

ARISTOTLE AND THE QUESTIONABLE MEAN-DISPOSITIONS

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It is well known that the *Eudemian Ethics*, the *Nicomachean Ethics*, and the *Magna Moralia* differ in their treatment of the so-called questionable or controversial¹ mean-dispositions. While the *Eudemian Ethics* groups together righteous indignation, shame or modesty, friendliness, dignity, truthfulness, and wittiness as emotional mean-dispositions (*pathêtikai mesotêtes*) which are without choice (*proairesis*) and so are not moral virtues (1233B16–18, 1234A23–25), the *Nicomachean Ethics* does not withhold choice from friendliness, truthfulness, and wittiness, but rather treats these dispositions as moral virtues concerned with human relations in speech and action (1108A11, 1126B11–12, 1127A20, 24, 1128B5–6). The *Magna Moralia* differs from both the *Eudemian Ethics* and the *Nicomachean Ethics* in leaving the issue open. It affirms that these controversial dispositions are praiseworthy mean-dispositions but postpones decision concerning whether or not they are moral virtues (1193A36–38).² The three ethical treatises, therefore, differ

N.B. Bibliographical abbreviations are given below, note 3.

¹ H. v. Arnim (*Topik* 89) speaks of the *sechs fragliche* mean-dispositions. F. Dirlmeier (*Eudemische* 350) refers to the *kontroverse Mitten*.

² R. Walzer (198) thinks that *MM* 1193A36–37: “whether these are virtues or not virtues,” concerns all the mean-dispositions as far back as *praotês* and not just the nearest six mean-dispositions. I agree with F. Dirlmeier (*Magna* 299) in so far as he opposes Walzer’s view and argues that the expressed hesitation of the *Magna Moralia* concerns mean-dispositions only as far back as *nemesis* (1192B18). H. v. Arnim (*Die drei* 130–32) thinks that the transitional sentence at *MM* 1190B7 is genuine and that after this transitional sentence a section has fallen out which may have distinguished between the different kinds of mean-dispositions. Such a previous distinction would render intelligible the vague reference of 1193A36, even though the transition from moral virtues to praiseworthy dispositions at 1192B18 occurs without comment. For my own part, I think the *Magna Moralia* is later than the *Eudemian Ethics* (in this I differ from Arnim and Dirlmeier) and that the brevity of 1193A36–38 is possible because the author of the

from one another in their treatment of the questionable mean-dispositions. This difference in treatment has already been the subject of considerable comment³ and has already been related to various views concerning the chronological order of the ethical treatises.⁴ There remains, however, a conceptual problem which is largely independent of chronological considerations and which has not, I think, received the attention it deserves.⁵ This problem may be expressed in the form

Magna Moralia assumes a knowledge of the Eudemean distinction between moral virtues and praiseworthy mean-dispositions.

³ The following constitutes a selection and not all the literature on the questionable mean-dispositions. These works are cited in abbreviated form.

E. Zeller, *Aristotle and the Early Peripatetics* (New York 1962) 428–29, note 1.

Sir Alexander Grant, *The Ethics of Aristotle* (London 1866) 2.84–94.

J. A. Stewart, *Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics* (Oxford 1892) 1.352–72.

J. Burnet, *The Ethics of Aristotle* (London 1900) 191–201.

H. v. Arnim, *Die drei aristotelischen Ethiken* (Wien 1924) 124–41; *Das Ethische in Aristoteles' Topik* = *SBWien* 205.4 (1927) 76–94.

R. Walzer, *Magna Moralia und Aristotelische Ethik* (Berlin 1929) esp. 198, 211.

P. Wilpert, "Die Wahrhaftigkeit in der aristotelischen Ethik," *Philosophisches Jahrbuch der Görresgesellschaft* 53 (1940) 324–38.

F. Dirlmeier, *Eudemische Ethik* (Berlin 1962) 349–65, esp. 349–51; *Aristoteles, Magna Moralia* (Berlin 1958) 298–310, esp. 298–302; *Aristoteles, Nikomachische Ethik* (Berlin 1960) 385–96; *Die Oikeiosis-Lehre Theophrasts* (Leipzig 1937) 40.

R. Gauthier and J. Jolif, *Aristote, L'Éthique à Nicomaque* (Louvain 1959) 2.304–24.

H. J. Kramer, *Arete bei Platon und Aristoteles* (Heidelberg 1959) 173–77.

⁴ The following scholars are representative of the different chronological views. Burnet (191) holds that both the *Eudemean Ethics* and the *Magna Moralia* are later than the *Nicomachean Ethics* and therefore speaks of the notion of moral virtue being narrowed and starved in the later treatises. Arnim and Dirlmeier hold that both the *Magna Moralia* and the *Eudemean Ethics* are earlier than the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Arnim and Dirlmeier differ in the following way. Arnim (*Topik* 90–94) thinks that the *Magna Moralia* expresses real doubt concerning the status of the six questionable mean-dispositions and that it is the *Eudemean Ethics* alone which decisively excludes them from the class of moral virtues. Dirlmeier (*Magna* 300–1) differs in thinking that *MM* 1193A36–38 expresses only apparent doubt and that the *Magna Moralia* and *Eudemean Ethics* agree in not classifying the questionable mean-dispositions as moral virtues. Walzer (210–11) thinks that the *Eudemean Ethics* is earlier and the *Magna Moralia* later than the *Nicomachean Ethics*. He sees the *Nicomachean* account as a refinement and deepening of the Eudemean position, while the *Magna Moralia* introduces a new emphasis in that moral virtue is based upon natural instinct. The six mean-dispositions which the *Eudemean Ethics* had labeled praiseworthy mean-dispositions become *aretê* simply by being joined to *logos*.

⁵ This is not to say that the problem—whether or not Aristotle has a satisfactory conceptual framework for handling the questionable mean-dispositions—has been altogether ignored. It has not. In particular I would refer to Dirlmeier (*Magna* 299–302, *Eudemische* 349–51), whose comments are penetrating and suggestive. Dirlmeier points out the difficulty in classifying indignation as a moral virtue (it does not

of a question: Does any one of the ethical treatises have the conceptual framework necessary for a satisfactory treatment of the controversial mean-dispositions? More precisely, can friendliness, dignity, truthfulness, and wittiness be classified comfortably either as moral virtues involving choice—this is the position of the *Nicomachean Ethics*⁶—or as emotional mean-dispositions like righteous indignation and modesty—this is the position of the *Eudemian Ethics*. I suggest that neither alternative is altogether happy and that the hesitation of the *Magna Moralia* may be due in part at least to an awareness that neither classification is satisfactory. What is needed, I think, is a third classification, a recognition of “character-traits”⁷ that do not involve choice and so are not moral virtues, and that are not directly related to emotions and so are not plausibly classified as emotional mean-dispositions.

Consider first the position of the *Eudemian Ethics*. Friendliness, dignity, truthfulness, and wittiness are grouped together with righteous indignation and modesty as emotional mean-dispositions (*pathêtikai mesotêtes*). Modesty and righteous indignation are clearly associated

seem to involve *proairesis* which is the mark of moral virtue) and asks whether truthfulness and wittiness are plausibly said to be *pathê*. According to Dirlmeier, it is at present impossible to show why, when, and in what steps Aristotle came to doubt whether or not his conception of moral virtue was applicable to the questionable mean-dispositions. What we need first of all is an analysis of the Aristotelian *Pathos-Lehre*. Here I agree with Dirlmeier. In the course of this paper I will follow his lead and draw upon the *Rhetoric's* account of emotion to elucidate Aristotle's conception of moral virtue and its relation to the questionable mean-dispositions.

⁶ The *Nicomachean Ethics* does not treat dignity; but with this qualification it is true to say that the *Nicomachean Ethics* classifies these questionable mean-dispositions as moral virtues involving choice.

