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ARISTOTLE ON THE REAL OBJECT OF *PHILIA* AND *ARETĒ*

INTRODUCTION

In the opening remark of *Nicomachean Ethics* [NE] VIII 1 Aristotle notices that the next step would be a discussion of *philia*, since it is “a certain *aretē*¹ or [it] goes along with *aretē*”.² This article is an attempt to determine the real object of *philia* ‘friendship’³ and *aretē* are related from Aristotle’s point of view.

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¹ It should be noted that the main Greek terms are virtually untranslatable into modern languages. *Eudaimonia*, *psuchē*, or just *aretē* are examples of such terms. This is due to the fact that they occur in a different and temporally distant cultural reality. The practice of using a one-word equivalent for the Greek notion is essentially an obstacle to becoming acquainted with semantic variability of it in different contexts (e.g., ADKINS 1972, 4). For this reason, I do not translate the term *aretē* and transliterate it or add an attribute to it (see note 14 below). I must add, however, that it has specific meanings in various points of this article: *aretē* as any kind of excellence in 1.1; *aretē* of character as habitual disposition of character (*aretē ēthikē*) in 1.3.1; *aretē* of character in the full sense (*kuria aretē ēthikē*) or authoritative *aretē* of character (*kuria aretē ēthikē*) in 1.3.1; intellectual *aretē* as the competence of reason in the practical function, namely practical wisdom (*phronēsis*), or as the competence of reason in the theoretical function, namely theoretical wisdom (*sophia*) in 1.3.2 and 1.3.3; human *aretē* as the bond of the *aretē* of character in the full sense and the practical wisdom or even the theoretical wisdom in 1.3.3.

² ἔστι γὰρ ἀρετὴ τις ἣ μετ’ ἀρετῆς, NE VIII 1 1155a 1–2. Unless otherwise indicated translations are my own.

³ It is worth adding here that *philia* is also a Greek term that is virtually untranslatable into modern languages. I can, then, be accused of inconsistency, since I render *philia* as ‘friendship’ (see note 1 above). It should be emphasized that in NE VIII 1 Aristotle begins the study of *philia*. But it is rather obvious that at this stage of his considerations he primarily refers to *philia* as a symmetrical interpersonal relationship in which both sides are in some respects attractive to each other, showing mutual interest. However, it does not follow I stand in the position that ‘friendship’ is a one-word equivalent of *philia*. See note 62 below.

The issues of friendship and *aretē* occupy an important place in Aristotle's practical philosophy. The study of them is intrinsic from the point of view of formulating an answer to the question: What kind of life is the most successful for the human being? In fact, friendship and *aretē* are indispensable for the achievement of the highest human good, that is, *eudaimonia*.

The close link between friendship and *eudaimonia* can be found in many analyses in Aristotle's ethical treatises.⁴ Yet, the solution of *aporia* "will *eudaimōn* need friends or not?" (*NE* IX 9 1169b 3–4) could be regarded as symptomatic. The difficulty may be, at first glance, only apparent. When someone is already *eudaimōn*, it seems that he leads the most appropriate and best life for the human being. After all, *eudaimonia* possesses the required qualifications for the highest human good: (a) it is the final purpose of human endeavors (the criterion from teleological superiority; *NE* I 7 1097a 25–1097b 7); (b) it is good that makes life choiceworthy and deficient in nothing (criterion from self-sufficiency; *NE* I 7 1097b 6–16). Thus, if the *eudaimōn* has friends, he will need them in the future. Losing them will be his personal failure and his life will lack something. If, however, the *eudaimōn* has no friends, then their absence in the future will not negatively affect his *eudaimonic* life.

Nevertheless, the difficulty is the real problem and Aristotle resolves it in his own way. He argues that the *eudaimōn* will need friends, but only those whose personality proves that they are people of excellence (*spoudaioi*). However, he does not hold that the lack of a *spoudaios* friend means there is no possibility of leading *eudaimonic* life, but rather that *eudaimōn* cannot achieve certain goods without the friend who is the person of excellence.⁵ This can be observed, for example, on the basis of Aristotle's statement that the human being is political and disposed by nature to live with others (*NE* IX 9 1168b 18–19). Friendship is a kind of community that ensures optimal conditions for actualization of these potentialities. It is true, however, that the "political dimension of the human being" and "sharing life with another" can be actualized in optional relationships. Nevertheless, it is possible to fulfill them in a perfect manner in the company of the friend who is a person of excellence. For friendship of people of excellence makes it possible to

⁴ Aristotle devotes books VIII and IX of *NE* to friendship. This corresponds roughly to the fifth part of this work, and also to similarly extensive book VII of *Eudemian Ethics* [*EE*]. I do not mention *Magna Moralia*, because there are disputes as to its authenticity. Some commentators claim that *Magna Moralia* is a work of Aristotle's (e.g., SCHLEIERMACHER 1835; DÜRING 1966, 438–44), but others argue otherwise (e.g., JAEGER 1923; KENNY 1978, 215–39).

⁵ See, e.g., Pakaluk's notes in ARISTOTLE 1998, 208–15.

take care of another for their own sake, namely out of concern for them and not merely out of concern for themselves. Therefore, every person treats and is treated disinterestedly or without a vested interest in the case of friendship of persons of excellence;⁶ in other words, everyone wishes and does good things to their friend for their sake and not merely for themselves. So, it becomes more understandable that friendship is the most necessary for living (*NE* VIII 1 1155a 2–3). The point is not that it is impossible to live without friends, just as it is impossible to live without water or food,⁷ but rather that it is impossible to accomplish *eudaimonic* activities without friends, at least some kind of them.⁸

The close link between *aretē* and *eudaimonia* can also be found in many places of Aristotle's ethical treatises. But the definition of *eudaimonia*, formulated in his function argument (*NE* I 7 1097b 21–1098a 17),⁹ clearly shows that there is a significant association between *aretē* and *eudaimonia*. The argument is preceded by some preliminary findings. In *NE* I 1–2 Aristotle introduces the concept of “the highest human good” and formulates the problem: “What is it?” In *NE* I 4 he states that both the many (*hoi polloi*) and more educated people (*hoi charientes*) say that it is *eudaimonia*. In *NE* I 5 he evokes various opinions (*endoxa*) about *eudaimonia* and *eudaimonic* life. But the quoted opinions are discordant, since some identify *eudaimonia* with pleasure and a hedonistic life, others equate it with a life focused on political activity, but others still identify it with a life concentrated on theoretical activity. Thus, the issue of the *content* of *eudaimonia* becomes a “node for unraveling” (*Metaphysics* III 1 995a29–30) and Aristotle initially resolves it in *NE* I 7. First, he formulates the criteria for the highest human good and underlines the fact that these criteria are fulfilled by *eudaimonia*¹⁰ (*NE* I 7 1097a 14–1097b 21). Second, he formulates a function argument and sketches out the answer to the question what *eudaimonia* is¹¹ (*NE* I 7 1097b 21–1098a 18). He concludes that *eudaimonia* is the activity of *psuchē* (or

⁶ On the matter of the understanding of “disinterested” in the case of Aristotle's friendship see, e.g., COOPER 1977, 621n7.

⁷ Some commentators believe that statement “[friendship] is the most necessary for living” means friendship is a necessary means for life (e.g., Percival in ARISTOTLE 1940, 1).

⁸ See 2.1 below.

⁹ On Aristotle's function argument see, e.g., LAWRENCE 2001, 445–75.

¹⁰ On the matter of the criteria for the highest human good see, e.g., PAKALUK 2005, 67–74.

¹¹ As Aristotle stresses, to say that *eudaimonia* is the highest good, it is likely to say something commonly accepted. However, it will be better to say what *eudaimonia* is if the human function is captured (see *NE* I 7 1097b21–25).

“in” *psuchē*) in accordance with the *aretē* proper to it.¹² It is for this reason, among others, that he votes in favor of adopting the link between *aretē* and *eudaimonia*. It must also be noted that he does not revoke this initial finding at any stage of his further ethical research.

Thus, both friendship and *aretē* are closely related to *eudaimonia* and *eudaimonic* life. Therefore it is not surprising that Aristotle links friendship to *aretē* in the opening remark of *NE VIII 1*.¹³ This initial declaration, however, raises a problem. It is not the point that there is a connection between friendship and *aretē* and, therefore, one has to decide whether friendship is *aretē* or just associated with it. The difficulty so understood seems to be apparent, because friendship is the relation and *aretē* is the quality.¹⁴ Thus each of them belongs to a different kind of category and the first cannot be the latter.¹⁵ That is why it is the reason to omit the first part of the difficulty and concentrate on the study the statement “[*philia*] goes along with *aretē*”. So, in order to explain what the relation between friendship and *aretē* is it must be examined what *aretē* means or can mean in the above statement.

There is, however, another difficulty, because Aristotle’s typology of friendship seems to suggest that not every kind of friendship is connected with *aretē*. But when he discusses political or civic friendship (*politikē philia*) as a variety of utilitarian friendship (*dia to chrēsimon*), he distinguishes *ēthikē* friendship,¹⁶ which seems to suggest that *ēthikē politikē philia*

¹² See *NE I 7 1098a 16*. It must be underlined that Aristotle also adds “and if there are several *aretai*, in accordance with *the best and [or “that is”] the most complete [or “the most perfect”]*” (ibid. 1098a 17). There is the problem of what *tēn aristēn kai teleiōtatēn aretēn* (ibid.) means and, as a consequence, what *eudaimonia* is. For this problem see, e.g., ACKRIL 1974, 3–23; HEINAMAN 1988, 35–41; and LAWRENCE 1993, 1–34. The first is a biased, “inclusivist” interpretation, the second “exclusivist”, and the third allows a compromise. See also 1.3.3 below.

¹³ Some commentators connect the wording “[*philia*] *estin aretē tis ē met’aretēs*” with another phrase in the *NE VIII 1* that friendship “*ou monon d’anankaion estin alla kai kalon*” (1155a 28–29). Burnet (1900, 346) affirms that “to say *φιλία* is an *ἀρετή* is equivalent to saying it is *καλόν*”. Percival (1940, 4) asserts that friendship “is also a noble thing—*nobility being the consummation of virtue*”. Tricot (in ARISTOTLE 1959b, 382n1) claims that “l’amitié est une vertu, autrement dit un *bien* (*καλόν*), ou, plus précisément, ne peut exister qu’entre gens vertueux (*μετ’ ἀρετῆς*)”. Irwin (in ARISTOTLE 1999, 273, note §5) notices that “‘fine’ repeats the claim in ‘a virtue, or involves virtue’.” Broadie (in ARISTOTLE 2002, 407) suggests that the *fine* (*kalon*) “applies to friendship because friendship in the primary sense is linked with excellence”.

¹⁴ See, however, note 61 below, point b).

¹⁵ However, some commentators admit the possibility that friendship can be *aretē tis*. See, e.g., notes by Grant in ARISTOTLE 1885, 252n5; Gauthier and Jolif in ARISTOTLE 1958, vol. 1, 52* Dirlmeier in ARISTOTLE 1960, 509–10n170,2; Apostle in ARISTOTLE 1975, 318n1; and MACINTYRE 1985, 155 and 180.

¹⁶ See *EE VII 10*; *NE VIII 13*.

should have to do with *aretē*, i.e., *aretē ēthikē*. So, it is also needed to depict the typology of friendship and specify the features of its particular kinds.

