities that go to make up a flourishing life cannot be continuously engaged in with pleasure and interest, as they must be if the life is to be a flourishing one, unless they are engaged in as parts of shared activities

rather than pursued merely in private; and given the nature of the activities that are in question, this sharing is possible only with intimate friends who are themselves morally good persons.[14]

To paraphrase the suggestions as crudely as possible, one's friends serve as human mirrors in which one can better see one's own virtue;[15] and one's friends are the teammates one needs to play the game of a virtuous life. I agree with Cooper that these are some of the ways

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14 Cooper, 330f.

15 The phrase 'human mirror' is Cooper's, adapted from the *Magna Moralia* (*MM*). The 'human mirror' argument seems to me the more dubious of the two. First, in making it out Cooper draws heavily on the *MM* (1213a10-26), which should be used with caution when trying to establish the views of the *NE*. For even if, as some deny, the *MM* is authentic, it may represent a stage in the development of Aristotle's thought distinct from that of the *NE*. Cooper appears to regard the *MM* passage as a more straightforward form of the argument of *NE* 1169b27-1170a4 and of 1170a15-b7. But it is not clear to me 1) that the two just-mentioned passages both contain the same argument or 2) that *either NE* passage contains the argument of the *MM* passage. Indeed, the contrast between the generally admitted obscurity of the *NE* passages and the relative clarity of the *MM* passage casts doubt on the claim.

Second, Cooper prefers his view to Ross's alternative construal of 1169b27-1170a4, which he regards as circular. But it is not clear that the argument, properly understood, *is* circular. Cooper points out that, on Ross's construal, 'Aristotle simply assumes, altogether without explicit warrant, that the good man will have friends' (318) – and this *is* an inappropriate assumption in an argument *for* having friends. But Cooper conflates the project of demonstrating 'the value to a person of his *having* friends' (318), with the distinct project of providing someone who has no friends with reasons to acquire them. Were Aristotle's aim the latter, rather than that of explaining to the virtuous person why his friends are valuable, the argument would indeed be circular. But notice that the argument, construed in this way, renders friendship essentially instrumental: a friendship formed in order to attain the pleasure promised by the argument would be one of the friendship-analogs, rather than true friendship.

If, instead, part of being virtuous is contributing to the virtue of others, and if – as we shall see – this has as a causal consequence that the virtuous man acquires friends, then the alleged circularity disappears. For then it is simply a fact that the virtuous man does have friends. Raising the question of the value of these friends is in such a case not at all the same as asking for *reasons to make friends*. So Ross-like interpretations, which do not require excursions to the *MM* and are thus to be preferred, remain open.

Given the foregoing, one might wonder why I adopt the 'human mirror' story at all. The reason is that even if these views were not in the foreground when the *NE* was composed, Aristotle may still have had 'human mirrors' in mind when thinking of the ways in which friends affect each other's virtue. There are undoubtedly many ways in which this happens, and Aristotle need not have enumerated in the *NE* all those he had discovered. For our purposes it suffices to supply plausibly Aristotelian examples of such causal relations.

in which we influence our friends' virtue, although there are surely others; moral education is another prominent possibility.[16] This influence plays an important role in my account, but this role is causal rather than justificatory. Our current task is to elucidate the 'because' in 'One desires the friend's good for his own sake because he is another self'; we already know that the 'because' cannot represent a means-end relation, because friendships are essentially non-instrumental.[17]

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16 Recall *Physics* 202b5, and see note 18 below.

17 When Cooper takes the function of these arguments to be that of 'defend[ing] the value of friendship *only* by showing that for human beings it is a necessary means to attaining certain broadly valuable psychological benefits' (Cooper, 332, italics mine) he is providing an unsatisfactory, because (solely) instrumental, account of friendship. And, not incidentally, an account that cannot explain the non-interchangeability of friends. Cooper's position in 'Aristotle on Friendship' seems to me schizophrenic: he denies that he is producing an essentially instrumental account of friendship, and in the first part of the paper seems more or less successful; but the latter half produces what is, denials notwithstanding, just such an account. Since the two parts of the paper were originally separately published papers (see Cooper's note 1), there may be an historical explanation for the final version's split personality. I will confine myself here to explaining why the story that Cooper gives is in fact essentially instrumental.

