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Aristotle's Criteria
for Happiness

In Plato's *Philebus* Socrates argues that happiness cannot be identi-
fied either with pleasure nor wisdom: only a mixed life involving
both would be a life worth choosing. He bases his argument on
the premiss that the supreme good must be both final (τελειον)
and self-sufficient (αυταρκες). This passage, as several scholars
have pointed out, is a key to understanding important passages of
Aristotle's *Ethics*, and in particular to the concepts that Aristotle
extracts as criteria for *eudaimonia*.

In my book *Aristotle on the Perfect Life* I translated "τελειον"
as 'perfect' in order to be neutral between two different trans-
lations suggested by different paraphrases of the word given by
Aristotle in different places. The translation 'final' (or, as some
have it, 'supreme') appears to fit some passages better, while
the translation 'complete' seems preferable in other contexts.[1]
In an important recent paper ('Plato and Aristotle on Finality and
(Self)-Sufficiency', in R. Heinaman (ed.), *Plato and Aristotle's Ethics*
(Ashgate, 2003)) Professor John Cooper shows us a way of avoid-
ing the choice between the two translations. In the appropriate
context, he argues, they will always for Aristotle be equivalent in
reference, if not exactly in sense.

To be unqualifiedly τελειον in the sense of 'final' is to be
ultimately choiceworthy (cf. 1097a33−4), never chosen as a means

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[1] Final: *NE* 1097a28−34; 1098a18 (1) *EE* 1249a16.
Complete: *NE* 1097b7; 1098a18(2); 1100a4; 1177b24−5; *EE* 1219a35−9.

to an end or as a constituent of a larger whole. But if something is final it is also self-sufficient (αυταρκες, 1097a8), that is to say it is something that, 'isolated on its own, makes life choiceworthy and lacking in nothing (1097b14−15)', that is to say, lacking in nothing that is needed for choiceworthiness.

That the two criteria must coincide can be shown thus. Suppose that the ultimately choiceworthy life did not contain all that was needed for choiceworthiness. Then it could not be ultimately choiceworthy, because it could be chosen as a constituent of a larger whole that contained in addition the missing elements. On the other hand, suppose that a life that contained all that was needed for choiceworthiness was not the ultimately choiceworthy good: in that case it could not contain all that is needed for choiceworthiness: since there must be something left out in order to make something else the ultimately choiceworthy life. So if we try, in the consideration of lives, to separate perfection in the sense of finality from perfection in the sense of completion, we get a *reductio ad absurdum*. The relationship between the two criteria is very well brought out by Cooper's discussion.²

The coincidence of the two meanings of "τελειον", however, occurs only when we are discussing lives: it cannot be taken for granted when the adjective is attached to some other noun. Since Aristotle's prime interest is in defining ευδαιμονια, the perfect life, this point may seem unimportant. But in his definition of ευδαιμονια he makes use of the notion of perfect virtue (*NE* 1100a4, 1102a6; *EE* 1219a39, 12349a16). In the case of virtue, choiceworthiness and completeness do not coincide: virtue can be something τελειον but it is not something ultimately choiceworthy in the way that ευδαιμονια is (1097b1−5).

For some decades there has been much discussion of the Nicomachean definition of ευδαιμονια as 'the activity of soul in accordance with virtue, and if there are several virtues in

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² I am glad to see that Cooper does not now regard it as established that Nicomachean *eudaimonia* is an inclusive rather than a dominant activity. He is now willing to consider that for Aristotle the human good is some single activity, a contemplative one.

accordance with the best and most perfect virtue' (1098a16–18). This definition sets a problem about the relationship between books one and ten of the *NE*.

Both books set out an account of happiness as the ultimate goal of a successful life, the end at which a happy person aims in everything he does. In what does happiness consist? Is it a dominant, monistic end, such as philosophical contemplation (*theoria*)? Such is the most natural reading of book ten. Or is it a comprehensive end, a set of intrinsically valuable goods, including most notably the activities of the moral virtues? Such is a just possible reading of book one, and it is preferred by many scholars, principally in order to avoid the conclusion that all intrinsic goods derive their value from the contribution they make to philosophical theorizing. Besides being implausible in itself, this conclusion seems in conflict with Aristotle's clear teaching that morally virtuous actions must be chosen for their own sakes. If we make a roll call of scholars who have debated the question since 1974, we can list eleven that support an inclusivist interpretation, and only three for the monistic reading.

In a recent remarkable book *Happy Lives and the Highest Good: An Essay on Aristotle's* Nicomachean Ethics (Princeton University Press, 2004) Gabriel Richardson Lear presents an interpretation of the crucial texts that is original, plausible, and illuminating. Her solution to the problem rests on a simple but extremely fruitful insight: that one way in which X can be for the sake of Y is by being an *approximation* to Y. (Thus, to use an example which Lear does not use, we might say that kissing is for the sake of sex, even though not all kissing leads to sex, and kissing is worth doing for its own sake.) So, in Aristotle's system, morally virtuous activity is for the sake of contemplation by being an approximation to it. The way in which it approximates to it is that it resembles it in being a mode of grasping truth, truth being the essential good that marks out rational humans from other animals.

The first step in this analysis is to reject the inclusivist inter-pretation of $\varepsilon\upsilon\delta\alpha\mu\upsilon\nu\iota\alpha$ in favour of the monistic one. In book

one as well as in book ten there is ample evidence that Aristotle thinks of happiness as a single dominant end. I have long argued that 'most perfect virtue' in the crucial *NE* passages does not mean 'most complete virtue' or 'all the virtues', as many scholars have maintained. To be sure, ευδαιμονια is only one ingredient of the life of the happy person—many other things go on in his life beside the contemplation in which ευδαιμονια consists. But it is a controlling or dominant ingredient, which gives shape to the whole of his life, and for this reason Aristotle is from time to time content to equate happiness with living well and with the happy life as a whole.

Lear shows how problems about the relationship between the intrinsic value of virtuous action and the monistic end arise only if we make the false assumption that when X is choiceworthy for the sake of Y this means either that X is a means to Y or that X is a constituent of Y. Allowing approximation to Y as being a form of being choiceworthy for the sake of Y dissolves the problems here.

The second step is to distinguish between human desires and human ends. Human desires do not determine what the human good and *telos* is. An end, or 'that for the sake of which', is not, as such, an object of desire. Health, for instance, is the *telos* of the medical art; but the doctor's desires may be focused not on the health of his patient but on the money he will make by treating him. So in proposing that philosophical contemplation is 'that for the sake of which' morally virtuous actions are performed, Lear is not committed to the implausible thesis that every virtuous person has an explicit desire for philosophical contemplation. The way in which *eudaimonia* causes the goodness of the happy life is not necessarily as a goal consciously pursued, but as a final cause—and we know from Aristotle's physics and metaphysics that final causes can operate in ways other than by being objects of desire. 'In addition to taking an instrumental means to an end and constituting an end, Aristotle recognizes in his scientific treatises a third way of acting for the sake of an end. Indeed it is central to his account of the first heaven's relationship to

the Prime Mover. In the *Metaphysics* Aristotle calls this acting for an end as an object of love. Less poetically, we can call it approximating, imitating, or emulating an end. The *telos* is not just similar to its subordinate goods, it sets the standards of success for them ... Essentially perishable creatures, for example, cannot be immortal, but they can approach immortality to some extent by procreating' (*Happy Lives*, 85). But this does not mean that rabbits intend to be like the divine when they fill the garden with bunnies.

