Nicomachean Revision in the 'Common Books':
the Case of *NE* VI (*≈EE* V) 2

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Open the Oxford edition of the *Nicomachean Ethics* to book six, chapter two, and you will find that Bywater presents the text as fairly unproblematic.[1] Though scholars have recently disagreed over the interpretation of this important chapter, which contains Aristotle's alluring notion of practical truth (1139a26-7), they all appear to accept the text as it has been handed down to us in the manuscript tradition.[2] However, this consensus

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[1] See I. Bywater (ed.), *Aristotelis Ethica Nicomachea* ['*Ethica'*] (Oxford, 1894), 114-6.

[2] See G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Thought and Action in Aristotle' in J. Bamborough, *New Essays on Plato and Aristotle* (London, 1965), 143-58; G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Practical Truth' in M. Geach and L. Gormally, *Human Life, Action and Ethics* (Exeter, 2005), 149-158; S. Broadie, 'Practical Truth in Aristotle' ['*Practical*'], *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, 90.2 (2016), 281-298; D. Charles, 'Practical Truth: An Interpretation of Parts of *NE* VI' in D. Brink, S. S. Meyer, C. Shields, *Virtue, Happiness, Knowledge: Themes from the Work of Gail Fine and Terence Irwin* (Oxford, 2018), 149-168; A. Kenny, 'Practical Truth in Aristotle' in B. Morison and K. Ierodiakonou (eds.) *Episteme, etc.* (Oxford, 2011), 277-284; A. Leandri, 'L'action et la verité (*Éthique à Nicomàque*, VI. 2)' in J.-V. Chateau (ed.), *La Vérité Pratique: Aristote:* Éthique à Nicomaque, *Livre VI* (Paris, 1997); G. R. Lear, *Happy Lives and the Highest Good: An Essay on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* [*Lives*] (Princeton, 2004), ch.5; C. M. M. Olfert, 'Aristotle's Conception of Practical Truth,' *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 52.2 (2014), 205-231; C. M. M. Olfert, *Aristotle on Practical Truth* [*Truth*] (Oxford, 2017); M. Pakaluk, 'The Great Question of Practical Truth and a Diminutive Answer' *Acta Philosophica* 19.1 (2010), 145-59; C. D. C. Reeve, *Action, Contemplation, and Happiness* (Cambridge, 2012); and H. Weidemann, 'Überlegungen zum Begriff der praktischen Wahrheit bei Aristoteles' *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung* 59.3 (2005), 345- 357. See also recent commentaries on the passage in, e.g., S. Broadie (comm.) and C. Rowe (trans.), *Aristotle:* Nicomachean Ethics*: Translation, Introduction and Commentary* [*Ethics*] (Oxford, 2002); C. D. C. Reeve, *Aristotle on Practical Wisdom:* Nicomachean Ethics *VI, Translated with an Introduction, Analysis and Commentary* (Cambridge, 2013); and D. Frede, *Aristoteles: Nikomachische Ethik. Zweiter Halbband: Kommentar* (Berlin/Boston, 2020).

would seem to be at least partly explained by the fact that many scholars are reading the text in the edition of Bywater. In the first part of this paper, I question this consensus, and I argue in favor of the neglected proposal of Gauthier and Jolif according to which the text of *NE* VI. 2 should be rearranged such that lines 1139a31-b11 (πραξεως... πεπραγμένα) follow the word κοινωνεῖν at 1139a20. The rationale for this transposition is that Aristotle probably inserted these lines into the text by means of something like a marginal note, but the first editor of the *NE*, when preparing the text for posthumous publication, mistakenly added these lines in the wrong place. While arguing for this transposition, I observe that *NE* VI. 2 without the suggested note forms a unified text that contains striking parallels to undisputed passages in the *Eudemian Ethics*.

In the second part of this paper, I offer linguistic and philosophical reasons to believe that the suggested note (1139a31-b11) was added by Aristotle in the course of revising Eudemian material for inclusion in the *NE*. The note is thus Nicomachean, and the whole of *NE* VI. 2 is most plausibly regarded as a Nicomachean revision of an originally Eudemian text. The content of the suggested note also seems critical for understanding the relationship between the *NE* and the *EE*, and this is because it expresses a desire-based account of the practical intellect as teleologically oriented to action. This account seems to be mature because it is found in the *De Anima* (III. 9-10, 432b26-433a25), and the *NE* articulates two related consequences of this account: that practical philosophy is teleologically oriented to action, and that it therefore has a special methodology. By contrast, the *EE* articulates neither of these consequences, and instead seems to presuppose an object-based account of the practical intellect suggested by the latter half of *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 1 (1138b35-9a17), which seems to be an originally

Eudemian text. The picture that emerges from these and other considerations is that, between the *EE* and the *NE*, Aristotle revised his conception of the practical intellect and consequently his conceptions of practical truth and practical philosophy.

1.1

We can begin by observing that Bywater's presentation of *NE* VI. 2 is somewhat peculiar. This is because Ramsauer had earlier observed that lines 1139a31-b11 disrupt the reasoning leading from 1139a26-31 to the end of the passage at 1139b12-13, and he conjectures that the lines, though genuinely Aristotelian, were transposed from elsewhere, either by Aristotle or someone else.[3] When Susemihl published his edition of the *NE* in 1880, he reported Ramsauer's conjecture, and partially accepted it by bracketing 1139a31-35 and 1139b4-11.[4] However, when Bywater published his edition in 1890 (and with minor corrections, in 1894), he bracketed no lines in *NE* VI. 2, and did not report the conjectures of Ramsauer or Susemihl. Here Bywater seems to have been carrying out his stated intention to ignore questions about the origins of the book, the reliability of its parts, or the arrangement of text as found in the manuscript tradition.[5] Susemihl did not ignore questions of this sort, and neither did Apelt, who revised Susemihl's text in 1903 and again in 1912.[6]

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[3] G. Ramsauer (ed. and comm.), *Aristotelis Ethica Nicomachea* [*Ethica*] (Leipzig, 1878), 376.
[4] F. Susemihl (ed.), *Aristotelis Ethica Nicomachea* (Leipzig, 1880), 126.
[5] Bywater, *Ethica*, v.
[6] F. Susemihl and O. Apelt (eds.), *Aristotelis Ethica Nicomachea*, 3rd edn. [*Ethica*] (Leipzig, 1912). With regard to the passages of the *Nicomachean Ethics* [*NE*] quoted in this paper, the Greek text is nearly identical in editions of Bywater, *Ethica* and of Susemhl and Apelt, *Ethica*. Where there are differences, I indicate which edition I am following.

In light of this short history, one can reasonably predict that readers will sometimes perceive the text of the *NE* quite differently depending on which edition they happen to be using.

1.2

Besides Ramsauer and Susemihl, several other scholars have commented on the disorderliness of *NE* VI. 2. For example, Greenwood wrote in 1909 that the text needs to be rearranged, and he also made a proposal about how this should be done.[7] However, it is interesting that Greenwood never asked how the text could have become so disorganized that it needed a rearrangement; instead, he sidestepped the issue by offering his proposal only as an attempt to clarify the text's meaning.[8] In fact, Gauthier and Jolif

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[7] L. H. G. Greenwood, *Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics: Book Six with Essays, Notes, and Translation* [*Book Six*] (Cambridge, 1909), 174 proposes that after the κοινωνεῖν at 1139a20, the lines should be ordered as follows: 1139a31-35 (πράξεως...οὐκ ἔστιν), 1139b4-b5 (διὸ... ἄνθρωπος), 1139b5-11 (ὅυκ ἐστι... πεπραγμένα), 1139a21-31 (ἔστιν... ὀρθῇ), 1135a35-b4 (διάνοια…τούτου), and then the last two lines (1139b12-13), kept in place. R. A. Gauthier and J. Y. Jolif (comm.), *L'Éthique à Nicomaque: Tome II – Deuxième Partie: Commentaire, Livres VI-X* [*Livres VI-X*], reprint of 2nd edn. (Louvain, 2002 [1970]), 444 follow this proposal with one small but important change: lines 1135a35-b4 are kept in place after 1139a31-35. Greenwood, *Book Six*, 176 also rejects 1139a34-35, reasoning that the lines 'appear to try to prove one statement by another that is logically posterior to it,' and here he is followed by H. Rackham (trans.), *Aristotle: The Nicomachean Ethics*, revised edn. (Cambridge, 1934), 328-30. However, see Gauthier and Jolif, *Livres VI-X*, 444 for a critique of this excision. One might further add that Aristotle emphasizes the need to sometimes proceed from what is clearer to us, not from what is clearer in itself (*NE* I. 4, 1095a30-b13), and that could explain his procedure at 1139a34-35; T. Aquinas, *Sentantia Libri Ethicorum*; edited by the Dominican Brothers (Rome, 1969), 337.163-5 seems to assume a similar interpretation when he notes the lines in question contain an argument from a sign (cf. *APr* II. 27 and *Rhet* I. 2, 1357b1-25).

[8] Greenwood, *Book Six*, 175. A. Kenny, *Aristotle's Theory of the Will* [*Theory*] (New Haven, 1979), 100-1 similarly seeks no explanation for the disorganization of *NE* VI. 2, even though he thinks the text's meaning is best appreciated when rearranged as follows: 1139a17-20, 1139a31-32, 1139b4-5, 1139a21-31, 1139a35-b4, 1139a33-35. Kenny regards 1139b5-11 as a footnote, and he presumably wishes to keep the last lines of the passage (1139b12-13) where they are. Kenny, *Theory*, 101, like Greenwood, explicitly says that he is only trying to clarify the text's meaning. It also makes sense for them to describe their rearrangements in this way because if one were to propose either of their rearrangements as the original ordering of the text, it would be very difficult to give a plausible story about how the text arrived at its present state.

seem to be the only commentators who have proposed a rearrangement of *NE* VI. 2 with the purpose of restoring the intended order of the text: as reported above, they reasoned that Aristotle inserted lines 1139a31-b11 as a note, which the first editor mistakenly added in the wrong place.[9] We will evaluate their proposed rearrangement in the next two sections, but here we discuss the rationale behind it.

The comments of Gauthier and Jolif on the relevant lines of *NE* VI. 2 are brief, but Gauthier's new introduction to the second edition of the commentary provides the relevant background. There one finds a sophisticated account of the composition and editing of the *NE* in which Gauthier emphasizes the formative role of a first editor.[10] Here I summarize the elements of that account that are relevant to our interpretation, and I expand on them by incorporating other relevant literature, as I proceed.

Gauthier begins by noting that the Aristotelian corpus is largely comprised of specialized treatises that were not published during Aristotle's lifetime. These treatises contrast with the so-called 'exoteric' writings, such as the *Protrepticus* and *Eudemus*, which Aristotle refers to as 'works in circulation' (τὰ ἐγκύκλια; e.g. *NE* I. 5, 1096a3-4).[11] The exoteric writings seem to have been polished works of popularization in literary form, while the specialized treatises were unpolished works-in-progress, more or less based on Aristotle's lecture notes.[12] Students would probably have heard these

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[9] Gauthier and Jolif, *Livres VI-X*, 443-4.

[10] The new introduction of 1970 is attributed solely to Gauthier, though the entire work (introduction, translation and commentary) is still attributed to both Gauthier and Jolif.

[11] R. A. Gauthier, R. A., *L'Éthique à Nicomaque: Tome I – Première Partie: Introduction* [*Introduction*], reprint of 2nd edn. (Louvain, 2002 [1970]), 63-67. Aristotle uses the term 'exoteric' in various places to designate his published works of popularization (e.g at *EE* I. 8, 1217b22-23 and *NE* I. 13, 1102a26-27).