Mirrors – even human mirrors – are tools used for a specified purpose; this is true despite Cooper's flat denial on p. 333. Those who cooperate with one in a shared activity are, on the account presented, instruments towards one's performance of that activity. Cooper distinguishes between shared activities like chess, in which co-participants need have solely instrumental value, and shared virtuous activities, which require intimate acquaintance in order to ascertain and apprehend the co-participant's virtue; such intimate acquaintance is, Cooper thinks, sufficient for friendship. A similar line is taken regarding 'human mirrors.'

This is an interesting argument, but its links will not bear the strain that Cooper puts on them. For one thing, intimate acquaintance is by no means sufficient for friendship (as anyone who has ever shared his living quarters will testify). For another, ascertaining the virtue of another need not require intimate acquaintance. Virtues are something like dispositional psychological states. We can imagine that psychologists discover ways of reading these states off of a person's nervous system. They then build virtuometers, which quickly and reliably evaluate a person's virtue index. (If we want to make the story less anachronistic, we can imagine that the gods, who see into the souls of men, sponsor Virtue Evaluation Oracles in downtown Athens.) Under such circumstances it is very easy for virtuous persons to find guaranteed-to-be-virtuous co-participants in virtuous activities. But it would be unreasonable to describe such people – people like the stranger with whom I have agreed, on the basis of his 98.7 Composite Virtue Index, to cooperate in building a temple – as *friends*. Such devices could also, with a little more story-telling, be made to take the place of 'human mirrors'; instead of using one's friend to study one's own virtue, one could take virtuometer readings. Stories like this one show that 'human mirrors' and co-participants in virtuous activities are, qua occupiers of these roles, simply instrumental means to an

So these considerations cannot be instrumental reasons for having friends. But what are they, if not instrumental reasons?

My suggestion is, causes. Let A and B be friends, and let B be (partly) responsible for (at least the maintenance of) A's virtue, in that B serves as a human mirror, and is a team-mate in A's virtuous activities. Cooper takes these facts to provide A with (instrumental) reasons for befriending B. But Cooper has things backwards. The causal facts, rather than providing *A* with instrumental reasons to befriend B, *explain B's* love for A. B loves A *because* he is a procreator of A, and procreators love their creatures. These causal interactions make each friend the other's 'other self,' and bring about the love of the friend for his own sake. (In like manner, the symmetrical facts explain A's love for B; just as B is a procreator of A, so A is a procreator of B.)[18]

It might be objected that one assists one's friends in being virtuous *because* they already *are* one's friends; so that they cannot be one's friends *because* one assists them in being virtuous. The appearance of circularity here can be dealt with by pointing out that the instances of assistance may be distinct: a present or future favor to a friend is prompted by his being a friend *now*; his being my friend now may be a result of *past* favors to one another's virtue. These in turn may have been prompted by the friendship of a still earlier time. To this it might

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end; they can be replaced by gadgets like virtuometers or by virtuometer-certified strangers because they are already no more than tools, and any tool, qua tool, is replaceable by anything else that serves the same purpose. Cooper's account, then, construes friends as essentially instruments, and as a fungible commodity.

18 A question that might be raised is whether my account can be extended to 'civic friendship' – the somewhat weaker form of *philia* that is found between fellow-citizens. (Even if it cannot, this is not an objection to the account; for Aristotle thinks that 'we should set apart the friendship of families and that of companions' [1161b11f].) Now, the citizens of the Greek *polis* took one of its primary functions to be that of educating its citizens. This education involved not merely the transmission of skills and information but a broader mission, involving the inculcation of virtues, that we can call the shaping of character. This widely shared opinion was also held by Aristotle. (Cf., e.g., 1099b29-32, 1102a7-10, 1103b2-7, 1155a23, 1179b32-1180a15, 1180a35-b7.) If, as I have suggested, one's character, constituted at least partly by one's virtues, is at least part of what makes one who one is, then the *polis* is (partly) responsible for its citizens being who they are.

