Aristotle's Regard for the Affective Elements Of Moral Education

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Aristotle challenged the traditional forms of Greek moral education.[1] A model for the position Aristotle confronted appears in Plato's *Protagoras.* Aristotle's mentor there describes conventional moral training in the mouth of the philosopher Protagoras as a class of feelings. It is an unthinking disposition to respond assimilated from the attitudes of one's family.[2] Plato's protagonist, Socrates, disputes Protagoras' argument. Familial moral training dissatisfies Socrates both because of its unreliability and because of its failure to provide an account.[3]

Aristotle shared these Socratic concerns. Aristotle saw the problem of morality as a question of knowledge, of providing a procedure so one could explain and understand ethical matters. Aristotle, however, was aware of certain problems concerning Socrates' intellectualistic account of virtue via the craft analogy.[4] In seeking to avoid the latter's errors, Aristotle developed his own scheme of education that while dissatisfied with convention, recognized the importance of some of the traditional elements.

Aristotle's first task was to clarify the relationship between the rational and affective accounts of moral training. Because of the complexity of the real world, Aristotle believed that no program of technical indoctrination could ensure accuracy in the moral realm. He did not therefore conceive of education in morality as suited to a program of formal schooling. Unlike a craft, virtue demands seasoning.[5]

Just as importantly, Aristotle recognized knowledge as one of the significant elements in the moral life of man. Like Socrates, Aristotle conceived of ethics as a practical science. It is in part a study of means to achieve certain ends. Hence, his morality incorporates both cognitive and affective aspects.

A third component of Aristotle's moral philosophy surrounded certain ancestral beliefs which explained morality as due to heredity.[6] Interestingly, Aristotle agrees even with these beliefs, albeit in a much more refined manner. He retained the opinion that heredity determines some aspects of a man's behavior. Aristotle's final point of view thus forms a complex amalgam of each of these three elements: the affective, the rational, and the hereditary.

Affective Education

How does one acquire virtue? Anyone who has ever seriously perused this question is apt to fall into the same account as Protagoras. Virtue seems to be nothing more than a certain norm of behavior assimilated by one's relationships with family and friends.

The view suggests a skepticism about the final criteria of morality. If moral standards have no basis other than convention, then there is no reason why one set of standards should be judged as better than any other. Furthermore, there is no room for thought in morality—other than the recognition of its basis in convention.

Aristotle takes a different view. He admits that one's social relations play an important role in disposing one to virtue. However, the part relations play is something different from that suggested by Protagoras. Aristotle believes that one's relations do not instill virtue or evil. Rather, they dispose one to be able to discover these qualities in the world.

In the circumstances of human life there are qualities attributable to actions. These qualities can be described in terms of good and fine or of evil and coarse. If a person is of proper disposition, he can discriminate these attributes correctly. If he is of an improper disposition, he cannot.

One's disposition, the composition of one's soul, thus constitutes an important preliminary basis in becoming good. Experience, in the form of the affective training, molds this initial design. In order to explain why Aristotle believes this is so, it will be necessary to examine his description of the soul.

The Soul

Like Plato, Aristotle conceives of the soul as divided

into parts. The first division is between the nonrational and the rational. Each of these he divides into components. Of the nonrational, there are two subdivisions. The first is the vegetative. This component is common to all living things and is the cause of their nutrition and growth. The other is the appetitive. It is the element that is the abode of the desires. The appetitive element shares in reason. Though it is not the origin of reason, it nevertheless "listens to reason."[7]

The rational division of the soul Aristotle describes as having reason to the fullest extent. It is also two-fold. One part concerns the contemplation of unchangeable truths. The other is attentive to truths and objects subject to change (NE1139a4-11).

Knowledge is divided by Aristotle both with respect to the divisions of the soul and with respect to their objects. This lack of distinction between the act of knowing and the objects of knowing is done throughout the Aristotelian corpus.[8]

Aristotle describes five states of the soul by which the mind grasps truth. These are: craft (*techne*), scientific knowledge (*episteme*), practical knowledge (*phronesis*), wisdom (*sophia*), and understanding (*nous*). Craft pertains to productive activities in which the end aimed at is distinct from the action (NE 1140a9-15). Scientific knowledge grasps the things existing of necessity. It is the state of the soul from which theoretical or demonstrative truths derive (NE 1139b19-25). Practical knowledge is the class of doing, or practical activity. It belongs to the variable class of things in which the means is not different from the end (NE 1140b1-5). Practical knowledge is what discovers what is right in action and so makes it possible for desires to conform to reason by discovering ends and then relating means to ends (NE 1140b20-25). Wisdom is a combination of scientific knowledge and understanding. The highest of the virtues, wisdom is an activity of which man is capable because of something divine in his nature. Its objects are those things that cannot be other than what they are and so never change (NE 1141a16-b5). Understanding, Aristotle states, concerns the first and the last terms of an argument—those about which there is no rational account (NE 1140b31-1141a6).