1. WHAT IS *ARETĒ*?

1.1 CONNECTION BETWEEN *ARETĒ* AND FUNCTION

Generally speaking, *aretē* is a relative term meaning “being good at something”.¹⁷ In Aristotle’s time *aretē* was used not only to describe the character and bodily traits, but also with regard to various professions, natural beings—e.g., breeding plants, domestic animals and their parts—products of different arts (*technai*)—e.g., tools, musical instruments, articles of clothing. Thus, there was the *aretē* of the politician, shoemaker, but also the horse, sheep, hand, eye or knife, flute, shoe. From this point of view, *aretē* is any kind of excellence, qualification or skill. Aristotle observes that “every *aretē* both brings that of which it is *aretē* into a good condition and makes it perform its function well” (*NE* II 6 1106a 15–17).¹⁸

Thus, the notion of *aretē* is closely related to the notion of function (see also *NE* VI 1 1139a16–17). There is no *aretē* when there is no function. But there is no perfect fulfillment of the function without the *aretē* proper to it. Strictly speaking, every functional thing is brought to completion well (*eu apoteleitai*; I 7 1098a 15) through the *aretē* proper to its function.¹⁹ Such

¹⁷ E.g., Guthrie (1967, 8) claims: “*Aretē* meant being good at something, and it was natural for a Greek on hearing the word to ask: ‘The *aretē* of what or whom?’ It is commonly followed by a dependent genitive or a limiting adjective.... *Aretē* then is a word which by itself is incomplete.”

¹⁸ Which is why *aretē* can be interpreted in a perfectionist spirit. It seems that a certain thing will be a good one of its kind, if it fulfills its function in a perfect manner. But “being a good thing of its kind” also seems to mean “something good” for that thing (see, e.g., AQUINAS 1949, lib. 1, lectio 10, n. 119). It is the rule FDP that is the first step in the function argument. The rule underlines the fact that “good” [D] and (or “that is”) “perfection” [P] reside in the function [F] in the case of every thing that has a proper function (*NE* I 7 1097b 26–27). Although Aristotle does not explain the rule, one can assume that his point is that “good” and (or “that is”) “perfection” of a given thing is founded on its functioning well (*NE* I 7 1098a 15). It seems, however, that the rule FDP is too general, since “being a good thing” does not have to be good for that thing. This is noticed, for example, by Whiting (1988, 35–36) who stresses that the connection between “being a good thing” and “being good for that thing” makes sense in the case of living beings.

¹⁹ In *Metaphysics* V 16 Aristotle mentions various ways of denoting the term *teleion* and links one of them to *aretē*. He notes that a thing is *teleion* ‘perfect’ when it lacks nothing in respect of the form of its peculiar *aretē* (1021b 16–17). Thus, we can say that the eye, for example, is *perfect* when it lacks nothing in respect of the form of its specific *aretē*. In consequence, such *aretē*

things realize their form or achieve their *target state* on condition that they perform their proper function in a perfect manner, that is, in accordance with *aretē* proper to it.²⁰

If, therefore, the human being has the proper function, and Aristotle does not deny it,²¹ then the highest human good relies on the realization of the human function in a perfect manner. However, the realization of the human function in a perfect manner means that the human being performs it in accordance with the *aretē* proper to it. So to give an answer to the question “What is the *aretē* proper to the human being?” we must know the answer to the question ‘What is the proper function of the human being?’

1.2 THE HUMAN FUNCTION

As we have seen, Aristotle thinks the human being has a function, and by determining what this function is we will be able to have our account of the proper *aretē* of the human being. Aristotle begins to look for this function from qualifying what is distinctive (*idion*) of people. He points out that a life involving reason is distinctive of them and concludes that a certain active life or a practical sort of life of what possesses reason (*NE* I 7 1098a 3–4) is

makes the eye perfect, because it keeps the eye in good form and makes it function perfectly well. Similarly, the *aretē* of the horse in warfare makes it perfect, because such an animal is inherently good and performs very well when running, carrying its rider, or standing its ground before enemies (*NE* II 6 1106a 17–21).

²⁰ The prior functional substances are really what they are when they are able to perform their functions. If, however, they lose this capacity, they lose their essence, for everything is defined by its function (see, e.g., *Meteorology* IV 12 390a 10–14). In other words, if a thing is incapable of performing its function, it no longer exists, except homonymically. If the eye cannot see at all, it is merely, so to speak, a lump of flesh (see, e.g., *Metaphysics* VII 10 1035b 23–25). If a *military* horse is useless in military terms, it becomes a *quasi military* horse.

²¹ “Just as the eye, hand, foot, and in general each part of the body has a function, so also might one indicate a certain function of the human being apart from all these?” (*NE* I 7 1097b 30–33). It is a rhetorical question, because Aristotle does not answer it and goes on immediately to examine what is the human function. This does not mean, however, that the statements before the question do not contain arguments that the human being has a certain function (e.g., PAKALUK 2005, 75–77). It would be strange, even absurd, if we attributed functions to the parts of the human body—to the secondary elements in relation to the whole—and refused the function to the human being, that is, to the whole that is composed of the secondary elements. In addition, the secondary elements ought to be defined with reference to the whole. For example, it is not enough to say that the human eye is an organ that sees. It still must be explained what it sees. Thus, it must be added that the human eye sees so that ‘...’ and “we would place in the blank space what the function of the organism is in which this capacity to see is located” (*ibid.*, 76). It can be said, for example, that the human eye sees so that the human being can better perceive the world.

the function of the human being. But it is *psuchē*—namely this aspect of the human being that is constituted by various functions of living things—that possesses reason. Thus, it is an activity of *psuchē* performed in conjunction with reason that would be a certain active life of what possesses reason. However, the rational dimension of *psuchē* is divided into “listening” and “thinking”, and the last is divided into “calculative” (*logistikon*) and “scientific” (*epistēmonikon*). So, it can be assumed that the proper function of the human being is the intellectual activity in a wide sense, namely the intellectual activity of calculative nature and intellectual activity of scientific nature.

However, the intellectual activity of calculative nature differs essentially from intellectual activity of scientific nature, for only the latter aims at no goal besides itself and, therefore, nothing accrues from it besides the activity itself. Thus, this activity seems to be the best and most pleasant for people and that is why it appears to constitute the complete *eudaimonia* of them (*NE* X 7 1177b 24–25). Nevertheless, Aristotle points out, that such a life is higher than the human being (*kreittōn ē kat’anthrōpon*) and therefore people who live in this way do so not because they are human, but because they are divine (*NE* X 7, 1177b 26–28), hence a problem with distinctiveness of this activity or some kind of it, namely the contemplative one.²²

The intellectual activity of calculative nature is another kind of activity of reason, because it is a sort of intellectual work that relies on investigating and finally discovering the way that guarantees the accomplishment of the designated goal. This being the case, one can assume that it would be possible to extend the range of distinctive activities of the human being and add some thoughtful practical action, namely the realization of what has been thoughtfully undertaken.²³ Thus, it is rather calculative or deliberative think-

²² Some commentators think that “a practical sort of life of what possesses reason” must be limited to practical actions (*praxeis*) performed from *proairesis* (e.g., JOACHIM 1955, 50–51), because such activities are distinctive of the human being only. Indeed, they are inseparable from rationality, discourse and communication, or features characterizing life in *polis*. Others believe that “a practical sort of life of what possesses reason” includes not only practical actions, but also theoretical activities (see, e.g., BURNET 1900, 79). It is significant that Aristotle makes it clear that the theoretical activity is the highest form of *praxis* (see, e.g., *Politics* VII 14 1333a 25–1333b 5).

²³ Aristotle notes that “the human being’s function we posit as being a certain life, and it is an activity of *psuchē* and [or “that is to say”] practical actions that go along with reason [or even “with calculation or reasoning”]” (ἀνθρώπου δὲ τίθεμεν ἔργον ζωὴν τινα, ταύτην δὲ ψυχῆς ἐνέργειαν καὶ πράξεις μετὰ λόγου, *NE* I 7 1098a 12–14); see also: “it is an activity of *psuchē* in accordance with reason [or even “a calculative activity in *psuchē*”] or an activity not without reason [or even “an activity not without calculation or reasoning”] that is the function of a human being” (ἔστιν ἔργον ἀνθρώπου ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια κατὰ λόγον ἢ μὴ ἄνευ λόγου, *ibid.*, 1098a 7–8). However, it must be added that Aristotle uses the term *logismos* for “calculation” (e.g., *NE* VI 7 1141b 14).

ing and thoughtful practical action that are distinctive of human beings, for only human beings act in this way. Although, this does not rule out their possibility of living a contemplative life. Indeed, Aristotle wants us to understand that as divine contemplative activity is accessible to the human being we ought to imitate divine life in our life, insofar as that is possible (*NE* X 7 1177b 31–33).²⁴

Since all functions are correlated with *aretai* proper to them and the usage of *aretē* proper to the function implies a perfect fulfillment of that function, it is the same with the human function. And since every functional thing works well when it performs the proper function in a perfect manner, it is the same with the human being. It follows that people can achieve their own *target state* on condition that they attain a level of self-actualization that will enable them to fulfill the human function in accordance with *aretē* proper to it.²⁵ If so, it is time to determine *aretē* proper to the human function.

1.3 THE HUMAN *ARETĒ*

Aristotle distinguishes two kinds of *aretai* that are significant from the point of view of the final good of the human being. They are *aretai ēthikai* and *aretai dianoētikai*. The first *aretai* are associated with character and they can be called “of character” one. The second *aretai* are associated with thinking and they can be called “intellectual” one. Among the latter, there is

²⁴ Broadie (in ARISTOTLE 2002, 443) emphasizes that “the completely happy *human* life is *higher than human*, because the human being is not just human, since the best element in us is similar to the divine.” Aristotle shows that just as every whole consisting of parts is identical with the most authoritative element in it, so it is with human beings (*NE* IX 8 1168b 31–1169a 1), and it is reason (*nous*, 1168a 17) in their case. Some commentators are troubled that Aristotle’s philosopher could be a wicked person. See, e.g., COOPER (1986, 164–65): “Aristotle conspicuously avoids saying that his theorizer will *be* a virtuous person.... He will not possess the social virtues, or any other virtue, because he will lack the kind of commitment to this kind of activity that is an essential characteristic of the virtuous person.... The ‘intellectual life’ discussed in the tenth book does not, then, involve the possession of any of the moral virtue.” But see, e.g., Boethius, the translator and commentator of some works of Aristotle, among others, who has no such a problem and clearly suggests in *De summo bono* that the theoretical life in accordance with *aretē* appropriate to it goes along with practical life in accordance with the *aretē* appropriate to it: “Et quia summum bonum quod est homini possibile est eius beatitudo, sequitur quod cognitio veri et operatio boni et delectatio in utroque sit beatitudo humana...; in his enim duobus consistit vita beata.” See also note 60 below.

²⁵ If human beings ought to imitate divine life in our life, as far as possible, it will be not only the *aretē* appropriate for thoughtful practical action and intellectual activity of a calculative nature, but also the *aretē* appropriate for intellectual activity of a theoretical nature.

practical wisdom (*phronēsis*) that is important for the achievement of the final good for human beings and even theoretical wisdom (*sophia*), if they can also live a divine contemplative life.²⁶

1.3.1 *Aretē ēthikē*

In *EE* Aristotle explains that the *aretē ēthikē* is the state of character connected with *proairesis* (*ēthikē hexis proairetikē*) in the sense that it is *skillfulness* that allows one to attain the mean in things that are either pleasant or painful, in respect of which it is possible to determine the person's character, depending on what brings them joy or pain.²⁷ In *NE* Aristotle also insists that *aretē ēthikē*²⁸ is the state of character having to do with *proairesis* and links it to the mean. In *NE*, however, the definition of the *aretē* of character is more complete compared to the one in *EE*, because Aristotle stresses that the mean has to be determined in the way in which the practically wise person would determine it.²⁹ So, the definition of it refers to the practical aspect of reason, since it involves a practically wise person.