Of course the *polis* is not a person. To say that the *polis* is responsible for a person's virtues and character is to say that the responsibility is shared by his fellow citizens who, with him, constitute the *polis*. Each of this person's fellow citizens is (in a small degree) responsible for his virtues, and thus (to a similar degree) for his being who he is. If so, then each citizen is a procreator of his fellow citizens, and this will lead him to exhibit (a suitably weak form of) love towards them. Civic friendship, it turns out, can also be understood as derivative from the relation between a procreator and his creature.

be objected that a regress has been substituted for vicious circularity. But it need not be the case that all my actions that assist others in being virtuous be prompted by prior friendship. Some may be due to spontaneous good will (1155b35ff, 1167a3-13; cf. 1156b26-30), and some may be the virtuous actions that one is bound to perform in the course of leading a virtuous life.

Let me review the merits of this account. It is explicitly non-instrumental. It explains why one loves the particular virtuous people that one in fact does love, and in so doing, explains the numerical constraint Aristotle imposes on the size of one's circle of friends: while there are many virtuous people, one is only causally responsible (in the appropriate way) for the virtue of a few. The self-perpetuating character of the causal relations explains the permanence of friendship (cf. 1156b18): virtuous friends assist one another in remaining virtuous, and this mutual assistance keeps them friends. While friends can be corrupted, and while long separation can sever the causal links (1157b10-14), in general friends do not cease to be one another's procreators.[19] Finally, the account rules out the interchangeability and replaceability of virtuous friends: A and B may be equally virtuous, but if one is causally responsible for A's virtue but not for B's, then one will love A and not B.

V

The most important piece of unfinished business is the job of attributing to Aristotle the claim that virtue is (a part of) what makes the virtuous man who he is. This claim deserves a paper unto itself, so I'm going to suffice with reviewing reasons for thinking that Aristotle did endorse it. The claim can be taken in two ways, corresponding to a stronger and weaker way of understanding the expression 'who someone is.' The question 'Who are you?' can prompt on the one hand, an answer like, 'My name's Horatio Alger,' or 'I'm the president of Alger Enterprises,' and on the other, an answer like 'I'm a Young Republican,' or 'I'm someone who clawed his way up from poverty to the pinnacle of financial success.' That is, it can elicit a response that picks out the individual himself (by name or definite description) – this is what I am calling the strong sense – or it can elicit a certain kind of

19 And they do not – barring the possibility that the corrupted friend has become another person (see note 22) – cease to have been one another's procreators. This may explain one's residual goodwill towards an (uncorrupted) ex-friend (1165b31-35).

characterization of the individual which does not necessarily apply only to him. There is strong textual support for the weaker version, which is the version of the claim for which I shall argue.[20] First, though, it is necessary to say something, however briefly, about the force of the weak version of the claim.

Clearly, not just any characterization of an individual will do as an answer to the question 'Who are you?' Consider the examples just given: to answer with one's party affiliation or with one's financial history is to indicate that one identifies oneself very strongly with one's political position or with the abilities and aspects of one's personality that brought one to the top of the heap. It is appropriate to answer with traits that one believes to be central to one's character, the kind of traits that someone who wants to be loved for him- or herself might regard as traits that it would be appropriate to be loved for. Of course, what one believes one's characteristic traits to be and what they in fact are may well be two very different stories. Still, who one is is largely a matter of one's character, and some traits are more central to one's character than others. To claim that virtue is part of what makes the virtuous man who he is is to say that his virtues exhibit this kind of centrality relative to his character.