There are many points of difference here between the Aristotelian and the Socratic ideas of knowledge. First, unlike Socrates, Aristotle recognizes that knowledge is of many types and that it does not fall under a single form. Further, he differentiates between theoretical and practical modes, each having its own level of exactitude. Whereas Socrates sought precision in all forms of knowledge, Aristotle realizes this is not always possible. The degree of precision will be determined by the field of study.

Aristotle does not identify knowledge with virtue. Whereas knowledge has the potential of correct or ignorant uses, right or sinister, virtue does not.[9] Wisdom, on the other hand, is most like virtue. Unlike knowledge, wisdom concerns both means and ends and is used only for good (NE 1144a1-35).[10]

One thus can mismanage one's books out of knowledge of accounting. This is possible because there is a higher branch of knowledge employing accounting. The same is not true for wisdom. It has no superior skill. One cannot through wisdom act unwisely.[11]

Another important distinction Aristotle makes about virtue is that it is not a capacity, but a state (*hexis*), (NE-1106a13). Thus wisdom, unlike cleverness or ability, avoids misuse because of its correct grasp of ends. This grasp proceeds not from another capacity that can be used well or badly, but from a state of character that cannot.[12]

Finally, Aristotle makes a distinction between a craft, which concerns making (*poesis*), and practical knowledge, which concerns doing (*praxis*). While morality is a practical science, it is different from craftsmanship in that it does not aim at a product apart from itself. Morality does not concern making, but doing. The action and the goal of the action are one. As our tennis sportsman plays for love of the game, a person does a moral action for the sake of the act. By this distinction Aristotle avoids the problem of inability to determine the end of moral actions, as was evident in Socrates' craft analogy.

The Soul and "The That"

With this description of the soul in place we can now explain how a moral disposition can be acquired. Man is not a wholly rational being, but has other traits as well. Within his psyche there is another element—the appetites. Since appetite is not rational, it cannot be convinced by rational argument. It "listens to reason" and can be swayed by reason, but it is only partially within the influence of rational power. There is no guarantee it will do what the rational power directs.[13]

This explains why Aristotle limited the scope of his moral enterprise. He did not believe, as Plato had assumed, that people may become moral upon the basis of mere argument. They are not entirely rational creatures. If they were, then arguments alone would be a sufficient moral persuasion. As it is, they are not. Consequently, if a person has improper appetites, no reasoning will be adequate to bring him to morality.

Thought concerns itself with good and the evil. But thought is not directly responsible for what one perceives as enjoyable. The appetites assume the latter role. The appetites cannot be changed abruptly. They are the product of nonrational motivation:[14]

Now if arguments were sufficient by themselves to make people decent, the rewards they would command would justifiably have been many and large, as Theognis says, and rightly bestowed. In fact, however, arguments seem to have enough influence to stimulate and encourage the civilized ones among the young people, and perhaps to make virtue take possession of a well-born character that truly loves what is fine; but they seem unable to stimulate the many towards being fine and good. For the many naturally obey fear, not shame; they avoid what is base because of the penalties, not because it is disgraceful. For since they live by their feelings, they pursue their proper pleasures and the sources of them, and avoid the opposed pains, and have not even a notion of what is fine and [hence] truly pleasant, since they have had no taste of it (NE1179b4-16).

The appetites involve the ends of moral action. They are what inspires the individual to take up the means in pursuit of ends.

Aristotle does not leave these ends to chance. Circumstance alone does not mold the objects of one's pursuits. They are open to training, albeit a different kind of training. The type of training molding the appetites focuses upon doing rather than thinking. It takes place by repeated actions upon the part of the individual. It is a style of education Aristotle describes as habituation.