⁷ I have borrowed the label “traits of character” or “character-traits” from R. S. Peters, *The Concept of Motivation* (London 1958) 5, 32; “More About Motives,” *Mind* 76 (1967) 92, 95; and N. Rescher, “Value and the Explanation of Behavior,” *The Philosophical Quarterly* 17 (1967) 133. In an earlier article (“Motives and Causes,” *Aristotelian Society Suppl. Vol.* 26 [1952] 156) Peters uses the label “personality-traits.” Whatever the label, we are concerned with dispositions that are exercised in pursuing a number of different goals in a particular sort of way. Character-traits, as these dispositions may be called, are not manifested in aiming at and choosing actions which either lead to or are instances of a particular goal, but rather in pursuing a variety of chosen goals in a particular way or manner. In the remainder of this paper I shall use the label “character-traits” to pick out this special class of dispositions. I shall speak of character-traits in the special sense pinned down by Peters and approved of by Rescher, not in the general sense in which G. Ryle (*The Concept of Mind* [New York 1961] 92) speaks of a motive as “a trait in someone's character.” See below, note 37.

with emotion. A modest man feels embarrassed or ashamed (*aischy-nesthai*, *EN* 1128B13, 27, 30) if he does something wrong. Similarly a righteously indignant man feels indignation and is said to be pained (*lupeisthai*, *EE* 1233B24, *MM* 1192B22–23) at unmerited success and misfortune. The *Rhetoric*'s treatment of individual emotions includes discussions of both shame (*Rhet.* 1383B11–1385A15) and indignation (*Rhet.* 1386B8–1387B15) and even relates indignation to morally good character (*Rhet.* 1386B11–12). It is, therefore, not surprising to find the *Nichomachean Ethics* classifying modesty and righteous indignation as "mean-dispositions in the emotions and concerned with the emotions" (*EN* 1108A31) and the *Eudemian Ethics* speaking of modesty and righteous indignation as emotional mean-dispositions (*EE* 1233B18). What is surprising is to find the *Eudemian Ethics* grouping the other four questionable mean-dispositions together with modesty and righteous indignation as emotional mean-dispositions. For friendliness, dignity, truthfulness, and wittiness do not seem to be directly associated with emotions in the same way that modesty and righteous indignation are related to emotions. They do not seem to be co-ordinated with particular *pathê* and so do not seem to fit the classification of *pathêtikai mesotêtes*.

There is, of course, a wide usage of *pathos* such that dispositions (*EN* 1145B5, *EE* 1221A13), and in general all psychic phenomena (*De an.* 430A3, 409B15), may be called *pathê*.⁸ Construing *pathos* in this broad sense, we might argue that there is no real difficulty involved in grouping the four mean-dispositions—friendliness, dignity, truthfulness, and wittiness—together with modesty and righteous indignation. *Pathos*, we might argue, has a wide usage, so that there is no serious difficulty involved in referring to all six mean-dispositions as *pathêtikai mesotêtes* (*EE* 1233B18) and in speaking of each as a *pathos* (*EE* 1234A27). This argument has a certain philological appeal and it may rescue the *Eudemian Ethics* from linguistic difficulties. But it does not meet the primary difficulty involved in the Eudemian treatment of the six questionable mean-dispositions; it does nothing to remedy the fact that the *Eudemian Ethics* has obscured an important

⁸ On this wide usage of *pathos*, see Burnet 291; R. D. Hicks, *Aristotle, De Anima* (Cambridge 1907) 177, 198, 474.

difference between kinds of mean-dispositions. By grouping friendliness, dignity, truthfulness, and wittiness together with modesty and righteous indignation, the *Eudemian Ethics* has failed to distinguish between dispositions which are and dispositions which are not directly related to an emotion. It has failed to pick out that class of mean-dispositions that are called *pathêtikai* not only because they are psychic phenomena but also and primarily because they are co-ordinated with particular emotions like shame and indignation.

It might be objected that I am assuming without justification a narrow and precise sense of *pathos* which the *Eudemian Ethics* could be expected to recognize and employ wherever relevant. My reply to this objection would be to point out that all three ethical treatises do employ *pathos* in a fairly well defined sense. All three ethical treatises agree in picking out three classes of psychic phenomena, *pathê*, *dynameis*, and *hexeis*, and in explaining *pathê* by an illustrative enumeration: appetite, anger, fear, confidence, envy, joy, friendly affection, hate, longing, emulation, pity, and generally that which is attended by pleasure or pain (*EN* 1105B21-23); anger, fear, hate, longing, emulation, pity, and such as is accustomed to be followed by pleasure or pain (*MM* 1186A12-14); spirit, fear, shame, desire, and generally that which in itself is usually accompanied by sensory pleasure or pain (*EE* 1220B12-14). While enumeration is not equivalent to precise definition, it must, I think, be admitted that all three treatises have a fairly clear idea of what belongs to this class of *pathê*. For the treatises are not setting forth some new classification of *pathê*, but rather employing a classification already developed in Plato's *Philebus* and refined in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*.⁹ The *Philebus*

⁹ It is likely that Aristotle first developed his views on *pathê* in his *Diairesis* and then incorporated these views, perhaps with revision and expansion, in the *Rhetoric*'s analysis of *pathê*. The treatment of *pathê* in the *Diairesis* was probably not confined to a simple enumeration or table as given in *EE* 1220B38-1221A12, but was full enough to include short descriptions as given in *EE* 1221A15-B3 and *EN* 1107A28-1108B10. On the *Diairesis* see Arnim, *Topik* 91-94, and Dirlmeier, *Eudemische* 242, 259, 356-57; *Magna* 300-2. That the *Rhetoric* contains a lengthy treatment of *pathê* is not surprising. By including an analysis of *pathê* within his rhetorical treatise, Aristotle is not only recognizing the importance of emotional appeal in actual rhetorical practice, but also following the lead of Plato (*Phaedrus* 271), who called upon the rhetorician to study the soul and its affections. See E. M. Cope, *Introduction to Aristotle's Rhetoric* (London 1867) 6; F. Solmsen, "Aristotle and Cicero on the Orator's Playing upon the Feelings,"

distinguishes three classes of mixed pleasures and pains: those which are altogether bodily such as itches and tickles (46DE); those which belong to both body and soul such as the feelings of a hungry or thirsty man who expects satisfaction (47CD); and those which belong entirely

CP 33 (1938) 394, 402-4; Aristotle, *Rhetoric and Poetics*, The Modern Library (New York 1954) xv-xvi; G. Kennedy *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (Princeton 1963) 18, 79, 85, 95; I. Düring, *Aristoteles, Darstellung und Interpretation seines Denkens* (Heidelberg 1966) 141. It might be objected that the *Rhetoric* disclaims precision and does not offer rigorous definitions, that the analyses and definitions of individual *pathê* given in the *Rhetoric* cannot be pressed and cannot be used except with great caution to elucidate material in the ethical treatises. (See Cope 11-14, Düring 139-40, 144-45, 148-49). It is certainly true that the *Rhetoric* explicitly disclaims exactitude in analysis and definition (1359B2-8, 1360B7-8, 1366A32, B24, 1369B31-32). Moreover, in one important case (*hêdonê*, 1369B33-35) the *Rhetoric* offers a definition that is rejected by the *Nicomachean Ethics*. But it is, I think, unreasonable to conclude that all analyses and definitions given in the *Rhetoric* are simply popular and do not represent Aristotle's own (or mature) view. (See G. Lieberg, *Die Lehre von der Lust in der Ethiken des Aristoteles = Zetemata* 19 [München 1958] 23-27.) Rather we should pay attention to the *Rhetoric*'s assertion that its analyses and definitions are sufficient (1366B24, 1369B31) and appropriate to the occasion (1359B5, 1366B24). In the absence of clear evidence to the contrary, we should treat particular analyses as if they were seriously advanced by Aristotle and should use them (with caution, of course) to help elucidate material in the ethical treatises. Toward this end we are encouraged by the fact that the *Rhetoric* describes itself as an offshoot of ethics (1356A20-27, 1359B8-12) and agrees with the *Ethics* in seeking truth roughly and in outline (EN 1094B20). In respect to the treatment of individual *pathê*, the following points may be made: (1) When Aristotle describes rhetoric as an offshoot of ethics, he is thinking explicitly of his analysis of individual *pathê* (1356A23-27). (2) Far from thinking his treatment of *pathê* popular and generally inaccurate, Aristotle thinks it accurate enough to permit practical success (1378A24-26). (3) There is no reason to think Aristotle ever shelved this treatment of *pathê*. While Book 2 may have been written during Aristotle's residence in the Academy, the mention of Deiopeithes (1386A14) indicates that Aristotle was still using and adding to this section of the *Rhetoric* at least as late as 341 B.C. (Düring 120, 124). (4) The *De anima* does not reject the *Rhetoric*'s analysis of anger. It merely (and predictably) suggests that this analysis does not go far enough. For after contrasting the natural philosopher's definition of anger with the dialectician's definition—and this latter definition may be identified with the *Rhetoric*'s definition (Cope 13, D. W. Hamlyn, *Aristotle's De Anima* [Oxford 1968] 80)—the *De Anima* goes on to suggest that neither definition is sufficient. A real *physikos* will construct his definition from both (403A24-B9). The definitions of individual *pathê* advanced in the *Rhetoric* are not, it seems, rejected. They are accepted and important, but need supplementing. We may, I think, quite properly use the *Rhetoric*'s analysis of *pathê* to get at Aristotle's conception of *pathos* and ultimately to elucidate Aristotle's ethical treatises. For a lengthy argument in favor of taking the *Rhetoric*'s analysis of *pathê* as a serious treatment that made important contributions to philosophical psychology, rhetorical theory, and ethical theory, see my article, "Aristotle's *Rhetoric* on Emotion," forthcoming in *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*.

to the soul such as "anger and fear and longing and grief and desire and emulation and envy and the like" (47E1-2). Here *pathê* such as anger and fear are clearly distinguished from the pleasures and pains of bodily affection. Itches and tickles, hungers and thirsts are *pathê*, but they are quite distinct from *pathê* like anger and fear. For itches and tickles, hungers and thirsts are bodily; they have a physiological cause.¹⁰ In contrast anger and fear are not bodily but mental. They do not depend upon bodily afflictions but upon an assessment of the situation.