The third step is to exhibit the way in which acts of moral virtue are approximations to acts of theoretical contemplation. Lear does this in two stages, first making the point in general, and then illustrating it with respect to three particular virtues: courage, temperance, and greatness of soul. The general thesis rests on the treatment of theoretical and practical wisdom in book six of the *NE*. We are told in that book that there are two parts of the rational soul, both of whom have as their function to deliver truth. The output of the theoretical part of the soul is truth about the unchanging and necessary aspects of the universe. The output of the deliberative part of the soul is practical truth, that is to say, truth in accordance with right desire. The output of correct practical deliberation is the exercise of the moral virtues. No less than a philosopher, therefore, a person exercising practical wisdom (an upright politician, for example) is engaged in an activity whose excellence is truthfulness. We can go so far as to say, Lear believes, that the practically wise person (the φρονιμος) is engaged in a kind of contemplation (θεωρια τις).

Book ten of the *NE* sets out two happy lives: a superior life of contemplation, and a second best life in accordance with the practical virtues. Having laid the foundations that we have seen, Lear has no difficulty, in the fourth and final part of her argument, in expounding this teaching without recourse to the implausible thesis of the inclusivist interpreters according to which these are two aspects of the same life rather than two competing alternatives. Here, she maintains, the key concept is that of leisure. The virtues of the political life—whether in wartime or in peacetime—are

exercised under pressures of various kinds. But, for Aristotle, unleisurely activity is choiceworthy only for the sake of leisure. The value of morally virtuous action is that it expresses the agent's orientation to the good, which finds its supreme form only in leisure. It is in the leisurely activity of philosophical contemplation that human beings most approximate to the divine life. But even the philosopher, in the exercise of the best and most perfect life, must from time to time desist from contemplation to undertake activities required by the moral virtues, such as the defence of family and fatherland, and the entertainment of friends and guests.

I have one, minor, complaint. A crucial step in Lear's argument depends on passages from book six of the *NE*. But book six of the *NE* is also book five of the *Eudemian Ethics*. According to the majority of scholars the *EE* was in fact the original home of this book. (Whether it was placed with the *NE* material by Aristotle or by a later editor is not a matter of similar agreement.) Lear accedes to this consensus, and yet in interpreting the book she follows a stubborn tradition in ignoring its original *EE* context, preferring to relate it to *NE* texts and Platonic antecedents.

Attention to the *EE* could have assisted Lear's enterprise in several ways. Of many possible examples, let me give just three. (1) The notion of truth (τo $\alpha\lambda\eta\theta\epsilon s$) has an important role in Lear's argument for the assimilation between theory and practice. But it is in the *EE*, not the *NE*, that truth is a key notion. (The evidence for this is presented in my *The Aristotelian Ethics*, 141.) In the *NE*, outside the originally Eudemian books, $\alpha\lambda\eta\theta\epsilon\iota a$ is the name of the virtue of candour, not of the good grasped by reason. (2) In an illuminating treatment of the doctrine that moral virtue is concerned with the fine (the noble), Lear complains that Aristotle does not say anything informative about τo $\kappa a\lambda o\nu$ in the *NE*. But in the last book of the *EE* there is an analysis of the difference between two ethical characters, the $\alpha\gamma a\theta o s$ and the $\kappa a\lambda o\sigma\kappa a\gamma a\theta o s$, which casts great light on the issue she discusses. (3) In urging that the activities of the great-souled man are intimations of $\theta\epsilon\omega\rho\iota a$, Lear admits to a difficulty in bringing the

worship of the gods within this rubric. But in the final chapter of the *EE* the ultimate standard of the moral life is provided precisely by 'the service and contemplation of God'.

There is a similar neglect of the *EE* in the article by Cooper which I discussed in the earlier part of this chapter. This leads him to omit Aristotle's final answer to the Philebus question, which is that φρονησις and pleasure are, as properly understood, not in competition with each other as candidates for happiness. The exercise of the highest form of φρονησις is the very same thing as the truest form of pleasure; each is identical with the other and with happiness. To reach this conclusion Aristotle needs three of his characteristic theses: (1) that happiness is virtuous activity; (2) that the intellectual virtues are superior to the moral ones; (3) that pleasure is identical with the activity enjoyed.

The argument, I shall maintain, is most forcefully set out in the *Eudemian Ethics* (including the Disputed Books), but I see no difference of substance on this issue between that treatise and the *Nicomachean*. In the *NE* the ground is already laid in the eighth chapter of the first book, the chapter where the ενδοξα are reconciled to the definition of happiness as ενεργεια κατ' αρετην. The following passage is significant (1099a8−16).

Their life is also in itself pleasant. For pleasure belongs to the soul, and everyone who is called a lover of X finds X pleasant: a horse is pleasant to a horselover, and a drama to a drama-lover, but in the same way just deeds to the lover of justice and in general virtuous deeds to the lover of virtue. Now most people's pleasures clash with each other because they are not naturally pleasurable; but for those that love what is noble it is the naturally pleasurable things that are pleasant: namely, actions expressive of virtue, which are pleasurable for such people as well as in themselves. Their life has no need of pleasure as an additional ornament: it has its pleasure in itself.

It is the mark of the genuinely virtuous person to take pleasure in his virtuous deeds, rather than doing them painfully or grudgingly. Now happiness consists of the best, most virtuous, activities (or the best one of these best activities). So happiness is the pleasantest

of all things—in accordance with a famous inscription at Delos (1099a17–31).

The *Philebus* dichotomy is already undercut, but a number of things are left unclear. We are not yet told what is the relation between Plato's φρονησις and the virtues whose exercise is pleasant. Though pleasure is no mere ornament, we are not yet told its precise relationship to pleasant activity. And while we may agree that a genuinely virtuous person finds virtuous activity pleasant, we are not here given reason to believe that this pleasure is greater than pleasure taken in other activities—unless it be that concentration on virtue is less likely to lead to a clash between competing pleasures.

However, when happiness comes to be finally identified with philosophical contemplation in book ten, one of the reasons we are given is that contemplation is the pleasantest of virtuous activities. The very pursuit of philosophy provides unmixed and stable pleasures, and the contemplation that results from success in the pursuit is even more exquisitely delightful (1177a22–7). 'Pleasure' is not to be thought of as a good or bad thing in itself: the pleasure proper to good activities is good and the pleasure proper to bad activities is bad (1175b27). This doctrine leaves it open for the pleasure of the best activity to be the best of all human goods.

This last doctrine is stated explicitly only in one of the Disputed Books:

If certain pleasures are bad, that does not prevent the best thing from being some pleasure—just as knowledge might be, though certain kinds of knowledge are bad. Perhaps it is even necessary, if each state has unimpeded activities, that whether the activity (if unimpeded) of all our states, or that of some one of them is happiness, this should be the thing most choiceworthy; and this activity is a pleasure. (1153b7–11)

The problem with book ten of *NE* is that the long discussion of pleasure that introduces it leaves most readers uncertain whether pleasure is identical with, or supervenient to, the activity enjoyed.[3]

³ In *The Aristotelian Ethics*, 233–8, I have argued that there is, in the end, no real difference of substance between the treatments of pleasure in the two treatises; but the

But the corresponding (Eudemian) discussion in the third of the disputed books is unambiguous that pleasure is to be identified with (unimpeded) activity. The unimpeded activity of (one or more) virtues, which is identical with the greatest good, is also identical with the greatest virtue.