This variety of knowledge is not adaptable to organized instruction. It does not accommodate a systematic program that can be understood before the fact. Experience is the only mode by which one can acquire it. The process begins with upbringing. In the habitual performance of good and fine actions one comes to recognize their merit. One has not learned yet the reasons for their worthiness, but only "that" something or other is to be done while other actions are to be avoided.[15]

Habit is thus the way we learn ***what*** are good and fine activities. When a child practices honesty under a variety of conditions, it learns the complexities of situations that constitute the moral end of honesty. It gains a capacity to discern honest from dishonest actions in the world about itself. Practice fixes the disposition. The class of knowledge such training imparts is knowledge of "the that"—the moral facts.[16]

Like the rest of material reality, concrete situations are indeterminate. They cannot be explicitly set out beforehand. Because of this indeterminacy knowledge of "the that" cannot be acquired by memorizing a set of rules. Rather, it is an aptitude to ascertain and respond to the important attributes of a complex situation. An individual with knowledge of "the that" is one who knows what is good and fine so he might conduct himself appropriately.[17]

It is the inclusion of the nonrational in virtue that in Aristotle's terminology makes it incapable of misuse. The correct orientation of the nonrational is the foundation of Aristotle's claim that theoretical wisdom includes an accurate discernment of moral ends—"the that." Wisdom involves the whole of the soul and not merely the rational element. If it were not for the nonrational faculties, the rational faculties would have no basis for understanding. Likewise, as we shall see, without guidance from the rational faculties, the nonrational would be lacking in control and orientation.

Thus, Aristotle includes affective training as a necessary basis for coming to be moral. Knowledge starts with the nonrational, affective aspect of man. One gains a proper understanding of moral ends by a dispositional shaping of one's nonrational nature so one is able to recognize those ends as intrinsically good. This is what Aristotle means when he states that in ethics argument begins from "the that" or the fact (*to hoti*), (NE1098a33-b4).



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Virtue and Pleasure

Aristotle does not construe mere conduct as entailing virtue. Not only must one's actions be correct, but one's attitudes towards those actions also must be appropriate. A person who has in-

adequate experience in what is fine and good may do what is just, but only to escape retribution. Such an individual is not one that Aristotle would call virtuous. Although he behaves correctly he does so with the wrong motivation.[18]

The fault here exhibited is a deficiency in the realization of "the that." Such a person has a misguided motivation about punishment or external reward. This individual improperly directs his search for pleasure. One may be informed that specific behaviors are good and fine. But one has not learned it for oneself until one has acquired an appetite for enjoying those activities.[19]

To be virtuous, then, is to learn to take pleasure in virtuous activities. So much so is this the case that it is in consideration of the actions in which a man takes pleasure that we can discern whether he has acquired the proper state of character.[20]

This conditioning of one's affective response is more than a bent. A proclivity does not fit into what we would call virtue. It is only a passing phase of one's dispositions—something to which one has grown accustomed without much conviction or thought. Proper training of the soul must involve a firm and settled disposition to respond in a given manner.[21] One acquires knowledge of "the that" only through a steadfast program of proper upbringing and the development of good tendencies.

Rational Education

A person who has acquired knowledge of "the that" is not, however, virtuous. Knowledge of "the that" is a necessary though not a sufficient basis for virtue. Complete virtue involves more. A person who behaves well but lacks insight into why he so behaves is not fully virtuous. He also must have an understanding of the rationale behind his behavior. To be truly moral, a man must acquire an additional kind of knowledge by coming to know why something is fine and intrinsically good.[22]

This latter element of virtue is outside the reach of the beginner, although the two elements are interdependent in that one must acquire virtue based on the former kind of knowledge before one can acquire virtue based on the latter. It is virtue of an intellectual kind. Whereas one acquires moral virtue by the contribution of habit, one acquires intellectual virtue by formal schooling.

Aristotle accordingly broke education into two components: of the passions and of the intellect. The former takes place in the form of good upbringing. The latter involves formal education and leads to reasoned comprehension of the good in behavior. True virtue requires the contribution of both. The purpose of Aristotle's lectures is to impart learning of this latter variety. He labels it knowledge of "the because."[23]

In conferring a reasoned morality, Aristotle teaches us to recognize happiness (*eudaimonia*) as the human goal, to understand the component values of happiness, and to realize why each of these values is important to that goal.[24] He outlines the process of deliberation and enlightens us how it functions to realize the ends expressed by happiness. Aristotle explains that correct behavior involves a mean between extremes. These extremes are not relative to action, but to the person, being that between the failings of immoderation and inadequacy (NE 1107a1-1107a4).[25]

The doctrine of the mean is not, however, a superordinate rule. Aristotle does not frame the makeup of the virtues to accord with the principle of the mean. Rather, he frames the principle of the mean from the examination of the character of the individual virtues. As it happens, the virtues generally accord with a mean between extremes.[26]

Besides reasons "why," knowledge of "the because" also provides reasons "how."[27] Aristotle speaks of a certain cleverness, besides virtue, as being necessary for proper conduct:

> *Now virtue makes the decision correct; but the actions that are naturally to be done to fulfil the decision are the concern not of virtue, but of another capacity. . . . There is a capacity called cleverness, which is such as to be able to do the actions that tend to promote whatever goal is assumed and to achieve it* (NE1144a24-30).