This last point concerning assessment may be made clearer by a consideration of the *Rhetoric's* discussion of *pathê* "such as anger, pity, fear, and the like" (*Rhet.* 1378A21). "Concerning each emotion," Aristotle tells us (1378A22-24), "it is necessary to make a threefold division. Take, for example, anger; it is necessary to distinguish how angry men are disposed, at whom they are accustomed to be angry, and on what sort of grounds." Using anger as an example, Aristotle announces that his discussion of individual *pathê* will consider the condition of emotional men, the object of their emotion, and the grounds or reasons for their emotion. This programmatic statement is important because it indicates that Aristotle does not look upon this group of *pathê* as mere sensations, bodily or mental. For sensations do not have objects and do not have grounds which explain and justify them. Like Plato, Aristotle sees an important difference between *pathê* such as tickles and itches, hungers and thirsts on the one hand, and *pathê* such as anger and fear on the other. We do not normally ask at whom a tickle or pang of hunger is directed. Similarly we do not normally inquire about the grounds for a tickle or pang of hunger. Sensations such as tickles and pangs of hunger have causes¹¹ and are immediately experienced, but they are not directed at anything and are not explained and justified by grounds. With *pathê* such as anger and fear the case is different. They have objects and grounds, because

¹⁰ The mixed pleasures and pains experienced by a hungry or thirsty man are, of course, not only bodily but also psychic or mental. Such a man expects to be filled, he thinks that he will be replenished, and therefore is pleased. Nevertheless his condition necessarily involves bodily sensation: pangs of hunger or parched feelings of thirst. And the necessary involvement of these bodily sensations serves to differentiate this class of affections from emotions like anger and fear, which are psychic or mental, and do not necessarily involve bodily feelings.

¹¹ For the causes of tickling sensations and pangs of hunger, see *PA* 673A7-10, *Pr.* 949B26-36, 965A18-32.

they involve cognition. It is thoughts and beliefs, not sensations, which have objects and which provide grounds explaining and justifying *pathê* such as anger and fear.

Consider Aristotle's account of anger (*orgê*). This *pathos* is defined as "a desire for revenge accompanied by pain on account of an apparent slight to oneself or to one's own, the slight being unjustified" (*Rhet.* 1378A30-32). Having laid down this definition, Aristotle proceeds to draw certain necessary conclusions. "If this is anger," he says (*Rhet.* 1378A32-B1), "it is necessary that the angry man always be angry at some individual like Cleon but not man in general, and that he be angry because the individual has done or was going to do something to him or his own." Anger is necessarily (*Rhet.* 1378A33) directed toward an individual. Aristotle so conceives of anger that it is always (*Rhet.* 1378A33) directed toward a particular individual: being angry always involves being angry at someone. This insistence upon an object is unintelligible if anger is thought of as some kind of immediate sense experience similar to a tickling sensation or pang of hunger. It is intelligible if anger is so conceived that it involves cognition, the thought or belief that someone has committed an outrage. For Aristotle anger is by definition a desire for revenge on account of apparent insult (*Rhet.* 1378A31). An angry man necessarily thinks that some individual has done something to him (*Rhet.* 1378A32-B1) and has done it unjustly (*Rhet.* 1378A32, 1379B11-12). He must believe that something has happened and deem it an unjustified outrage. Anger, therefore, involves both the factual perception of some event and the negative assessment of this event. And whenever such perception and assessment are absent, then anger cannot be present. Aristotle makes this point in respect to retribution. As long as men think that their own actions are unjust and that their suffering is just, then they do not become angry. "For they no longer think their suffering unmerited; and anger, as we have seen, is this" (*Rhet.* 1380B17-18). An essential part of anger is thinking oneself mistreated, so that anytime this thought is not present, anger cannot be present. By definition being angry involves the appearance of insult (1378A31), the judgment that outrage has occurred (cf. *Topics* 127B30-32).

Aristotle gives a similar account of the other individual *pathê*. They involve thoughts and beliefs which give them direction. Fear

(*phobos*) involves by definition the appearance or thought of imminent danger (*Rhet.* 1382A21–22), so that a frightened man is always afraid of something. If a man does not think himself threatened by imminent danger, if he does not assess his situation negatively, then he is not frightened. On this point Aristotle is quite clear: “If fear is associated with the expectation of suffering something destructive, it is obvious that fear is not felt by persons who do not think anything can befall them. . . . It is, therefore, necessary that fear is felt by persons who think that they can suffer something, and that they fear those persons on account of whom and those things which and at those times when they think they can suffer” (*Rhet.* 1382B29–35). The obviousness (*Rhet.* 1382B30) and the necessity (*Rhet.* 1382B33) are logical. Aristotle so conceives of fear that it necessarily involves certain thoughts or beliefs which give the emotion direction. Similarly Aristotle conceives of shame (*aischynê*) in such a way that it involves both thought and object. Shame is defined as a pain or disturbance concerning present, past, or future evils which appear to bring discredit (*Rhet.* 1383B12–14). From this definition it is said to follow necessarily that a man is ashamed of those evils which are thought disgraceful either to oneself or to those for whom one cares (*Rhet.* 1383B16–18). Here again the necessity (*Rhet.* 1383B16) is logical. Aristotle conceives of shame in such a way that an ashamed person necessarily thinks of or imagines the occurrence of some evil. So much is shame the thought or imagination of something disgraceful that on one occasion Aristotle says simply that shame is *phantasia* concerning disgrace (*Rhet.* 1384A22). Shame, then, always involves the thought or imagination of disgrace. And this thought or imagination gives shame direction, makes it intelligible why an ashamed man is said to be ashamed of something.

This regular involvement of cognition and objects serves to mark off *pathê* like anger, fear, and shame from *pathê* like tickles and pangs of hunger. It also serves to mark off these *pathê* from *pathê* like depression and other non-directed moods.¹² For a man can be and

¹² In addition to being in a depressed mood, men can be in a variety of other moods, such as a jovial mood, a frivolous mood, a sullen mood, or a bored mood. On moods in general see G. Ryle (above, note 7) 98–104. Not every modern philosopher thinks that a mood like depression is non-directed or without an object. A. Kenny (*Action, Emotion and Will* [London 1963] 60–61) argues that cases of pointless depression are

frequently is depressed without being depressed at anyone or anything and without having any grounds which serve to explain and justify his depression. He may simply have eaten or drunk too much the previous night and so feel low and depressed. His depression can be explained by reference to his intemperance, but such an explanation does not give grounds for, but rather the cause of, his depression. Indeed, the man need not remember that he ate or drank too much the previous night. He may have no idea why he feels depressed and yet be absolutely certain that he is depressed. Of course, sometimes a man can say why he is depressed. He may say that he is depressed because of a personal or business failure. Here his depression does involve thought and assessment and is explained by grounds. But this case of depression is no more central or standard than cases of depression which lack such cognitions and grounds. Depression and other similar *pathê* are not primarily distinguished by such cognitions and grounds and so are distinct from *pathê* like anger, fear, and shame, which always have grounds and objects because they always involve an assessment of the situation.

After emphasizing the involvement of perception and assessment in anger, fear, shame, and other similar *pathê*, we should, I think, remind ourselves that these *pathê* are not simply forms of judgment. Aristotle recognizes that fear and anger have a cognitive core but he does not reduce them to this cognitive core. When men become emotional, they not only make judgments (*krinein*) but also are affected (*paschein*). Frequently this affection takes the form of bodily disturbance. Fear, for example, is defined as a pain or disturbance (*tarachê*) resulting from the appearance of imminent danger (*Rhet.* 1382A21-22). When a man perceives or imagines danger and becomes frightened, he is affected in various ways: the region around his heart becomes turbulent (*De an.* 432B31-433A1), there occurs a drop in the temperature

not without objects. When a man is depressed and things seem black for no particular reason, then the things that seem black are the object of depression. Kenny's argument is criticized by J. Gosling, "Emotion and Object," *The Philosophical Review* 74 (1965) 491-98. See also I. Thalberg, "Emotion and Thought," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 1 (1964) 46-47, 50, reprinted in *Philosophy of Mind*, ed. S. Hampshire (New York 1966) 204-6, 214, and J. Benson, "Emotion and Expression," *The Philosophical Review* 76 (1967) 350. For a humorous illustration of just how pointless depression can be, see *Peanuts*, October 7, 1968.

of his body (*Rhet.* 1389B32), his complexion becomes pale (*EN* 1128B13-14). Similarly shame, indignation, and envy are all said to be some kind of disturbance (*tarachê*, *Rhet.* 1383B13, 1386B18, 23). When men become ashamed they not only think that they have done something disgraceful but also turn red (*EN* 1128B13). And when men become angry, they not only imagine themselves insulted but also suffer bodily disturbance such as a boiling of blood around the heart (*De an.* 403A31-B1, cf. 403A21-22). Moreover, emotions affect a man's reason and judgment. Angry men, for example, find it difficult to deliberate (*Pol.* 1312B25-34). They are overcome by the thought of outrage and become so angry that they cannot reflect or deliberate further. Indeed it is for Aristotle a general principle that emotion affects judgment, that on account of emotion men so change as to differ in judgment (*Rhet.* 1378A19-20). The perceptions and assessments involved in emotion act on a man so as to disturb (further) judgment. A juror who sees the defendant as an outrageous individual will be angry at the defendant and will fail to see evidence relevant to a fair verdict. Likewise a juror who deems the defendant an unworthy sufferer and feels pity for him will have his mind closed to damaging evidence. In general, the appraisal of an individual or situation as agreeable or disagreeable (that is, the assessment involved in emotion) clouds a man's mind so that he will overlook features relevant to a particular decision.