This is very much Aristotle's view. At 1156a10, he says that '[t]hose who love each other for utility love not the other in himself'; and at line 17 that utility- and pleasure-friendships 'are coincidental, since the beloved is loved not in so far as he is who he is.' Utility- and pleasure-friendships are here being contrasted with virtue-friendships, so the implication is that those who love another for his virtue love him in himself, and that the virtue-beloved is loved insofar as he is who he is.[21] If loving someone for his virtues is loving him for who he is, then his virtues must be a large part of who he is.

We can complement these inferences from contrasting cases with positive evidence. Good people, we are told, 'will be friends because of themselves, since they are friends insofar as they are good' (1157b2-3; compare 1156b8, 1157a17-20). More tenuously, 1171a19f (which speaks of being the friend of people 'for their virtue and for themselves') sug-

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20 It may be possible to substantiate the claim on its second, stronger reading. While I won't attempt to do so here, it seems possible to defend the view that virtues are not merely characterizing but also individuating features, perhaps in the context of a reading that commits Aristotle to individual forms.

21 A similar implication is possibly carried by 1157a15, which describes friends for utility as persons who 'were never friends of each other, but of what was expedient for them'; one who befriends another for his virtue *is*, we may suppose, a friend of the other. Cf. also 1164a10.

gests that being someone's friend for his virtue is the same thing as being his friend for himself. And at 1112a2-3 Aristotle states that our ethical decisions – which are either partly constitutive or symptomatic of our virtues – make us the sort of persons we are.

If virtues are a central part of who their possessor is, we should expect them to be among the most stable of character traits; and this is how Aristotle regards them. Virtuous characters are stable (1100b13-20, 1167b5-10, 1156b13), unlike those of the vicious, who 'do not even remain similar to what they were' (1159b9; cf. 1156a20). '[V]irtuous people are enduringly [virtuous] in themselves, and enduring [friends] to each other' (1159b3f). Aristotle does admit that the virtuous can become corrupted (1165b1, 13ff). But his discussion of such cases supports the claim for which we are arguing. In justifying one's ceasing to associate with a once-virtuous but corrupted friend, Aristotle states that one 'was not the friend of a person of this sort' (1165b22f). If losing one's virtue makes one a different sort of person, then one's virtue is central to making one the kind of person one is, and is a character trait of the appropriate centrality.[22]

Earlier on we said that Aristotle takes virtue-friendship to be the sole genuine form of friendship. We can now explain why. While it is plausible to think that I have causal effects on my pleasure- and utility-'friends,' and that I am responsible for maintaining certain features or properties of theirs (probably those features and properties that make them pleasurable or useful to me), these properties and features – unlike virtues – are not, on Aristotle's view, among those that make persons (and in particular, my pleasure- and utility-'friends') who they are. Being virtuous is a large part of what it is to be a human being, whence of what it is to be the virtuous person that one is. On the other hand, being useful to me and being pleasant to me are not a part of being who one is.[23] This is why, despite superficial similarities, virtuous friendships turn out to be related to pleasure- and utility-'friendships' in much the way that ducks turn out to be related to toy ducks.

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22 If one were to argue for the stronger version of the claim (see note 20, above), one might want to treat this case as one in which the corrupted friend has become a different person, reading the passage against Aristotle's discussions of still-more-radical transformations that fail to preserve identity at 1159a9ff and 1166a20-24.

23 This may not always be true if these descriptions are given a 'rigid reading': what makes someone useful to me may be his virtues. A non-rigid reading is intended.

VI

An additional strength of my view is that it allows us to reconcile Aristotle's account of friendship with his commitment to what Vlastos calls 'the Eudaemonist Axiom' (EA), i.e., with the claim that all one's actions are done for the sake of one's own *eudaemonia* (roughly, happiness or well-living);[24] and to do so without sacrificing the motivational plausibility of the EA. The difficulty is that the EA seems to conflict with Aristotle's strongly held view that one desires the friend's good for his own sake. It suggests that while 'Why do what's good for you?' may be a non-question, the parallel question, i.e., 'Why do what's good for your friend?' cannot be.