Now, we are in a position to comment on the two elements of Aristotle's elucidation of the *aretē* of character, namely the wording *ēthikē hexis proairetikē* and the link between the *aretē* of character and the mean. Aristotle has in mind various aspects of this link. On the one hand, the mean indicates that the *aretē* of character lies between two *kakiai* of character that are opposite to each other and opposite to it. On the other hand, the mean underlines the fact that the action performed in accordance with the *aretē* of character is done in the best possible manner, because it *hits the target* in

²⁶ Since, however, the human being is a *terain* of the irremovable play between potentiality and actuality (*dunamis-energeia*), it should be added that leading *eudaimonic* life—performing the thoughtful practical action and intellectual activity of a calculative nature or even intellectual activity of a scientific nature in accordance with *aretē* appropriate for them—becomes a kind of fulfillment, though not in the sense of irrevocable *state*.

²⁷ τὴν ἀρετὴν εἶναι τὴν ἠθικὴν ἕξιν προαιρετικὴν μεσότητος τῆς πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἐν ἡδέσει καὶ λυπηροῖς, καθ' ὅσα ποῖός τις λέγεται τὸ ἦθος, ἢ χαίρων ἢ λυπούμενος, *EE* II 10 1227b 8–10.

²⁸ Although in *NE* II 6 1106b 36–1107a 2 Aristotle does not use *ēthikē* to specify *aretē* and *hexis proairetikē*, it is clear that he wants to formulate the definition of the *aretē* of character. The main purpose of the second book is to explain what the *aretē* of character is. In addition, in 1106b 16 Aristotle states that he is interested in the *aretē* of character (*legō de tēn ēthikēn*).

²⁹ ἡ ἀρετὴ ἕξις προαιρετικὴ, ἐν μεσότητι οὖσα τῇ πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ὠρισμένη λόγῳ καὶ ᾧ ἂν ὁ φρόνιμος ὀρίσειεν, *NE* II 6 1106a 36–1107b 2.

any given circumstance.³⁰ That is why Aristotle states that the *aretē* of character makes the human being resemble an archer who aims an arrow of action or an appropriate reaction and does not miss the target (*NE* II 6 1106b 28–34). But we have already mentioned that the mean has to be determined in the way in which the practically wise person would determine it. Thus, the mean, and therefore, the *aretē* of character remain in close correlation with practical wisdom. But what precisely do *hexis* and *proairetikē* mean in the phrase *ēthikē hexis proairetikē*?

The first element of the phrase, *hexis*,³¹ indicates that the *aretē* of character is possessed, stable and ensures constant orientation (e.g., PAKALUK 2005, 107). The first feature draws our attention to its possessiveness; the third stresses that its possessor is predictable in actions and also in reactions to various stimuli;³² the second underlines the fact that it is an acquired and well-established quality of character. As Aristotle notices, “since a habit is the source of the *aretē* of character (*hē de ēthikē ex ethous*), hence it also received the name by slightly changing of the term ‘habit’ (*mikron parekklinon apo tou ethous*)” (*NE* II 1 1103a 17–18). That is why Aristotle uses twofold aspects of ‘habit’: (a) habit as it is being formed by repeating certain activities or behaviors; (b) habit that has already been acquired as a result of repeating certain activities or behaviours (RICOEUR 1990, 146). Thus, the *aretē* of character is a habitual disposition rather than congenial one.

The term *proairetikē* refers to *proairesis*, which is desire determined by deliberation (*bouleutikē orexis*) (e.g., *NE* III 3 1113a 10–11) of something that is up to us. Thus, *proairetikē* underlines, first of all, the fact that the *aretē ēthikē* is a state of character with respect to desire on the one hand and reasoning or calculation on the other. But *proairesis* is also connected with action, namely its activity *does really overlap* with action, at least in the sense that it triggers the action. Ultimately, Aristotle underlines the point that “*proairesis* is the origin of action—that from which the motion be-

³⁰ “The *aretē* of character is the mean between two *kakiai* of character, the one related to excess and the other related to deficiency. Furthermore, it is also the mean, because some *kakiai* fall short of but others exceed what is needed both in affective reactions and actions. However, the *aretē* of character both achieves and takes what is needed in affective reactions and actions. Hence, the *aretē* of character, with respect to its being and definition that specifies what it is, is the mean (*kata men tēn ousian kai ton logon ton ti ēn einai*), but with respect to what is the best and to the perfection, it is extremity (*kata de to ariston kai to eu akrotēs*)”; *NE* II 61107a 2–8.

³¹ The term *hexis* comes from the verb *echein*, which is used transitively or intransitively, and it denotes a quality that is possessed by a given thing and can be used in a broadly understood action.

³² An action and a response to various stimuli is predictable not only in human beings who act or react, but also in those who interact with them daily.

gins”.³³ Hence, *proairetikē* stresses that the *aretē* of character allows to: a) set the goal; b) carry out unimpeded deliberation—unblocked by appetitive and affective factors—and to find the means needed to achieve the designated goal; c) make a thoughtful undertaking or preferential choice, where both assume deliberation about how to achieve the designated goal, but the latter requires deliberation on alternative courses of action, whereas the former does not; d) make a decision about proceeding with thoughtful undertaking or preferentially chosen course of action; e) proceed with the realization of the determined course of action, that is, to take on what has been determined by deliberation as chronologically first in the sequence of steps that lead to the achievement of the designated goal (SMOLAK 2018, 102–6). And we could add that *proairetikē* points out that the *aretē* of character is also responsible for continuing the action that leads to the achievement of the designated goal, which means the agent aims to achieve the set goal to the best of their ability.

So, we can say that the *aretē* of character is the virtue of character that is formed by habit and, therefore, it is rather the acquired state of being able to perform a *proairetic* action, namely to make the thoughtful undertaking or preferential choice and, in consequence, to decide to and continue the action that hits the mean.³⁴ That is why the *aretē* of character contributes to having a well-oriented character, namely the one that testifies that its possessor loves what is fine (*kalon*) and feels aversion to what is disgraceful (*aischron*).

I pointed out above that Aristotle takes notice of the intellectual element in the definition of the *aretē* of character, since he refers to the practical as-

³³ πράξεως μὲν οὖν ἀρχὴ προαίρεσις—ὄθεν ἡ κίνησις, *NE* VI 2 1139a31–32.

³⁴ It must be added that many actions in accordance with the characterological *aretē* are not preceded by a process of deliberation and, therefore, the agent will not always need to deliberate before his action. As Bostock (2000, 39) says, “very often he [the virtuous man] will just ‘see’ it [i.e., what would be the virtuous way to act in his present situation], and act at once”. Therefore, *proairetic* action need not meet conditions (b), (c) and (d) mentioned above: “to carry out unimpeded deliberation and to find the means needed to the achievement of the designated goal”, “to make a thoughtful undertaking or preferential choice”, and “to make the decision about proceeding with a thoughtful undertaking or preferentially chosen course of action”. In consequence, there are many *proairetic* responses in which condition (e) can be expressed in the following way: “to proceed with the realization of action that is involved in a present situation”. Nevertheless, it should be noted that every *proairetic* action is deliberated in this sense that “if the agent acted on *reasons*, it is *as if* he had deliberated in accordance with a practical argument that spells out those reasons” (SEGVIC 2008, 148). See also BROADIE (1991, 79): “If, as often happens, we know at once and so immediately that the knowledge itself is already the response, this unhesitant expression of our moral nature must be at least as perfect (as an expression of *moral* nature) as if it had been reached through deliberation.”

pect of the reason, namely the calculation of the practically wise person. The definition, however, is so general that it does not clarify whose calculation is involved. It is only said that the mean is to be determined “as a practically wise person would determine it” (*NE* II 6 1107a 1–2). Furthermore, Aristotle suggests that it is necessary to re-examine what the *aretē* of character is in the last chapter of the book devoted to the study of *aretai dianoētikai* (the opening remark of *NE* VI 13). For this reason we have the suspicion that the definition of the *aretē ēthikē* in *NE* II 6 has to be supplemented or clarified.

It needs to be highlighted that Aristotle allows gradation in the development of the *aretē* of character and shows to the listeners that it is brought to completion when it changes its level from the *aretē* of character in the form of learned habit to the *aretē* of character in the full sense (*kuriōs aretē ēthikē*) or authoritative *aretē* of character (*kuria aretē ēthikē*). But this happens when the possessor of the *aretē* of character is also a practically wise person. Indeed, the *aretē* of character has not yet achieved its *target point* when its possessor listens, accepts and even follows recommendations of practical reason that nevertheless come “from a different place”. After all, human beings can *hit* the mean, because they follow the instructions provided by a practically wise person. Such a *target point* is reached only when human beings are internally harmonized to the extent that they wish and achieve good things for themselves in accordance with guidelines whose source is their own practical wisdom. This is confirmed by Aristotle’s thesis about coexistence of the *aretē* of character and the practical wisdom.³⁵

It might seem that the thesis argues there is no *aretē* of character without the practical wisdom, nor the practical wisdom without the *aretē* of character. However, this interpretation shows that Aristotle is to be accused of perpetuating a vicious circle (e.g., ZELLER and MONDOLFO 1969, 72). Nevertheless, this objection can be withdrawn, because Aristotle’s thesis is more sophisticated. The point is not that there is no *aretē* of character without the practical wisdom, nor the practical wisdom without the *aretē* of character, but rather that “it is not possible to be good in the full sense without the practical wisdom, nor to be the practically wise person without the *aretē* of character.”³⁶ But someone who is good in the full sense (*kuriōs agathos*) is the possessor of the *aretē* of character in the full sense (*kuriōs aretē ēthikē*)

³⁵ On the relationship between the *aretē* of character and practical wisdom see, e.g., SMITH (1996, 56–74).

³⁶ οὐχ οἷόν τε ἀγαθὸν εἶναι κυρίως ἄνευ φρονήσεως, οὐδὲ φρόνιμον ἄνευ τῆς ἠθικῆς ἀρετῆς, *NE* VI 13 1144b 31–32.

or authoritative *aretē* of character (*kuria aretē ēthikē*). It can also be reasonably assumed that someone must be prepared to become a practically wise person, and ought rather to have the *aretē* of character, but in the form of learned habit that was acquired as a result of good education. So, we can replace the wording “to be good in the full sense” in the first part of the statement with “to have the *aretē* of character in the full sense” or “to have the authoritative *aretē* of character”, and “the *aretē* of character” in the second part of the statement with the phrase “the *aretē* of character in the form of learned habit”. In consequence, the thesis can be divided into two inter-related parts of the statement and each will include the wording *aretē ēthikē* with a different clarification.

The second part of the statement is equivalent to the following formula: “it is not possible to be the practically wise person without the *aretē* of character” with clarification “in the form of learned habit”. It does not follow, however, that the *aretē* of character with such a clarification is fully developed. Although it must be admitted that human beings that have it may listen and accept instructions of another person and take the mean as a result of the advice they have received.³⁷ Thus, the second part of the statement emphasizes that the *aretē* of character in the form of learned habit is a necessary condition for becoming the practically wise person. But it does not mean that the possessor of the *aretē* of character with such a clarification is already the practically wise person.