Our investigation has succeeded in picking out several features which characterize those *pathê* that are listed in the ethical treatises and discussed in the *Rhetoric*. There are, of course, differences between the members of this class of *pathê*. One of these differences, the involvement of intentional action, will be considered later. But we have, I think, discovered enough common features to form a fairly clear idea of what kind of *pathos* belongs to this class. It is the kind of *pathos* that involves a perception and assessment of the situation and so is characterized by an object and by grounds, and that affects a man both by bodily disturbance and by clouding his judgment. Roughly speaking, it is the kind of *pathos* that in English we frequently call an emotion.¹³ Tickles and pangs of hunger and also depression do not

¹³ The English word "emotion" has, of course, a variety of usages. Ryle ([above, note 7] 83-115) has used emotion as an inclusive term to cover inclinations (motives),

qualify as members of this class of *pathê*. Anger, fear, and shame do qualify. Pity, indignation, and emulation also belong to this class. But does the class include any *pathê* which can be plausibly assigned to the four controversial mean-dispositions: friendliness, dignity, truthfulness, and wittiness? For three of the four mean-dispositions I think the answer is negative.

Consider truthfulness (*alêtheia*).¹⁴ Is there any emotion similar to anger or fear which can be plausibly assigned to this mean-disposition?¹⁵ Apparently not. While we speak of good-tempered men "feeling" anger on the right occasions and courageous men "feeling" frightened when they ought to feel frightened, we do not normally speak of truthful men "feeling" anything at all. We do not correlate truthfulness with veracious feelings. We do not normally speak of veracious men as emotional and we do not normally say that truthful men respond veraciously on the right occasions. Truthful men speak and

moods, agitations (commotions), and feelings. In contrast, E. Bedford ("Emotions," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 57 [1956-57] 281-304, reprinted in *Essays in Philosophical Psychology*, ed. D. Gustafson [Garden City, N.Y. 1964] 77-98) has used "emotion" quite narrowly, emphasizing the cognitive core and largely disregarding the passive side. R. S. Peters ("Emotions and the Category of Passivity," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 62 [1961-62] 117-34) has opposed Bedford's analysis and argued that we use "emotion" primarily to describe something which happens to man, an affection which comes over and (frequently) disturbs a man. For my own part I think it quite natural to use "emotion" to signify the complex phenomenon of perception and assessment conjoined with bodily and mental affection. It is in this sense that I will continue to use "emotion" in the rest of the paper, and it is in this sense that I think the English term "emotion" comes close to being an adequate label for the class of *pathê* that is discussed in the *Rhetoric* and associated with moral virtue in the ethical treatises. I say "comes close" because I have doubts whether finding something funny can be called without oddness an emotion. See below, notes 20 and 22.

¹⁴ The *Nicomachean Ethics* 1126B14 (cf. 1108A16-19) says that this mean-disposition lacks a name. But *EN* 1108A20 employs the label *alêtheia*. See also *EE* 1221A6, *MM* 1193A28, and P. Wilpert (325-26), who notes that the second book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* introduces names, including *alêtheia*, which are not known to the fourth book. Wilpert asks whether chronological conclusions can be drawn from this difference. He suggests that since the table in the *Eudemian Ethics* mentions *alêtheia* (1221A6), this label was already used by the Academy to signify the virtue of truthfulness. Dirlmeier (*Eudemische* 350, 357) thinks that *EN* 2.7 represents a middle period between the *Eudemian* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

¹⁵ See Dirlmeier, *Eudemische* 351, and also Bedford ([above, note 13] 294, reprint 90) who is probably influenced by the *Nicomachean* analysis when he says that the overlap between virtues and emotions is not complete and that veracity is not connected with an emotion.

act in a particular way. While the boaster claims to possess more than he really does possess and the dissembler pretends to possess less, the truthful man will do (*poiêsei*, *MM* 1193A34)¹⁶ neither of these things. He will claim neither more nor less than he really possesses. He will speak the truth, owning up to what he possesses and revealing what he knows. He is disposed to act and speak in an honest and straightforward manner; he is not disposed to respond emotionally, to feel veracious on the proper occasions.

Similarly friendliness and dignity do not seem to be related to particular emotions. Friendliness (*philia*)¹⁷ seems to be an especially clear case. None of the ethical treatises mentions a particular emotion.¹⁸ The *Magna Moralia* connects friendliness with action and discourse (*MM* 1193A21), and the *Nicomachean Ethics* says that friendliness differs from friendship in that it involves no emotion or affection (*pathos*)

¹⁶ Truthfulness is connected with action (*poiein*, *prattein*) and not with affection (*paschein*). Cf. *EN* 1126B24, 27, where truthfulness is related to life and discourse, speaking and acting. The failure of the *Magna Moralia* to mention an emotion in connection with truthfulness is, I think, especially indicative of the difficulty involved in finding a plausible emotion. The *Magna Moralia* shows a special interest in emotions. It criticizes Socrates for doing away with emotion and moral character (1182A22–23), explains virtue as a mean-disposition in respect to emotion (1186A33–34), and introduces the discussion of individual virtues with the statement that for each virtue the relevant emotion must be specified (1190B7–8 [This introductory remark may, of course, be the work of a later hand attempting to fill a lacuna. See above, note 2]). But when the *Magna Moralia* comes to treat truthfulness it does not name an emotion. Even more striking is the failure to name an emotion at 1186A24–27. After explaining dispositions by reference to emotions and explaining a good or mean-disposition by reference to the particular emotion of anger (1186A16–24), the *Magna Moralia* introduces truthfulness to illustrate further the idea of a mean-disposition. But now no emotion is mentioned, unless pretending to possess more or less than one has is to be considered an emotion. But such pretensions do not seem to be emotions like anger and fear. They do not seem to depend on an assessment of the situation and do not seem to involve affection (*paschein*). Apparently the author of the *Magna Moralia* has lapsed. In a section which is concerned with moral virtue as a mean-disposition in respect to emotion (*MM* 1186A16–17, 33), he introduces truthfulness to illustrate the idea of a mean-disposition, overlooking or ignoring the fact that truthfulness is not tied to an emotion.

¹⁷ The *Nicomachean Ethics* (1126B19–20) says that this mean-disposition has never been given a name, but it is especially like *philia*. Earlier, at 1107B28, the term *philia* is used after a warning that many of the social virtues lack a name (1107B17). See above, note 14.

¹⁸ The *Eudemian Ethics* 1233B31 mentions *epithymia*. But the *epithymia* belongs to the befriended party, not to the friendly man. Moreover, here *epithymia* does not denote a particular emotion. It is used quite generally for the desires and wishes of another man with whom one interacts socially.

for those with whom one associates. It is not because he loves or hates that a friendly man takes everything as he ought, but because he is the kind of man he is (*EN* 1126B19–25). Friendliness, then, is not connected with a particular emotion but is a mean-disposition according to which men act in a particular way, men put up with and refuse to put up with the right things in the right manner (*EN* 1126B18–19). Similarly, dignity (*semnotês*) does not appear to be associated with a particular emotion. The dignified man does, it is true, make conscious or unconscious assessments. Unlike the self-willed man who despises (*kataphronêtikos*, *EE* 1233B36) everyone, the dignified man treats people according to their merit. His behavior, therefore, involves assessment, which is one of the components of emotional response. But he does not seem to be affected in any particular way. When he acts he does not normally feel or suffer (*paschein*) anything. Rather he acts in a particular manner. In contrast with the obsequious man who consorts with everyone in every way and under every circumstance (*MM* 1192B34–35), the dignified man consorts with worthy persons in a dignified manner.¹⁹

While truthfulness, friendliness, and dignity do not seem to be closely related to particular emotions, wittiness (*eutrapelia*) does seem to be related to an emotion, namely the emotion of finding something laughable. We may mark off this emotion from emotions such as fear and anger by calling it an aesthetic emotion,²⁰ and we may mark off the

¹⁹ It might be suggested that *semnotês* is to be connected with pluming and priding (*semnynesthai*, *MM* 1195B19) oneself on something. In English such persons are said to feel pride and sometimes are said to be blinded by pride. Feeling proud can affect a man's judgment. We might, therefore, postulate an emotion of feeling pride (*semnynesthai*). It would be like indignation and envy and unlike anger and fear in that it is not especially characterized by vigorous and goal-directed action. Still, this postulated emotion does not seem to be directly related to the mean-disposition of *semnotês*. The *semnos* does not so much feel pride properly as speak and act in a dignified manner. Obviously a man can speak and act in a dignified manner on a variety of occasions when it would be very odd to speak of feeling pride in the proper way. See *Rhetoric* 1408A10–19, where Aristotle distinguishes between language which is appropriate because it corresponds to its subject and language which is appropriate because it expresses emotion. Speaking in a dignified manner (*semnôs*, *Rhet.* 1408A13) belongs to the former category and is clearly distinguished from the language of anger, pity, and similar emotions.