The good man thus has besides an appreciation of the good and fine things in the world, an understanding of how those things are to be attained. He knows both what are the proper ends and is competent in achieving them.[28]

Thus, knowledge of "the because" transforms the moral constitution from a loose collection of impulses into an integrated fabric joined through the process of reason. It recasts the soul of the individual from one of desires to one of reasoned desires. The character of the agent now aims at what is good, his reason comprehends why they are good, and he is made capable by his understanding of how those goods are to be realized.

Order of Precedence

Which comes first, knowledge of "the that" or knowledge of "the because?" Aristotle is not explicit about this. Yet, from what he says about moral training, one can infer that knowledge of "the that" comes first.

A person who attempts knowledge of "the because" before acquiring knowledge of "the that" does not truly understand the reasoning underlying the former explanations. Aristotle explains that this is why a boy has a greater facility to learn mathematics than to acquire wisdom. The former requires no more than a certain aptitude of mind. Wisdom, however, requires an experiential knowledge of the moral facts. A boy cannot yet apprehend the latter. Consequently, though he may superficially grasp the method of ethics, he remains uncomprehending on a deeper level:

> *. . . we might consider why a boy can become accomplished in mathematics, but not in wisdom or natural science. . . . Young people, [lacking experience], have no real conviction in these other sciences, but only say the words, whereas the nature of mathematical objects is clear to them* (NE-1142a16-21).

It is the ordeals of living that allow one to discern "the that"—the morally significant features of real world circumstances. One can only acquire these through practice (NE1143a25-b14).

One should not be mislead, however, into thinking mere sensible perception of virtuous acts is sufficient for knowledge of "the that." The discerning of kindness, generosity, and courage is not gained through the senses alone. The discernment is an intellectual one. Unless a person has an appreciation of courage, he may not recognize the act as a good one.[29]

Intuitively, this account seems plausible. Moral virtue like gymnastics is a practical endeavor. We would not expect one who had never practiced gymnastics to be able fully to comprehend an account of the activity. Only one who has experience in the sport, recognizes the merit of it, and desires to perform to his best capacity will truly understand the reasons behind the movements.

Likewise, in the moral realm, knowledge of "the because" can only come about by correctly examining and describing one's experiences of the moral facts. In doing moral acts, the student comes to take pleasure in fine and good action. Once the student himself recognizes the value of these acts, he can then delve into more serious discussions of such matters. A person who lacks knowledge of "the that" will not receive later instruction properly.[30]

This explanation fits Aristotle's own program of moral instruction. The goal of formal moral training is to bring men to moral goodness. It does so, first, by enabling them to decide appropriately concerning the objects that fit into the moral scheme. Second, it enables them to choose actions that accord with that scheme. Aristotle's ethical lectures provide "the because" by explaining what makes certain activities fine and good by revealing how they fit into the scheme of happiness. His lectures reveal why "the that" (of which the morally disposed man is already in possession) is necessary to a good life.[31]

A person who participates in Aristotle's discourses, therefore, must be one who can agree with him upon which actions are moral. He knows what is just and what it is to be temperate. He will have a clear recognition of the actions that express these virtues.[32] He also will desire to emulate such actions. It will not be necessary to argue with him over the question of "why be just." Such an individual will consider it a superfluous question. It is analogous to the case of a sensible man who already appreciates art. He has no need or interest in questioning "why art?" He might, however, want to come to a finer understanding of what is beautiful and how to create beauty.[33]

This explains why moral instruction cannot in its beginning be formal. Someone who lacks knowledge of "the that" cannot be persuaded by ethical arguments, for he will not believe the virtues should be pursued for their own sake. He will find it necessary to appeal to ulterior motives, such as rewards or punishment. He will not be able to recognize the activities as being fine and good.[34]