The first part of the statement is the equivalent of the following formula: “there is no *aretē* of character in the full sense (or authoritative *aretē* of character) without the practical wisdom”. Thus, it stresses that the *aretē* of character achieves its *telos* or obtains its full form, as far as its possessor is a

³⁷ It should be added that human beings having the *aretē* of character in the form of learned habit can act based on their own calculation and *hit* the mean. Therefore, they can accurately pick out the means for the designated goal. But they do it primarily in typical situations. They can also perform the learned action with success as long as its conditions do not change significantly. But they may not know what to do when they have just faced a new situation. It can be assumed that such a situation requires the advice of a practically wise person. Besides, constant readiness is needed to revise the thoughtful undertaking with respect to new data in the case of the changing conditions of action. But the *aretē* of character in the form of learned habit does not necessarily ensure it. Strictly speaking, such *aretē* is not a sufficient guarantee to deal with the challenges of problematic situations effectively. It does not have to be either a sufficient safeguard against action errors if the conditions of action diverge radically from the ones assumed. Also, those who have been taught, for example, to act bravely do not need to know what is the final end for human life. That is why Aristotle posits in *EE* VIII 3 1248b 37–40 that Spartans have a certain civic state (*tis hexis politikē*) and think that one ought to have *aretē* because it pays off. See also note 45 below.

practically wise person.³⁸ This is because the fine (*to kalon*) is the motive for action in the case of a practically wise person, and simultaneously the *aretē* of character in the full sense is directed towards the creation of the fine.³⁹

³⁸ As Aristotle states “all [*aretai*] will be present, when the one [*aretē*], the practical wisdom, is present” (*NE VI 13 1145a 1–2*). The context indicates that *aretai* primarily means *aretai* of character. But it may be posited that Aristotle does not rule out that the intellectual *aretē*, such as *sophia*, can also be present and be one of the *aretai* mentioned in 1145a 2.

³⁹ The thesis about the coexistence of the *aretē* of character and the practical wisdom remains in close relationship with the thesis about the concomitance of the *aretai* of character. Aristotle attempts to justify the latter in *NE VI 13 1144b32–1145a2*. The thesis underlines the fact that the possession of one *aretē* of character implies having all *aretai* of character or those that are essential from the perspective of *eudaimonic* life (on the unity of the *aretai* of character see, e.g., PRICE 2011, 134–145). The thesis may seem doubtful, because experience teaches us that somebody can have one *aretē* of character without having another. One can fight bravely in battle and yet be licentious, for this instance. Nevertheless, the thesis makes sense if we replace the wording “*aretē* of character” with phrases “*aretē* of character in the full sense” or “authoritative *aretē* of character”. It is understandable that the human being who is good in the full sense of the word can and will behave in keeping with the mean in all or in most cases. That is why they are good in the full sense or good unqualifiedly (*haplōs agathos*, *NE VI 13 1145a 1*). Thus, their character must be underpinned by *aretai* of character that are fully developed—in other words, by *aretai* of character that lack nothing in respect of their forms. As Aristotle notices, it cannot happen in the case of those *aretai* in reference to which someone is said to be good unqualifiedly to have one *aretē* while not having another (*NE VI 13 1144b 36–1145a 1*). Thus, the thesis does not have to apply to the *aretai* of character in the form of learned habit and it makes us think it rather concerns the *aretai* of character in the full sense or authoritative *aretai* of character. The *aretē* of character in the form of learned habit does not ensure good behavior regardless of circumstances. It may happen, for example, that such *aretē* leads to the attainment of a goal which, however, does not harmonize with the final end of human life. This is confirmed, *inter alia*, by the difference between *agathos* ‘good’ and *kalos kagathos* (literally ‘fine-and-good’) that Aristotle outlines in *EE VIII 3* (on the difference between *agathos* and *kalos kagathos* see, e.g., WHITING 1996, 162–99). Generally speaking, *agathoi* have the *aretai* of character (hence, they are *agathoi*), but they treat them instrumentally. They believe that natural goods, in particular, fame and honors, can be achieved by the means of actions that are carried out in accordance with *aretai* of character. But they also regard the acquisition of these goods as the final end of human life. Thus, their actions are fine, but only accidentally (*EE VIII 3 1249a15–16*). They are fine because they are realized in accordance with *aretai* of character; they are accidentally fine because they are realized by reason of natural goods. The case is different with *kaloi kagathoi*, because they both have the *aretai* of character and value them for themselves. Furthermore, they know that “to act in accordance with them” is worth choosing in itself and they look for opportunities to practice them. Besides, when they strive for the natural goods, they do so not for the sake of them, but for the sake of doing fine deeds, because they know that they can do many fine deeds by means of them (*EE VIII 3 1249a 13–14*). In effect, they do fine deeds without some ulterior motive and, therefore, their behavior is fine unqualifiedly (*haplōs kalon*)—in other words, their behavior is fine in itself (*kath’auto kalon*). So, *agathoi* have a misguided conception of the final end of human life, whereas *kaloi kagathoi* know what kind of good is *eudaimonia* and how to lead *eudaimonic* life. And that is why they are rather practically wise persons (see 1.3.2 below).

In *EE* VIII 3 Aristotle presents a kind of human being that he calls *kalos kagathos*. He underlines the fact that such a human being is fine because it possesses *aretai* and deeds of *aretē* (*EE* VIII 3 1248b 34–37). That is why his character adorns *kalokagathia*. Aristotle insists that *kalokagathia* is a full or complete *aretē* (*teleios*; *EE* VIII 3 1249a 16). Its fullness or completeness is due to the fact that it arises out of the combination of particular *aretai* of character (*EE* VIII 3 1248b 10–13). However, the dependency between *kalokagathia* and particular *aretai* of character is mutual. The *aretai* of character underpin *kalokagathia*, they are the basis for it and, therefore, they are its ontological foundation. So there is no *kalokagathia* without the *aretai* of character. *Kalokagathia*, in turn, makes a mark in the *aretai* of character that are the basis for it and brings them to their full form. Indeed, each of them is *used* for doing fine things. This is evidenced by the fact that the fine is generally a motive for action in the case of *kaloi kagathoi* on the one hand, and it is the same motive for action in accordance with every *aretē* of character that underpins *kalokagathia* on the other. So, *kaloi kagathoi* do what is consistent with reason, because it insists on choosing what is fine (*NE* III 1 1229a 2). However, it cannot be recognized without the practical wisdom, since the practical wisdom is the true conception of the general end of human life.⁴⁰ Indeed, *kaloi kagathoi* know what constitutes *eudaimonia* and, therefore, they *use* the *aretai* of character in a perfect manner—they act in accordance with them and for the sake of the fine (*tou kalou heneka*; see, e.g., *EE* III 1 1230a 27–30), which is why *kaloi kagathoi* are rather practically wise persons.⁴¹

So, Aristotle has a reason to develop the definition of the *aretē* of character formulated in *NE* II 6. It turns out that the *aretē* of character achieves its *telos*, if its possessor *uses* it for the sake of the fine and, therefore, since its possessor is the practically wise person. Thus, if persons neither know that doing fine deeds is valued for itself nor live in accordance with that knowledge—if it is up to them—they have not yet the *aretē* of character in the full sense.

⁴⁰ On the matter of practical wisdom as the true conception of the general purpose of human life, see section 1.3.2 below.

⁴¹ See note 38 above.

1.3.2 Practical wisdom

In the opening remark of *NE VI 5* Aristotle provides methodological guidance to clarify what sort of intellectual competence is practical wisdom. He notes that we might grasp its nature if we consider whom we describe as the practically wise person (*NE VI 5 1140a 24–25*). It is an important characteristic of the practically wise persons to be able to deliberate well (*kalōs bouleusasthai*) about things good and advantageous (*ta agatha kai sumpheronta*) for them and other people,⁴² and not in particular respects, but about what conduces to the good life as a whole (*to eu dzēn holōs*; *NE VI 5 1140a 25–28*).

In *NE III 3* Aristotle explains what sort of thing is deliberation. He points out three key aspects of its nature. First of all, we deliberate about things that are up to us and doable.⁴³ Secondly, we deliberate about things that usually happen in a certain way, but it is not clear how they will turn out, and where the outcome is undetermined.⁴⁴ Thirdly, we deliberate not about goals, but about things that are conducive to goals.⁴⁵

Therefore, we do not deliberate about things that are immutable and eternal. They are in the domain of scientific knowledge (*epistēmē*). We do not deliberate about matters that are the subject of physics study. Of course, we perceive becoming, change and motion in natural beings, and it is true that they “may or may not be”. However, such *variability* is not the result of our actions, but rather the natural causes. We do not deliberate about artificial beings, namely how to make products of arts (*technai*), because they are made in accordance with pre-determined rules that are appropriate for each of them. If we are to make shoes, for example, we make them in accordance with pre-determined rules applicable to shoemaking. Thus, deliberation concerns the practical life and it also finds broad application in politics, which is the most authoritative practical science (I 2). In essence, deliberation con-

⁴² As Aristotle states in *NE VI 5 1140b 8–9*, persons with practical wisdom can discern what is good for them and what is good for people in general. But, as Broadie (in ARISTOTLE 2002, 384) stresses, it is about people as the agents themselves and not as any expert.

⁴³ βουλευόμεθα δὲ περὶ τῶν ἐφ’ ἡμῖν καὶ πρακτῶν, *NE III 3 1112a30–31*.

⁴⁴ τὸ βουλευέσθαι δὲ ἐν τοῖς ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ, ἀδήλοισι δὲ πῶς ἀποβήσεται, καὶ ἐν οἷς ἀδιόριστον, *ibid.* 1112b8–9.

⁴⁵ βουλευόμεθα δ’ οὐ περὶ τῶν τελῶν ἀλλὰ περὶ τῶν πρὸς τὰ τέλη, *ibid.* 1112b11–12. A doctor does not deliberate whether he or she is to cure, or an orator whether they are to convince their listeners, or a politician whether they are expected to enact good law. Each of them, having set down the goal, examines how and through what thing or things to reach it (*ibid.*, 1112b12–18).

sists in examining the situations in their individuality and it makes an investigation in order to discover the way that guarantees the accomplishment of the designated goal.

However, as already mentioned it has to be borne in mind that the good deliberation—*euboulia*—is the trait of the practically wise person. And since the practically wise persons deliberate well about things that are good and advantageous from the point of view of the good life as a whole, it can be assumed that their deliberation is not limited to discover effective ways to achieve the designated goals only, but also consists in the intellectual work that is focused on things related to the holistic end of life (*ta pros to telos*),⁴⁶ that is, *eudaimonia*. However, the phrase *ta pros to telos* does not have to imply that good deliberation is limited to the search for the means to arrive at the holistic end of life. Indeed, the goals–means model does not cover the entire field of human activity. Strictly speaking, deliberation of the practically wise person is not limited to discovering things that are conducive to *eudaimonic* life, but also involves the study of its elements. We can assume that the first things fit into the goal–means model, because they fulfill an essentially instrumental function for the achievement of *eudaimonia*, whereas the latter may indicate the constitutive components of *eudaimonia* itself.⁴⁷

In *NE* VII 13 1153b 16–19 Aristotle shows that the perfect activities (*teleiai energeiai*) are the constitutive components of *eudaimonia*.⁴⁸ He also insists that “unimpededness” is one of the most important features of these activities. “Unimpededness” underlines the fact that the agent’s nature is not

⁴⁶ See *NE* VI 9 1142b 33 and note 59 below. The term *telos* is not used accidentally. Deliberation in this area does not have to be limited to running an investigation to discover the way that guarantees the accomplishment of the goals set, just as in *NE* III 3 1112b12 (see note 44 above). It can also apply to the ultimate end of human endeavors, namely the good that meets the formal criteria for the highest anthropic good (see *NE* I 7).

⁴⁷ On the wording “*ta pros to telos*” as “things relative to the end”, i.e., things that are components of the end itself, see, e.g., WIGGINS 1980, 222–25.