²⁰ On finding something laughable as an aesthetic emotion, see D. H. Munro's article on "Humor" in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. P. Edwards (New York 1967) 90–93. Munro gives a brief but clear historical survey of the principal theories of humor. One of these theories, namely Hobbes' theory that we laugh because we

mean-disposition of wittiness from mean-dispositions such as courage and good temper by calling it a social virtue,²¹ but we can, nevertheless, relate wittiness to enjoying a joke in much the same way that we relate courage to fear and good temper to anger. Being witty is having a proper disposition toward the laughable (*geloion*) and in particular toward jeering abuse (*skômma* and its cognates, *EN* 1128A7, 14, 25, 30; *MM* 1193A12, 13, 14, 16, 18; *EE* 1234A16, 22). The witty man is characterized both by a readiness to enjoy a good joke, even when the joke is directed toward himself, and also by the ability to make a good joke (*EN* 1128A1, 18, B1; *MM* 1193A17-19; *EE* 1234A14-17). Insofar as the witty man responds properly to the laughable, wittiness is certainly to be connected with a particular emotion.²² For in responding to the laughable, the witty man perceives a joke and is affected with laughter; he assesses positively a witty thrust and is more or less overcome with good humor.²³ But the relationship of wittiness to emotion is not confined to taking a joke. It also includes making

feel superior (Hobbes defines the passion of laughter as "sudden glory arising from some sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmity of others, or with our own formerly," *Human Nature* in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes*, ed. W. Molesworth [London 1840] 4.46), seems closely related to the emotion of a witty man. For, as we shall see, wittiness is educated insolence and insolence involves being pleased by the thought of one's own superiority (*Rhet.* 1389B11-12, 1378B 23-28). We may also compare Alexander Bain, *The Emotions and the Will* (London 1859), who devotes a chapter to the "emotion of power" 145-62 and argues that feelings of superiority tend to involve outbursts of laughter (153, cf. 282). See further Plato (*Philebus* 48A-50B), who points out that men laugh at the ridiculous qualities of their friends, that men take malicious joy in the harmless defects of another. For general remarks on Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, and the comic, see J. W. H. Atkins (*Literary Criticism in Antiquity* [Cambridge 1934] 1.57, 101-2.)

²¹ Wittiness is frequently grouped together with truthfulness and friendliness as a social virtue concerned with one's deportment in society. See Grant 84, 86; Stewart 1.352-53; Dirlmeier, *Nikomachische* 385, *Eudemische* 350; Gauthier and Jolif 2.304; E. M. Cope, *The Rhetoric of Aristotle* (Cambridge 1877) 2.150; M. A. Grant, *The Ancient Rhetorical Theories of the Laughable* (Madison 1924) 26.

²² In English it is odd to speak of laughing, and in general finding something funny, as an emotion. But philosophers do speak of this response as an aesthetic emotion. Moreover, the issue with which we are concerned is whether or not finding something laughable enjoys the marks of emotional response and so qualifies as a *pathos* in the sense already explained.

²³ Just as anger, fear, and similar emotions can affect a man against his "better judgment," so laughter can "get the better of" a man. See *EN* 1150B10-12 for the example of Xenophantus, who tried to hold back his laughter but finally succumbed to loud guffaws.

seemly jokes. For Aristotle is primarily concerned with ordinary persons who enjoy poking fun at other people. He is especially concerned with people who find themselves funny, who assess their own remarks in a positive way and are affected by laughter at their own jokes. He is not concerned with professional comedians who can go through their act without being affected.²⁴ On the contrary, he is interested in everyday men who enjoy both making and hearing jokes and who are apt to make the same kind of jokes that they enjoy hearing (*EN* 1128A28–29).²⁵

A brief look at the *Rhetoric* will help to make more precise what kind of emotion may be associated with wittiness. At the end of the chapter on youthful character, the *Rhetoric* (1389B11–12) tells us that young persons are lovers of laughter and so lovers of wit (*phileutrapeloi*). For wittiness (*eutrapelia*) is educated insolence (*hybris*). This reference to educated insolence is important. It recalls the statement of the *Nichomachean Ethics* that the jesting of an educated man differs from that of an uneducated man (*EN* 1128A21–22)²⁶ and provides a clue for better understanding the kind of cognition which is especially involved in the emotion of a witty individual. Insolence, we have already

²⁴ Aristotle does recognize a class of *eutrapeloi* who are well versed in pleasant pastimes and so find favor with tyrants (*EN* 1176B13–16). Some of these *eutrapeloi* may come close to being professionals, but it seems likely that they remain ordinary persons insofar as they enjoy and laugh at their own jokes. Still, these “semi-pros” are not the persons with whom Aristotle is primarily concerned when he discusses the mean-disposition of wittiness. He is concerned with educated gentlemen who enjoy good-humored pokes and thrusts at one another. See *Rhet.* 1419B7–9, where it is said that irony better suits the gentleman than buffoonery, for the ironical man makes jokes to amuse himself, in contrast with the buffoon who tries to please another. While the ethical treatises do not explicitly associate wittiness with irony and so do not draw this same distinction, the ethical treatises are in general agreement with the *Rhetoric* concerning a gentleman’s independence. If wittiness is to be the virtue of an Athenian gentleman, it cannot be the disposition of a flunky at court whose position depends upon the favor of a superior. On *Rhet.* 1419B7–9 see M. A. Grant (above, note 21) 28–29.

²⁵ Dirlmeier (*Eudemische* 351) asks: “Und wem wäre sofort plausibel, dass die Aufrichtigkeit ein pathos ist oder gar die Gewandtheit, wo doch die Intelligenzleistung im Vordergrund zu stehen scheint?” Dirlmeier is certainly correct to emphasize the intellectual or cognitive side of wittiness (Gewandtheit), but this does not show that wittiness is not a *pathos*, or more precisely a mean-disposition in respect to a *pathos*. On the contrary we have seen that the *pathê* in question all involve cognition as well as affection or disturbance. Finding something funny seems to satisfy both criteria, and therefore qualifies as a *pathos* to which wittiness can be related.

²⁶ Gauthier and Jolif 2.317.

been told (*Rhet.* 1378B14-15), is a kind of slighting. It is doing and saying things that cause shame to some other person, not in order that anything may happen to oneself or because anything has happened, but rather for the pleasure involved in doing and saying such things. And the cause of pleasure to insolent men is that they think themselves superior to others when they treat them poorly (*Rhet.* 1378B23-28).²⁷ In other words, insolent men are delighted because they deem their position to be one of superiority, and witty men enjoy themselves because they are insolent. Of course their insolence is not crude; it is educated so that they do not abuse and make fun of other persons in an unseemly way. But with this qualification concerning seemliness, it is correct to say that the witty man delights in superiority. Poking fun at another person, he sees himself as a superior individual and expresses his delight in smiles and laughter. The witty man laughs because he sees himself in a position of superiority and is overcome with delight. He also laughs at the thrusts and jabs of another person because he is educated. He has learned to appreciate the one-upmanship of other gentlemen. Instead of feeling ashamed or angry when he is the victim of a clever barb, he laughs out of sympathy with the triumphant party. Unlike the boor who becomes angered whenever he is the object of a jest (*MM* 1193A13-15), the witty individual appreciates the success of the other party and smiles or laughs or in some other way expresses his delight.

Wittiness, it seems, can be associated with an emotion. So long as wittiness is primarily associated with jeering abuse, it seems that wittiness, like modesty and righteous indignation, is properly described as an emotional mean-disposition (*EE* 1233B18). But it should be noticed that this is a considerable restriction upon the sphere of *eutrapelia*. Thucydides (2.41.1) conceived of *eutrapelia* very widely when he made Perikles say that each Athenian could with grace and versatility (*eutrapelôs*) show himself self-sufficient in the most varied kinds of activity. Isocrates (*Antidosis* 296) restricted *eutrapelia* to the sphere of discourse, but still conceived of it quite generally when he argued that

²⁷ The insolent man's pleasure in thinking himself superior is only a particular case of what is a general phenomenon. See *Rhet.* 1371A32-34, where we are told that victory is pleasant, not only for persons who love to win but for everyone. For there arises an idea of superiority which all persons more or less desire. Cf. *Rhet.* 1389A12-13. See the notes of Cope (above, note 21) 1.210, 2.18-19, 143.