[12] Gauthier, *Introduction*, 67-70 quotes A. Mansion, 'La genèse de l'œuvre d'Aristote d'après les travaux récents' ['Genèse'], *Revue Néoscolastique de Philosophie*, 29.2 (1927), 307-41 and 423-466 at 308-10, and he also refers the reader to W. W. Jaeger, *Studien sur Entsehungsgeschichte der Metaphysik des Aristoteles* [*Entsehungsgeschichte*] (Berlin, 1912), 131-63. There is a memorable piece of evidence that the *NE* is based Aristotle's lectures: he at one point refers to a chart of the virtues that is not present in the text (*NE* II.

specialized treatises when Aristotle presented them in the classroom at which time he would have extemporaneously expanded upon them with examples and other clarifications.[13] It is possible that students were able to read working drafts of the treatises in the school library;[14] however, Aristotle never seems to have finalized them for publication, but continually revised them until his death.[15] One major piece of evidence for such revision is the presence of doublets throughout the corpus—that is, passages in which Aristotle seems to cover the same material two times. Scholars surmise that one of these passages is often a later reconsideration, sometimes intended to replace the other.[16]

Now if Aristotle died while still revising his treatises, then it would fall to one or more editors to publish these treatises posthumously.[17] Consequently, this first editor of the *NE*, whoever he was, could have easily made mistakes when preparing the treatise for

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7, 1107a32-33). C. Natali, *Aristotle: His Life and School* [*Life*], edited by D. S. Hutchinson (Princeton, 2013), 117 infers that the various references in the treatises to visual aids indicate 'a teaching activity that was fairly institutionalized.' However, one should not conclude that the specialized treatises are identical to lecture notes. For example, W. D. Ross, *Aristotle* (London, 1923), 17 writes that most of the specialized treatises 'show a fullness of expression and attention to literary form, which is incompatible with their being mere rough memoranda for lectures.' M. F. Burnyeat, *A Map of Metaphysics Zeta* [*Map*] (Pittsburgh, 2001), 115n.60 also observes diversity within the corpus ('[*History of Animals*] was a resource to be read'), and he believes that many scholars need to appreciate that *akouein* can be used to indicate 'reading' as well as 'hearing.'

[13] Gauthier, *Introduction*, 76. H. Jackson, 'Aristotle's Lecture Room and Lectures,' *Journal of Philology* 35 (1920), 191-200 detects in Aristotle's writings various features of a lecture's style, and J. Barnes, 'Life and Work' ['Work'], in J. Barnes, *Cambridge Companion to Aristotle* (Cambridge, 1995), 1-26 at 15 describes Aristotle's sentences as 'telegrammatic' and his arguments as 'enthymematic.'

[14] Gauthier, *Introduction*, 67-68 quotes Mansion, 'Genèse', who mentions the possibility of private publication of the written treatises within the school. Burnyeat, *Map*, 116 suggests that working drafts of chapters of the *Metaphysics* may have been available in the school library, and J. P. Lynch, *Aristotle's School: A Study of a Greek Educational Institution* (Berkeley, 1972), 97 gives reasons to think that Aristotle was 'the first to recognize the value of organizing a library for a philosophical school.'

[15] Gauthier, *Introduction*, 82-83. See also e.g. Jaeger, *Entsehungsgeschichte*, 159-60 and Burnyeat, *Map*, 113. On the nature of such revision, see Natali, *Life*, 109-11.

[16] For a discussion of doublets in the corpus, see Gauthier, *Introduction*, 69, 74-75, and Barnes, 'Work', 12-14. Some of the cross-references within the Aristotelian corpus point to non-existent discussions, and M. F. Burnyeat, 'Aristotelian Revisions: The Case of *de Sensu*' ['Case'], *Apeiron* 37.2 (2004), 177-180 has argued that the best explanation for this would seem to be that these cross-references were added by Aristotle but rendered defunct due to his continual revision.

[17] Gauthier, *Introduction*, 83-84. For the purposes of this paper, it does not matter who the first editor of the *NE* was, only that there was one and that this was not Aristotle.

publication. For example, he might have included passages that were meant to be superseded, and this would explain some of the 'doublets' just mentioned. The editor might have also misplaced certain passages that Aristotle had added in the course of revision,[18] and this is in fact how Gauthier and Jolif explain the disorganization of *NE* VI. 2.[19] This latter kind of editorial error was not unknown in the ancient world. Galen comments on a certain Hippocratic treatise: 'I have often thought that this book was found in draft and published after the death of Hippocrates. For it does not seem likely that the disorder of the text came to be in any other way than this.'[20] Similarly problematic editorial work has even occurred recently.[21]

Our interpretation of *NE* VI. 2 still requires a further clarification, though, and this is because *NE* VI is one of the three so-called 'common books' that seem to belong both

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[18] As Gauthier, *Introduction*, 75 observes, these additions would have been written in the margin or on small slips of papyrus that were attached to the manuscript.

[19] Gauthier and Jolif, *Livres VI-X*, 444). Scholars have similarly explained other disorganized passages in Aristotle. For example, O. Primavesi, 'Introduction: the transmission of the text and the riddle of the two versions' in C. Steel (ed.) *Aristotle's* Metaphysics *Alpha*: *Symposium Aristotelicum* (Oxford, 2012), 387-458 at 452-56 explains in this way certain authentic but misplaced 'supplements' in *Metaphysics* A.

[20] Galen, *In Hippocratis de acutorum morborum victu commentarius*, in C. G. Kühn, *Claudii Galeni Opera Omnia*, vol. 15 (Leipzig, 1828), 418-919 at 624.3-5: Πολλάκις ἐνενόησα τοῦτο τὸ βιβλίον ἐν τύποις εὑρεθὲν ἐκδεδόσθαι μετὰ τὸν Ἱπποκράτους θάνατον. ἡ γὰρ ἀταξία τῶν λόγων οὐκ ἄλλως ἔοικεν ἢ οὕτως γεγονέναι. L. D. Reynolds and N. G. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature*, 4th edn. (Oxford, 2013), 217 assimilate this Hippocratic text to the case of second editions, but it is perhaps more accurate to say that Galen is here considering the case of a posthumously published first edition that had been earlier revised by the author—that is, a case quite similar to the one that we seem to have in Aristotle.

[21] When preparing the *Philosophical Investigations* for posthumous publication, G. E. M. Anscombe and R. Rhees had to make a difficult decision: Wittgenstein had inserted notes on slips of paper into the manuscript with no 'further indication about where they were to come in,' and Anscombe and Rhees chose to print these notes beneath a line at the bottom of the page, on which see the 'Editors' Note' in L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*; edited by G. E. M. Anscombe and R. Rhees, translated by G. E. M. Anscombe, 1st edn. (Oxford, 1953), vi. However, in their 4th edition of *Philosophical Investigations*, P. M. S. Hacker and Joachim Schulter questioned this decision, and made an 'important change' to the text by printing the notes 'in boxes in their designated places wherever that is now known, rather than at the foot of the page,' on which see L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*; edited by P.M.S. Hacker and J. Schulte, translated by G. E. M. Anscombe, P.M.S. Hacker and J. Schulte, 4th edn. (Oxford, 2009), ix. Scholars have similarly questioned the editorial work involved in the posthumous publication of Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics*, on which see B. Stawarska, 'Recent Developments in Saussurean Linguistics' in B. Stawarska (ed.) *Saussure's Linguistics, Structuralism, and Phenomenology* (Cham, 2020), 9-14.

to the *NE* and to the *EE*.[22] Gauthier believes that Aristotle originally composed the

common books (*EE* VI-VI ≈ *NE* V-VII) as part of the *EE*—a thesis which Anthony

Kenny later controversially defended by stylometric methods, and which now seems to

be the consensus view.[23] However, Gauthier also believes that Aristotle revised the

common books for their inclusion in the *NE*:[24] thus, books V-VII of the *NE* have a

Eudemian 'base,' which accounts for the similarities to undisputed books of the *EE*, but

they also have Nicomachean additions and revisions, which were not in their Eudemian

originals.[25] Moreover, the disarray that one sometimes finds in *NE* V-VII may also be due

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[22] D. Harlfinger, 'Die Überlieferungsgeschichte der Eudemischen Ethik' in P. Moraux and D. Harlfinger (eds.), *Untersuchungen zur Eudemischen Ethik* (Berlin, 1971), 1-50 at 43-45 shows that the text of the common books as preserved by certain manuscripts of the *EE* was in fact derived from a manuscript of the *NE*, but he does not think this proves that the *NE* is the original location of the common books.

[23] See A. Kenny, *The Aristotelian Ethics* [*AE*] (Oxford, 1978). For evidence of a growing consensus that the common books were originally written for the *EE*, see A. Kenny, 'Reconsiderations 2016' ['Reconsiderations'], in A. Kenny, *The Aristotelian Ethics*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 2016), 272-305 at 301n.21.

[24] Gauthier, *Introduction*, 72-73 is sympathetic with the hypothesis of Mansion, 'Genèse', 445n.2 according to which Aristotle himself inserted the common books into the *NE*, but Gauthier is hesitant to agree with this hypothesis completely because he finds it improbable that Aristotle would have inserted the Eudemian treatment of pleasure (i.e. *EE* VI. 11-14) into the *NE*. C. J. Rowe, *The Eudemian and Nicomachean Ethics: A Study in the Development of Aristotle's Thought* (Cambridge, 1971) maintained that *NE* V and VII are Nicomachean revisions of Eudemian originals but that *NE* VI was written afresh for the *NE*, though this latter thesis seems to have been retracted by C. J. Rowe, 'De Aristotelis in tribus libris Ethicorum dicendi ratione: Participles, Connectives, and Style in Three Books from the Aristotelian Ethical Treatises,' *Liverpool Classical Monthly* 8 (1983), 4-11, 37-40, 54-57, and 70-74 at 74. In response to the arguments of Kenny, *AE*, T. Irwin, Reviews of A. Kenny, *The Aristotelian Ethics* and of A. Kenny, *Aristotle's Theory of the Will* ['Reviews'], *The Journal of Philosophy* 77.6 (1980), 338-354 and J. Cooper, Review of Kenny, *The Aristotelian Ethics* ['Review of *AE*'], *Noûs* 15.3 (1981), 381-392 mentioned the possibility that the common books were Nicomachean revisions of Eudemian originals, but they did not develop the hypothesis. D. Frede, 'On the So-Called Common Books of the *Eudemian* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*' ['Common'], *Phronesis* 64 (2019), 84-116 has recently defended such a view, but she did not discuss the work of Gauthier and Jolif because she mistakenly supposed both that they 'regarded the *EE* as the work of Eudemus' and thus 'did not take the possibility into consideration that the *EN* might be a revision of the *EE*' (87). Both H. Lorenz, 'Virtue of Character in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*' ['Character'], *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 37 (2009), 177-212 at 180n.5 and Frede, 'Common', 93n.30 highlight an observation of O. Primavesi, 'Ein Blick in den Stollen von Skepsis: Vier Kapitel zur frühen Überlieferung des Corpus Aristotelicum' *Philologus* 151.1 (2007), 51-77 at 70-73 that suggests that the ten-book *NE* was considered the authoritative version of the ethics at Aristotle's death: the ten books of the *NE* follow the same book numbering scheme as the majority of the Aristotelian corpus whereas the *EE* follows a different and later book-numbering scheme. Kenny, 'Reconsiderations' does not discuss Primavesi's observation or the relevance placed upon it by Lorenz, 'Character', 180n.5.