⁴⁸ Aristotle stresses that *eudaimonia* is built of perfect activities (ἡ δ’ εὐδαιμονία τῶν τελείων, *NE* VII 13 1153b 16–17). Most commentators suggest reading this wording as if we had a *hē d’ eudaimonia teleion ti* (see, e.g., Crisp in ARISTOTLE 2000): “happiness is something complete”). Some commentators translate the wording as if *eudaimonia* were one of the many perfect or complete things (see, e.g., Gauthier and Jolif in ARISTOTLE 1958): “le bonheur est du nombre des choses parfaites”). If, however, there are many things that are perfect or complete, then *eudaimonia* has to be the most perfect or complete of these (see, e.g., *NE* I 7 1097a 30 for the criterion from teleological superiority). Therefore I think Aristotle suggests *eudaimonia* is an *amalgamation* of perfect activities, and no matter whether it is constituted by the unimpeded activities of all *hexeis* that accords with nature or by the unimpeded activity of one of them (*NE* VII 13 1153b 9–11).

deficient, which is why *eudaimones* also need bodily and external goods, so that they are not impeded in these respects and, in consequence, undertake and continue *eudaimonic* activities without hindrance. Thus, actions that preserve our health or restore us to our natural state are not intrinsic components of *eudaimonia*, although they are useful for the achievement or maintenance of it. However, if thoughtful practical actions and intellectual activities of a calculative nature or even intellectual activities of a theoretical nature are performed in accordance with *aretai* proper to them, they can be the constitutive components of *eudaimonia*. Of course, they can be such components as long as they are realized without hindrance. Indeed, poverty, disease and other sorts of bad luck disturb *eudaimonia* and that is why, as Aristotle notes, it requires their opposites (*Politics* VII 13 1332a 20–21). So “those people who claim that the person being tortured on the rack, or the person who has fallen into misfortune, is *eudaimōn* if he is good, talk nonsense” (*NE* VII 13 1153b 19–21).

Let us reiterate: in the function argument Aristotle shows that the proper function of the human being is the thoughtful practical action and the intellectual activity of the calculative nature. But if, in fact, the human being is able to imitate divine life, it will also include the intellectual activity of the theoretical nature, or more precisely, the contemplative activity. Furthermore, he stresses that *eudaimonia* is the activity of *psuchē* (or, in *psuchē*) in accordance with *aretē* proper to it. And it is significant that he does not revoke this initial finding at any stage of his further ethical research. If, therefore, such activities are performed effortlessly, they can be the constitutive elements of the final good for the human being. So, the “goals–means” model does not have to cover all relations between some goals and the final human end. That is why this model does not fully reflect what is *euboulia*—the deliberation of a practically wise person. For *euboulia* or good deliberation may also concern these things that are components of *eudaimonia*, that is, things that do not stand in essentially instrumental relation to *eudaimonia*. This, in turn, opens the possibility to use good deliberation for a deeper understanding of the human end of life. For a deliberation about the constituent elements of *eudaimonia* can be an analysis of it, and such an analysis can give us further insight into its essence and structure. As a consequence, a good deliberation can be helpful for capturing *eudaimonia* in its fullness.

So, what is the practical wisdom? It is the intellectual *aretē* that owes its origin and development mainly to teaching and, therefore, its achievement requires experience and time (*NE* II 1 1103a 15–17). But, strictly speaking,

it is a true *state* that (a) is bound up with practical action, (b) goes along with reason in its calculative function, and (c) is concerned with good things for the human being.⁴⁹ After all, people with practical wisdom are professionals in every area of practical life, since they set the right path which they follow in their life, being able to advise others what to do in the cases of undetermined outcome.⁵⁰ And this is a major task of *euboulia* that is the main component of practical wisdom.⁵¹ So, we can assume that practical wisdom is the intellectual *aretē* that is responsible for an insight and discovery of the way that ensures the achievement of the designated goals. But the way to achieve these goals and goals themselves ought to harmonize with the true conception of good life as a whole—*eudaimonic* life.

To sum up, practical wisdom is not a purely instrumental competence, and *euboulia* does not have to be limited to deliberation about things that are conducive to goals that harmonize with the final end of human life. Good deliberation and, in consequence, practical wisdom can also concern careful examination of goals themselves. And such a task consists in analyzing their value from the perspective of a general policy in life reflecting the practically wise person's understanding of *eudaimonia*.

Now, since the practical wisdom is capable of judging goals and actions that are in line with requirements of the final human end, it can also be responsible for defining that end. This supposition can be found in the remark in which Aristotle arrives at the conviction that practical wisdom is the true conception of the holistic end of human life. He states: "If, then, it is characteristic of the practically wise people to have deliberated well, good deliberation will be correctness with regard to what is advantageous in relation to the end (*pros to telos*), of which practical wisdom is the true conception."⁵²

⁴⁹ ὥστ' ἀνάγκη τὴν φρόνησιν ἔξιν εἶναι μετὰ λόγου ἀληθῆ περὶ τὰ ἀνθρώπινα ἀγαθὰ πρακτικὴν, *NE* VI 5 1140b20–21.

⁵⁰ That is why people hire counselors if they do not trust their own judgement, especially in regard to important matters in practical life (see *NE* III 3 1112b 9–11).

⁵¹ On the matter of the good deliberation as an element of practical wisdom see, e.g., Gauthier and Jolif in *ARISTOTLE* 1959a, 563–78.

⁵² εἰ δὴ τῶν φρονίμων τὸ εὖ βεβουλευῆσθαι, ἢ εὐβουλία εἴη ἂν ὀρθότης ἢ κατὰ τὸ συμφέρον πρὸς τὸ τέλος, οὗ ἡ φρόνησις ἀληθῆς ὑπόληψις ἐστίν, *NE* VI.9 1142b31–33. This translation takes into account the emendation in the manuscript *Laurentianus* (K/b)—πρὸς τὸ τέλος instead of πρὸς τι τέλος. It ought to be added that οὗ in the phrase οὗ ἡ φρόνησις ἀληθῆς ὑπόληψις ἐστίν can refer to τὸ συμφέρον πρὸς τὸ τέλος. On this account, practical wisdom is the true conception of what is expedient as a means to the end. See Rackham's translation in *ARISTOTLE* 1956: "If therefore to have deliberated well is a characteristic of prudent men, Deliberative Excellence must be correctness of deliberation with regard to what is expedient as a means to the end, a true

The wording *to telos* is instructive because it can indicate the general end of the whole of human life, as Thomas Aquinas stresses in his commentary to *NE VI 9 1142b31–33*: “Because to deliberate well is characteristic of the practically wise people, *euboulia* in an unqualified sense is correctness of deliberation with regard to means to that end, which practical wisdom in an unqualified sense has the true evaluation; and this is the general end of the whole of human life.”⁵³ It must be added, however, that Aquinas underlines the fact that practical wisdom has (*habet*) the true evaluation of the general end of the whole of human life. But Galewicz (in AQUINAS 2011, 14) points out that *habet* weakens the thought of Aristotle. He insists that Aristotle does not claim that practical wisdom has the true conception of the general end of human life, but rather that it is the true conception of it. The wording “having the true conception of the general end of the human life” makes it possible to base practical wisdom on this conception and does not itself determine it. “Being” the true conception of the general end of human life is more than just “having” it, because “being” underlines the fact that the practical wisdom itself defines such a conception.

Thus, practical wisdom can be an intellectual qualification or a skill that grasps the ultimate end of human life or, to put it differently, is the conception of what kind of life is the most successful for the human being.⁵⁴ Nonetheless, it must be added that the *aretē ēthikē* has a direct impact on the recognition of this end. For the recognition of it must be preceded by habituation and acquisition of the *aretai* of character in the form of learned habit. I pointed out above that the *aretē* of character contributes to having a well-oriented character and, therefore, loving what is fine and feeling aversion to what is disgraceful. The fact that the *aretē* of character has a direct impact on the recognition of the ultimate end of human life does not mean it could establish or define itself such an end. The point is that the *aretē* of character in the form of learned habit contributes to the development of the capacity of

conception of which constitutes Prudence”, and his commentary to it: “The antecedent of ‘which’ is probably not ‘the end’ but ‘what is expedient as a means to the end,’ since it is indicated below that Prudence deals with means, not ends” (ibid., 356, note c).

⁵³ “Quia cum prudentium sit bene consiliari, oportet quod eubolia sit simpliciter rectitudo consilii in ordine ad illum fine, circa quem veram exisimationem habet prudentia simpliciter dicta; et hic est finis communis totius humanae vitae, ut supra dictum est”; AQUINAS 1949, lib. 6, lectio 8, n. 1233.

⁵⁴ Note, however, that Broadie (1991, 198–202) maintains that no one and, thus the practically wise person too, has a full conception of *eudaimonia*, so no one refers to such a conception in their deliberations. See also SEGVIC 2008, 167–70.

practical thinking into the proper skill of it, namely into the state of practical thinking that has achieved the level of practical wisdom. As Aristotle states: “Practical wisdom is not the same as this faculty [i.e., the capacity of practical thinking, *deinotēs*], but it does not exist without it; and this eye of *psuchē* does not acquire its proper state without *aretē* [i.e. without the *aretē* of character with a clarification “in the form of learned habit”]” (*NE* VI 12 1144a 28–31).

1.3.3 The human aretē as the bond of the aretē of character in the full sense, the practical wisdom and even the theoretical wisdom

In principle, it is clear that *eudaimonia*, namely the highest good for the human being, is the fulfillment of the human function in a perfect manner. However, it can be achieved on the condition that the human function is performed in accordance with the *aretē* proper to it—in other words, in accordance with the human *aretē*. It must be reminded that in *NE* VI 13 Aristotle develops his definition of the *aretē* of character, which was originally formulated in *NE* II 6. It turns out—based on the thesis about the coexistence of the *aretē* of character and practical wisdom—that the first reaches its *telos* provided that both belong to the same person. Indeed, the human *aretē* consists of practical wisdom—that is, excellence that qualifies reason in its practical aspect, and the *aretai* of character in the full sense, namely the virtues that qualify *psuchē* in the *sensual-orectic* dimension. It is remarkable that the human *aretē* is the feature of the person of excellence (*spoudaios*) most of all. In his function argument Aristotle stresses that the person of excellence performs the human function in a perfect manner (*NE* I 7 1098a 14). Furthermore, he claims that the person of excellence sees the truth in the case of every object of wish (*to boulēton*) and estimates it correctly in every set of circumstances. That is why, he is the measure in the field of human affairs (*NE* III 4 1113a5–1113b 2). Aristotle underlines once more this fact in *NE* IX 4. Strictly speaking, he insists that *aretē* and the person of excellence is the measure in each case.⁵⁵ In this context, however, it is difficult to assume that *aretē* means the *aretē* of character without clarification or the *aretē* of character in the form of learned habit only. Besides, it is highly probable that “*kai*” is epexegetical in *NE* IX 4 1166a 12 and, therefore, it is rather *aretē* of the person of excellence in the wording “*metron hekastōn hē*

⁵⁵ μέτρον ἐκάστων ἢ ἀρετὴ καὶ ὁ σπουδαῖος εἶναι, *NE* IX 4 1166a 12–13.

aretē kai ho spoudaios einai". So, it can be assumed that *aretē* means the human *aretē* here.

Now, the person of excellence is a complete person (*teleios*; *EE* VII 2 1237a 30), since he has reached the *target state* of the human being, namely he has achieved the goal of self actualization (*hoti kai teleiōthenti*; *EE* VII 2 1237a29). Indeed, "the person of excellence is at one with himself, that is,⁵⁶ aims at the same things with their whole *psuchē*."⁵⁷ Thus, the proposal to equate *aretē* with the human *aretē* in *NE* IX 4 seems justified and, therefore, it seems to be justified to acknowledge that in *NE* IX 4 1166a 12 *aretē* means excellence that is the connection between the practical wisdom and the *aretē* of character in the full sense. And above all, such excellence ensures to perform the human function in a perfect manner. It also confirms that its *beneficiary* has achieved the inner integration which unifies practical thinking, desires, decisions and activities into one co-ordinated whole that harmonizes with the final end of human life.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that in *EE* II 1 Aristotle concludes his function argument by emphasizing that "*eudaimonia* can be the activity of a complete life in accordance with complete *aretē*".⁵⁸ Since above Aristotle claims that *aretē* can be complete or partial (*hē men gar holē, hē de morion*; *EE* II 1 1219a 37), it can be assumed that *teleia aretē* is the whole made up of all *aretai*, namely *ēthikai* and *dianoētikai* ones. In other words, in *EE* Aristotle's definition of *eudaimonia* allows such a possibility that *teleia aretē* also includes theoretical *aretai* and theoretical wisdom (*sophia*) in particular. So, this whole can be made up not only of the *aretai* of character in the full sense and the practical wisdom, but also of theoretical wisdom.⁵⁹ Of course, it is not surprising that *teleia aretē* can include theoretical wisdom, because such wisdom can play an important role in the implementation of *eudaimonic* life. In *NE* X 7–8 Aristotle points out that both political and theoretical life are of an *eudaimonic* nature. However, he stipulates that theoretical life is the primary form of *eudaimonia* compared to the practical one (*NE* X 8 1178a 9–10). We have already mentioned that the contemplative activity has no purpose apart from the activity itself. In addition, the superiority of theoretical life lies in the fact that it enables participation in divin-

⁵⁶ E.g., Percival in ARISTOTLE 1940, 106.