Athens had become the school of able orators for a number of reasons, including Athenian versatility (*eutrapelia*) and love of letters. Construed quite generally, *eutrapelia* is a kind of versatility or dexterity (*epidexiotês*, EN 1128A17, cf. 33) which includes, but is not restricted to, jeers and jests. It is necessary wherever people interact. The physician needs it in talking to his patients,²⁸ and so do a variety of other persons in many situations which do not seem to involve emotional response. Construed generally *eutrapelia* is a kind of social tact which manifests itself in emotional and in non-emotional situations; construed narrowly, it is a kind of wittiness which manifests itself whenever people are amused and laugh at clever barbs and jests.

Construed narrowly, *eutrapelia* or wittiness can be associated with an emotion in much the same way that modesty and righteous indignation are associated with emotions. It can be called an emotional mean-disposition in the same sense as modesty and indignation. But construed widely, *eutrapelia* is not tied to a particular emotion and so joins truthfulness, friendliness, and dignity in forming a class of mean-dispositions that are not closely related to emotions and that cannot be called *pathêtikai mesotêtes* in the same way that modesty and righteous indignation are called by this label. It would seem, then, that the *Eudemian Ethics* has joined together some unlikely bed-fellows, and that the *Nicomachean Ethics* has done well to draw a distinction between mean-dispositions that are concerned with human relations in speech and action (EN 1108A11) and mean-dispositions in emotions and concerning emotions (EN 1108A31). By including wittiness together with truthfulness and friendliness in the class of mean-dispositions concerned with human relations, the *Nicomachean Ethics* may be said to recognize tacitly the wider usage of *eutrapelia* without denying that it is frequently related to an emotion. The *Nicomachean* analysis, it may be argued, recognizes both similarity and difference between *eutrapelia* on the one hand and truthfulness and friendliness on the other. By grouping together the three mean-dispositions, it allows that

²⁸ The Hippocratic treatise on *Decorum* states that a doctor must possess ready wit (*eutrapelia*), for a dour manner (*austêron*) is repulsive both to the healthy and to the sick (Chap. 7). Unfortunately the date of this little treatise is disputed. It may be as early as 350 B.C., but more likely it is after 300 B.C. See W. H. S. Jones, *Hippocrates*, Loeb edition (London 1923) 2.269-71.

eutrapelia is like truthfulness and friendliness in that it may be manifested in a variety of situations apart from emotional response. By emphasizing the role of *eutrapelia* in ensuring a proper enjoyment of jeering abuse, it allows that *eutrapelia* is different from truthfulness and friendliness in that it is closely associated with a particular emotional response.

In some respects, therefore the Nicomachean analysis is more satisfactory than the Eudemian analysis, and in these respects the *Nicomachean Ethics* may be said to represent an advance over the *Eudemian Ethics*. But this is not the end of the matter. There is one respect in which the *Eudemian Ethics* might be plausibly argued to represent an advance over the *Nicomachean Ethics*. This is the way in which the *Eudemian Ethics* groups the four mean-dispositions of truthfulness, friendliness, dignity, and wittiness together with the two mean-dispositions of modesty and righteous indignation, and withholds *proairesis* from all six mean-dispositions. The *Nicomachean Ethics* differs in that it treats three of the four mean-dispositions as if they were moral virtues quite similar to the virtues of courage, good temper, and the like. For just as courage and good temper are characterized by *proairesis* and goal-directed action, so according to the *Nicomachean Ethics* the mean-dispositions of truthfulness, friendliness, and wittiness are marked by *proairesis* and goal-directed action. Here, I think, the Nicomachean analysis cannot be called an advance. It has the merit of economy in that it brings all moral virtues under one pattern: it explains all moral virtues as goal-directed dispositions.²⁹ But this merit

²⁹ Aristotle analyzes moral virtue according to the general principle that each thing is defined by its goal (*EN* 1115B22). Moral virtue is an established disposition to aim at (*stochastikê*, *EN* 1106B15-16, 28) and to choose (*proairetikê*, *EN* 1106B36) noble action. Moral virtue is said to make correct the goal (*EN* 1144A8, 1145A5), to make choice correct (*EN* 1144A20). The courageous man, for example, chooses (*EN* 1117A5, 21) endurance as a noble goal. Like every virtuous man he chooses virtuous action for its own sake (*EN* 1105A31-32, 1144A13-20). This is not to imply that Aristotle's conception of *proairesis* is altogether clear. Sometimes Aristotle seems to restrict choice to means to the goal (*EN* 1111B4-1113A14), while at other times he seems to associate choice directly with the goal (*EN* 1105A31-32, 1115A7, 1152A17, and see Sir David Ross, *Aristotle* [London 1923] 200; Gauthier and Jolif 2.130, 195). It seems probable that Aristotle does not want to restrict choice to means that are conducive to or productive of the goal. He would also recognize a choice of component means (L. H. G. Greenwood, *Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, Book Six* [Cambridge 1909] 46-48, 53-55; D. J. Allan "The Practical Syllogism," in *Autour d'Aristote* [Louvain 1955] 325-40), so that a courageous man not only chooses means that are conducive to endurance but also chooses

is also a fault. By subsuming all virtuous mean-dispositions under this general pattern, it obscures the fact that truthfulness, friendliness, and wittiness (we may add dignity) are not exclusively or even primarily concerned with a man's goals. They are not primarily concerned with what a man chooses to do but rather with the manner in which he pursues his chosen goals.

Let me develop this point first by contrasting briefly mean-dispositions like good temper and courage with mean-dispositions like modesty and righteous indignation, and then by considering whether or not the four mean-dispositions of truthfulness, friendliness, dignity, and wittiness are naturally grouped together with good temper, courage, and other mean-dispositions that are marked by goal-directed behavior. We may begin with good temper, which is a mean-disposition in respect to the emotion of anger. This emotion, as we have already seen, is a complex phenomenon involving perception and assessment as well as some kind of bodily or mental disturbance. It also involves revenge as a goal. In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle mentions revenge in the definition of anger (*Rhet.* 1378A30) and states that when revenge appears impossible, anger is absent (*Rhet.* 1370B13). No one, we are told, aims at what appears to be impossible. The angry man is no exception; he aims at possible revenge (*Rhet.* 1378B2-4). Anger, then, is not an idle emotion indulged in by day-dreamers. It is, so to speak, practical. When a man becomes angry, he thinks revenge possible and aims at or intends³⁰ to seek revenge. He has a specific goal for

this act of endurance as an instance of noble action. But in either case his action is goal-directed. Courage, good temper, and the other moral virtues are conceived of as goal-directed dispositions that explain a man's actions by reference to the sorts of things at which he regularly aims and for which he regularly acts.

³⁰ In introducing the notion of intention, I am aware that there is disagreement among modern philosophers concerning the precise nature of this concept. Still there is one important analysis of this concept which seems to me to be closely related to Aristotle's analysis of anger and fear and which is helpful in elucidating Aristotle's thought. This analysis of intention is that of Stuart Hampshire. According to Hampshire, intending to do something is logically incompatible with believing that the action in question is impossible. "If I can be said to intend to achieve X, it must be true that I at least believe that there is *some* chance of my not failing in the attempt" (*Thought and Action* [New York 1960] 112). A soldier, for example, may try against all odds to break through the enemy line. But if his action is to count as a serious attempt, as an intentional act, he must think that there is some possibility of achieving his goal (*Freedom of the Individual* [New York 1965] 61-62). For an alternative view of intention see G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention* (Oxford 1958) 93, and I. Thalberg, "Intending the Impossible," *Australian Journal of Philosophy* 40 (1962) 49-56.

which he acts. Should it develop that revenge no longer appears possible, he abandons his intention to seek revenge and gives up his anger. The intention to take revenge is part of being angry, so that a man cannot think revenge impossible and at the same time be angry. His emotion is practical and involves goal-directed action.

Good temper is a mean-disposition in respect to this practical emotion.³¹ It is easy for a man to become angry (*EN* 1109A26-27) and it is natural for men to seek revenge (*EN* 1126A30). What distinguishes the good-tempered man from other men is that he becomes angry on the right occasions (*EN* 1125B31-32) and seeks revenge when he ought to. Compared with ordinary men he is forgiving and not vindictive (*EN* 1126A1-3). He does not have an indiscriminate preference for revenge. But he does have an established disposition or preference to revenge outrageous insult and so is said to choose (*Rhet.* 1382B2) revenge when insulted. Such a choice is not an idle wish. No one aims at a goal that he thinks is impossible (*Rhet.* 1378B3-4). The good-tempered man is no exception. He does not aim at or choose revenge when there seems to be no possibility of attaining revenge. For no one chooses (*proaireitai*) the impossible (*EN* 1111B25, cf. 1139B5-9). Choice (*proairesis*) is not of the impossible (*EN* 1111B20-21) but of that which is within a man's power (*EN* 1111B30). Morally virtuous men are characterized by choice because their disposition is practical. They are disposed to act for possible goals and not to collapse in futile dreams. Good-tempered men are not absorbed in impossible wishes. On the contrary, they are well disposed toward a practical emotion which involves goal-directed action. Confronted with outrageous insult, they choose revenge and manifest their choice in goal-directed action.