Aristotle's definitive resolution of the Philebus problem is most clearly set out in the *Eudemian Ethics*. Unlike the *NE*, the *EE* regards happiness as the exercise of all the virtues, not just of a single dominant virtue: it includes the exercise of the moral virtues, and of both the intellectual virtues, wisdom and understanding, that correspond together to Plato's *φρονησις*.[4] In his final book, having earlier established that happiness is the exercise of perfect virtue, Aristotle explains that perfect virtue is *καλοκαγαθια* (1249a18).[5] He continues thus:

Pleasure has already been discussed: what kind of thing it is, and in what sense it is a good; and how things which are pleasant *simpliciter* are noble *simpliciter*, and things which are good *simpliciter* are also pleasant. But there cannot be pleasure except in action: and so the truly happy man will also have the most pleasant life. (1249a18–21)

The backward references are to the context we have just discussed and to the Eudemian book on friendship. Things that are pleasant *simpliciter* are noble *simpliciter* because what most rightly deserves to be called pleasant is that which the wise man calls pleasant; and to him it is good and noble things that are pleasant (1235b36–1236a7). Things that are good *simpliciter* are also pleasant, because it is natural goods that are good *simpliciter* and these are naturally pleasant: this natural pleasure is nature's road to virtue (1237a5–9).

notorious 'bloom on the cheek of youth' passage (1174b23–32) has led many people to believe that the *NE* refuses to identify pleasure and activity.

   [4] See my *Aristotle on the Perfect Life*, 19–22.
   [5] The perfection of the virtue of a Eudemian *καλοσκαγαθος* is both final and complete: final, because he, unlike the Laconian, chooses not only virtuous action, but virtue itself, for its own sake; complete, because his happiness consists in the exercise of all the virtues (not just contemplation).

Thus, for the ideally virtuous person the concepts 'good', 'pleasant', and 'noble' coincide in their application. If what is pleasant for a man differs from what is good for him, then he is not yet perfectly good but incontinent; if what is good for him does not coincide with what is noble for him, then he is not yet *καλοσκαγαθος* only *αγαθος*. For the nobly virtuous person the natural goods of health and wealth and power are not only beneficial but noble, since they subserve his noble virtuous activity. So, for him, goodness, nobility, and pleasantness coincide. The bringing about of this coincidence is the task of ethics (1237a3). But whereas something can be *καλον* or *αγαθον* whether it is a *εξις* or an *ενεργεια* (1248b35–7, b23–4) it is only an *ενεργεια* or *πραξις* that can be pleasant. So it is in the noble activities of the good man that the highest pleasure is to be found, and that pleasure, goodness, and nobility meet.

We met earlier, in considering *NE* book one, the inscription from Delos:

> *Κάλλιστον τὸ δικαιότατον, λῷστον δ' ὑγιαινειν·*
> *ἥδιστον δὲ πέφυχ' οὗ τις ἐρᾷ το τυχεῖν.*

In the *Eudemian Ethics* Aristotle takes this text and puts it at the beginning of the book as a challenge. He will set out to prove that *ευδαιμονια* alone is the best, the noblest, and the pleasantest of things. In the final book the challenge is met. The noble activities of the good man are the activities of perfect virtue in which happiness consists. But it is in these noble activities that pleasure, goodness, and nobility meet. So Aristotle has carried out the promise of his first paragraph to show that happiness combines the three superlatives—noblest, best, and pleasantest—of the Deliac inscription.

5

Practical Truth in Aristotle

In 1965, having been newly appointed a philosophy tutor at Balliol, I was assigned to teach the *Nicomachean Ethics* to Jonathan Barnes, then in his final year of Literae Humaniores. One week I assigned as a topic 'Practical Truth', with special reference to chapter 6. 2 of the *Ethics*. The essay he handed in was one of the best I ever encountered in a dozen years of Greats tutoring: I was so impressed that I asked him if I could keep it. Its theme was that Aristotle had no concept of practical truth: that was a fiction foisted on him by commentators. Sadly, I can no longer find the essay among my papers, so I cannot refresh my memory of the arguments it contained. However, in Barnes's recently published Locke lectures *On Truth etc* the index contains no entry for practical truth, and there is no reference in the Index Locorum to *NE* 6. 2. So I conclude that the John Locke lecturer is in agreement with the fourth-year undergraduate: there is no such thing as practical truth.

When I set the essay topic I was much influenced by Elizabeth Anscombe's paper 'Thought and Action in Aristotle', published in J. R. Bambrough's collection *New Essays on Plato and Aristotle* (Routledge, 1965). That paper concluded:

What does Aristotle mean by 'practical truth'? He calls it the good working, or the work, of practical judgement; and practical judgement is judgement of the kind described, terminating in action. It is practical truth when the judgements involved in the formation of the 'choice' leading to action are all true; but the practical truth is not the truth of those judgements. For it is clearly that 'truth in agreement with right

desire' which is spoken of as the good working or the work of practical intelligence. That is brought about—i.e. made true—by action since the description of what he does is made true by his doing it, provided that a man forms and executes a good 'choice.'…The notion of truth or falsehood in action would quite generally be countered by the objection that 'true' and 'false' are senseless predicates as applied to what is done. If I am right there is philosophy to the contrary in Aristotle…these predicates apply to actions (praxeis) strictly and properly and not merely by an extension and in a way that ought to be explained away.

I have since come to believe that Anscombe's interpretation is mistaken. There are, however, at the present day authoritative commentators who credit Aristotle with a theory of practical truth. Sarah Broadie and Christopher Rowe in their commentary of 2002 (OUP) say, 'This strange notion of practical truth is central for Aristotelian ethics. If Aristotle cannot make it plausible he should either abandon the principle that truth is the proper work of rational thought or the doctrine that practical wisdom is an excellence of reason' (p. 362). More recently still, Gabriel Richardson Lear in her *Happy Lives and the Highest Good* (Princeton UP, 2004) makes the notion of practical truth the keystone of her endeavour to reconcile the contemplative account of happiness in *NE* 10 with the emphasis on moral virtue in the earlier books. She maintains that for Aristotle the way in which morally virtuous activity is 'for the sake of contemplation' is that it is an approximation to it. It approximates to it in that it resembles it by being a mode of grasping truth, truth being the essential good that marks out rational humans from other animals.

Among those who attach importance to practical truth in this way there is no agreement about who or what is the bearer of this truth. For Anscombe, the bearer is an action; for Lear, it is a person, for Broadie and Rowe it is the mind. Anscombe is surely wrong about this: nowhere does Aristotle describe a $\pi\rho\alpha\xi\iota\varsigma$, a piece of conduct, as true. While there are, as Lear points out, verbs and adjectives that attribute truthfulness to human beings, the plain adjective $\alpha\lambda\eta\theta\epsilon\varsigma$ is not one of them. Broadie and Rowe say

'Truth, true etc. in this chapter connote, not a semantic property of propositions, but a property which the mind has when it is in the best relation to the objects in the domain it is addressing' (p. 362). This too seems to me inadequate. Certainly Aristotle had no conception of the modern notion of a proposition as a timeless abstract entity: but rather than say broadly that truth is a property of the mind, we should say that it is a property of certain states and activities. To specify which particular states and actions, we need to look closely at what Aristotle has to tell us about προαιρεσις in this chapter.