⁵⁷ οὗτος γὰρ ὁμογενῶμονεῖ ἑαυτῷ, καὶ τῶν αὐτῶν ὀρέγεται κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν ψυχὴν, *NE* IX 4 1166a 13–14.

⁵⁸ εἴη ἂν ἡ εὐδαιμονία ζωῆς τελείας ἐνέργεια κατ' ἀρετὴν τελείαν, *EE* II 1 1219a 38–39.

⁵⁹ E.g., COOPER 1986, 116–18.

ity; its realization implies the activation of *nous*, that is, the divine element in us (*NE* X 7 1177b 27–31). And it is *sophia* that ensures the flawless performance of a contemplative activity. So, there is a reason to believe that the theoretical wisdom can be included in *teleia aretē*.⁶⁰ That is why it can be assumed that the proper function of the human being does not have to be limited to thoughtful practical action and intellectual activity of a calculative nature, but it may also incorporate the intellectual activity of a theoretical nature. Thus, it is possible that human *aretē* is ultimately the whole consisting not only of *aretai* of character, fully developed and practical wisdom, but also theoretical wisdom.

2. THE TYPOLOGY OF FRIENDSHIP

Aristotle begins to study the typology of friendship from the distinction between three objects of love:⁶¹ “good” (*agathon*), “pleasure” (*hēdonē*) and “usefulness” (*chrēsimon*).⁶² It is needed to underline the fact that it is *aretē*

⁶⁰ We could ask this: Will it be necessary to have the *aretai* of character and the practical wisdom at all to lead the most successful human life, if the theoretical life is better than practical one? It is believed that Anaxagoras and Thales are theoretically wise human beings (*sophoi*). Although people deny they have the practical wisdom, since they are ignorant about what is advantageous to them (*NE* VI 7 1141b 3–6). Besides, if theoretical life is a primary form of *eudaimonia*, the most successful human life will require to sacrifice the practical activity in favor of the theoretical one. It seems, however, that the exercise of theoretical wisdom entails the exercise of practical wisdom and the *aretai* of character, since a) the human being is political and b) the human being is one whose nature is to live with others. So attributes a) and b), or b) in particular, belong to *eudaimōn*, and so it is better for him to pass days together with friends and decent people than with strangers or just anyone (*NE* IX 9 1169b 18–21). It can, therefore, be assumed that the *aretai* of character are necessary for *eudaimōn* and the *aretai* regarding *social* intercourse in particular. Admittedly, the theoretically wise person is capable of theoretical activity even when by himself; but it is better, perhaps, if he had partners to work with (*NE* X 7 1177a 33–34). And further, since in *Ethics* Aristotle devotes a lot of attention to topics relating to the *aretē* of character and practical wisdom, it would be strange they have no matter for the achievement of the ultimate goal of human life. The problem, however, would require a deeper reflection.

⁶¹ It ought to be noted that the Greek language does not have an appropriate term for friendship (e.g., KONSTANT 1996, 75). Indeed, the noun *philia* has the same scope as the verb *philein*. And *philein* means primarily ‘to love’, ‘to cherish’ and ‘to like’; yet it can also mean ‘be friendly’. Furthermore, since *philein* is the term that is said in more than one way (e.g., *Topics* I 15 106b 3–4); then *philia* is also said in more than one way. In fact, Aristotle uses the term *philia* in at least three ways: a) as the feeling of love (see, e.g., *NE* II 5), and b) as the *aretē* of character (e.g., *EE* II 3), and c) as friendship (e.g., *NE* VIII and IX).

⁶² In *EE* VII 2 Aristotle shows that “good” is said in more than one way. His reasoning is based on two distinctions: A) “what is good” and “what appears to be good” (1235b 24–29); B)

as the first mentioned object of love. It should be reminded that *aretē* both brings things into a good condition and makes them perform their function well. But, if a given thing is in a good condition and performs its function well, then it is good unqualifiedly (*haplōs agathon*) or good in itself (*kath'hauto*).⁶³ That is why it has developed its own form or has attained its *telos*. After all, every kind of functional thing has some characteristic function as well as activity.

So, if we take into account the ways of predicating “good” in accordance with points a) and b) in note 62 and take into consideration the view that human beings can love inanimate things as well as other people for the same reasons, then it makes sense to consider *aretē* as one of the objects of love or one of the reasons for love. Aristotle states that “just as in the case of inanimate things, we can choose and love something for each of these reasons,⁶⁴ so, too, in the case of human beings. For we choose and love one human being because they have such a quality, that is, because of *aretē*, another because they are helpful and useful, another because they are pleasant—that is, because of pleasure.”⁶⁵ Since we can call, *inter alia*, a given thing “good” because it is “of such quality” and we can love inanimate things as well as people for the same reasons and, moreover, *aretē* can be one of the reasons why human beings love one another, so it is not unreasonable to assume that *aretē* is the object of love in the case of inanimate things. After all, to love inanimate things because they are “of such and such quality” can mean they can be loved for their *aretē*. In fact, the use of the wording *tōi toionde kai di'aretēn* in relation to inanimate things is not unfounded and it is possible to generalize the idea that human beings can love *anything* because of its *aretē*.

“what is good unqualifiedly” and “what is good for someone” (1235b 30–1236a 6). In consequence, he comes to the conclusion that we call a given thing “good”: a) because it is of such quality (*to men gar tōi toiond'einai*); b) because it is good unqualifiedly; c) because it is helpful and useful; d) because it is pleasant unqualifiedly; e) because it is pleasant for a particular individual; f) because it is apparently good (1236a 7–10).

⁶³ In *NE* VII 9 1151b 2–3 Aristotle explains that by *kath'hauto* he means *haplōs*. Thus, it can be assumed that if anything is *haplōs agathon*, then it is good in its essence, since the wording *kath'hauto* concerns predication and definition of being.

⁶⁴ See note 62 above, points a–f.

⁶⁵ ὡς περ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀψύχων δι' ἕκαστον τούτων ἐνδέχεται ἡμᾶς αἰρεῖσθαι τι καὶ φιλεῖν, οὕτω καὶ ἄνθρωπον. τὸν μὲν γὰρ <τῷ> τοιόνδε καὶ δι' ἀρετὴν, τὸν δ' ὅτι ὠφέλιμος καὶ χρήσιμος, τὸν δ' ὅτι ἡδὺς καὶ δι' αὐτούς ἡδονήν; *EE* VII 2 1236a12–14; see also, e.g., *NE* VIII 3 1156a10–1156b17.

According to Aristotle, friendship is a kind of interpersonal relationship and that is why human beings can only be “objects” of love in this relationship.⁶⁶ However, since friendships are based on *aretē*, pleasure or usefulness, he concludes that there are three kinds of friendship: a) because of *aretē* (*di’aretēn*),⁶⁷ which he calls “primary” (*protē*; *EE*), “complete” (*teleia*; *EN*) or “of character” (*ēthikē*)⁶⁸ friendship; b) because of pleasure (*di’hēdonēn*), which one might call “hedonistic” friendship; c) because of usefulness (*dia to chrēsimon*),⁶⁹ which one might call “utilitarian” friendship.

Aretological friendship⁷⁰ is inextricably linked to *aretē*, as can be seen from the preliminary characteristics of three kinds of friendship above. It is not clear, however, what *aretē* means in the wording *di’aretēn*. Strictly speaking, it is not obvious which *aretē* is the basis of *aretological* friendship. But when it comes to the two other kinds of friendship, hedonistic and utilitarian, it must be examined whether there is any connection between them and *aretē*. If, however, it turns out that such a link is not necessary, then we will have to assume that the wording “[*philia*] goes with *aretē*” (*NE* VIII 1 1155a 2) refers to *aretological* friendship only.

2.1 ARETOLOGICAL FRIENDSHIP

It is already known that every person is a friend because of *aretē* (*di’aretēn*) in the case of *aretological* friendship. Thus, it must be considered what *aretē* is needed to this kind of friendship.

It is remarkable that *aretological* friendship is the *ēthikē* one⁷¹ and, therefore, it can be assumed that one or another *aretē* of character is the reason for it. If, however, one or another *aretē* of character is the reason for it, then

⁶⁶ See, however, *EE* VII 2 1236b 7–10. Although it seems that Aristotle makes use of the polysemy of *philia* and there are reasons to think it is *philia* as “feeling of love” in this paragraph (see note 60, point a) above).

⁶⁷ If this kind of friendship is based on *aretē*, then there is reason for one to call it “*aretological* friendship”.

⁶⁸ The expression “friendship of character” (*ēthikē philia*) appears in *EE* VII 10. Aristotle uses it when discussing political friendship (*politikē philia*). Although he uses the predicate *ēthikē* to qualify one of the subtypes of utilitarian friendship in 1242b 32–33, he makes it clear that *ēthikē philia* is friendship because of *aretē*. Besides, he adds in line 1241a 10 that friends of *ēthikē philia* are *ēthikoi*. See also a discussion on “goodwill” (*eunoia*) in *EE* VII 7, where Aristotle uses the wording *ēthikē philia* in line 1241a 10.

⁶⁹ In *EE* VII 2 1236a 32 Aristotle uses the phrase “because of usefulness” (*dia to chrēsimon*).

⁷⁰ See note 67 above.

⁷¹ See note 68 above.

the phrase “because somebody is of such quality” can simply accentuate that *aretological* friends have a good character in some respect—they are brave, for example. But in *EE* VII 2 1236a 1 Aristotle stresses that friendship because of *aretē*, or rather, for the sake of *aretē* or based on it (*kat'aretēn*), occurs among the best people. Naturally, one may still argue that friendship *kat'aretēn* is that of the best people in this sense that they are the best in a certain field of practical activity—in the military field, for example. Nevertheless, it seems rather unlikely because Aristotle clearly explains that he is interested in something more in the case of the best people.⁷² This is especially evident in his remarks when he adds that the *aretological* friend is good unconditionally (1237a 10–11), pointing out that *aretē* of naturally excellent people makes them unconditionally good (1237a 17).

As already mentioned, people of excellence have achieved the goal of self-actualization. It is manifested, among other things, in the fact that they perform the human function in a perfect manner. Hence, if *aretological* friends are people of excellence, then the wording *tōi toionde* does not point out that they are good thanks to this or that aspect of their character, but rather because they are good inherently or unconditionally. Thus, their character is rather the set of the *aretai* of character in the full sense and, therefore, they are reasonably practical, wise people.⁷³ But if so, their practical thinking, desires, decisions and actions must harmonize with the realization of the final end of human life and, therefore, we ought to accept the idea that it is the human *aretē* in the wordings *di'aretēn* and *kat'aretēn*, namely the connection between the *aretē* of character in the full sense, the practical wisdom and even the theoretical wisdom, if the human being can also live a divine contemplative life.⁷⁴ That is why in the case of *aretological* friendship *aretē* means something more than one or another *aretē* of character.