[25] Gauthier, *Introduction*, 73. Cooper, 'Review of *AE*', 387, Irwin, 'Reviews', 342, and Frede, 'Common', 87 all observe that the possibility of such revision compromises the statistical results of Kenny, *AE*. A. Kenny, *Aristotle on the Perfect Life* [*Perfect*] (Oxford, 1992), 135 responds with a challenge to provide him

to the fact that these books received a less complete revision than other books in the *NE*.[26] Consequently, when the first editor was preparing the *NE* for posthumous publication, he might have especially made mistakes in editing the common books, given the problematic nature of the text.[27] The editor might have included doublets where a Nicomachean addition was intended to replace a Eudemian original.[28] The first editor might have also misplaced Nicomachean notes within originally Eudemian texts, and this is how we should interpret the proposal of Gauthier and Jolif concerning *NE* VI. 2: it is a revision of *EE* V. 2 with a Nicomachean note that was misplaced by the first editor.

1.3

When we interpret Gauthier and Jolif's proposal concerning *NE* VI. 2 in this way, the proposal implies that the original text of *EE* V. 2 would have been the text of *NE* VI. 2 without the suggested Nicomachean note. Gauthier and Jolif do not themselves draw this conclusion, but it is a conjecture worth taking seriously. Moreover, by discussing the hypothesis, we will also be in a better position to evaluate Gauthier and Jolif's proposed rearrangement, which we discuss in the next two sections.

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with at least 1,000 words of Nicomachean revisions so that he can evaluate them statistically (cf. Kenny, 'Reconsiderations', 303); however, he also implies in a footnote that even the statistical evaluation of these Nicomachean revisions will be compromised if Irwin, 'Reviews', 342 is correct that Aristotle in the course of revision may be been influenced by his earlier *EE* style. Gauthier and Jolif, *Livres VI-X*, 438 had already hypothesized such stylistic influence at e.g. *NE* VI. 1, 1138b25-6, and below I will similarly hypothesize such influence at *NE* VI. 2, 1139a31-33.

[26] Frede, 'Common', 87.

[27] Gauthier, *Introduction*, 86-87, J. Rist, *The Mind of Aristotle: A Study in Philosophical Growth* (Toronto, 1989), 188 and Frede, 'Common', 112-3.

[28] H. Lorenz, '*NE* VII 4: Plain and Qualified *akrasia*' in C. Natali (ed.), *Aristotle's* Nicomachean Ethics *Book VII*: *Symposium Aristotelicum* (Oxford, 2009), 72-101 at 99 interprets *NE* VII 4 in this way. See also Gauthier and Jolif, *Livres VI-X*, 618. Kenny, 'Reconsiderations', 304 discusses the proposal of Lorenz.

I present the reconstructed text of *EE* V. 2 below, but we should first observe the context. This is because the concluding lines of *EE* V.2 discusses the *ergon* 'of both thinking parts' (ἀμφοτέρων […] τῶν νοητικῶν μορίων, 1139b12) as well as their proper virtues (1139b12-13), and this would seem to be a reference to the account of the intellect given in the latter half of the previous chapter (1138b35-9a17). There Aristotle distinguished one part of the intellect that considers things whose 'principles cannot be otherwise' (αἱ ἀρχαὶ μὴ ἐνδέχονται ἄλλως ἔχειν, 1139a7-8) and another part that considers 'things that can be otherwise' (τὰ ἐνδεχόμενα, 1139a8).[29] The former seems to correspond to the theoretical intellect, while the latter seems to correspond to the practical intellect. Aristotle concludes the chapter by saying: 'And so we should grasp what is the best state of each of these two parts; for this is the virtue of each, and the virtue of each thing is relative to its proper *ergon*' (1139a15-17).[30] Aristotle in *EE* V. 2 appears to take up this task by describing both the *ergon* and the virtue of each thinking part.

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[29] Here I assume that Aristotle's discussion of these two intellectual parts is genuinely Eudemian, on which see Section 2.2 below. This is of course compatible with the prevalent view of Kenny, *AE* that all of *NE* VI is originally Eudemian, but it is also compatible with the proposal of Gauthier and Jolif, *Livres VI-X*, 440-2 that only lines 1138b35-39a15 constituted the original Eudemian introduction to *EE* V.

[30] ληπτέον ἄρ' ἑκατέρου τούτων τίς ἡ βελτίστη ἕξις· αὕτη γὰρ ἀρετὴ ἑκατέρου, ἡ δ' ἀρετὴ πρὸς τὸ ἔργον τὸ οἰκεῖον

Eudemian Ethics V 2 (speculative reconstruction)[31]

Τρία δ᾽ ἐστίν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ τὰ κύρια πράξεως καὶ ἀληθείας, αἴσθησις νοῦς ὄρεξις. Τούτων δ᾽ ἡ αἴσθησις οὐδεμιᾶς ἀρχὴ πράξεως· δῆλον δὲ τῷ τὰ θηρία αἴσθησιν μὲν ἔχειν, πράξεως δὲ μὴ κοινωνεῖν. [1139a17-20]

ἔστι δ᾽ ὅπερ ἐν διανοίᾳ κατάφασις καὶ ἀπόφασις, τοῦτ᾽ ἐν ὀρέξει δίωξις καὶ φυγή· ὥστ᾽ ἐπειδὴ ἡ ἠθικὴ ἀρετὴ ἕξις προαιρετική, ἡ δὲ προαίρεσις ὄρεξις βουλευτική, δεῖ διὰ ταῦτα μὲν τόν τε λόγον ἀληθῆ εἶναι καὶ τὴν ὄρεξιν ὀρθήν, εἴπερ ἡ προαίρεσις σπουδαία, καὶ τὰ αὐτὰ τὸν μὲν φάναι τὴν δὲ διώκειν. Αὕτη μὲν οὖν ἡ διάνοια καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια πρακτική, τῆς δὲ θεωρητικῆς διανοίας καὶ μὴ πρακτικῆς μηδὲ ποιητικῆς τὸ εὖ καὶ κακῶς τἀληθές ἐστι καὶ ψεῦδος· τοῦτο γάρ ἐστι παντὸς διανοητικοῦ ἔργον, τοῦ δὲ πρακτικοῦ καὶ διανοητικοῦ ἀλήθεια ὁμολόγως ἔχουσα τῇ ὀρέξει τῇ ὀρθῇ. [1139a21-31]

The factors in the soul that are in control of action and truth are three: perception, intellect, and desire. Of these, perception is not the principle of any action, and this is clear because beasts have perception but do not partake of action. [1139a17-20]

Now what affirmation and denial are in thought, pursuit and avoidance are in desire. And so, given that ethical virtue is a state that issues in decision, and that decision is a deliberative desire, it is necessary (on account of these things) that the reason be true and the desire correct, if decision is excellent, and the former must affirm and the latter must pursue the same things. This thought and truth is of a practical sort. In the case of theoretical thought but not practical and productive thought, the true and false is the excellent or bad achievement—since this is the *ergon* of everything that thinks. But in the case of practical thought <the *ergon*> is truth in agreement with correct desire. [1139a21-31]

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[31] The Greek of this reconstruction comes from Susemihl and Apelt, *Ethica*, even though it differs from Bywater, *Ethica* only with regard to punctuation and one Greek word. In line 1139a17, Susemihl and Apelt give δέ (with the manuscripts) instead of Bywater's conjecture δή.

| ἀμφοτέρων δὴ τῶν νοητικῶν μορίων ἀλήθεια τὸ ἔργον. Καθ' ἃς οὖν μάλιστα ἕξεις ἀληθεύσει ἑκάτερον, αὗται ἀρεταὶ ἀμφοῖν. [1139b12-13] | Of both intellectual parts, then, the *ergon* is truth. And so the virtues of each will be the states on the basis of which each will achieve truth most of all. [1139b12-13] |

In support of the hypothesis that the above text is Eudemian, we should begin by observing that the text contains striking verbal and philosophical similarities to undisputed passages in the *EE*. Most notably, Aristotle's claim that the *ergon* of each thinking part is truth (ἀλήθεια τὸ ἔργον, 1139b12) is clearly echoed in *EE* II. 4: 'in the case of the intellectual virtues of the part having reason, the *ergon* is truth [ἔργον ἀλήθεια], whether about how something is or about coming-to-be' (1221b29-30).[32] By contrast, the undisputed books of the *NE* nowhere clearly state that the *ergon* of the intellectual parts, or their virtues, is truth (ἀλήθεια).[33] Aristotle's denial of action to beasts (τὰ θηρία) (1139a19-20) also seems Eudemian. This is partly because of the word θηρίον, which is used eleven times in the *EE* but only once in the *NE*, but more especially because of a similar statement in *EE* II. 8, which has no parallel in the *NE*: 'We do not say that a small child acts nor a beast [θηρίον], but only one acting on account of reasoning' (1224a28-

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[32] αἱ ἀρεταὶ […] αἱ μὲν τοῦ λόγον ἔχοντος διανοητικαί, ὧν ἔργον ἀλήθεια, ἢ περὶ τοῦ πῶς ἔχει ἢ περὶ γενέσεως. For the Greek text of the *EE*, I use R. R. Walzer and J. M. Mingay (eds.) (1991), *Aristotelis Ethica Eudemia* (Oxford, 1991). It is also worth noting that the similarity between the two passages is not exact: *NE* VI. 2 identifies truth as the *ergon* of each thinking part, while *EE* II. 4 identifies it as the *ergon* of each virtue of the thinking part. However, one might reconcile the dissimilarity by observing that the *ergon* of each thing is determined by reference to the good case (*Pol* I. 5, 1254a36-b1).

[33] Similarly, Kenny, *AE*, 165. However, Kenny, 'Reconsiderations', 291 goes too far when he claims, 'In *NE*, outside the originally Eudemian books, *aletheia* is the name of the virtue of candour, not of the good grasped by reason.' Aristotle clearly speaks of *alētheia* as the good of the intellect at *NE* I. 6, 1096a14-17. See also *NE* I. 7, 1098a26-32 and *NE* II. 7, 1107a28-32, both of which are discussed in Section 2.4.

30).[34] Commentators have also observed a similar parallel at *EE* II. 6: 'Man alone among animals [μόνον… τῶν ζῴων] is the principle of certain actions [πράξεών τινών… ἀρχή] for we would not say that any of the other animals acts, and those principles from which motions first arise are called 'controlling' [κύριαι]' (1222b19-22; cf. 1223a4-6, 15-16).[35]

There are also verbal peculiarities to this passage that distinguish it from the suggested note (1139a31-b11), which is here removed but which may be found in the following section. In the fifteen lines of the text above, the word 'virtue' (ἀρετή) occurs twice, the word *ergon* occurs twice, and the word 'truth' (ἀλήθεια) and its cognates occur seven times.[36] These three words are also integral to the concluding lines of the passage (1139b12-13). By contrast, these three words occur nowhere in the eighteen lines of the suggested note, even though that note occurs in the midst of the lines above. This strongly suggests that the suggested note had a different origin than the rest of the passage, which appears to be Eudemian.