But first, a few words on translation. There is no satisfactory, or even conventionally agreed, English equivalent of the Greek word. (This may tell us something about the concept itself: as Anscombe asks, 'If it had been a winner, like some other Aristotelian concepts, would not ''prohaeretic'' be a word as familiar to us as ''practical'' is?') For different reasons 'choice' (Anscombe, Ross) 'decision' (Broadie and Rowe, Irwin), 'purpose' (Kenny[1]) fail to fill the bill. In this chapter I will use 'resolution'. I do not suggest this is the best translation of the Greek word in all contexts, but it has two merits. One is that a προαιρεσις is, among other things, the resolution of an inner debate. The other is that a new year's resolution seems to be about the closest thing in everyday life to the kind of decision that Aristotle describes as προαιρεσις.

The second problem that this chapter presents for the translator is the expression "λογος ενεκα τινος", translated by Anscombe as 'reason with a view to something' by Irwin as 'reason that aims at some goal' and by Rowe and Broadie 'thought for the sake of something'. The literal meaning is 'a for-the-sake-of-what account', i.e. the account that one would give of what one was doing if one was asked 'For the sake of what are you doing this?' The natural way of putting the question in English is 'why are you doing this?' but we cannot simply call such

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[1]   A. Kenny, *Aristotle's Theory of the Will* (Duckworth, 1979).

questions 'why' questions, since the English 'why?' can also seek for a causal explanation, corresponding to the Greek δια τι. So I will adopt an archaic usage, calling such questions 'where-fore?' questions, and translate "ου ενεκα" as 'the wherefore'. Wherefore-reasoning includes, but is not exhausted by, means-end reasoning.

Finally, there is the question how to translate "πραξις". The standard translation is 'action', but this is too broad. Right at the start of the chapter Aristotle tells us that brute beasts have no share in praxis: but non-human animals surely are capable of action. Henry V, urging his troops once more unto the breach, bade them imitate the action of the tiger. Moreover there are human actions, such as drawing a conclusion from a theoretical syllogism, which would not count as praxis. 'Conduct', therefore, seems the most appropriate translation.

With these preliminaries, we can approach the crucial passages.

The origin of conduct—its efficient, not its final cause—is resolution; and the origin of resolution is desire plus wherefore-reasoning (1139a1–33).

Not every piece of conduct originates in resolution (novices in virtue do good πραξεις without προαιρεσις, and incontinent people behave badly without any resolution to do so: 114a15–20; 111b13). Nor does every resolution result in action. Once again the incontinent man provides a counter-example—the weak incontinent, who deliberates well but does not abide by his deliberation (1150b20). Nonetheless, resolution is par excellence the origin of conduct, and no conduct can be fully good unless it originates from a good resolution.

Aristotle draws a parallel between the two elements that enter into resolution, namely desire and wherefore-reasoning.

What assertion and negation are in thinking, pursuit and avoidance are in the case of desire: so that since moral virtue is a state which finds expression in resolution, and resolution is deliberative desire, therefore, if the resolution is to be a good one both the reasoning must be true and

the desire must be right—and the latter must pursue just what the former asserts. This, then is the kind of thought and the kind of truth that is practical. (1139a21–7)

The parallel between the cognitive and the affective operations of the mind is clear enough. Asserting is saying 'yes' to a statement, pursuit is saying 'yes' to a proposal or course of action. The adjective of commendation appropriate to a piece of reasoning (a λογος) is 'true', the adjective of commendation appropriate to a desire is 'right'. We might say that correctness in assertion is truth while correctness in desire is rightness. For the resolution itself, Aristotle uses neither of these adjectives, instead he uses "σπουδαιος" one of his favourite words for 'good' as applied to human beings. There is no problem about the conclusion that if the resolution is to be good, the two elements involved in it must both be correct: *bonum ex integra causa, malum ex quocumque defectu*.

The puzzling feature of this passage is the remark that the desire must pursue what the reasoning asserts. Surely this is not a unique requirement proper to a good resolution, but something necessary if there is to be a resolution at all. A desire for fish plus an expert knowledge of bee-keeping will not produce any action or any resolve. But Aristotle is making a stronger point: the assertion that is the conclusion of the reasoning, and the pursuit which is the upshot of the desire are one and the same thing, the very same resolve. As he puts it when he sums up the discussion, resolution can be thought of either as thought qualified by desire, or desire qualified by thought (1139b4–5).

If resolution is a form of thought, does that mean that it can, like other thoughts, be described as true or false? If so, we would have, in the case of a sound resolution, a clear-cut instance of practical truth. But Aristotle in *NE* 3, in the course of distinguishing resolution from belief, says that whereas beliefs are classified as true or false, resolutions are divided rather into good and bad (1111b34). And *EE* 1226a4 says flatly 'a resolution is neither true nor false'. So perhaps we should ask whether the two formulations—thought

qualified by desire, and desire qualified by thought—stand on the same level as each other.

Aquinas raised this question in his commentary on the passage, and the answer that he gives is persuasive.

> Because choice is the origin of conduct, and the originators of choice are appetite and reason (i.e. intellect or mind) which are, via choice, the originators of conduct, it follows that choice is appetitive intellect—that is to say essentially an act of the intellect in its function of regulating appetite—or choice is intellectual appetite—that is to say essentially an act of appetite in so far as it is directed by intellect. But the latter is truer, as is clear from the relevant objects. For the object of choice is good and evil, just like the object of appetite; its object is not the true and the false, which is the province of the intellect. (*In X Ethic*, L vi c. 2 Spiazzi 1137)[2]

So we do not locate practical truth in the resolution any more than in the action. Where then is it? Immediately after introducing the notion, Aristotle goes on to say

> In the case of thought that is theoretical and neither practical nor productive the 'well' and the 'badly' consist in truth and falsehood (for that is the function of any thought-faculty); but in the case of the faculty of practical thinking it is truth in accordance with right desire.

I take it that the 'it' towards the end of that quotation is 'the "well"', not 'the truth' or 'the function'. What Aristotle is telling us is that for the good operation of the faculty of practical reasoning mere truth is not enough; we need truth in concord with right desire. He is not denying that there could be true practical reasoning without right desire; only, such reasoning would not be the faculty operating as it should.

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[2] Quia enim electio principium actus, et electionis principia sunt appetitus et ratio sive intellectus aut mens, qua mediante electione principia sunt actus, consequens est, quod electio sit intellectus appetitivus, ita scilicet quod electio sit essentialiter actus intellectus, secundum quod ordinat appetitum, vel sit appetitus intellectivus ita quod electio sit essentialiter actus appetitus, secundum quod dirigtur ab intellectu. Et hoc verius est: quod patet ex obiectis. Objectum enim electionis est bonum et malum, sicut et appetitus; non autem verum et falsum, quae pertinent ad intellectum.

Well, what would be a case of practical truth in the absence of right desire? To answer this we have to do what Aristotle does not do in this dense chapter, and give some concrete examples. Elsewhere in the ethical treatises, and in the *De Motu Animalium* and the *De Anima*, Aristotle is quite generous with examples of practical reasoning. Most of them are unhelpful, however, in enabling us to construct examples of correct and incorrect προαιρεσις.

There are two reasons for this. The first is that most of what commentators call 'practical syllogisms' in Aristotle's texts are not examples of ethical reasonings (reasoning aimed at good conduct) but technical reasonings (designed to effect a product, whether an end such as health, or victory, or something tangible like a cloak or a house). Aristotle regularly distinguishes between πραξις and ποιησις, and the examples he frequently gives of the deliberations of medical men are instances of the latter. They are not really practical syllogisms at all—we should rather call them technical or productive syllogisms (since 'poetical syllogisms' would not quite do).

In 6. 2 Aristotle adverts explicitly to the distinction between conduct and product.