The conviction that the *aretological* friends are people of excellence is also confirmed by the fact that they are true friends (*EE* VII 2 1236b 28–29).

⁷² However, e.g., Cooper (1977, 624) notes that friends of primary friendship (*protē philia*) may be ordinary people with a typical mixture of good and bad character traits.

⁷³ See section 1.3.1 above on the matter of the thesis about coexistence of the *aretē* of character and practical wisdom.

⁷⁴ In *Category* 8 10b 5–9 Aristotle says that sometimes even when there is an established name for a quality, it is not by derivation that the subject qualifies expressly according to this quality. And it is remarkable that this is the case of *aretē* of the person of excellence. Strictly speaking, the person of excellence is named *spoudaios*, because he has *aretē* and not by derivation from it, as is the case with *sōphrosunē*, for example. That is because the *aretē* of the person of excellence is not a particular one, but the whole made up of all character and intellectual *aretai* that are essential from the perspective of *eudaimonic* life.

It is remarkable that in *NE* IX 4 Aristotle points out that people of excellence are capable to show the features of friendship (*ta philika*) for friends in a paradigmatic manner. There is nothing surprising about this, if one remembers that they are the measure for human affairs. Thus, they also ought to be the measure for showing the features of friendship to friends. One of the features of friendship is as follows: “to wish and to do good things for a friend’s sake (*ekeinou heneka*)” (*EN* IX 4 1166a 4).

However, it must be stressed that Aristotle understands the wording *ekeinou heneka* in two ways in the context of friendship: a) in accordance with common opinion⁷⁵ and b) in the narrow sense, namely, his sense. One who takes care of *ekeinos* in accordance with common opinion does not have to take into account the distinction between essential and accidental features of the “object” of care. One who takes care of *ekeinos* in accordance with Aristotle’s understanding of the wording *ekeinou heneka* takes into account the distinction between essential and accidental features of the “object” of care. This person wishes and does good things for a friend’s sake, that is, as long as the friend is what he is. Thus, the second kind of care is possible, when the “subject” that cares for and “object” of care meet certain requirements, namely they both are good in their own right and measures for showing this feature of friendship to friend. That is why such an “subject” and “object” are friends that have achieved personal integrity characteristic of the person of excellence. Indeed, point b) takes into account the normative and descriptive dimension of the wording *ekeinou heneka*. The normative dimension of the wording *ekeinou heneka* stresses that the friend cares for his or her friend’s well-being and treats it as an independent good and not only as a part of his own. The descriptive dimension indicates how friends are to be constituted if they treat their friends and are treated by their friends in accordance with the wording *ekeinou heneka* in the narrow sense.⁷⁶ In other words, if the feature of friendship indicated above is to be manifested perfectly, the friend has to take care of friend’s good in a disinterested manner.⁷⁷ That is why Aristotle poses a rhetorical question in the opening chapter of book VIII of *NE*: “What advantage [is there] from such prosperity [i.e., possessing property, holding a high office, exercising power], if one eliminates the good deed which is carried out principally and in the most

⁷⁵ E.g., *NE* VIII 2 1155b 30–1156a 2; IX 5 1166b 30–1167a 3.

⁷⁶ On the normative and descriptive dimension of the wording *ekeinou heneka* see, e.g., STERN-GILLET 1995, 59–77.

⁷⁷ E.g., VLASTOS 1973, 33n100. See also note 6 above.

praiseworthy way towards friends?”⁷⁸ But such a question suggests that benevolent activities have different degrees of excellence. In point of fact, wishing and doing good things in accordance with point b) means wishing and doing good things to another person in the best way achievable for the human being, because such an activity is linked directly to the person of excellence who loves a friend as a friend (*EE* VII 2 1237b 2) and not as another (1237b 4). The wording “to love a friend as a friend” underlines the fact that the friend is loved as oneself or for being the kind of person he really is (*hēi estin hōsper estin ho philoumenos*; *NE* VIII 3 1156a 17–18), while the wording “to love a friend as another” stresses that the friend is loved not because of being the kind of person he really is, but rather because of accidental traits—because of his musicality, for example.⁷⁹

However, it does not follow that *aretological* friends do gain nothing for themselves, if they realize good things for friends’ sake. Of course, they assign to themselves the greater good, namely they gain what is fine (*kalon*), because they act in accordance with *aretē*. Strictly speaking, if they take care of their friends in accordance with point b), they act in accordance with the human *aretē*. After all, such an activity is characteristic of the person of excellence.⁸⁰

Thus, *aretological* friendship is closely linked to *aretē*. Strictly speaking, it is the human *aretē* in the case of an *aretological* friendship, namely perfection or the connection, at least,⁸¹ between the *aretē* of character in the full sense and practical wisdom. As a result, it is *aretological* friendship that enables one to have a good life with another person. Furthermore, it is a kind of community or interpersonal relationship that enables us to take care simultaneously of ourselves and another person’s *eudaimonia*.

2.2 HEDONISTIC FRIENDSHIP

Hedonistic friendship is a kind of relationship based on pleasure. According to Aristotle, friendship between young people is the canonical version of

⁷⁸ τί γὰρ ὄφελος τῆς τοιαύτης εὐετηρίας ἀφαιρεθείσης εὐεργεσίας, ἢ γίγνεται μάλιστα καὶ ἐπαινετωτάτη πρὸς φίλους, *EN* VIII 1 1155a 7–9.

⁷⁹ In *NE* VIII 3 1156b 9–11 Aristotle indicates that “friends are above all those who wish good things to their friends for their friends sake (since they behave in this way because of themselves [*di’hautous*] and not because of their accidental traits).”

⁸⁰ “If ... it is finer to do good to friends than to strangers, the person of excellence will need those [friends] who he will do some good” (κάλλιον δ’ εἶ ποιεῖν φίλους ὀθνείων, τῶν εἰς πεισομένων δεήσεται ὁ σπουδαῖος, *NE* IX 9 1169b 11–13).

⁸¹ See section 1.3.3 above in the context of *eudaimonia* understood as contemplative life.

hedonistic friendship (*EE* VII 2 1236a 39). Strictly speaking, young people become friends quickly because they strive to satisfy desires immediately, and they also cease to be friends quickly for what they find pleasant changes quickly too—they are driven by emotions and concentrate most of all on what the moment brings. It is remarkable that on the one hand they focus their attention on taking pleasure in sensual perception and they are impatient with things that do not resolve swiftly on the other. This is due to the fact that young people are in adolescence, a time for puberty changes and a stage of life that is highly emotional. There are changes in the appearance, mood alterations, nervousness, having conflicting feelings, shaping of the character and personal identity formation in this period of human development. It is clear, then, that young people are characterized by the emotional instability and volatility of needs and pleasures (*EE* VII 2 1236a 39–1236b 1; *NE* VIII 3 1156a 34–1156b 1).

Therefore, if young people are emotionally unstable, an obvious sign of the lack of self-control (*akrasia*) as well as the deficiency of lasting traits of character, then their friendship cannot depend on the *aretē* of character—namely, the acquired state of being able to perform *proairetic* action as well as the virtue of character that settles affective reactions and irrational arousals of *psuchē*—neither is linked to it. And if the youthful friendship is the canonical version of the hedonistic one, it is understandable that the hedonistic friendship does not depend on the human *aretē*, neither is connected with it in general. Indeed, such a friendship is essentially an unreliable interpersonal relationship, since it is based on an unsteady kind of pleasure.⁸²

It must also be added that the hedonic friends do not love their friends as “the friend” but rather as “another”. For they do not love each other in themselves, but rather because of accidental features, which bring pleasure. Indeed, all hedonistic friends love their friends for their own pleasure only (*NE* VIII 3 1156a 15) and, therefore, they treat their friends purely instrumentally. And even if they show any concern for them, they do it for the sake of their own pleasure. Besides, Aristotle makes it clear that bad people may be friends to each other because of pleasure (e.g., *EE* VII 2 1236b 13–17). Of course, such people cannot have the human *aretē* nor its components—they are bad after all. This is another reason why a hedonistic friendship cannot go along with *aretē* or *aretai* that play a crucial role in *eudaimonic* life.

⁸² In *NE* VIII 3 1156b 11–12 Aristotle clearly underlines the fact that the stability of the *aretological* friendship is based on the goodness of friends, whereas the goodness of them is founded on *aretē*, namely on the human one (see section 1.3.3 above) and such *aretē* is a stable thing.

However, Aristotle allows the possibility of establishing a hedonistic friendship in which the person of excellence is one of its parties (*EE* VII 2 1238a 35–1238b 5). Yet, the fact that the person of excellence is able to be an active participant in the hedonistic friendship does not undermine the claim that “the hedonistic friendship is not linked to the human *aretē*, nor its components.” Now, even if the person of excellence takes part directly in this kind of friendship, he does it for a short time only. After all, his life has no need of additional pleasure as some sort of ornament, because it possesses pleasure within itself (*NE* I 8 1099a 15–16). That is why no hedonistic friend can bring pleasure that adds something to pleasure he provides for himself (*NE* IX 9 1169b 26–27).

Why, then, does the person of excellence decide to take part on the hedonistic friendship? In *Politics* VIII 3 1337b 40–1338a 1 Aristotle points out that play provides relaxation and pleasure that contribute to the restoration of the forces that were lost during action.⁸³ In fact, every one needs a rest after activity. And amusement in the company of another person can be a genuine kind of taking care of oneself after *eudaimonic* activity. That is why the person of excellence can decide on being an active participant in the hedonistic friendship. It does not follow, then, that the person of excellence takes care of a hedonistic friend in accordance with point b) in section 2.1 above. In spite of meeting all the essential requirements for a true friend, he treats his hedonistic friend purely instrumentally: he is interested in him as “another” and not as “the friend”, since he pays attention to his accidental attributes only and love him for the sake of his own pleasure—he is interested in the hedonic friend as a kithara player, because he takes pleasure in listening to music, for example. In consequence, even if the person of excellence is an active participant in the hedonic friendship, we are not committed to thinking that the hedonistic friendship is essentially connected with the human *aretē*.

However, it is worth paying attention to a certain example of hedonistic friendship that can be embarrassing. It is a rather important case for Aristotle, because he uses it in *NE* VIII 3 in the context of the characterization of three distinguished kinds of friendship. He notes: “It is similar with those who love [each other] because of pleasure; they are fond of those who are witty (*eutrapeloi*), not because they are of a certain character, but because they are pleasant to them” (*NE* VIII 3 1156a12–14). It must be underlined

⁸³ In *NE* IV 8 1128b 3–4 Aristotle stresses that relaxation and play are something necessary in life.

that wittiness (*eutrapelia*) is concerned with a certain mean (*meson*), namely the mean between buffoonery and boorishness. It has to do with what is pleasant in the sphere of playful amusement and determines what jokes to listen to and how to tell them properly. If, however, *eutrapelia* is one of the *mesona* that are discussed in *NE* IV—the book devoted to the advanced study of the *aretai* of character—then there is reasonable suspicion that *eutrapelia* is one of the *aretai* of character. Thus, it can be assumed that those who love witty people do it, because they are witty themselves and like listening to things fitting for decent and free people (*NE* IV 8). So, *eutrapelia* might be the equivalent of “*tōi toionde*” in the sense of one or another *aretē* of character (e.g., *Metaphysics* V 14 1020b 12–13).