As we mentioned earlier, Ramsauer flagged the suggested note as interpolated because he thought that it interrupted the reasoning of *NE* VI. 2; now that we have removed the note from our reconstruction of *EE* V. 2, the reader can clearly see how the last part of the passage (1139b12-13) serves as a conclusion to what came before (esp. 1139a21-31). The central argument, which is intelligible without the note, seems to proceed as follows. Aristotle begins by identifying perception, thought, and desire as

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[34] οὐ γάρ φαμεν τὸ παιδίον πράττειν, οὐδὲ τὸ θηρίον, ἀλλὰ τὸν ἤδη διὰ λογισμὸν πράττοντα. The similarity between these passages is observed by A. Grant (1885), *The Ethics of Aristotle*, 4th edn., revised, vol. 2 [*Ethics*] (London, 1885), 151.

[35] See e.g. Grant, *Ethics*, 151, A. Kenny, *Aristotle: The Eudemian Ethics, Translated with an Introduction and Notes* (Oxford, 2011), 168, and T. H. Irwin (trans. and comm.), *Aristotle:* Nicomachean Ethics*, Translated with Introduction, Notes and Glossary*, 3rd edn. [*Nicomachean*] (Indianapolis/Cambridge, 2019), 277.

[36] If we combine these fifteen lines with the previous three lines (1139a15-17), which also seem to be Eudemian, then the word 'virtue' occurs four times and the word *ergon* three times.

factors that 'control' action and truth (ἀλήθεια). (At the end of the passage, Aristotle

glosses the noun ἀλήθεια by means of the related verb ἀληθεύω, and so he seems to

understand by ἀλήθεια a certain activity of achieving the truth.[37]) After ruling out

perception as a principle of action (1139a19-20), he explains how the two remaining

factors work in concert as the principle of action (1139a21-26). In light of this

explanation, Aristotle then identifies the *erga* of both intellectual parts: the *ergon* of the

theoretical intellect is truth (1139a27-29), while the *ergon* of the practical intellect is

practical truth (1139a26-27), i.e. 'truth in agreement with correct desire' (ἀλήθεια

ὁμολόγως ἔχουσα τῇ ὀρέξει τῇ ὀρθῇ, 1139a30-31).[38] He then infers that the *ergon* of both

parts is, in a way, truth (1139b12-13), and further concludes that the virtue of each part is

the state by which it will achieve the optimal version of its *ergon*, i.e., 'will achieve truth

most of all' [μάλιστα… ἀληθεύσει]' (1139b13). In this final line, the superlative μάλιστα

('most of all,' 1139b13) recalls the superlative βελτίστη ('best,' 1139a16): we have now

found the virtue, i.e. the *best* state, of each intellectual part.

But what does it mean 'to think truly most of all'? Scholars have rarely

commented on this puzzling phrase, and this is perhaps partly due to the fact that scholars

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[37] See Broadie, 'Practical', 283-4 for reasons to think that truth properly applies to 'judgments or assertions rather than to the propositional contents of assertions.' Alternatively, one might think that truth properly applies to the content of thought. Or perhaps truth applies simultaneously to both. I take the translation 'achieving the truth' to be neutral on this issue. Perhaps someone might wonder whether 'truth' (in *NE* VI. 2) could here designate a product, not an activity, and one might be lead to such a view because, as I have argued in S. Baker, 'The Concept of *Ergon*: Towards an Achievement Interpretation of Aristotle's "Function Argument"' ['Concept'], *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 48 (2015), 227-266, the *ergon* of an X may in some cases be a product, not an activity—thus, e.g. the *ergon* of a sculptor is a sculpture, not sculpting. I believe that my argument can go through even if one assumes that 'truth' does designate a product, but I do not consider this to be a plausible interpretive possibility for the following reason. 'Truth' in *NE* VI. 2 is identified as the *ergon* of the intellect, and we know that the proper activity of the intellect is an activity of thinking, which is a complete activity, having no internal reason to stop (*Meta* Θ 6, 1148b23-24, 33-34), whereas, as Baker, 'Concept', 247 argues, an *ergon* is a product only when the activity that produces the product is an incomplete activity, which has an internal reason to stop.
[38] This phrase admits of different interpretations on which see Broadie, 'Practical' and our argument below will suggest that the phrase would be understood differently in the *EE* than in the *NE*.

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are reading the received text of *NE* VI. 2, which separates the concluding lines from the premises on which it is based. Once we reconstruct the text of *EE V*.2, we see that the text now strongly resembles two other arguments in Aristotle—one from the *Protrepticus* and one from *Metaphysics* α 1. Here we will confine our attention to the former.

Aristotle's early, exoteric work *Protrepticus*, preserved in fragments by Iamblichus, contains at least three fragments in which we find clear resemblances to our reconstructed *EE* V. 2.

Protrepticus[39]	*Eudemian Ethics* **V** [≈*NE* VI] **2**
… wisdom is more choiceworthy than sight, all the other senses, and life—being more in control of truth [κυριωτέρα τῆς ἀληθείας]. (VII, 75.6-7; B77)[40]	The factors in the soul that are in control of action and truth [τὰ κύρια πράξεως καὶ ἀληθείας] are three: perception, intellect and desire. (1139a17-19)[41]
… the supreme *ergon* [ἀλήθεια… ἔργον] of the thinking part of the soul is truth. (VII, 73.6-7; B65)[42]	Of both intellectual parts, then, the *ergon* is truth [ἀλήθεια τὸ ἔργον]… (1139b12)[43]
… Now the *ergon* of the soul is… thinking and reasoning… [H]e lives more who thinks correctly, and he lives most of all who	And so, the virtues of each will be the states on the basis of which each will achieve truth

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[39] I cite Iamblichus's *Protrepticus* in the edition of E. Des Places (ed. and trans.), *Jamblique: Protreptique*, 2nd edn. (Paris: 2003), and for convenience, I also include the numbering in the reconstruction of I. Düring (ed. and trans.), Protrepticus: *an attempt at reconstruction* [*Attempt*] (Göteborg, 1961). In the chart, I place VII, 75.6-7 before VII, 73.6-7 only in order to emphasize the verbal similarities with *EE* V.2. For purposes of economy, I focus on those lines from the *Protrepticus* that contain clear verbal resemblances to *EE V*.2, but I believe that the surrounding context of these lines also supports my interpretation.

[40] ταύτης δὲ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἁπασῶν αἱρετωτέρα καὶ τοῦ ζῆν ἐστιν ἡ φρόνησις κυριωτέρα τῆς ἀληθείας

[41] Τρία δ' ἐστίν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ τὰ κύρια πράξεως καὶ ἀληθείας, αἴσθησις νοῦς ὄρεξις.

[42] ἀλήθεια ἄρα τὸ κυριώτατον ἔργον ἐστὶ τοῦ μορίου τούτου τῆς ψυχῆς. Olfert, *Truth*, 83-84n.6 observes the similarity between *Protrep* VII, 72.23-73.7 (B65) and *NE* VI. 2, but it seems to me that she misinterprets the *Protrepticus* passage by imposing upon it the idea that the *ergon* of the intellect is not 'truth' but rather 'truth and falsity.' Olfert does not discuss other relevant passages from the *Protrepticus*.

[43] ἀμφοτέρων δὴ τῶν νοητικῶν μορίων ἀλήθεια τὸ ἔργον.

achieves truth most of all [ὁ μάλιστα ἀληθεύων], and this is the person who is wise and contemplates on the basis of the most exact understanding. (XI, 87.23-28; B85)[44]

most of all [μάλιστα… ἀληθεύσει]. (1139b12-13)[45]

In the *Protrepticus*, Aristotle identifies the *ergon* of the thinking part of the soul as truth (VII, 73.6-7; B65), and he goes on to explain that truth can be achieved to greater or lesser degrees (VII, 74.15-19; B71).[46] He claims that wisdom is more choiceworthy than all perceptual powers because it is 'more in control of truth' (κυριωτέρα τῆς ἀληθείας, VII, 75.6-7; B77). He furthermore makes it clear that 'truth' is achieved in an activity of 'thinking and reasoning' (τὸ διανοεῖσθαί τε καὶ λογίζεσθαι), and he explains that the person who achieves truth most of all (ὁ μάλιστα ἀληθεύων) will do so on the basis of the most exact understanding (ἐπιστήμην) (XI, 87.23-28; B85). In *EE* V. (≈*NE* VI.) 2, Aristotle begins by identifying three powers that are 'in control of truth' (κύρια […] ἀληθείας 1139a18), and he similarly claims that the *ergon* of the thinking parts is truth (1139b12). His language also similarly indicates that by 'truth' (ἀλήθεια) he means some activity of thinking when he finally states that each thinking part of the soul 'will achieve truth most of all' (μάλιστα… ἀληθεύσει) on the basis of its proper virtue (1139b13).

Each of the key verbal phrases that are shared between *EE V.*2 and the *Protrepticus* (κύριος ἀληθείας; ἀλήθεια… ἔργον; μάλιστα ἀληθεύω) do not seem to be

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[44] Ἔστι δὴ καὶ ψυχῆς […] ἔργον τὸ διανοεῖσθαί τε καὶ λογίζεσθαι. […] ζῇ μᾶλλον ὁ διανοούμενος ὀρθῶς καὶ μάλιστα πάντων ὁ μάλιστα ἀληθεύων, οὗτος δ' ἐστὶν ὁ φρονῶν καὶ θεωρῶν κατὰ τὴν ἀκριβεστάτην ἐπιστήμην.
[45] Καθ' ἃς οὖν μάλιστα ἕξεις ἀληθεύσει ἑκάτερον, αὗται ἀρεταὶ ἀμφοῖν.
[46] See Baker, 'Concept' for a discussion of the concept of *ergon* that Aristotle employs in *Protrep* VII, 72.23-73.7 (B65) and elsewhere.

found anywhere else in the Aristotelian with the sole notable exception of *EE* II. 4, 1221b29-31 (ἔργον ἀλήθεια), quoted above. Moreover, it is possible that Aristotle expected some of his audience to pick up on these parallels and to interpret *EE* V. 2 in light of the *Protrepticus*.[47] In any case, when we do interpret the last line of *EE* V. 2 in this way, Aristotle here would seem to saying that the virtue of each thinking part will enable it to achieve truth to the highest degree.

These resemblances to the *Protrepticus* also support the thesis that our reconstructed text is Eudemian. This is because the first two books of the *EE*—much more than the parallel passages of the *NE*—exhibit strong similarities to the *Protrepticus* both in language and content, as Jaeger argued.[48] (Kenny never disputed this.[49]) Jaeger particularly commented on the similarities between the *ergon* argument of *EE* II. 1 and related *ergon* argumentation in *Protrepticus*. However, these same passages in the *Protrepticus* also resemble the argument of *EE* V. (≈*NE* VI.) 2, as we have just seen, and this in turn suggests that when Aristotle wrote the *EE*, he broke up the '*ergon* argument' of the *Protrepticus* into the two related *ergon* arguments of *EE* II. 1 and V. 2. Jaeger did

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[47] See W. W. Jaeger, *Aristotle: Fundamentals of the History of his Development*, 2nd edn. [*Development*] (Oxford: 1948), 257.

[48] See Jaeger, *Development*, 228-58. Düring, *Attempt*, esp. 162-5, 242-4 discusses these similarities in further detail.