There is no assurance in life that one will esteem good and fine things. Yet once we have done the good and fine thing we find it pleasurable and repeat it. Moral education therefore in its origins must be affective, based largely upon proper habituation.[35] When once a person gains a habit of fairness in dealing with others, it is then possible to advance to technical forms of moral training.[36]

> *Presumably, then, the origin we should begin with is what is known to us. This is why we need to have been brought up in fine habits if we are to be adequate students of what is fine and just, and of political questions generally. For the origin we begin from is the belief that something is true, and if this is apparent enough to us, we will not, at this stage, need the reason why it is true in addition; and if we have this good upbringing, we have the origins to begin from, or can easily acquire them (NE 1095b4-8).*

Thus, knowledge of "the that" necessarily precedes knowledge of "the because." If one's disposition is wrong, one will be unable to accept or to understand the principle.

Nonvoluntary Aspects of Morality

Yet, affective and rational training is not the whole of it. Like Socrates, Aristotle wanted to show that virtue could not be innate. It was not something one acquired by birth. Unlike Socrates, however, Aristotle thought that morality does entail certain natural components. He recognized that not all people who train become experts in their craft. A man who practices singing while having no natural aptitude does not become a virtuoso, regardless of the extent of his training.[37]

In order to become virtuous a person must have besides training an additional basis of virtue—a natural capacity. Aristotle describes this as a certain gentle disposition, one conducive to moral practice. It also involves a certain inherent proclivity for virtue—something like a love of the fine.[38]

This capacity has to do with the condition of the soul. Although the structure of the soul is the same, the condition of the soul differs for every individual. Each person has a natural disposition to respond in particular modes. The passions are ubiquitous, yet people experience them in individual ways. This is a part of what Aristotle intends when he says that the mean is relative. The mean takes into account an individual's natural disposition. A particular intensity of response is fitting for a given person in particular circumstances.[39]

The naturally virtuous disposition is not an all-or-nothing attribute. Most people have the quality to varying degrees. For some, however, their constitution is nearly perfect. Thus, if a person's disposition to respond is in all respects proper, then the individual has what Aristotle designates as natural virtue. This is a case where one's appetitive responsiveness is always suitable to the importance of the circumstance. The case would admittedly be a rare one.[40]

Yet even an individual who has such a perfect natural aptitude is not truly virtuous. His dispositions govern him and he has no appreciation of the goodness embraced by his actions. His grasp of the importance of the end is just his degree of passional response to it. If it disappeared, then so too would his propensity to attain the end. His rational concerns play no role in directing his behavior.[41]

Thus, regardless of affective disposition, in order for virtue to be complete all people must receive formal training to gain knowledge of "the because." Further, although Aristotle will admit that birth establishes a certain portion of one's character, he allows that training forms the greater portion of it. Of a person whose natural response is imperfect, the situation experienced by most people, the requirements for moral training are even more apropos.

Kalon

Aristotle describes the virtues as intrinsically good activities. Yet, he also ascribes to them another attribute—they are fine (*kalon*). In the Greek language, `fine' denotes beauty. This might lead us to think Aristotle uses the word to refer to an aesthetic attribute. It does seem to be an aesthetic property.[42] Yet, there are indications that Aristotle uses the word `fine' to signify more. In the *Rhetoric*, he contrasts the fine with the useful:

> *Because of this, they [Elderly Men] guide their lives too much by considerations of what is useful and too little by what is noble [kalon]—for the useful is what is good for oneself, and the noble what is good absolutely.*[43]

Aristotle is making a distinction here between prudential and moral goods. He implies that one of the conditions of the fine is its concern not merely for one's own good, but also for the good of others. The virtues must concern the general good and not just the good as it relates to the self. However, the *Rhetoric* also suggests that the fine excludes self-interest. This is perhaps not clearly formulated.[44]

Aristotle, NE IX, develops this view with greater sophistication. He connects three important ideas: what is good in action, what is fine, and what is propitious to society:

> *And when everyone competes to achieve what is fine and strains to do the finest actions, everything that is right will be done for the common good, and each person individually will receive the greatest of goods, since that is the character of virtue. Hence the good person must be a self-lover, since he will both help himself and benefit others by doing fine actions. But the vicious person must not love himself, since he will harm both himself and his neighbors by following his base feelings* (NE 1169a8-14).