The courageous man is like the good-tempered man in being well disposed toward a practical emotion. In the case of the courageous man, this emotion is fear, which, as we have seen, involves the perception

³¹ Aristotle's concern with moral virtues related to practical emotions is reflected in his repeated assertion that moral virtue concerns emotion and action (*EN* 1104B13-14; 1106B16-17, 24; 1107A4-5; 1108B18-19; 1109A23, B30). In saying that moral virtue concerns emotion and action, Aristotle is not thinking of emotion and action as two distinct things. On the contrary, he is thinking primarily of practical emotions like anger and fear, which involve goal-directed action and which are related to good temper and courage, two paradigm cases of moral virtue.

of imminent danger as well as some kind of bodily disturbance. Fear also involves goal-directed behavior. When men are frightened they desire safety and intend to attain this goal. In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle makes this clear when he says that there must be some expectation of safety. For fear makes men deliberate and no one deliberates concerning the hopeless (*Rhet.* 1383A5-8, cf. *EN* 1112A33-34). Fear, like anger, involves a possible goal. Frightened men not only are disturbed by the appearance of danger but also intend to secure safety. What marks off the courageous man from other men is that the courageous man correctly assesses the situation and so seeks safety only on the proper occasions. Courage is a virtue on account of which men do (*praktikoi*, *Rhet.* 1366B11) noble deeds in dangerous situations. When the situation demands it, courageous men choose to endure. They prefer endurance as something noble or good in itself (*EN* 1115B12, 23; 1116A11, B31).

Courage and good temper are alike in that they are both associated with practical emotions and are both characterized by certain kinds of goal-directed action. They differ from modesty and indignation which are not associated with practical emotions. Modesty is associated with the emotion of shame. This emotion is like all emotions in that it involves assessment and some kind of disturbance or affection. It is by definition a pain or disturbance concerning apparent disgrace (*Rhet.* 1383B12-13). Shame, however, differs from practical emotions such as anger and fear in that it does not necessarily involve action. There is no class of actions with which shame is always connected; there is no goal for which ashamed men regularly act. Indeed, when a man is ashamed of some past deed, there may be no way to undo what has become an accomplished fact. The ashamed man may find himself unable to do anything. He simply suffers some kind of disturbance (*tarachê*, *Rhet.* 1383B13) and perhaps turns red (*EN* 1128B13). Shame, therefore, is not a practical emotion and modesty is not related to an emotion which regularly involves goal-directed action. Modest men do not choose to turn red on the right occasion. They do not choose at all. Rather they are overcome or suffer or are disturbed as the situation demands.

Righteous indignation is like modesty in that it is not connected with a practical emotion. The emotion of indignation involves the

thought of unmerited good fortune (*Rhet.* 1386B11, 1387A9). A man feels indignant when he deems another's success unmerited. But he need not act to be indignant. He may, for example, be disturbed because a newly rich person has attained high office (*Rhet.* 1387A22-23). He feels indignant at an accomplished fact which cannot be undone. He wishes that things were otherwise, but he does not act for an impossible goal. So the man that has the mean-disposition of righteous indignation feels indignant on the right occasions. But when unmerited success is irreversible, he does not engage in futile actions. He does not intend or choose (cf. *EN* 1139B5-9) to do anything. His emotional response is appropriate and may be said to manifest good character (*Rhet.* 1386B11-12), but it is not the response of moral virtue. For moral virtue involves choice and goal-directed action. Righteous indignation is not characterized by choice and action but by feeling disturbed at the sight of unmerited success.³²

Modesty and righteous indignation differ from courage and good temper in that they are not regularly associated with choice and goal-directed action. What about the four mean-dispositions of truthfulness, friendliness, dignity, and wittiness? They, too, I think, differ from courage, good temper, and similar mean-dispositions in lacking a close connection with choice and goal-directed action. Consider the mean-disposition of truthfulness. To call a man truthful is not primarily to indicate the sort of goal he regularly pursues. Rather it is to indicate the manner in which he does whatever he does.³³

³² Dirlmeier (*Magna* 301) contrasts the emotional response of a courageous man with the emotional response of indignation, and points out that feeling indignation cannot be construed as a *praxis*.

³³ Truthfulness is a character-trait, a disposition to act in a particular manner whatever the goal. Peters (*The Concept of Motivation* [above, note 7] 5) has pointed out that in explaining behavior we consider not only goals, but also norms or standards of social appropriateness. When men act, they not only aim at goals but also follow rules. They conform to standards or conventions. And when we call a man punctual or honest, we do not indicate the sorts of goals he is disposed to pursue but rather the type of regulation he imposes on his behavior. Of course, there are occasions when character-traits may account for a man's particular goal. When a rule or convention is likely to be broken, then a character-trait may explain the point of a man's behavior. If he is likely to be late, a punctual man runs in order that he may be on time. The point of his running is given by a reference to the man's punctuality. But most of the time character-traits do not indicate goals. They indicate the manner in which a man pursues a variety of goals, the rules he imposes upon his conduct in the pursuit of various ends.

Truthful men are "simple" (*haplous*, *EE* 1233B38) or straightforward; they exhibit their good character in pursuing a variety of goals. Hence a high-minded man may also be a truthful man (*EN* 1124B30). When we call a man high-minded, we indicate the sort of goal he pursues. We characterize him as one who aims at (*EN* 1123B19) or pursues exceptional honors (*EN* 1123B18–24, 1124A4–12). If we further characterize this high-minded man as a truthful individual, we do not indicate another goal but rather the manner in which he pursues honor. We suggest that he goes about his business openly, neither exaggerating nor understating his own qualities. Only in the presence of common people will he engage in understatement (*EN* 1124B 30–31). It would be unseemly for him to assert his true character before these people. But in general his manner is open and honest when he pursues honor, which is the goal of every high-minded individual.³⁴

Truthfulness, it seems, characterizes the way in which a man pursues his various goals. The same would seem to be true of friendliness and dignity. Friendliness is an agreeable manner. The friendly man goes about his business putting up with the right things in the right manner (*EN* 1126B18). He takes everything in the right way (*EN* 1126B24). Whatever a friendly man is doing, he does in an agreeable manner. He is said to be friendly not because he aims at a particular goal but because he pursues his several goals in a particular sort of way. Similarly a dignified person is marked not by a particular goal which he regularly chooses to attain but rather by a particular manner. Dignity is a manner compatible with a variety of intended goals. In pursuing honor high-minded men conduct themselves with dignity in the presence of eminent men (*EN* 1124B21). Their goal is honor; their manner is dignified. Men in power, the *Rhetoric* (1391A20–29) tells us, are ambitious and aim at great deeds. In addition, they are dignified rather than burdensome (*Rhet.* 1391A26). They pursue their goals in a manner which is not overbearing. Their behavior exhibits moderation and dignity—dignity being a mild and becoming form of gravity (*Rhet.* 1391A27–28).³⁵

³⁴ On the high-minded man as a truthful man, see Wilpert 328, 331, 336.

³⁵ Consider *authadeia*, which both the *Eudemian Ethics* (1233B34) and the *Magna Moralia* (1192B30) treat as a vice co-ordinate with the virtue of dignity. *Authadeia* is not marked so much by a particular goal as by a contemptuous and inconsiderate

Dignity, therefore, is a character-trait like friendliness. Both are manifested in the way in which a man pursues his various goals. The same may be true of wittiness. We have already noticed how *eutrapelia* can be used quite generally to signify versatility, so that wittiness can be construed as a kind of dexterity (*EN* 1128A17) which is manifested not only in humorous jest but also in the most varied kinds of activity. Wittiness is the opposite of harshness (*EE* 1240A2). It is a pleasing manner which finds expression in good natured abuse, in speech (*Isoc.* 4.296), in a doctor's bedside manner (*Hp. Decent.* 7), and in general whenever people act and speak with charming dexterity. Wittiness, then, would seem to be like friendliness, dignity, and truthfulness. All are character-traits concerned with the manner in which men act. When we characterize a man as truthful, friendly, dignified, or witty we do not indicate the sorts of goals that he tends to choose. Rather we indicate the way in which he acts, the type of regulation he tends to impose upon his behavior.