Practical thought governs productive thought: for whoever produces something produces it for the sake of an end: the product itself is not an end in an unqualified sense, but an end only relative to a particular consequent and antecedent. A piece of conduct, on the other hand, is an end, for doing well is the end par excellence and this is what desire aims at. (1131b1−5)

I see no reason to say, as Anscombe does, that the outcome of a doctor's deliberations will not be a resolution unless it is part of his overall design for the pursuit of a good life. Sure, it will not be a good resolution unless it is embedded in a good life, but that does not mean that it will not be a resolution at all. Aristotle does indeed tell us that resolution cannot exist without intellect and thought and moral character; but the moral character need not be fully-fledged virtue or vice. A man's resolutions will reveal his

character—but it may show him to be brutish, foolish, continent or incontinent, rather than virtuous or vicious.

The second reason why Aristotle's own examples are unhelpful is that in the cases where he does consider ethical reasoning—as in the treatment of incontinence in *NE* 7—he concentrates on only one of the moral virtues, namely temperance. Temperance, of its nature, is most commonly expressed in negative resolutions—don't smoke, leave your neighbour's wife alone, and so on. So if we are to provide plausible examples of positive resolutions which answer to the recipe given in 6. 2, we will have to invent them for ourselves.

At 1144a29–b1 Aristotle tells us 'Those syllogisms which contain the starting points of acts to be done run "since the end, the highest good, is such and such".' It is this passage, mistranslated, which is the origin of the misbegotten expression 'practical syllogism'. What Aristotle means here is that the initial premiss in a piece of practical reasoning is a conception of the good life. A correct conception of that life will include a true appreciation of the moral virtues that are necessary to it.

It will generate chains of reasoning such as the following:

A man who is courageous will volunteer for an expedition that is dangerous and strategically important. This expedition is dangerous and strategically important. So I'll volunteer.

A man who is honest declares a conflict of interest when his private benefit clashes with his official duty. There is such a clash here. So I will make the conflict public.

In such cases we have a universal statement and a particular statement, followed by a resolution. (In real life the chain of reasoning might well be much longer, setting out for instance the reasons why the expedition is strategically important, or why interest and duty pull in opposite directions.) The final utterance, beginning 'So', is the resolution: it is to be evaluated as good or bad, not as true or false; but obviously it will only be good if the previous statements are true. The 'right desire' which is necessary

if this is to be an instance of good practical reasoning is the desire for courage or honesty.

If that is so, what would be a case of truth unaccompanied by right desire? We might think, perhaps, of the clever strategies of an evil man (142b19); but they are not a case of practical truth at all, because the vicious man is not in possession of the correct universal. The intemperate man thinks that the good life is the incessant pursuit of pleasure; the democratic politician wrongly believes that goods should be distributed equally among all citizens. Such cases, for Aristotle, are examples of 'error in the $\pi\rho o\alpha\epsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$' (*NE* 110b31). Such would be the case of Paris's resolution to seduce Helen. There is a good deal of truth in his reasoning, 'Sex with her would be very pleasant' (true), 'She'll come away with me if I ask her' (true). But his 'so I'll go for it' is bad, not good, because his resolve is based on the false universal premiss 'The aim of life is to have the best possible sex'.

If we want an example of ethical truth without right desire, we have to distinguish between types of desire. First, there is the desire to have a good life: this, if Aristotle is right, is universal among human beings. It is only when mediated through a particular conception of the good life that this develops into the varied lower-level desires (e.g. for the particular virtues) which eventually find expression in resolution and action. In the case of our first example above, there is the natural desire for a good life, the virtuous desire for courage, and the good resolution expressed in 'So I'll volunteer'.

There would be truth without right desire in the case of a person who reasoned only like this:

> A man who is courageous will volunteer for an expedition that is dangerous and strategically important. This expedition is dangerous and strategically important. So a courageous man would volunteer.

There is nothing wrong with this man's reasoning: he just lacks any enthusiasm for courage. (Perhaps his background thought is

'Thank God I'm not a courageous man'.) Now would the truth of his reasoning be, for Aristotle, practical truth? It seems natural to say that his conclusion is simply theoretical: it has no consequences in action. But for Aristotle theoretical reasoning has to be about the universal and unchanging, which this is not. I think we have to answer by making a distinction. It is truth that is a product of practical reasoning; but it is not truth that leads to a practical resolution. And because it leads to no good resolution, it is not an example of the good functioning of practical reasoning.

Note that the case we have just been considering is not a case of incontinence. The incontinent weakling does draw the practical conclusion 'So I'll volunteer'. It is just that at the crucial moment his courage fails him and he cannot bring himself to raise his hand. The incontinent does possess practical truth: he has correct reasoning and right desire, and draws the right conclusion. The fact that he does not act on his resolve does not falsify his reasoning; his failure to volunteer does not make 'So I'll volunteer' a falsehood, because it was a resolve, not a prediction. The error is in the performance, not in the resolution.

Aristotle speaks as if the resolution follows from the premisses of a piece of practical reasoning. 'One premiss is universal, and the other concerned with particular objects of perception; and when the two are brought together into a unity, the soul must at once affirm the conclusion' (1147a27). The truth of a piece of wherefore-reasoning, therefore, will include not only the truth of the premisses, but the validity of the argument. The nearest English equivalent to "$\alpha\lambda\eta\theta\epsilon\varsigma$" so understood, is 'sound'.

In non-practical reasoning, a conclusion follows from premisses if it cannot but be true when the premisses are true. This is the criterion of a valid theoretical argument. But a resolution, we have argued, is not a truth: so the notion of 'following from' and the criterion for the validity of a piece of reasoning must be something different. The function of ordinary reasoning is to transmit truth from premisses to conclusion. In practical reasoning, not only is truth to be preserved as we proceed from premisses to resolution,

but also goodness. For in the case of practical inference the goal of the reasoning is the good, just as in the case of theoretical reasoning the goal is the true.

The rules of valid argument in the theoretical mode are designed to ensure that in reasoning one will never pass from something that is true to something that is not true. If there are rules for practical inference they must ensure that the inference conforms to a pattern that will never lead from a project that is good to one that is not good. Just as the truth of the premisses is communicated to (or as Aristotle would say, causes) the truth of the conclusion in a valid theoretical argument, so the goodness of the initial practical premiss (the desire for a good life) is communicated to the conclusion, which is the resolution to act appropriately.

Aristotle never succeeded in setting out rules for valid practical reasoning, though the *De Motu Animalium* makes clear that he fondly hoped that they would turn out to have a close resemblance to his theoretical syllogistic. That hope was delusory because practical reasoning has a special feature: defeasibility. Theoretical reasoning is not defeasible: that is to say, the addition of a new premiss cannot invalidate a previously valid inference; a conclusion that follows from a set of premisses will follow from any larger set that includes them. The same is not true of practical reasoning. A course of action which may be reasonably estimated as good on the basis of a particular set of premisses may cease to be reasonable if further premisses (e.g. about the unintended consequences of the action) are brought into the picture. This defeasibility of practical reasoning has prevented not only Aristotle, but every subsequent logician, from presenting a satisfactory formulation of practical inference.

In conclusion, I return to the initial debate between Anscombe and Barnes. I believe that Barnes was right to reject Anscombe's claim that the predicates 'true' and 'false' apply to actions 'strictly and properly and not merely by an extension and in a way that ought to be explained away'. Of course a man may be true or false to his word, but that is a different matter. On the other hand, I

would maintain that Anscombe was right that 'practical truth' in Aristotle differs from plain truth. It differs because it signifies the soundness of practical reasoning, which rests on criteria different from those for the soundness of theoretical reasoning. What these criteria are must still be left, all these centuries later, as an exercise for the reader.