[49] Instead, Kenny, *AE*, 3 chose to ignore the evidence from the *Protrepticus*, claiming: 'the reliability of our reconstructed texts of the *Protrepticus* has been seriously called into question (Rabinowitz, 1957). Until the criticisms of the reconstruction have been met, it seems unwise to rely on them for the dating of the *Eudemian Ethics*.' W. G. Rabinowitz, *Aristotle's Protrepticus and the Sources of its Reconstruction* (Berkeley, 1957) had argued that scholars have no good basis for offering reconstructions of the *Protrepticus*. However, as D. S. Hutchinson and M. R. Johnson, 'Authenticating Aristotle's *Protrepticus*' ['Authenticating'], *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 29 (2005), 193-294 at 200 observe, 'Rabinowitz's negative thesis [concerning the alleged fragments of the *Protrepticus*] was ruinously criticized by many eminent reviewers.' Moreover, Hutchinson and Johnson, 'Authenticating' have themselves offered new arguments for the authenticity of various fragments of Aristotle's *Protrepticus*, as preserved in Iamblicus. Kenny, 'Reconsiderations' does not address these scholarly developments, even though they seem to undermine the reasons given by Kenny, *AE* for neglecting evidence from the *Protrepticus*.

not notice the similarities between the *Protrepticus* and our *EE* V. 2, and that was because he was laboring under the uncritical assumption that the common books belonged exclusively to the *NE*.[50]

We should still note a relevant difference between the *Protrepticus* and *EE* V. 2: the *Protrepticus* identifies truth as the *ergon* 'of thought or the thinking part' (τῆς διανοίας ἢ τοῦ διανουμένου; VII, 73.4-5; B65), while *EE* V. 2 draws a distinction: the *ergon* of the theoretical intellect is truth (*simpliciter*), and the *ergon* of the practical intellect is a truth that is 'practical' (πρακτική, 1139a26-27).[51] Nevertheless, despite this difference, Aristotle closes *EE* V. 2 by saying that the *erga* of both thinking parts is (in some sense) truth, and in this way he seems to emphasize the continuity with his view in the *Protrepticus*.[52]

And so overall, the arguments in *EE* V. 2 and the *Protrepticu*s strongly resemble one another in language and content. There is even a striking structural resemblance insofar as each argument first identifies truth as an *ergon*, and then proceeds to identify the optimal achievement of this *ergon* as 'thinking most truly.' By contrast, the suggested note (1139a31-b11) does not contain any such strong resemblances, and this fact further indicates that what we have identified as *EE* V. 2 was indeed an originally unified and continuous text.

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[50] See Jaeger, *Development*, 258n.1 where he nevertheless observes that the common books do not seem to be completely 'of a piece' with the rest of the *NE*.
[51] See Gauthier and Jolif, *Livres VI-X*, 449.
[52] Cf. Jaeger, *Development*, 234.

1.4

We can now turn to Gauthier and Jolif's proposed rearrangement of *NE* VI. 2 in which the suggested note (1139a31-b11) now follows the word κοινωνεῖν in 1139a20.

Nicomachean Ethics **VI. 2 (rearranged)**

Τρία δ' ἐστίν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ τὰ κύρια πράξεως καὶ ἀληθείας, αἴσθησις νοῦς ὄρεξις. Τούτων δ' ἡ αἴσθησις οὐδεμιᾶς ἀρχὴ πράξεως· δῆλον δὲ τῷ τὰ θηρία αἴσθησιν μὲν ἔχειν πράξεως δὲ μὴ κοινωνεῖν. [1139a17-20]

The factors in the soul that are in control of action and truth are three: perception, intellect, and desire. Of these, perception is not the principle of any action, and this is clear because beasts have perception but do not partake of action [1139a17-20]

πράξεως μὲν οὖν ἀρχὴ προαίρεσις, ὅθεν ἡ κίνησις ἀλλ' οὐχ οὗ ἕνεκα, προαιρέσεως δὲ ὄρεξις καὶ λόγος ὁ ἕνεκά τινος· διὸ οὔτ' ἄνευ νοῦ καὶ διανοίας οὔτ' ἄνευ ἠθικῆς ἐστὶν ἕξεως ἡ προαίρεσις· εὐπραξία γὰρ καὶ τὸ ἐναντίον ἐν πράξει ἄνευ διανοίας καὶ ἤθους οὐκ ἔστιν. Διάνοια δ' αὐτὴ οὐθὲν κινεῖ, ἀλλ' ἡ ἕνεκά του καὶ πρακτική. Αὕτη γὰρ καὶ τῆς ποιητικῆς ἄρχει· ἕνεκα γάρ του ποιεῖ πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν, καὶ οὐ τέλος ἁπλῶς ἀλλὰ πρός τι καὶ τινός τὸ ποιητόν. Ἀλλὰ τὸ πρακτόν· ἡ γὰρ εὐπραξία τέλος, ἡ δ' ὄρεξις τούτου. Διὸ ἢ ὀρεκτικὸς νοῦς ἡ προαίρεσις ἢ ὄρεξις διανοητική, καὶ ἡ τοιαύτη ἀρχὴ ἄνθρωπος.

Decision is in fact the principle of action—the origin of motion, not the goal—and the principle of decision is desire and reason for the sake of something. Thus, there is no decision without intellect and thought or without an ethical state of character: for acting-well and its opposite in action do not occur without thought and character.
And thought itself moves nothing, but <what moves is rather> thought for the sake of something, that is, practical thought. For this is the principle of productive thought since everyone engaging in production does so for the sake of something, and that which is

Οὐκ ἔστι δὲ προαιρετὸν οὐδὲν γεγονός, οἷον οὐδεὶς προαιρεῖται Ἴλιον πεπορθηκέναι· οὐδὲ γὰρ βουλεύεται περὶ τοῦ γεγονότος ἀλλὰ περὶ τοῦ ἐσομένου καὶ ἐνδεχομένου, τὸ δὲ γεγονὸς οὐκ ἐνδέχεται μὴ γενέσθαι· διὸ ὀρθῶς Ἀγάθων

μόνου γὰρ αὐτοῦ καὶ θεὸς στερίσκεται, ἀγένητα ποιεῖν ἄσσ' ἂν ᾖ πεπραγμένα. [1139a31-b11]

achieved in production is not the unqualified end but rather <the end> in reference to something and of a certain sort of agent. Instead that which is achieved in action <is the unqualified end> since acting-well is the end and one's desire is for this. Thus, decision is either desiderative intellect or reasoned desire, and this sort of principle is the human being.

And what one decides upon is not something that has already come-to-be—for example, no one decides to have sacked Troy. This is because no one deliberates about what has already come-to-be but about what will be and admits <of coming-to-be >, and what has already come-to-be does not admit of coming-to-be. Thus, Agathon correctly <wrote>:
'God is deprived of this alone:
to make undone what has already been done.'
[1139a31-b11]

ἔστι δ' ὅπερ ἐν διανοίᾳ κατάφασις καὶ ἀπόφασις, τοῦτ' ἐν ὀρέξει δίωξις καὶ φυγή· ὥστ' ἐπειδὴ ἡ ἠθικὴ ἀρετὴ ἕξις προαιρετική, ἡ δὲ προαίρεσις ὄρεξις βουλευτική, δεῖ διὰ ταῦτα μὲν τόν τε λόγον ἀληθῆ εἶναι καὶ τὴν

Now what affirmation and denial is in thought so pursuit and avoidance is in desire. And so, given that ethical virtue is a state that issues in decision, and that decision is a deliberative desire, it is necessary (on account of these

ὄρεξιν ὀρθήν, εἴπερ ἡ προαίρεσις σπουδαία, καὶ τὰ αὐτὰ τὸν μὲν φάναι τὴν δὲ διώκειν. Αὕτη μὲν οὖν ἡ διάνοια καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια πρακτική, τῆς δὲ θεωρητικῆς διανοίας καὶ μὴ πρακτικῆς μηδὲ ποιητικῆς τὸ εὖ καὶ κακῶς τἀληθές ἐστι καὶ ψεῦδος· τοῦτο γάρ ἐστι παντὸς διανοητικοῦ ἔργον, τοῦ δὲ πρακτικοῦ καὶ διανοητικοῦ ἀλήθεια ὁμολόγως ἔχουσα τῇ ὀρέξει τῇ ὀρθῇ. [1139a21-31]

things) that the reason be true and the desire correct, if decision is excellent, and the former must affirm and the latter must pursue the same things. This thought and truth is of a practical sort. In the case of theoretical thought but not practical and productive thought, the true and false is the excellent or bad achievement—since this is the *ergon* of everything that thinks. But in the case of practical thought <the *ergon*> is truth in agreement with correct desire. [1139a21-31]

ἀμφοτέρων δὴ τῶν νοητικῶν μορίων ἀλήθεια τὸ ἔργον. Καθ' ἃς οὖν μάλιστα ἕξεις ἀληθεύσει ἑκάτερον, αὗται ἀρεταὶ ἀμφοῖν. [1139b12-13]

Of both intellectual parts, then, the *ergon* is truth. And so, the virtues of each will be the states on the basis of which each will think truly most of all. [1139b12-13]

As we explained above, Gauthier and Jolif proposed to rearrange the received text of *NE* VI. 2 because they agreed with Ramsauer that lines 1139a21-31 and 1139b12-13 contain a continuous argument and so belong together. This is the most powerful reason for the rearrangement, and we found confirmation of it by observing that the continuous argument of 1139a17-31 and 1139b12-13 resembles a similar argument in the

Protrepticus. The rearranged text preserves this continuous argument, and now inclines the reader to treat lines 1139b12-13 as a conclusion drawn on the basis of 1139a21-31.[53]

Once the text is rearranged in this way, the beginning of the suggested note also naturally links up to its new context. Aristotle begins by listing three controlling factors of action and truth: 'perception, intellect and desire' (αἴσθησις νοῦς ὄρεξις, 1139a18). He then rules out perception as a 'principle of action' (ἀρχὴ πράξεως, 1139a19). On our proposed rearrangement, Aristotle then immediately identifies decision as the 'principle of action' (πράξεως […] ἀρχὴ, 1139a31), and he explains that decision is a compound of the two remaining controlling factors: 'desire' (ὄρεξις, 1139a32) and a certain sort of intellect, namely, 'reason for the sake of something' (λόγος ὁ ἕνεκά τινος, 1139a32-3). In this way, the logic of the passage is clear, and the repetition of the phrase 'principle of action' (ἀρχὴ πράξεως) which does not occur anywhere else in *NE* VI. 2, appears to be a verbal signal that Aristotle wished the passages to be linked in this way.[54]

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[53] As noted above, commentators on *NE* VI. 2 have rarely discussed lines 1139b12-13, and none has discussed them as a conclusion drawn on the basis of 1139a21-31. I also do not know of any scholar who has clearly engaged with the proposal of Gauthier and Jolif. R. Bodéüs (trans. and comm.), *Aristote: Éthique à Nicomaque* (Paris, 2004), 293 perhaps has them in mind when he writes: 'Certains commentateurs veulent transposer ici [at line 1139a20] les lignes 1139a31-b11, sous prétexte que les lignes 1139a21-32 (?) interrompent le raisonnment. Mais ce n'est pas le cas. Ayant éliminé l'hypothèse que le sens puisse être au départ de l'action, Aristote a d'emblée à débrouiller le rôle du l'intelligence et du désir. Ce qu'il fait.' However, if Bodeüs is considering the proposal of Gauthier and Jolif, he does not correctly report their primary reason for the transposition, which is in fact to preserve the reasoning from 1139a21-31 to 1139b12-13.