Nevertheless, Aristotle points out that those who love witty people do not love them for their being of a certain character or of a certain quality (*ou gar tōi poious tinas einai*; *NE* VIII 3 1156a 12–13), but rather because they are pleasant to them. Therefore, even if the hedonistic friendship is associated with the *aretē* of character, hedonistic friends love each other not because of their *aretē* of character, but rather for their sake of their own pleasure and, therefore, because their friends bring them pleasure. Furthermore, the wording “*ou gar tōi poion tina einai*” rather means “not because of what he is in himself”. For Aristotle insists that the hedonistic friend does not love a person loved for being what he is (*ho philoumenos estin hosper estin*; 1156a 16), but because of an accidental trait and only insofar as he provides something pleasant. Thus, we are not committed to thinking that the hedonistic friendship is essentially connected with the human *aretē* or its components or even a certain *aretē* of character that is crucial from the perspective of *eudaimonic* life.

2.3 THE UTILITARIAN FRIENDSHIP

Aristotle points out that most friendships are based on usefulness (*EE* VII 2 1236a 34). This is due to the fact that the vast majority of people wish fine things but strive for useful ones for them (*NE* VIII 13 1162b 35–36). That should come as no surprise, given that Aristotle underlines the fact that most people (*hoi polloi*) are bad or boorish (*phauloi*) (e.g., *NE* IX 8 1168b 15–22). It is remarkable that such people both allot to themselves the larger share of money or honors than they deserve and gratify non-rational dimension of their *psuchē*. That is why they are stigmatized as “self-lovers” in the pejorative sense of that term and thus rightly reproached. If so, there is reason to

assume that utilitarian friendship is not connected with the human *aretē*, nor even a certain *aretē* of character that is crucial from the perspective of *eudaimonic* life.

Furthermore, utilitarian friendship is characteristic of business type and for those who are commercially minded (*NE* VIII 6 1158a 20–21). It takes frequently the form of mutual aid agreement in the political, legal, or commercial spheres. That is why it is usually a formal relationship, namely a kind of association without emotional involvement of the two parties in question.⁸⁴ The utilitarian friendship between Athenians and Megarians can be such a kind of formal relationship (*EE* VII 2 1236a 37) for it was the contract concluded between one city-state and another after the Persian Wars, and it was broken up following the withdrawal of the Athenian garrison from Megara.

Besides, utilitarian friends, just like hedonistic ones, treat their friends purely instrumentally, because those who love each other for their usefulness do not love them for themselves, but rather in so far as they can profit in some way (*NE* VIII 3 1156a 11–12). That is why they love one another only in so far as they are useful (*EE* VII 2 1236a 35). This is reflected in the proverb invoked by Aristotle: “Glaucus, a mercenary, as long as he fights in the battle, is a friend” (1236a 36). Thus, the utilitarian friends love their friends not as “a friend”, but rather as “another”. In consequence, we are not led to think that the utilitarian friendship is essentially connected with the human *aretē* or its components.

It should be noted, however, that Aristotle allows the possibility of establishing a utilitarian friendship with a person of excellence (*EE* VII 2 1238b 2–5). It may happen that a person of excellence forms a utilitarian friendship with an uncontrolled person, or even wicked one, if such a relationship is useful for the former. Yet, Aristotle provides a very important qualification: it is possible for a person of excellence to be a friend to a bad one, if the latter is useful to the former in relation to his particular undertaking and on condition that this undertaking is in accord with his nature (*pros tēn* [that is,

⁸⁴ It is worth mentioning that the reciprocated friendly affection which is recognized by two persons in question is one of the conditions of friendship. Aristotle insists that “a human being becomes a friend when while receiving love he returns a friendly affection, and when each of the two is in some way aware of this” (φίλος δὴ γίνεται ὅταν φιλούμενος ἀντιφιλή, καὶ τοῦτο μὴ λανθάνη πως, *EE* VII 2 1236a 14–15, see also *NE* VIII 3 1156a 8–9). Thus, we may have reasonable suspicion that a relationship called “utilitarian friendship” or at least some of its subtypes, are not friendships at all. The problem, however, would require recourse to study Aristotle’s conception of homonymy and polysemy.

pros proairesin] kata phusin; EE VII 2 1238b 4–5). In this context Aristotle can understand *proairesis* as a particular purpose or an undertaking that seeks some good. It should be recalled that the person of excellence fulfills the human function in a perfect manner, because he is the measure in the field of human affairs. Thus, his particular purpose or undertaking will rather promote his conception of *eudaimonia* that is clearly harmonized with the final end of human life. That is why the person of excellence does not betray his nature and remains faithful to his ideals, models and values. Strictly speaking, the person of excellence is faithful to his regardless of the circumstances. Hence, a utilitarian friendship with the active participation of the person of excellence does not mean that this kind of friendship is essentially connected with the human *aretē* or even a certain *aretē* of character that is crucial from the perspective of *eudaimonic* life.

CONCLUSION

The above-mentioned characteristics of three basic kinds of friendship and the close link between friendship, *aretē* and *eudaimonia* both suggest that it is rather doubtful that every kind of friendship goes along with *aretē*. But the question needs to be clarified.

If in *NE* VIII 1 1151a 1–2 Aristotle has in mind both friendship and *aretē* that play a crucial role in leading a *eudaimonic* life, then friendship means the *aretological* one and *aretē* the human one; in other words, the whole consists of the *aretē* of character in the full sense and the practical wisdom on condition that *aretological* friends equate *eudaimonia* with a life focused on the political or practical activity, or even of the theoretical wisdom, providing that they identify it with the highest form of *eudaimonic* life, that is, the contemplative one. In other words, if Aristotle has in mind *protē* or *teleia philia* in the quotation above, that is the best people's friendship, then friendship must go along with human *aretē*. For this kind of friendship must be the *deliberate mutual choice and mutual love* based on the excellent personality of both sides of the relationship.

If, however, in *NE* VIII 1 1151a 1–2 friendship is to be a term said in many ways (*pleonachōs legetai*) and *aretē* is to be understood in a broad sense as “being good at something”, then friendship can signify every kind of it, namely the *aretological*, the hedonistic and the utilitarian one, whereas *aretē* stands for a qualification or skill that makes these friendships perform

their functions well. It will be leading a *eudaimonic* life together with another person based on the human *aretē* of both parties to the relationship in the case of the *aretological* friendship; it could be gratifying appetites and enjoying the bodily pleasures most of all in the case of a hedonistic friendship—for example, based on the musicality of both parties; it could be removing the various deficiencies in the case of a utilitarian friendship—for example, based on different *poiētical* skills each party has.

Thus, the first possibility is that the relation between friendship and *aretē* is limited to *aretological* friendship at the expense of narrowing the meaning of *aretē* to the human one. The second possibility is that every kind of friendship is considered as a functional thing and, in consequence, defined by their proper function (e.g., FORTENBAUGH 1975, 51–62). From this point of view, all friendships are accompanied by appropriate *aretē* understood as “being good at something”, namely by *aretai* that ensure the perfect fulfillment of their proper function and, therefore, the achievement of the set goal by two persons in question.

Finally, it is worth noting the significant remarks made by Aristotle in *NE* VIII 8. He implies that friendship consists more in loving than in being loved (1159a 27), and that “to love a friend” is the *aretē* of friends (1159a 34–35). But “to love a friend” is for Aristotle “to wish and to do good things for friend’s sake (*ekeinou heneka*)” in accordance with the wording *ekeinou heneka* in the narrow sense (see section 2.1 point b) above). Nevertheless, the hedonistic friends love their friends, but not in this way—they love their friends “as another” and not “as a friend”. And it is the same with utilitarian friends. Furthermore, there is a reasonable suspicion that there is no mutual love in the relationship called “utilitarian friendship” or, at least, in some of their subtypes. For such a relationship is usually formal, namely a kind of association without emotional involvement of two sides in question. Thus, it is difficult to speak of “to love a friend” in their case. So if in *NE* VIII 1 1151a 1–2 Aristotle had in mind the *aretē* of friends mentioned in *NE* VIII 8 1159a 34–35, then the hedonistic friendship and the utilitarian one would not go along with it.

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ARISTOTLE ON THE REAL OBJECT OF *PHILIA* AND *ARETĒ*

Summary

In the opening remark of *Nicomachean Ethics* VIII 1 Aristotle notices that the next step would be a discussion of *philia*, since it is a certain *aretē* or is associated with *aretē* (NE VIII 1 1155a 1–2). This article is an attempt to determine how the real object of *philia* and *aretē* are related from Aristotle's point of view. The author performs a study into two sections. The first section is focused on the analysis of *aretē* and its various types, in particular the human one. The second section is concentrated on the typology of *philia*, namely friendship and its particular kinds. The author shows that the relation between *philia* and *aretē* can be described in two ways: if both *philia* and *aretē* play the crucial role in leading a *eudaimonic* life, then *philia* is the

aretological friendship and *aretē*—the human one, namely the whole consists of the *aretē* of character in the full sense and the practical wisdom on condition that the *aretological* friends equate *eudaimonia* with life focused on the political or practical activity, or even of the theoretical wisdom, providing that they identify it with the highest form of *eudaimonic* life, that is, the theoretical one. If, however, *philia* is to be a term said in many ways (*pleonachōs legetai*) and *aretē* is to be understood in a broad sense, that is, as “being good at something”, then *philia* can signify every kind of friendship, namely the *aretological*, the hedonistic and the utilitarian one, whereas *aretē*—qualification or skill that makes these friendships perform their functions well. The first possibility is that the relation between *philia* and *aretē* is limited to the *aretological* friendship at the expense of narrowing the meaning of *aretē* to the human one. The second possibility is that every kind of friendship is considered as the functional thing and, in consequence, defined by their proper function. From this point of view, all friendships are accompanied by appropriate *aretai*, namely by qualifications or skills that guarantee the perfect fulfillment of their proper function and, therefore, the achievement of the set goal by two persons in question.

Keywords: Aristotle; *aretē*; *eudaimonia*; *philia*; friendship; person of excellence.

O ZWIĄZKU MIĘDZY *PHILIA* A *ARETĒ* W UJĘCIU ARYSTOTELESA

Streszczenie

W uwadze otwierającej *Etykę nikomachejską* VIII 1 Arystoteles stwierdza, że „*philia* jest określoną *aretē* lub jest nierozłączna z *aretē*” (*EN* VIII 1 1155a 1–2). Celem artykułu jest interpretacja tego stwierdzenia, z podziałem na dwie części. W pierwszej autor przeprowadza badanie dotyczące *aretē* i jej różnych typów, w szczególności *aretē* ludzkiej. W drugiej bada pojęcie *philia*, czyli przyjaźń i jej poszczególne typy. Autor wykazuje, że związek pomiędzy *philia* i *aretē* można rozumieć na dwa sposoby: a) jeśli *philia* oraz *aretē* są rozpatrywane z punktu widzenia możliwości prowadzenia *eudaimonicznego* życia, to *philia* oznacza przyjaźń *aretologiczną*, a *aretē* — *aretē* ludzką; b) jeśli *philia* jest rozpatrywana jako termin wielorako orzekany (*pleonachōs legetai*), a *aretē* jako termin względny, czyli „bycie dobrym w czymś”, to *philia* oznacza każdy typ przyjaźni, czyli przyjaźń *aretologiczną*, hedonistyczną i utylitarną, a *aretē* — konkretną umiejętność lub skuteczność w działaniu charakterystycznym dla każdej z wymienionych przyjaźni. Zgodnie z a) związek pomiędzy *philia* i *aretē* ogranicza się do przyjaźni *aretologicznej*, ale kosztem zredukowania *aretē* do *aretē* ludzkiej. Zgodnie z b) związek pomiędzy *philia* i *aretē* dotyczy każdego typu przyjaźni, jako że każdy typ przyjaźni pozostaje w związku z przynależną do niej *aretē*, której praktykowanie skutkuje doskonałym spełnieniem jej funkcji, czyli niezawodnym osiągnięciem celu przez przyjaciół.

Słowa kluczowe: Arystoteles; *aretē*; *eudaimonia*; ludzka doskonałość; przyjaźń; *philia*.