6

Aristotle's *Categories* in the Latin Fathers

The Latin Church Fathers of the fourth century had reason to be interested in Aristotle's categories, or at least in the category of substance, in the period between the Councils of Nicaea (325) and Constantinople (381), which formulated the relationship between the Son and the Father in the Christian Trinity. Nicaea (in the Latin version of Hilary of Poitiers) declared that the Son was 'natum ex patre unigenitum, hoc est de substantia patris, deum ex deo, lumen ex lumine, deum verum de deo vero, natum, non factum, unius substantiae cum Patre (quod Graece dicunt homoousion)'. Constantinople (in the version of Dionysius Exiguus) described the Son as 'natum ex patre ante omnia saecula, deum verum de deo vero, natum non factum, consubstantialem Patri'. With minor modifications these formulations provided the basis for the Creed recited liturgically in many Christian churches every Sunday.

The Latin word *substantia* corresponds to the Greek *ousia*, which is the word used for the first of Aristotle's categories. After the council of Nicaea many divines objected to the word *homoousion* to describe the Son's relation to the Father, since it seemed to them to imply that the Son and the Father were not really distinct entitites. In Aristotelian terms, this would be the case if the *ousia* in question was first substance, but not if it was second substance.

It is unlikely, of course, that the Fathers of Nicaea were familiar with the Aristotelian treatise. The point is simply that an acquaint-ance with the text would have provided a simple solution to the

theological complexities that bedevilled the post-Nicene era. But at least in the Latin church the opportunity seems to have been missed. Hilary of Poitiers, who laboured to convince the West that the Nicene formula was orthodox, shows no interest in the distinction between first and second substance, and no evidence of familiarity with Aristotle.

There was one Latin writer, however, who was both acquainted with Aristotle's *Categories* and was a defender of the Nicene formulation against the semi-Arians who preferred the word 'homoiousion' to express the Son's relation to the Father. Marius Victorinus was a Roman rhetorician of distinction whose conversion to Christianity is described in one of the set-pieces of Augustine's *Confessions* (8. 2. 3). In his commentary on Cicero's *De Inventione* he says:

Aristoteles ait res omnes, quae in dictis et factis et in omni mundo aguntur decem esse: quorum rerum nomina ponemus. Prima substantia est, deinde quantitas, qualitas, ad aliquid, ubi, quando, situs, habere, facere, pati … Harum prima, ut diximus, substantia vocatur. Reliquae novem in substantia sunt, quae accidentia vocantur ut puta, membrana substantia est: accidunt autem ei crocum scriptura et cetera, cum interea et substantia res sit et ea quae accidunt res sint … Hic rem substantiam illam ponamus: quae dum solus est, patet omnibus accidentibus sed cum ab una accidenti fuerit occupata, iam in se incidentem aliam non admittit, put puta, lana alba res est, sed substantia. Haec res patet multis accidentibus, potest enim lana illa aut russea fieri aut veneta aut nigra. Sed si unum colorem in se susceperit, iam in se colorem alium non admittit. (Halm, *Rhetores Latini Minores*, 183)

This shows an acquaintance with the principal contents of the *Categories*. But according to Cassiodorus, Victorinus actually translated and commented on the Aristotelian text.[1] Cassiodorus' testimony is accepted by some scholars, and rejected by others; but even the scholars who accept it dismiss Victorinus' translation as lost without

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[1] 'Isagogen transtulit Victorinus orator; commentaque eius quinque libris vir magnificus Boethius edidit. Categorias item transtulit Victorinus, cuius commentum octo libris ipse quoque formavit' (*Institutes*, 2.18, ed. Mynors p. 128).

trace. After all, Cassiodorus himself, when he quotes passages of the *Categories*, uses Boethius' translation.[2]

After his conversion, Victorinus wrote treatises in defence of Nicene orthodoxy against his Arian friend Candidus, and also a short tract *De Homousio Recipiendo* which is printed in the eighth volume of Migne's patrology. These writings are largely concerned with scriptural argument, but there are also passages which draw on Aristotelian terms and concepts, and which show an acquaintance with, though not a mastery of, the distinction between first and second substance.

The following text, for example, is accurate only if 'substantia' is understood as first substance. '[E]sse Graeci *ousian* vel *upostasin* dicunt: nos uno nomine latine substantiam dicimus. Et *ousian* Graeci pauci et rari, *upostasin* omnes. (PL 8, 1113B)' Nicene orthodoxy, while affirming that Father and Son shared a single *ousia*, agreed that they were two *hypostases*. Arguing against the semi-Arians, on the other hand, Victorinus has this to say:

Impii et illi rursus, qui dicunt homoiousion esse filium patri. Substantia enim secundum quod substantialis est, non est alia, ut sit similis ad aliam, eadem enim est in duobus et non est similis, sed ipsa; sed alia cum sit, non quo substantia est similis dicitur, sed secundum quamdam qualitatem. Impossibile ergo et incongruum homoiousion esse aliquid.

This argument works only if 'substance' is understood as meaning second substance. If the same substantial predicate applies to two things (e.g. to Peter and Paul, who are both men) it is wrong to say that their substances are alike: it is not two humanities, but one and the same humanity, to be found in each of them. If two things are alike, it must be in respect of some quality, not in respect of the substantial predicate that makes them the kind of thing they are.

We will return to Victorinus later: but I turn next to his admirer Augustine, the most famous reader of the *Categories* among

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[2] Minio Paluello accepted Cassiodorus' claim (*CQ* 39 (1945), 63–74) and he was followed by Chadwick, *Boethius* (OUP, 1981), 116. Hadot, *Marius Victorinus* (Paris, 1971), 197 and O'Donnell, *Augustine's Confessions* (OUP, 1992), ii. 265 reject it.

the Latin fathers. In the fourth book of the Confessions we read:

What good did it do me that at about the age of twenty there came into my hands a work of Aristotle which they call the *Ten Categories?* My teacher in rhetoric at Carthage, and others too who were reputed to be learned men, used to speak of this work with their cheeks puffed out with conceit, and at the very name I gasped with suspense as if about to read something great and divine. Yet I read it without any expositor and understood it. I had discussions with people who said they had understood the *Categories* only with much difficulty after the most erudite teachers had not only given oral explanations but had drawn numerous diagrams in the dust. They could tell me nothing they had learnt from these teachers which I did not already know from reading the book on my own without having anyone to explain it. The book seemed to me an extremely clear statement about substances, such as man, and what are in them, such as a man's shape, what is his quality of stature,[3] how many feet, and his relatedness, for example whose brother he is, or where he is placed, or when he was born, or whether he is standing or sitting, or is wearing shoes or armour, or whether he is active or passive, and the innumerable things which are classified by these nine genera of which I have given some instances, or by the genus of substance itself.

What help was this to me when the book was also an obstacle? Thinking that absolutely everything that exists is comprehended under the ten categories, I tried to conceive you also, my God, wonderfully simple and immutable, as if you too were a subject of which magnitude and beauty are attributes. I thought them to be in you as if in a subject, as in the case of a physical body, whereas you yourself are your own magnitude and your own beauty. By contrast a body is not great and beautiful by being body; if it were less great or less beautiful, it would nevertheless still be body. My conception of you was a lie, not truth, the figments of my misery, not the permanent solidity of your supreme bliss. (*Confessions*, 4. 16. 28–9, trans. Chadwick, OUP, 1991)

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[3] This seems a slightly odd translation of 'figura hominis, qualis sit, et statura, quot pedum sit': 'what kind of figure a man has, and how many feet tall he is' would be more natural. Augustine is thinking of whether a man is handsome or not: the reference is picked up in the discussion of God's beauty and greatness in the next paragraph.