[54] One might object to this rearrangement for the following reason. In the first line of the suggested note, which begins πράξεως μὲν οὖν ἀρχὴ προαίρεσις (1139a31), Aristotle uses the particle μὲν οὖν, which 'often… sums up and rounds off the old topic, while the δέ clause introduces the new one,' according to J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles*, 2nd edn., revised by K. J. Dover [*Particles*] (Oxford: 1950), 472. This may suggest that Aristotle had already introduced the topic of προαίρεσις before line 1139a31, but on my rearrangement, he has not done this; consequently, it may seem that we should retain the received order of the text in which Aristotle already introduces the topic at 1139a23. My response is twofold. First, when we look closely at the remarks of Denniston concerning the 'retrospective and transitional οὖν with prospective μέν,' we see that he does not say that the μὲν οὖν clause always 'sums up and rounds off the old topic' but only that it 'often' does; moreover, this specific use of μὲν οὖν is normally correlated with a δέ clause that introduces a new topic, but the δέ clause at 1139a32 does not do this. Second, I translate μὲν οὖν as 'in fact' because I understand Aristotle to be using μὲν οὖν in the second way recognized by Denniston, *Particles*, 473, according to which 'οὖν is emphasizing a prospective μέν.' Denniston further comments: 'This usage

2.1

We now turn to the question of the suggested note's origin. Given our previous argument, there seem to be two principal options: either the note is the result of a Eudemian revision of a Eudemian text or it is the result of a Nicomachean revision of a Eudemian text. On the first option, Aristotle would have added the note in the course of updating and revising the *EE* itself, presumably as a whole. On the second option, Aristotle would have added the note in the course of integrating originally Eudemian material into the *NE*. In favor of (some form of) the second option, I shall offer six reasons, the last of which we will discuss at greater length.

First, the Nicomachean revision hypothesis is prima facie more likely than the Eudemian revision hypothesis because the undisputed books of *NE* contain far more signs of revision than the undisputed books of the *EE*. For example, the *NE* contains 'numerous doublets'[55] while the *EE* contains either few or none at all. In fact, I am aware of no scholar who claims to see clear evidence of revision in the undisputed books of the *EE*— though we would certainly expect to find such evidence if there had been a Eudemian revision of the *EE*. (Moreover, this lack of evidence of revision and the *EE*'s different chapter numbering scheme, as discussed above in footnote 24, give us reason to believe that the *EE* was not among the treatises continually revised by Aristotle.)

Second, the suggested note twice uses the distinctively Nicomachean word εὐπραξία ('acting-well') (1139a34; 1139b3). Εὐπραξία is found three times in the undisputed books of the *NE* (I. 8, 1098b22; I. 10, 1100a21; I. 11, 1101b6), but never in

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is not adequately recognized by theorists, and it is rare enough to be a stumbling-block to copyists and editors. It is commoner in Hippocrates and Aristotle than elsewhere […].'
[55] Kenny, 'Reconsiderations', 305.

those of the *EE*. By contrast, εὐπραγία is found four times in the undisputed books of the *EE* (II. 3, 1221a38-9; III. 7, 1233b25; VIII. 2, 1246b37, 1247a1) but never in those of the *NE*. If we agree with Natali that these terms of Aristotle do not differ appreciably in meaning,[56] then we would seem to be dealing with a change in linguistic preference: when Aristotle wrote the *EE*, he preferred to spell the word εὐπραγία (just as Plato had always spelled the word), but when he wrote the *NE*, he preferred to spell the word εὐπραξία. The suggested note is thus using the Nicomachean—and not the Eudemian— spelling of the word.[57]

Third, interpreters have naturally heard the suggested note's claim that '*eupraxia* is the end' (ἡ γὰρ εὐπραξία τέλος, 1139b3) as an echo of a similar claim in *NE* I. 8: '<happiness> was pretty much said to be a kind of living well or *eupraxia*' (1098b21-22).[58] Aristotle makes no comparable claim with the term *eupragia* in the *EE*.

Fourth, the suggested note claims that '*eupraxia* [εὐπραξία] and its opposite do not occur without thought and character' (1139a34-35),[59] and this harmonizes much more easily with the undisputed books of the *NE* than with those of the *EE*. The *NE* defines character-virtue by reference to the judgment of the prudent person (ὁ φρόνιμος) (II. 6, 1106b36-7a2), and it never suggests that *eupraxia* can be achieved without thought and prudence. By contrast, the *EE* does not define character-virtue by reference to the judgment of the prudent person (II. 5, 1222a6-12), and it even claims that there are certain fortunate people who achieve *eupragia* (VIII. 2, 1247a1) even though they are

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[56] See C. Natali, 'The Book on Wisdom' ['Wisdom'], in R. Polanksy (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to the Nicomachean Ethics* (Cambridge, 2014), 180-202 at 187-8 with n.12.
[57] The word εὐπραξία is used once more in the common books at *NE* VI 5, 1140b7 (a line that closely resembles *NE* VI. 2, 1139b3), and our reasoning here would suggest that this line too is Nicomachean.
[58] σχεδὸν γὰρ εὐζωΐα τις εἴρηται καὶ εὐπραξία
[59] εὐπραξία γὰρ καὶ τὸ ἐναντίον ἐν πράξει ἄνευ διανοίας καὶ ἤθους οὐκ ἔστιν.

imprudent (ἄφρονες; 1147a4, a16, a21) and so do not achieve their success on the basis of thought (1247a30).[60]

Fifth, the account of productive thought articulated in the suggested note seems to conflict with the account of productive thought presupposed in the *EE*. According to the suggested note, practical thought (ἡ πρακτική) aims at the 'end without qualification' (τέλος ἁπλῶς), i.e. the highest end, which is identified as *eupraxia* (1139b2-4); productive thought (ἡ ποιητική) aims only at an end that is 'in reference to something and of a certain sort of <agent>,' i.e. a subordinate end; consequently, practical thought 'rules' (ἄρχει) productive thought (1139b1). By contrast, Aristotle in the *EE* seems to presuppose that every form of knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) must be either theoretical or productive (*EE* I. 5, 1216b10-18; II. 3, 1221b5-6; 11, 1227b28-30), in which case practical thought would not 'rule' productive thought but would instead be a species of productive thought.[61] In fact, Aristotle in the *EE* explicitly identifies *politikē* as a form of productive knowledge (ποιητική ἐπιστήμη; *EE* I. 5, 1216b16-18) while at the same time affirming that *politikē* aims at 'the end of things achievable by humans in action' (τὸ τέλος τῶν ἀνθρώπῳ πρακτῶν, *EE* I. 8, 1218b12)—claims which together create a sharp contrast with the suggested note. When we turn to the undisputed books of the *NE*, however, we find a conspicuous absence of these problematic Eudemian claims

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[60] Two comments are in order. First, though the full text of *EE* VIII. 2 raises various interpretive issues that fall outside the scope of this paper, the conflict with the suggested note is evident so long as we agree with the majority of scholars that *eupraxia* (at 1139a34 in the note) and *eupragia* (at *EE* VIII. 2, 1246b37 and 1247a1) signify actions performed on the basis of virtue, on which Eudemian lines see e.g. Johnson (1997, 93-4). Second, Gauthier and Jolif, *Livres VI-X*, 469 have suggested that the three chapters of *EE* VIII are fragments from the original Eudemian treatise on wisdom, and this hypothesis naturally dovetails with our observation that there seems to be conflict between suggested note and *EE* VIII. 2.

[61] See M. Woods, *Aristotle:* Eudemian Ethics: *Books I, II, and VIII*, 2nd edn. [*Eudemian*] (Oxford, 1992), 57. Aristotle seems to have made this same assumption in the *Protrepticus* (73.17-74.3 [B68-69]), on which see Gauthier and Jolif, *Livres VI-X*, 457, who also argue that this characterization of productive knowledge is Platonic in origin (cf. *Charmides* 163b-e).

concerning productive thought. Aristotle in the *NE* never suggests that all knowledge must be either theoretical or productive, and he never identifies *politikē* as a form of productive knowledge.[62] Consequently, the suggested note's account of productive thought fits more easily into the undisputed books of the *NE* than into those of the *EE*.[63]

Sixth, and relatedly, the suggested note seems to articulate a distinctively Nicomachean account of the practical intellect. The account is found principally in lines 1139a35-36 and 1139a31-33, which I here present alongside parallel passages from *De Anima* III. 9-10. Given that the *De Anima* is generally regarded as a 'mature production,'[64] these similarities give us reason to think the suggested note contains Aristotle's mature account of the practical intellect.

NE VI. 2, 1139a31-b11 (suggested note)	*De Anima* III. 9-10[65]
'Thought itself moves nothing [διάνοια δ' αὐτὴ οὐθὲν κινεῖ] but what moves is thought for the sake of something, i.e. practical	'But surely the reasoning part or what is called intellect is not the mover [ὁ κινῶν]—for the theoretical intellect contemplates nothing practical [οὐθὲν θεωρεῖ πρακτόν] [...] Thus, both seem to

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[62] The *NE*, unlike the *EE*, also places a special and apparently new emphasis on *politikē* as the 'highest ruling' science (ἡ μάλιστα ἀρχιτεκτονική), as B. Inwood and R. Woolf (eds. and trans.), *Aristotle: Eudemian Ethics* [*Eudemian*] (Cambridge, 2013), xviii observe, and this could be related to the suggested note's claim that practical thought 'rules' (ἄρχει) productive thought (1139b1-4). Moreover, as R. Kraut, *Aristotle: Political Philosophy* (Oxford, 2002), 19 notes, the *EE*, unlike the *NE*, 'is not framed in a way that highlights the political implications of its theories.'

[63] Interestingly, our interpretation can explain a problematic line in the common books, namely, *NE* VII. (≈*EE* VI.) 3, 1147a28, where Aristotle uses the word ποιητικός in the 'broad way' characteristic of the *EE*, as Woods, *Eudemian*, 57 has observed. Commentators on the *NE* such as Irwin, *Nicomachean*, 299 have reasonably found it 'puzzling' that Aristotle should use the word in this way, presumably given the *NE*'s lack of any similar usage elsewhere. However, on our working hypothesis, and in light of the evidence presented above, the line would seem to be an originally Eudemian text that was imperfectly revised for its inclusion in the *NE*.

[64] Shields, C. (trans. and comm.), *Aristotle: De Anima* (Oxford, 2016), xiii.