At this point we can imagine a threefold objection. First, there is a narrow sense of *eutrapelia* which is concerned with goals and which Aristotle was free to introduce into the *Nicomachean Ethics*. This is the sense of *eutrapelia* which Isocrates seems to recognize in the *Areopagiticus* (49) when he complains about persons that are witty and capable of abuse, whom Athenians used to consider unfortunate but now call naturally talented. Here, it seems, Isocrates grudgingly recognizes that specific sense of wittiness which Aristotle was soon to employ in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.³⁶ He recognizes that class of witty

manner. This is brought out quite clearly in Theophrastus' *Characters*, which defines *authadeia* as a kind of roughness (*apêneia* 15.1) and goes on to depict the *authadês* as a man of coarse manners. (The genuineness of the definition need not concern us, for in this particular character sketch the definition agrees with the description that follows.) The *authadês* answers questions in a rough and abrupt manner (15.2). His business manner is blunt (15.4). When he makes a contribution he does so ungraciously (15.7). He is impatient (15.9) and uncooperative (15.10). He is distinguished not by a particular goal but by a crude and inconsiderate manner. *Authadeia*, it seems, is a kind of rough or harsh manner and so can be construed as a vice co-ordinate with dignity. Both are primarily character-traits, not goal-directed dispositions. See P. Steinmetz (*Theophrast, Charaktere* [München 1962] 2.172-74), who points out that Theophrastus' characterization has greater affinities with the *Magna Moralia* than with the *Eudemian Ethics*; for both the *Characters* and the *Magna Moralia* construe *authadeia* rather narrowly as *Schroffheit in Worten*.

³⁶ See Dirlmeier, *Nikomachische* 392; Gauthier and Jolif 2.316.

men whom the *Rhetoric* seems to have in mind when it speaks of men that are dexterous (*Rhet.* 1381A33, cf. *EN* 1128A17, 33) in giving and taking a joke, men that have the same object in view as their neighbor and are capable of making and taking jokes in good taste (*Rhet.* 1381A 33–35). These witty men have a goal. They aim at pleasing one another by clever barbs and thrusts. The *Nicomachean Ethics*, it seems, does not invent a goal-directed disposition of wittiness. It simply focuses upon a particular, if narrow, sense of *eutrapelia*. Further—and this is the second objection—dignity cannot be introduced to criticize the *Nicomachean* analysis. For this disposition is not discussed in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, so that it is quite unfair to use this mean-disposition in adversely criticizing the *Nicomachean* analysis. Finally and thirdly, the *Nicomachean Ethics* does manage to treat truthfulness, friendliness, and wittiness as goal-directed dispositions. This is especially clear in the case of friendliness. For the friendly man is said to aim at avoiding pain and contributing pleasure (*EN* 1126B29–30, cf. 1127A7–8). He is said to be concerned with pleasures and pains in social relationships, to be the kind of person that will provide pleasure where proper but will choose to give pain when he ought to (*EN* 1126B30–33). Friendliness, therefore, is conceived of as a goal-directed disposition. Friendly men aim at giving pleasure and choose to do so whenever the situation permits. Similarly, it may seem, truthful men aim at and choose (cf. *EN* 1127B14) plain talk, while witty men aim at (cf. *EN* 1128A6) and choose raising a laugh on proper occasions.

We may, I think, admit the truth of all three points: the *Nicomachean Ethics* focuses on a particular sense of *eutrapelia*, it does not treat dignity, and it does manage to analyze all three mean-dispositions as goal-directed dispositions. But these points do not seem to add up to a serious objection; they seem to miss the mark. For I do not claim that truthfulness, friendliness, dignity, and wittiness cannot possibly be analyzed as goal-directed dispositions. Such a claim would show too little respect for human ingenuity. My claim is that these mean-dispositions cannot be analyzed adequately as goal-directed dispositions. They are not primarily goal-directed dispositions, but character-traits which govern the manner in which goals are pursued. To treat them as if they were simply or primarily goal-directed dispositions is to

overlook their very core and to confuse one kind of mean-disposition with another kind. It is to obscure important distinctions.³⁷

The *Nicomachean Ethics* emphasizes goal-directed action. It treats (correctly, I think) goal-directed behavior as the central or paradigm case of human action. Moreover, it recognizes that goal-directed behavior is frequently explained by reference to dispositions such as courage, good temper, liberality, and high-mindedness. When we explain a man's behavior by reference to his courageous disposition, we indicate that he has a preference for endurance, that his action is a particular manifestation of his general tendency to choose endurance as a noble goal. Similarly with high-mindedness. When we explain a man's action by calling the man high-minded (or ambitious), we indicate that he has an established disposition to pursue honor and that the action in question is a particular manifestation of this goal-directed disposition. Many dispositions are goal-directed and are useful in describing goal-directed behavior. But this does not mean that all dispositions are goal-directed, that all dispositions should be made to conform to this pattern. To think so is an error and to analyze all dispositions as goal-directed dispositions is, if not a complete confusion, at least an impoverishment of our conceptual framework. For not all dispositions are conceived of as goal-directed. We often describe

³⁷ For an interesting modern parallel see Ryle ([above, note 7] Chap. 4, 83-115) who includes a variety of different dispositions: e.g. vanity, avarice, patriotism, indolence, kindness, laziness, punctuality (85), interest in symbolic logic (87), philanthropy (93), ambition, loyalty to one's party, interest in entomology (99), affection, and sense of justice (110), all together under the general heading of motive or inclination. Ryle explains an inclination as "a proneness or readiness to do certain sorts of things on purpose" (106), as a tendency to aim at or try to do certain sorts of things (112). Ryle, it seems, construes inclinations or motives as goal-directed dispositions (avarice is "directed towards" [94] self-enrichment), so that the exercise of a particular motive will fit the pattern "he did X in order to Y" (91). This analysis is, I think, suitable for dispositions such as avarice and ambition, which do imply a goal. But it seems to be inadequate for dispositions such as punctuality and vanity. As Peters (*The Concept of Motivation* [above, note 7] 5) points out, punctual men are not marked by the pursuit of a particular goal but by pursuing various goals in a particular way. Ryle, it seems, is like Aristotle in construing character-traits as goal-directed dispositions, so that it comes as no surprise when Ryle connects his own analysis with that of Aristotle (112). Both philosophers (Ryle apparently following Aristotle) focus upon goal-directed dispositions and fail to distinguish character-traits which are not tied to any particular goal. On Ryle's analysis see Peters, "Motives and Causes" (above, note 7) 146-47, 156, and *The Concept of Motivation* (above, note 7) 32-33.

behavior by reference to character-traits, and in so doing we do not refer to a man's goals but rather to the manner in which a man pursues his goals. Character-traits are in this way significantly different from goal-directed dispositions. Yet the *Nicomachean Ethics* obscures this difference by treating truthfulness, friendliness, and wittiness as if they were goal-directed dispositions like courage and good temper.³⁸ In this respect the Eudemian analysis may seem to represent an advance over the Nicomachean analysis. For the *Eudemian Ethics* groups truthfulness, friendliness, dignity, and wittiness together with modesty and righteous indignation. It groups together those mean-dispositions that are not connected with a particular goal or a particular kind of goal-directed action and that are in this way different from mean-dispositions such as courage and good temper. This is not to say that the Eudemian analysis is satisfactory. We have already seen that it fails to distinguish between mean-dispositions that are connected with a particular emotion and mean-dispositions that are not. But it is to say that the Eudemian analysis is not in every respect inferior to and immature by comparison with the Nicomachean analysis. Neither analysis is satisfactory, so that the indecision³⁹ of the *Magna Moralia*

³⁸ It may be that the *Nicomachean Ethics* ignores dignity largely because this mean-disposition cannot be grouped together plausibly with dispositions that are goal-directed. Dignity is too clearly a way of "carrying oneself" whatever the goal. Arnim (*Die drei* 129) says that in the *Nicomachean Ethics* dignity totally disappears because one of the coordinate vices, *areskeia* (EE 1233B34-35) is grouped together with *kolakeia* as a vice opposed to the mean-disposition of friendliness (EN 1126B12). Arnim's remark is an observation about shifting terminology. But it is not adequate as an explanation of why the *Nicomachean Ethics* completely passed over the mean-disposition of dignity. Without ruling out other explanations, we can, I think, say that the considerable difficulties involved in construing dignity as a goal-directed disposition may have encouraged Aristotle to pass over this mean-disposition in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

³⁹ Walzer (211) thinks that the *Magna Moralia* is not so much hesitant as indifferent; for the position of the *Magna Moralia* is that all the praiseworthy mean-dispositions mentioned by the *Eudemian Ethics* become moral virtues simply by being connected with *logos*. Walzer may be correct. But if he is correct, then the *Magna Moralia* is open to the same criticism as the *Nicomachean Ethics*. For like the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the *Magna Moralia* conceives of moral virtue as a goal-directed disposition whereby men choose to do something either as an efficient means or as a component means to the goal (MM 1189A7-12, 25-26; 1190A8-33). If all praiseworthy mean-dispositions become moral virtues just like courage and good temper, then all praiseworthy mean-dispositions including truthfulness, friendliness, dignity, and wittiness become goal-directed dispositions and the difference between character-traits and goal-directed dispositions is obscured.

may be due in part at least to an awareness that neither mode of analysis is altogether happy.⁴⁰

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