There has been considerable discussion of the question what translation Augustine was using. According to Minio-Paluello, Varro (116–27 BC) was the first translator of Aristotle's text into Latin. This is on the basis of a passage in Martianus Capella where the lady dialectic says 'Marci Terentii prima me in latinam vocem pellexit industria' (xxx). However, it seems rash, on the basis of this alone, to conclude that Varro translated the entire organon, and no trace of or allusion to his translation is to be found. Quintilian (*c*. AD 35–*c*.95) seems to have been acquainted with Aristotle's work, and lists the categories in his *Institutio Oratoria* (3. 6. 22):

Ac primum Aristoteles elementa decem constituit, circa quae versari videatur omnis quaestio: ουσιαν, quam Plautus essentiam vocat (neque sane aliud est eius nomen Latinum), sed ea quaeritur 'an sit': qualitatem, cuius apertus intellectus est: quantitatem, quae dupliciter a posterioribus divisa est, quam magnum et quam multum sit: ad aliquid, under ductae tralatio et comparatio: post haec ubi et quando: deinde facere pati habere (quod est quasi armatum esse, vestitum esse): novissime κεισθαι, quod est compostum esse quodam modo, ut iacere stare. (p. 146, ed. Winterbottom, Oxford Classical Texts (OUP, 1970))

There is no evidence, however, that Quintilian himself made a translation, and indeed his discussion suggests that there was no agreed Latin version of key terms in his time. No satisfactory source has in fact been proposed for Augustine's acquaintance with the *Categories*.[4]

Whatever was the text in which Augustine read the *Categories*, he made frequent use of its teaching in dealing with theological matters. We can draw some examples from his writing on the Trinity. In general, he rejects the application of accidental categories to the Godhead. We must think of God as 'sine qualitate

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[4] O'Donnell (*Augustine's Confessions*, ii. 265) seeks a solution from the order in which the categories are listed: Augustine gives quality as the first accident, whereas Aristotle gives quantity. But the only conclusion he reaches is this: 'On the evidence of the order, therefore, A. is in the tradition from Porphyry and Calcidius (and leading to Boethius); fully neo-Platonic (and for that matter Porphyrian more than Plotinian).' He does not point out that Augustine's ordering is already there in Quintilian.

bonum, sine quantitate magnum, sine indigentia creatorem, sine situ praesentem, sine habitu omnia continentem, sine loco ubique totum, sine tempore sempiternum, sine ulla sui mutatione mutabilia facientem nihilque patientem' (*De Trinitate*, 5. 1. 2). However, God is without doubt a substance, Augustine agrees.

Moreover, in controversy with Arians Augustine makes appeal to the special category of relation. Some Arians argued as follows. Whatever is said or thought of God is in substance, not accident. So to be unbegotten belongs to the substance of the Father, and to be begotten to substance of Son. Hence there is a difference in substance between the Father and the Son.

To deal with this, Augustine introduces the Aristotelian notion of relation. 'Begotten' is a relational predicate, and so is 'unbegotten', because negations belong in the same category as what they negate. This is spelt out in the seventh chapter of *De Trinitate* V.

Velut cum dicimus 'homo est' substantiam designamus. Qui ergo dicit: 'non homo est', non aliud genus praedicamenti enuntiat sed tantum illud negat. Sicut ergo secundum substantiam aio: 'Homo est', sic secundum substantiam nego cum dico: 'Non homo est', et cum quaeritur, quantus sit, et aio: 'Quadripedalis est', id esst quattuor pedum, qui dicit 'Non quadripedalis est' secundum quantitatem negat…Et omnino nullum praedicamenti genus est secundum quod aliquid aiere volumes nisi ut secundum idipsum praedicamentum negare convincamur si praeponere negativam particulam voluerimus.

'Unbegotten' is, therefore, in the category of relation, as 'begotten' is. But the category of relation is not the same as the category of substance; one who is begotten is different from one who is unbegotten, the difference is not a difference in substance.

Like Marius Victorinus, Augustine has some difficulty in relating Greek to Latin terminology. Should the Greek *ousia* be translated 'essentia' or 'substantia'? Some writers prefer 'essentia' and regard 'substantia' as the equivalent of *hypostasis*, but Augustine confesses that he is not sure what the difference is between the two Greek words. The common Greek formula for the Trinity 'mia ousia, treis hypostaseis' sounds odd if rendered into Latin as 'una essentia,

tres substantiae' since 'essentia' and 'substantia' are often treated as synonymous. He opts finally for saying that there is one essence or substance, and three persons (*De Trin.* 5. 9).

Among the texts printed by Migne among the works of Augustine (*PL*, 32) there is a work entitled *Decem Categoriae* attributed, by most of the manuscripts, to Augustine himself. The attribution goes back to Alcuin, who in about 790 edited the work and dedicated it to Charlemagne.[5] From the time of the Maurist editors, modern scholars have been unanimous in rejecting this attribution, and following them I shall refer to the author of the treatise as pseudo-Augustine. The text was edited by Minio-Paluello in the first volume of the *Aristoteles Latinus*, pp. 133–75.

The work is neither exactly a version of, nor a commentary on, the *Categories*, but a paraphrase that contains substantial portions of translated text. It is a work of original intelligence that captures Aristotle's sense reasonably accurately (usually if not always) without slavishly following his diction or passively reproducing his examples. The author also adds interesting developments—which may be his own, or may derive from Themistius, whose influence he acknowledges—of which we may give a few examples.

Pseudo-Augustine asks which of three things form the subject matter of Aristotle's text: things that exist, things that are in the mind, or things that are said. His answer is that the treatise is principally concerned with things in the mind, but the treatment of these necessarily involves a discussion of things that exist and things that are said (p. 137).

Of the things that exist, some are known by the senses, others by the mind alone. What is detected by the senses, pseudo-Augustine says, is called 'substance' (*usia*), what is changeable and investigated by the mind is called 'accident' (p. 139). This is a very interesting remark, running counter to a view common later that the accidental

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[5] Alcuinus Magister a partibus scythiae nostras deveniens has cathegorias ab Aristotle Greco sermone editas et post ab Augustine latinis litteris elucidatas karolo regi francorum cum his versibus destinavit. See Minio-Paluello, *Aristoteles Latinus*, I. 5.

forms of things were obvious to the senses, while the substantial form could be detected only by the intellect.

Again, pseudo-Augustine remarks perceptively that there is a problem about the category of quality, since the notion of quality seems to be applicable within a number of other categories: we can speak of a learned man, a white surface, a proud father, a dark place, a warm month, and so on. In this context, he also interests himself in the relationship of adverbs to the categories (p. 159).

The content of the treatise is sufficiently interesting to make it worth pursuing the question of its authorship. I will do so at the conclusion of this chapter, but first I will complete my brief survey of the use of the *Categories* in the Latin Fathers. The most significant figure in the story is, of course, Boethius, but I will pass over him since he has been fully discussed by other authors.