Aristotle here retains a social association to the fine while rejecting the simple view of the *Rhetoric* that one renounces one's own advantage in furthering the interests of others. He instead insists that in administering to the general welfare one serves one's own interest as well.[45]

Other passages confirm the latter viewpoint. In discussing magnanimity, Aristotle uses the phrase "common good" to describe that virtue: "For the magnanimous person spends money on the common good, not on himself, and the gifts have some similarity to dedications" (NE 1123a4-5). In associating the fine with the



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"common good" Aristotle declines to make the separation he did in the *Rhetoric*. Although it is clear the virtue of magnanimity is concerned with the social welfare, the phrase "common good" does not ignore self-interest.[46]

One must be careful, however, not to misconstrue what Aristotle intends by the common good. His is not a consequentialist theory. Though the fine is a quality that corresponds to the general welfare, the consequences of one's actions do not explain why one pursues them. The virtuous individual decides upon actions because they are intrinsically good and because they are a constituent of happiness. He values the action apart from the success of his efforts or from any pleasure he might derive.[47]

Engberg-Pedersen elaborates that in acting for the sake of the fine one recognizes that by "sharing the natural goods one's own claim is initially no stronger than that of any other human being." [48] The morally good man counts himself as one of the recipients of the natural goods because he recognizes himself as worthy of them. He has a preferential claim upon the natural goods since he will put them to the right use, whereas the evil man will not.[49]

Aristotle thus avoids egoism. The good man does not seek strictly his own happiness, but the happiness of society as a whole. As he is a part of the whole, he also values his own happiness. Happiness, is a quality taking into account the greatest happiness of all concerned—oneself included.

The distinction is a fragile one and poses some difficulties. First, if one serves another for the sake of the fine, does one help the other for his own sake, or does one disregard his end and act merely for the sake of the good in itself? Nancy Sherman suggests that an answer to this question might be that concern for others is not the aim of one's action, but is one's motive for action. Distinguishing between aim and motive she thus interprets action for the sake of the fine as not excluding direct interest in others, but as limiting actions in their behalf.[50]

Another problem is that not every moral action affects the common good. Temperance, for instance, seems to be a private virtue. It is more directly related to personal rather than social welfare.

Irwin answers by explaining that while temperance is a private virtue, one arrives at it through the contemplation of the fine. Thus, in its origins temperate actions will indirectly entail consideration of the common good.[51]

Sherman, agreeing with Irwin, explains that such seemingly "self-regarding" virtues obliquely promote the common good in that one's own temperance or health is a necessary condition for the performance of virtues that more positively augment the common good. Aristotle thus construes the fine as a standard property of ethics without construing every virtuous action as of immediate consideration to the interests of others.[52]

Thus, contrary to Socrates' hedonism of the *Protagoras*, Aristotle includes the fine as an attribute of the moral good. True virtue is both fine and good (*kalokagathia*). It goes beyond craft knowledge, since it entails a non-technical regard for the fine. The latter gives it a social quality—taking into consideration the community as a whole. One cannot decide upon good actions without also embracing the fine, in the form of the common welfare, as its inherent characteristic.[53]

Public Education

Aristotle's recognition of the importance of the fine requires the development of moral habit to be a public affair. It cannot take place within the restricted confines of the family. Only education within a community furnishes the coherence and homogeneity critical to establishing a common culture. The habituation furnishing the origins of morality must therefore be a civil affair.[54]

This is why Aristotle counts favorable political circumstances as essential for sustenance of a virtuous disposition. Even a person of good character who enters upon a degrading life will suffer a degeneration over time (NE

1100b27-30). His ability to recognize moral action will be degraded by the influence of his fellows.[55]

Aristotle advances several other arguments why this must be the case. First, he contends that public education will insure the uniformity of values among people—something an eclectic scheme of values as favored by individual parents cannot provide (*Politics*, 1337a21-5). Further, a public education, as formulated by a legislator of practical wisdom, bears a greater likelihood of correctly rendering the human goods (NE1180a18-22). A public scheme will also provide a better context for the teaching of social virtues (*Politics* 1337a27-9). Aristotle argues that the moral development of an individual does not cease when a person reaches adulthood. It is a continuing pattern. For this one needs the active support from the laws of one's society (NE1180a1-4). Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Aristotle asserts that political activity is an eminent part of human nature: "Man is by nature a political animal" (*Politics* 1253a1).[56]

Political life is an intrinsic good in the philosophy of Aristotle. It is a necessary component of happiness. Without it man would not attain a fully developed moral capacity. The type of education following a political lifestyle is therefore inherently public.[57]

Thus, private education within the household, in the manner Protagoras described, Aristotle considers to be an insufficient means towards instilling the virtues. He requires a civic scheme.