[65] For the Greek text of the De Anima, I use Ross, W. D. (ed.), *Aristotelis De Anima* [*DA*] (Oxford, 1956). Here it is worth observing that while the *DA* does use the term τὸ λογιστικόν (432b26; cf. 432b5), it does not use it in the restricted way of *NE* VI. (*EE* V.) 1, 1138b35-a17.

thought [ἀλλ' ἡ ἕνεκά του καὶ πρακτική].' (1139a35-6)[66]

'Decision is in fact the principle of action [πράξεως ἀρχὴ] […] and the principle of decision is desire and reason for the sake of the something [ὄρεξις καὶ λόγος ὁ ἕνεκά τινος].' (1139a31-33)[68]

cause local movement, intellect and desire—intellect that reasons for the sake of something, i.e., practical intellect [νοῦς δὲ ὁ ἕνεκά του λογιζόμενος καὶ ὁ πρακτικός]. It differs from the theoretical intellect with respect to its end.' (9, 432b26-27; 10, 433a13-15)[67]

The object of desire is the principle of practical thought and the terminus of practical thinking is the principle of action [ἀρχὴ τῆς πράξεως]. Thus, it is reasonable that these two seem to cause motion: desire and practical thought [ὄρεξις καὶ διάνοια πρακτική]. (10, 433a15-18)[69]

The suggested note characterizes the practical intellect as λόγος ὁ ἕνεκά τινος ('reason for the sake of something,' 1139a32-33) and διάνοια ἡ ἕνεκά του καὶ πρακτική ('thought for the sake of something, i.e. practical thought,' 1139a36), and these teleological descriptions of the practical intellect find their only clear linguistic parallel at *DA* III. 10, 433a14: νοῦς ὁ ἕνεκά του λογιζόμενος καὶ ὁ πρακτικός ('the intellect that reasons for the

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[66] Διάνοια δ' αὐτὴ οὐθὲν κινεῖ, ἀλλ' ἡ ἕνεκά του καὶ πρακτική. This is the text printed by modern editions, but it is perhaps worth noting that the codex Laurentianus (Kb) has αὕτη instead of αὐτὴ. However, this difference seems insignificant if P. Probert, *Ancient Greek Accentuation* (Oxford, 2006) at 16-19 is right that signs for accents and breathings were not used in writing in Aristotle's day, except in certain special contexts. In any case, scholars have not adopted the reading of Laurentianus presumably because it is difficult to make sense of it: the nearest antecedent for διάνοια αὕτη (1139a35-6) would be διανοίας (1139a35), which is clearly a reference to the practical intellect.
[67] ἀλλὰ μὴν οὐδὲ τὸ λογιστικὸν καὶ ὁ καλούμενος νοῦς ἐστιν ὁ κινῶν· ὁ μὲν γὰρ θεωρητικὸς οὐθὲν θεωρεῖ πρακτόν [...] ἄμφω ἄρα ταῦτα κινητικὰ κατὰ τόπον, νοῦς καὶ ὄρεξις, νοῦς δὲ ὁ ἕνεκά του λογιζόμενος καὶ ὁ πρακτικός· διαφέρει δὲ τοῦ θεωρητικοῦ τῷ τέλει.
[68] πράξεως μὲν οὖν ἀρχὴ προαίρεσις, ὅθεν ἡ κίνησις ἀλλ' οὐχ οὗ ἕνεκα, προαιρέσεως δὲ ὄρεξις καὶ λόγος ὁ ἕνεκά τινος·
[69] οὗ γὰρ ἡ ὄρεξις, αὕτη ἀρχὴ τοῦ πρακτικοῦ νοῦ, τὸ δ' ἔσχατον ἀρχὴ τῆς πράξεως. ὥστε εὐλόγως δύο ταῦτα φαίνεται τὰ κινοῦντα, ὄρεξις καὶ διάνοια πρακτική·

sake of something, i.e. the practical intellect').[70] Both passages also articulate a similar

doctrine: thought on its own, i.e. without desire, does not cause motion (*NE* VI. 2,

1139a35-6; *DA* III. 9, 432b26-29), yet practical thought does cause motion (*NE* VI. 2,

1139a36; *DA* III. 10, 433a13-14) in virtue of being joined to desire (*NE* VI. 2, 1139a31-

33; *DA* III. 10, 433a15-20)—for the practical intellect's origin is the object of desire (*DA*

III. 10, 433a15-16), namely, *eupraxia* (*NE* VI. 2, 1139b3-4).[71] On this account, the

practical intellect—unlike the theoretical intellect—cannot be specified without reference

to desire.

　　　In what follows, I offer three inter-related reasons why this 'desire-based' account

of the practical intellect is a better fit for *NE* than for the *EE*. The first reason concerns an

alternative object-based account of the practical intellect that seems to be presupposed in

the *EE* (Section 2.2). The second and third reasons concern two apparent consequences of

the desire-based account that the *NE* articulates but the *EE* does not: namely, that the end

of practical philosophy is action (Section 2.3), and that practical philosophy has a

different methodology from theoretical philosophy (Section 2.4). In order to give us a

point of reference by which to appreciate these latter two reasons, we will also discuss

how Aristotle approached these same topics in the *Protrepticus*. Our discussion will

further deepen our interpretation of *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 2 because it will suggest that one

would naturally give a different interpretation to the concluding lines of the chapter

(1139b12-13) when those lines are read in the context of the *NE* as opposed to the *EE*.

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[70] See e.g. Ramsauer, *Ethica*, 377 and Gauthier and Jolif, *Livres VI-X*, 444.
[71] J. A. Stewart, *Notes on the* Nicomachean Ethics *of Aristotle*, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1892), 27, Natali, 'Wisdom',
187, and J. Müller, 'Practical and Productive Thinking in Aristotle,' *Phronesis* 63 (2018), 148-175 at 154
all observe that *NE* VI. 2, 1139a35-b5 and *DA* III 10, 433a13-20 are closely related passages.

2.2

Commentators have puzzled over the latter half of *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 1 (1138b35-9a17) because it seems to articulate a philosophically problematic, object-based account of the practical intellect. In this section, after briefly reviewing this passage, I explain why its object-based account seems to be in tension with the 'desire-based' account of the suggested note and the *DA*, and I then offer several reasons to think that the latter half of *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 1 is an originally Eudemian text. In light of these considerations, it seems that Aristotle added the suggested note in order to revise his earlier Eudemian account of the practical intellect.[72]

Roughly half way through *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 1, Aristotle reminds the reader that he had earlier divided the soul into 'the part having reason and the irrational part' (τό τε λόγον ἔχον καὶ τὸ ἄλογον, 1139a4-5), which could be a reference either to *EE* II. 1, 1219b27-20a12 or to *NE* I. 13, 1102a26-3a10, and he then proposes to divide the part having reason, i.e. the intellect. The most important lines are as follows:

> καὶ ὑποκείσθω δύο τὰ λόγον ἔχοντα, ἓν μὲν ᾧ θεωροῦμεν τὰ τοιαῦτα τῶν ὄντων ὅσων αἱ ἀρχαὶ μὴ ἐνδέχονται ἄλλως ἔχειν, ἓν δὲ ᾧ τὰ ἐνδεχόμενα· πρὸς γὰρ τὰ τῷ γένει ἕτερα καὶ τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς μορίων ἕτερον τῷ γένει τὸ πρὸς ἑκάτερον πεφυκός, εἴπερ καθ᾽ ὁμοιότητά τινα καὶ οἰκειότητα ἡ γνῶσις ὑπάρχει αὐτοῖς. λεγέσθω δὲ τούτων τὸ μὲν ἐπιστημονικὸν τὸ δὲ λογιστικόν […] (1139a6-12)

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[72] A full discussion of lines 1138b35-9a17 falls outside the scope of this paper, and so I here emphasize that my other arguments do not strictly depend on the claims that I defend in this section.

Let there be two parts that have reason, one by which we contemplate those sorts of beings whose principles do not admit of being otherwise, and one part by which <we contemplate/consider> those beings that admit of being otherwise. This is because parts of the soul differ in kind when they are naturally related to things that differ in kind, if knowledge belongs to these parts according to a certain similarity and affinity. Let one of these <parts> be called the *epistēmonikon* and the other the *logistikon*.

Aristotle here distinguishes two parts of the intellect, and he does so by distinguishing their respective objects: the *epistēmonikon* contemplates things 'whose principles do not admit of being otherwise' (1139a7-8), and the *logistikon* considers/contemplates 'things that admit of being otherwise' (1139a8). Given evidence from the surrounding context (e.g. 1139a12-14, 16-17, 27-31, b12), scholars have reasonably assumed that the *epistēmonikon* and the *logistikon* correspond respectively to the theoretical and practical intellects.

However, there is a clear tension between this object-based account of the practical intellect and the one that we find in the suggested note and *DA* III. 10; two contrasts should make this tension evident. First, according to the desire-based account, the practical intellect is not for the sake of cognizing a certain class of objects but rather for the sake of action; consequently, the 'proper objects' of the practical intellect cannot be identified without reference to this goal.[73] However, the latter half of *NE* VI. 1

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[73] On this account, identifying the proper object of the practical intellect becomes a matter of secondary importance. Here it is worth noting that Aristotle in *DA* III. 9-10 seems to indicate that the proper object of the practical intellect is τὸ πρακτόν (432b27 and 433a29), and this way of specifying the proper object of practical intellect does of course make implicit reference to action (πρᾶξις).

identifies its objects as 'things that admit of being otherwise' (τὰ ἐνδεχόμενα, 1139a8), and this specification, which makes no reference to action as a goal, seems to include many things that are neither achievable in action nor relevantly related to things achievable in action (cf. *EE* II. 10, 1226a20-26).[74] Second, the two accounts seem to give opposing answers to the question whether the practical intellect is a distinct power of the soul. *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 1 employs a rationale (1139a8-11) that resembles a principle in *DA* II. 4 according to which powers (δυνάμεις) of the soul are distinguished by proper objects (415a18-22); consequently, *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 1 seems to distinguish the practical intellect as a distinct power of the soul.[75] However, the *DA* itself gives nothing like the argument of *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 1, 1139a8-11, never invoking the principle of *DA* II. 4 in order to distinguish the practical intellect; instead, the *DA* explicitly says that the practical intellect is distinguished from the theoretical intellect by its end (*DA* III. 10, 433a14-15; cf. *NE* VI. 2, 1139a35-6); consequently, the view here seems to be that there is one intellectual power used for two different ends.[76] These two ends occur because the

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[74] Thus, the object-based account of *NE* VI. 1 does not seem to succeed in specifying the practical intellect as such, on which see also e.g. D. Bostock, *Aristotle's Ethics* (Oxford, 2000), 77, Richardson Lear, *Lives*, 96-8 and Olfert, *Truth*, ch.2.

[75] See e.g. T. K. Johansen, *The Powers of Aristotle's Soul* (Oxford, 2012), 225: 'He is here [in *NE* VI. 1, 1139a3–15] not so much giving a reason for saying that the kinds of reason count as parts of the soul, as he is giving grounds for why, given that they are parts, they must be different parts. The explanation is that they have objects of quite different kinds. They will then, on the object criterion [of *DA* II. 4], differ fundamentally as capacities […].' Similar thoughts may be found in W. F. R. Hardie, *Aristotle's Ethical Theory*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1980), 221-224, Broadie and Rowe, *Ethics*, 361, and H. Lorenz and B. Morison, 'Aristotle's Empiricist Theory of Doxastic Knowledge,' *Phronesis* 64 (2009), 431-464 at 431-432.

[76] See e.g. Gauthier and Jolif, *Livres VI-X*, 442: 'la division aristotlélienne voit dans l'intellect spéculatif et dans l'intellect pratique des functions d'une seule et même faculté, fonctions qui se distinguent d'abord par leur fins (*De l'âme*, III, 10, 432b27), là savoir et ici l'action […], et par voie de consequence seulement par leurs objects […].' Similar thoughts may be found in Eustratius, *In Ethica Nicomachea VI* in Heylbut, G. (ed.), *Eustratii et Michaelis et Anonyma in Ethica Nicomachea Commentaria*, *CAG* 20 (Berlin, 1892), 256-406 at 284.36-38, Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q.79, a.11, and R. Brito, 'Questiones super librum Ethicorum Aristotelis' in I. Costa, *Le* questiones *di Radulfo Brito sull' 'Etica Nicomachea': Introduzione e testo critico* (Turnhout, 2008) 171-563 at 475-8. A discussion of *DA* III. 10, 433b1-4 falls outside the scope of this paper, but see A. Torstrik (ed. and comm.), *Aristotelis De Anima: Libri III* (Berlin, 1862), 216.

practical intellect—unlike the theoretical intellect—receives its end from a distinct power of the soul, namely, desire: 'the object of desire is the principle of the practical intellect' (οὗ γὰρ ἡ ὄρεξις, αὕτη ἀρχὴ τοῦ πρακτικοῦ νοῦ, *DA* III. 10, 433a15-16; cf. 19-20), and thus 'the end without qualification' (τέλος ἁπλῶς) is the aim of practical thought 'because *eupraxia* is the end and one's desire is for this' (ἡ γὰρ εὐπραξία τέλος, ἡ δ' ὄρεξις τούτου, *NE* VI. 2, 1139b2-4). By contrast, the object-based account of *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 1 makes no reference to desire, and presents both intellects as being 'by nature' oriented to the cognition of certain classes of objects.