Cassiodorus (*c.* AD 490−*c.*585) in his *Institutiones*, after discussing Porphyry's *Isagoge* has this to say:

Sequuntur Aristotelis Categoriae sive praedicamenta, quibus mirum in modum per varias significantias omnis conclusus est sermo; quorum organa sive instrumenta sunt tria. Organa vel instrumenta categoriarum sive praedicamentorum sunt tria: aequivoca univoca denominativa: aequivoca dicuntur quorum nomen solum commune est, secundum nomen vero substantiae ratio diversa, ut animal homo et quod pingitur. Univoca dicuntur quorum et nomen commune est, et secundum nomen discrepare eadem substantiae ratio non probatur, ut animal homo atque bos. (p. 113, ed. Mynors)

Cassiodorus lists the ten categories as follows: *substantia*, *quantitas*, *ad aliquid*, *qualitas*, *facere*, *pati*, *situs*, *quando*, *ubi*, *habere*. He gives a clear account of the difference between first and second substance.

Substantia est, quae proprie et principaliter et maxime dicitur, quae neque de subiecto praedicatur neque in subiecto est, ut aliqui homo vel aliqui equus. Secundae autem substantiae in quibus speciebus illae, quae principaliter substantiae primo dictae sunt, insunt atque clauduntur, ut in homine Cicero. (p. 113)

Cicero, along with Hortensius, was also given as an example of a first substance by pseudo-Augustine (p. 135).

The series of Latin fathers who made use of the *Categories* is concluded by Isidore of Seville, who discusses the work in his *Etymologies* 2. 26. His chapter on the Aristotelian text is largely a mosaic of borrowings from previous writers. The first sentence is almost a verbatim quotation of the passage from Cassiodorus quoted above. He then inserts two sentences from Martianus Capella before returning to Cassiodorus' text to distinguish between first and second substances. At the end of the chapter he borrows from pseudo-Augustine to draw a distinction between various types of accident.

Ex his novem accidentibus tria intra usiam sunt, quantitas et qualitas et situs. Haec enim sine usia esse non possunt. Extra usiam vero sunt locus, tempus et habitus; intra et extra usiam sunt relatio, facere et pati. (2. 26. 13 = Ps-Aug, 144)

Isidore gives as an example of a sentence utilizing all the categories: Augustine, a great orator, the son of so-and-so, standing in the temple today and wearing a crown, is tired out by disputing.

I turn in conclusion to the question of the authorship of the pseudo-Augustinian *Decem Categoriae*. First, I suppose, one should consider for a moment whether the Maurist rejection of its authenticity can be called into question. After all, in our own time, the *De Dialectica*, long considered spurious, has been returned to the canon and edited by Darrell Jackson (Reidel, 1975). However, a convincing argument against the genuineness of the *Decem Categoriae* is that, unlike the *De Dialectica*, it is not mentioned in the *Retractationes*. No author ever took so much care as Augustine did to see that his *Nachlass* was handed over intact to posterity. I see no reason, therefore, to deny to pseudo-Augustine the attribution of recent centuries. The question is: who is pseudo-Augustine?

Several indications in the *Decem Categoriae* make clear that the work was written in the fourth century. The author is a contemporary and admirer of Themistius (317–88). When he

assigns mental ideas as Aristotle's subject matter, the author adds 'ut erudito nostrae aetatis Themistio philosopho placet' (p. 137), and at the end of the treatise he acknowledges his debt to 'Themistii nostra memoria egregii philosophi magisterium' (p. 175). In the course of his discussion of the category of 'situs' the author goes out of his way to praise one Agorius 'quem ego inter doctissimos habeo' (p. 162).

On the basis of this last text scholars for a long time identified the author as Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, (*c.* AD 320–*c.*384), an anti-Christian philosopher and senator who is credited by Boethius with translating Themistius' paraphrase of Aristotle's *Analytics*.[6] But Henry Chadwick is surely right to say that, on the contrary, 'unless one resorts to the desperate expedient of seeing this remark as an interpolation from a marginal note by an early reader, this text must decisively disprove the old opinion'.[7]

Chadwick prefers the hypothesis put forward in 1945 by Minio-Paluello (*CQ* 39: 63–74) that the author's name was Albinus, corrupted in transmission to Augustinus. On the basis of this conjecture, and on the strength of the acknowledgement to Themistius in the envoi of the treatise, Minio-Paluello entitled his edition of the *Decem Categoriae* 'A-I Paraphrasis Themistiana'.

There were, indeed, several members of the Albini family in the circle of Agorius, the most plausible of whom, as a candidate author, would be Ceonius Rufus Albinus, the consul of 335, who was a writer on dialectic.[8] However, unless this man lived for a considerable time after his consulate, he is unlikely to have written the treatise, because in 335 Themistius was only 18 and Agorius 15, and both, as we have seen, are mentioned with respect.

Instead of Agorius and Albinus I would like to propose for consideration as a candidate author Marius Victorinus. Here the chronology presents no difficulties. Victorinus was converted to Christianity, after a distinguished rhetorical career, in about 354;

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[6] J. A. Fabricius, *Bibliotheca Graeca III* (1793), 211; Schanz/Hosius, *Gesch.d. rom Litt IV 2* (1920), 412, 414; G. Pfligersdorffer, *Wiener Studien*, 65 (1970), 131–7.

[7] *Boethius* (OUP, 1981), 114.   [8] *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (OUP, 1996), 50.

he would have been well placed to write, in his later pagan or early Christian days, a treatise such as the *Decem Categoriae*. He could well have met Themistius when the latter visited Rome in 357.

As we have seen, Cassiodorus tells us that Victorinus translated and commented on the *Categories*, and it is surely not too hardy a speculation to suggest that the text of Victorinus that has gone missing is identical with the paraphrase that lacks an author. Given that the word 'ens' was coined by Victorinus it might not be unreasonable to quote in support of the conjecture 'entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem'.[9]

Several features of the *Decem Categoriae* suggest that it was written by a grammarian or rhetorician rather than a dialectician. The stock examples of individuals are not philosophers like Socrates and Hippias but orators like Hortensius and Cicero. From time to time the author digresses to enlarge on points of diction, for instance to rebuke those who say 'mulier habet maritum', rather than 'mulieri est vir' (p. 168). On the crucial philosophical issue of the difference between first and second substance the text seems considerably confused (pp. 134–5). Victorinus' treatment of the categories in his commentary on Cicero resembles the mixture of independent imagination and uncertain philosophical footwork characteristic of pseudo-Augustine.

So far as I am aware, no close comparison has been made between the style of pseudo-Augustine and that of Victorinus. A superficial glance does not suggest any close resemblance between the two. On the other hand, there are considerable and obvious differences between the rhetorical works of Victorinus and his Christian works of anti-Arian polemic. As Augustine was well aware, a close study of the Bible can have a drastic effect on one's Latin style.

The hypothesis that Victorinus was responsible for the *Categories* would also provide a solution to two problems we have already

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[9] To be sure, there is some uncertainty about the manuscript tradition of the passage in Cassiodorus, and on the basis of this Hadot (*Marius Victorinus*, 197) denies that Victorinus made a translation of the *Categories*. But I see no reason to prefer his conjectural reconstruction of the text to that printed in Mynors's edition.

encountered. No satisfactory answer has been given to the question: in what version did Augustine encounter the *Categories* around the year 374? May it not have been in the *Decem Categoriae* if that had been produced by Victorinus a decade or two earlier? It is by that name that Augustine refers to Aristotle's treatise. Again, may not the reason that the work was attributed to Augustine himself have been that it was found after his death among his own papers? It would not be surprising if he possessed, in his library at Hippo, a version of a text he utilized, written by a fellow African whom he much admired.

This of course is all conjecture: but it is a conjecture which, I submit, deserves further study.