The type of program established will differ for each society. Like Socrates, Aristotle conceives of the educator in terms of a craftsman. As a cobbler and carpenter, an educator is one who makes rather than one who uses. His product is a good disposition of the soul. This disposition is specific to each political environment. The type of citizen suitable to an aristocracy will not be the same as one who is fitting to a democracy. The aims and programs proper to each educational system will fit the type of society in which the educator finds himself.[58]

These aims of the Aristotelian program of education can be generally summarized in terms of three important categories: (i) it should be practical, (ii) it should embody proper instruction towards citizenship, and (iii)it should be designed with a view to continued development.[59]

Educators who have followed Aristotle's philosophy of education have tended to focus upon public instruction emphasizing technical skills and learning by rote for children. They restrict the learning of higher principles to adults. This has historically had both good and bad consequences.[60]

Conclusion

The Protagorean model of moral education focused upon the affective aspects of the acquisition of morality. It conceived of morality as something assimilated from society. The fault of this approach is that it offered no account. One could provide no justification for the standards of behavior one had thus acquired. The Socratic



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model, on the other hand, sought a more structured, rational approach. Socrates searched for an explanation that could be examined and taught as one would teach any other craft. The shortcoming of the latter was that it relegated ethics to the level of a practical skill. It was merely a means to achieve pre-established ends.

Aristotle takes a novel approach. He combines the advantages of each of these strategies, while avoiding their disadvantages. Virtue, as Aristotle conceives of it, pertains to concrete situations—to particulars. He believes that moral knowledge begins with the fact, "the that." By this he means that moral education springs from an experiential understanding of good and fine acts.[61]

Yet, though affective training is important, it is not the whole of morality. Equally significant is an understanding of why the virtuous man acts as he does. Knowledge of "the because" provides this. The latter is the subject of Aristotle's ethics and is to be acquired only after one has acquired the proper moral disposition.

Finally, Aristotle recognizes that nature too has a role to play in human morality. The soul of man is in part molded by his natural constitution. A man may have a moral disposition from birth. Contrarily, his natural disposition may be so far removed from a moral one that it will take considerable labor to rectify. Whatever the case, the dispositional aspect is in no way constitutive of the whole of morality. It must be combined with a rational understanding of "the because."

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6. Hanlon, *op.cit.*, 12.

7. Artistotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Terence Irwin (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, 1985), NE 1102a33-1103a1. All subsequent parenthetical references to the NE are taken from this source. I will be using the standard Bekker references as employed by Irwin.

8. J. Donald Monan, *Moral Knowledge and Its Methodology in Aristotle* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 64-65.

9. Anthony Kenny, *The Aristotelian Ethics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 184-185.

10. Ibid., 184-185

11. Ibid., 185-186

12. Ibid., 187

13. Rober S. Brumbaugh and Nathanial M. Lawrence, *Philosophers on Education: Six Essays on the Foundations of Western Thought* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1963), 60.

14. M.F. Burnyeat, "Aristotle on Learning to be Good," in *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics*, ed. Amelie Oksenberg Rorty (Los Angles: University of California Press, 1980), 73; also N.J.H. Dent, *The Moral Psychology of the Virtues* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1984), 165-167.

15. Burnyeat, *op. cit.*, 74.

16. Ibid., 73; also Dent, *op. cit.*, 165-167.

17. Burnyeat, *op. cit.*, 72.

18. Sam Walker, "The Natural Conditions of the Soul and the Development of Virtue," *Dialogue*, 29 (April 1987), 39.

19. Ibid., 39.

20. Burnyeat, *op. cit.*, 75-77.

21. Dent, expostulating upon an Aristotelian view, advances five characteristics he claims to be constitutive of a "committed intent." It entails: (1) a determination to pursue frequent actions embodying the virtue, (2) an attempt to subdue inimical claims and commitments, (3) an attempt to make permanent the dispositon towards having such responses, (4) an inclination to feel contrition if one is unaffected in a given circumstance, (5) a power to do the proper thing in spite of one's propensity. (See Dent, *Psychology*, 169-170).

22. Walker, *op. cit.*, 40-42; Michael J. White, "Functionalism in the Moral Virtues in Aristotle's Ethics," *International Studies in Philosophy*, 11 (1979), 53.