One response is to suggest that Aristotle's conception of *eudaemonia* is such as to reconcile the two claims. *Eudaemonia* is not to be understood as restricted to a person's narrowly conceived interests; it is not, for instance, a hedonist's conception of happiness. Rather, it may include such things as the happiness of others. On such a construal, I can desire the good for my friend for his own sake while adhering to the EA because my friend's good is *part* of my own *eudaemonia*; whenever I act for my friend's sake I am *also* acting for my sake.[25]

While I do endorse this move, it is important to see why it must be made with caution. For it seems to threaten the psychological plausibility and motivational force of the EA. The claim that one does (and should) act for the sake of one's own *eudaemonia* loses much of its persuasive power when *eudaemonia* is construed not as something like the personal happiness in which an egoist would take a healthy interest but rather as a collection containing one's own (narrowly conceived) happiness, the (narrowly conceived) happiness of others, and possibly additional unrelated items. That is, while the conflict can be resolved by broadening one's reading of *eudaemonia* to include the *eudaemonia* of one's friends, if this leaves one's *eudaemonia* broader than oneself, the EA will be undercut.

The doctrine of the friend being another self resolves the difficulty by giving selfhood as broad a scope as *eudaemonia*. In the paradigm of the procreative relation, 'a parent is fond of his children because he regards them as something of himself' (1161b18f). In a way, the relation resembles that which one has to one's parts: '[A] person regards

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24 1102a3; 1140a27 is seen as supporting the claim that the *eudaemonia* in question is one's own.

25 This is, if I correctly understand him, Vlastos's view. (Personal communication and unpublished notes.)

what comes from him as his own, as the owner regards his tooth or hair or anything' (1161b23f) – and, 'what is our own is pleasant' (1169b33). The *eudaemonia* of one's friends is part of one's own because, and in the same way that, one's friends are parts of oneself.

One might be troubled by the fact that this reading seems to leave little room for what we might want to call genuine altruism. There is truth in this, but the responsibility for our discomfort is Aristotle's. Aristotle's explanations of friendship are uniformly self-oriented: since 'we are insofar as we are actualized,' loving one's own being involves loving the actualizations of one's own being (1168a5ff) – and these include one's friends.[26]

By way of a last word, perhaps I should point out that in attributing to Aristotle the account of friendship set forth in this paper I am – I hope not too uncharitably – ascribing to him opinions that I myself would not care to endorse. It seems to me that self-love is playing too great, and the wrong kind of, a role. As Robert Frost puts it in his poem, 'Hyla Brook': 'We love the things we love for what they are' – not for what we have made them.[27]

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26 This reconciliation of Aristotle's theory of friendship with his eudaemonism may help to resolve an ambiguity I have been leaving open. We said that the procreator has the same being as his creature; and this is likely to prompt the reader familiar with Aristotle to ask whether the being they share is species being or individual being, i.e., whether the procreator and his creature are the same in kind or the same in number. Our discussion suggests that the more strongly one reads eudaemonism as a form of psychological egoism, the more one will be motivated to adopt the latter construal. Diogenes Laertius ascribes to Aristotle the saying that friends are 'one soul inhabiting two bodies' (V.20); on such a reading, this would literally be Aristotle's view.

27 It has occurred to me that Frost may have had Aristotle's views of friendship in mind when he wrote this poem. Frost would have shared the exegetical orthodoxy of his time in taking Aristotle to hold that things of a kind have their form in common but are individuated by their matter. Virtues are specified by the form: if brooks had forms, a brook's virtues might include being full of clear, flowing water. Frost seems to be saying that he loves Hyla Brook not for its brookish virtues (which it possesses scantily, if at all) but for the matter that makes it differ from other brooks: its dried mud and dead leaves. What we love is not the form, and the virtues specified by it, but the individuating matter (*hule*). (The pun on hyla and *hule* has been thought of by others – e.g., Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1979], 40, 45, 64f – and it is not extravagant to suppose that it may have occurred to Frost as well.)