23. Walker, *op. cit.*, 39.

24. The word, *eudaimonia*, is generally translated as "happiness." The happiness of which Aristotle speaks, however, has often been criticized as something apart from our own meaning of the term. John Cooper has coined the expression "human flourishing" as a better translation of what Aristotle means by *eudaimonia*. He rejects the term "happiness" because the word may apply to a child or may refer to short instances of pleasure, whereas "human flourishing" denotes the experiences of a mature adult over an extended period of time, the later being Aristotle's signification. (See John Cooper, *Reason and Human Good in Aristotle* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1975), 89).

Merril Ring rejects Cooper's reasoning. He argues that though "pleasure" may be given short term interpretation, "happiness" may not and is fully in accordance with Aristotelian *eudaimonia*. (See Merril Ring, "Aristotle and the Concept of Happiness, " in *Greeks and the Good Life*, ed. David J. Depew (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, 1980), 69-90.)

We agree with Ring's arguments and will use "happiness" as an appropriate English translation of *eudaimonia*.

25. Burnyeat, *op. cit.*, 81-84.

26. White, *op. cit.*, 54; Christine M. Korsgaard, "Aristotle on Function and Virtue." *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 3 (July 1986), 261-262; Hanlon, *op. cit.*, 87-89.

27. White, *op. cit.*, 49-50.

28. White additionally sees the concern with knowledge "how" as forming a nexus between the teleological and the moral virtue schemes (Ibid., 49-55).

29. Burnyeat, *op. cit.*, 73; also Martha Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 305-306.

30. Monan, *op. cit.*, 80; Irwin, taking the same position, presents four possible reasons why someone needs to be well brought up if he is to learn moral philosophy: (1) To procure any advantage from ethics a person must be able to live according to his beliefs. This requires a proper motivational disposition capable of attending to reason. (2) True virtue requires taking pleasure in the right things. This can only be achieved by affective training. (3) The spring of ethical inquiry is convention, which moral philosophy seeks to amend and illuminate. A pupil of ethics must first, therefore, be aware of these attitudes. (4) The first principles of ethics are "the facts," which can only be gained by experience. (See Terence Irwin, "Aristotle on Reason, Desire and Virtue," *Journal of Philosophy*, 74 (October 1975), 577.

31. Joseph Owens, "Aristotle Teacher of Those Who Know," in *The Collected Papers of Joseph Owens*, ed. John R. Catan (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1981), 11; also Burnyeat, *op. cit.*, 71.

32. The student must also of course agree with Aristotle that morality is something it is fruitful to take into rational consideration. Thus, lectures are a method of gaining insight into "the because."

33. Burnyeat, *op. cit.*, 71-72.

34. Ibid., 81.

35. Aristotle and Plato each hold the belief that in addition to habituation, music is an alternative method of training the nonrational element of the soul (*Politics*, VIII, 3); Burnyeat, *op. cit.*, 79-80.

36. Walker, *op. cit.*, 41-42.

37. Monan, *op. cit.*, 81.

38. Ibid., 81.

39. Korsgaard, *op. cit.*, 261-262.

40. Dent, Psychology, 183.

41. Ibid., 183.

42. Aristotle in fact never fully specifies what the kalon entails. Monan believes it is because he takes it as an absolute value term — one whose reference cannot be further analyzed. (See Monan, *op. cit.*, 102-103.)

43. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, trans. W. Rhys. Roberts, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (new York: Random House, 1941), 1389b36-1390a1. All subsequent parenthetical references to Aristotle's *Rhetoric* are to this source.

44. Terence Irwin, "Aristotle's Concetion of Morality," in *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy*, 1 (1985), 128-134.

45. Ibid., 133.

46. Ibid., 132.

47. Ibid., 136.

48. T. Engberg-Pedersen, *Aristotle's Theory of Moral Insight*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 45.

49. Ibid., 45-46.

50. Nancy Sherman, "Commentary on Irwin," in *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy*, Vol. I, ed. John H. Cleary (New York: University Press of America, 1986), 147-148.

51. Irwin, "Morality," 137.

52. Sherman, *op. cit.*, 148.

53. Nussbaum, *Fragility*, 351-352.

54. Ibid., 346.

55. Ibid., 348.

56. Ibid., 346.

57. Ibid., 349-353.

58. John Burnet, *Aristotle on Education*, translated and edited by John Burnet (Cambridge: The University Press, 1967), 5-6.

59. Brumbaugh and Lawrence, *op. cit.*, 68-69.

60. Modern opinion contests this. It is now widely accepted that children have an equal capacity for formulating comprehensive outlooks. (Ibid., 71-74).

61. Burnyeat, *op. cit.*, 72.

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