If there is a tension between these passages, as there seems to be, we should want to account for this, and Gauthier and Jolif have plausibly suggested that the latter half of *NE* VI. 1 is an originally Eudemian text that does not contain Aristotle's mature account of the practical intellect.[77] In favor of the hypothesis that the text is originally Eudemian, I here present six reasons, the last of which will be most important. First, given the arguments of Kenny, *AE* and others, we have prima facie reason to think that any passage in the 'common books' is originally Eudemian. Second, Gauthier and Jolif, *Livres VI-X*, 442 believe the latter half of *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 1 seems early, and thus probably Eudemian, because it does not display awareness of the account of the practical intellect in *DA* III. 10. Third, the latter half of *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 1 prominently employs the Platonic term *to logistikon* (1139a12 and 14), which is never used in the *NE* but is used in a passage of the *EE* where Aristotle seems to be speaking of the practical intellect (VIII. 1, 1246b19 and 23).[78] Fourth, the latter half of *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 1 immediately precedes,

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[77] See Gauthier and Jolif, *Livres VI-X*, 439-40 and 442.

[78] It is also worth noting that in this same passage, i.e. *EE* VIII. 1, Aristotle refers to the obedient part of the soul as *to alogon* (1246b13, 20, 21, 24) just as he does at *EE* V. (≈*NE* VI.) 1, 1139a4-5. Indeed, the *EE* refers to the obedient part of the soul as *to alogon* more frequently than does the *NE*.

and connects up with the Eudemian portion of *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 2, as we observed in Section 1.3; thus, the two passages together seem to constitute a continuous Eudemian text.[79] Fifth, *EE* II. 6 closely resembles the latter half of *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 1 because it distinguishes principles that 'do not admit of being otherwise' (μὴ ἐνδέχεται ἄλλως; 1222b22) and identifies humans as principles of certain things that 'admit of both coming-to-be and not coming-to-be' (ἐνδεχεται καὶ γίνεσθαι καὶ μή; 1223a5-6),[80] while no parallel discussion seems present in the *NE*.[81]

Finally, sixth, Aristotle in *EE* II. 4 speaks of 'the intellectual virtues, whose *ergon* is truth, whether about how things are or about coming-to-be' (1221b29-30, discussed above in Section 1.3).[82] This important line seems to explicate the distinction between truth and practical truth from the Eudemian portion of *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 2 in terms of the object-based account of the intellect in the latter half of *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 1 (and not in terms of the desire-based account in the suggested note). The truth 'about how things are' (*EE* II. 4, 1221b30) seems to be the truth about 'things whose principles do not admit of being otherwise' (*NE* VI. [≈*EE* V.] 1, 1139a7-8), and the truth 'about coming-to-be' (*EE*

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[79] Here it is worth observing that there are the two chapter-divisions in the *NE* (one indicated by Roman numerals, and one indicated by Arabic numerals in Bywater's text), but neither of these chapter divisions should be considered authoritative because both derive from late medieval traditions, on which see Gauthier, R. A. and J. Y. Jolif (trans. and comm.), *L'Éthique à Nicomaque: Tome I: Introduction et Traduction.* (Paris/Louvain, 1958), 82*n.248. I have been using the chapter divisions indicated my roman numerals, as this is more common in anglophone scholarship. However, if one uses the chapter divisions indicated by Arabic numerals, then *NE* VI. 2 would include 1138b35-1139b13 (and so would include both texts that I am suggesting are originally Eudemian).

[80] Broadie and Rowe, *Ethics*, 361. *EE* II. 6 also contains resemblances to the Eudemian portion of *NE* VI (≈*EE* V) 2, as we noted in Section 1.3

[81] See F. Dirlmeier, *Aristoteles: Eudemische Ethik* (Berlin, 1963 [1984]), 266-7.

[82] αἱ μὲν τοῦ λόγον ἔχοντος διανοητικαί, ὧν ἔργον ἀλήθεια, ἢ περὶ τοῦ πῶς ἔχει ἢ περὶ γενέσεως

II. 4, 1221b30) seem to be the truth about 'things that admit of being otherwise' (*NE* VI. [≈*EE* V.] 1, 1139a8).[83] No comparable passage occurs in the *NE*.

In light of these reasons, we should suppose that the latter half of *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 1 is an originally Eudemian text, and that its object-based account of the practical intellect is likewise Eudemian. Given that this account seems to be in tension with the desire-based account in the suggested note, we then have some reason to suppose that Aristotle added the note in order to revise (or at the very least, to recontextualize) his earlier Eudemian view. Moreover, there do not seem to be any passages in the *EE* where Aristotle presents the distinction between truth and practical truth in light of the desire-based account of the practical intellect found in the suggested note. However, there do seem to be such passages in the *NE*, most notably I. 7, 1098a29-32 and II. 7, 1107a28-32, which we will discuss in the following sections.

Before moving on, though, we should observe a consequence of our working hypothesis: the audiences for the *EE* and the *NE* would naturally have understood the same lines from *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 1, i.e. 1138b35-9a17, differently. This is because the lines in the *EE* do seem to indicate an object-based account of the practical intellect, while the lines in the *NE* must be understood in light of the desire-based account in the suggested note. The resulting Nicomachean view would thus seem to be that the practical intellect is fundamentally distinguished by its end, which is given by desire, and only secondarily or heuristically distinguished by 'objects.' Aristotle presumably smoothed over any difficulties when presenting the material in lecture, but lines 1138b35-9a17

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[83] Kenny, *AE*, 168 also plausibly suggests that account of the *logistikon* of *EE* V. (≈*NE* VI.) 1 is being referred to at *EE* II. 10, 1226b25-26, where Aristotle appears to characterize the practical intellect as an intellect concerned with a certain sort of object.

seem to have been imperfectly revised for their inclusion in the *NE*. Aristotle died

without having 'time to put his Nachlass in order.'[84]

2.3

As we noted above, the *Protrepticus* identifies the *ergon* of the soul as truth (VII,

73.6-7, B65), but it does not distinguish between two thinking parts of the soul, of which

the *erga* are truth and practical truth, as we find in *EE* V. (≈*NE* VI.) 2. The *Protrepticus*

nowhere clearly identifies a practical intellect, and nowhere identifies any philosophical

knowledge that is essentially practical—that is, philosophical knowledge of which the

end is action. Instead, when Aristotle recommends philosophical knowledge that is useful

for living and ruling, he clarifies: 'this knowledge is theoretical indeed, though it enables

us to accomplish all practices on its basis…' (X, 85.23-25; B51).[85] Accordingly, this

philosophical knowledge has a double value: 'To be wise [τὸ φρονεῖν] and to know is

choiceworthy in itself for humans […], and it is useful for life' (VII, 71.14-16; B41).[86]

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[84] Frede, 'Common', 113.

[85] Ἔστι μὲν οὖν θεωρητικὴ ἥδε ἡ ἐπιστήμη, παρέχει δ' ἡμῖν τὸ δημιουργεῖν κατ' αὐτὴν ἅπαντα.

[86] τὸ φρονεῖν καὶ τὸ γιγνώσκειν ἐστὶν αἱρετὸν καθ' αὐτὸ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις [...], χρήσιμόν τ' εἰς τὸν βίον ὑπάρχει. See e.g. Düring, *Attempt*, 276-7. Because the term φρονεῖν is integral to this claim, I will make two comments on the contention of Jaeger, *Development*, 82 that 'the *Protrepticus* understands *phronesis* in the full Platonic sense, as equivalent to philosophical knowledge as such.' First, Jaeger's claim concerning *phronēsis* in the *Protrepticus* is distinct from his similar claim concerning *phronēsis* in the *EE*—and it is only the latter claim that has been widely questioned, on which see Gauthier and Jolif, *Livres VI-X*, 467-9. Second, scholars tend to be sympathetic with Jaeger's judgment concerning *phronēsis* in the *Protrepticus*: see e.g. Gauthier and Jolif, *Introduction*, 28-29, *Livres VI-X*, 466 and C. Bobonich, 'Aristotle's Ethical Treatises' ['Treatises'], in R. Kraut, *The Blackwell Guide to Aristotle's* Nicomachean Ethics (Malden, MA, 2006), 12-36 at 18-23. My claims naturally dovetail with this judgment, but do not strictly require it. For example, even if φρονεῖν at IX, 83.4 (B41) indicates an activity of practical wisdom, Aristotle would still be saying that practical philosophical knowledge is valuable for its own sake—and this claim seems to be sufficient to provide a contrast with the *NE*.

Yet such knowledge is properly choiceworthy in itself, and it seems to be useful only by way of 'contributing cause' (συναίτιον) (IX, 83.4; B42).

In the undisputed passages of the *EE*, Aristotle speaks of 'intellectual virtues, whose *ergon* is truth, whether about how things are or about coming-to-be' (II. 4, 1221b29-30),[87] and this would seem to point forward to the distinction between truth and practical truth in *EE* V. (≈*NE* VI.) 2, as we observed above in Section 1.3. However, as we discussed in Section 2.2, Aristotle in this passage from *EE* II 4 does not distinguish practical intellectual virtue by its teleological orientation to action but rather by an orientation to cognize a certain general subject matter that includes action, namely, 'coming-to-be' (γένεσις). Moreover, the *EE* itself is not presented as an essentially practical treatise: Aristotle remarks that he will discuss some topics that pertain to 'theoretical philosophy alone' (φιλοσοφίαν μόνον θεωρητικήν; I. 1, 1214a13), and the word 'alone' (μόνον) suggests that he considers other discussions in the *EE* (and perhaps the entire *EE*) to be at least partly theoretical.

Moreover, Aristotle in *EE* I. 5 assumes that all knowledge divides into theoretical and productive kinds, as we noted in Section 2.1, and after asserting that theoretical knowledge may be useful 'accidentally' (κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς, 1216b15; a claim that resembles *Protrep.* IX, 82.20-83.4; B42) he affirms the inherent value of certain forms of productive knowledge (1216b17), namely those concerned with 'noble' (καλός) things (1216b20; cf. *EE* I. 4, 1215b3):

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[87] αἱ μὲν τοῦ λόγον ἔχοντος διανοητικαί, ὧν ἔργον ἀλήθεια, ἢ περὶ τοῦ πῶς ἔχει ἢ περὶ γενέσεως

καλὸν μὲν οὖν καὶ τὸ γνωρίζειν ἕκαστον τῶν καλῶν· οὐ μὴν ἀλλά γε περὶ ἀρετῆς

οὐ τὸ εἰδέναι τιμιώτατον τί ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ τὸ γινώσκειν ἐκ τίνων ἐστίν. οὐ γὰρ

εἰδέναι βουλόμεθα τί ἐστιν ἀνδρεία, ἀλλ' εἶναι ἀνδρεῖοι, οὐδέ τί ἐστι δικαιοσύνη,

ἀλλ' εἶναι δίκαιοι […] (I. 5, 1216b19-23)

It is certainly noble to know each noble thing; nevertheless, in the case of virtue,

the most valuable thing is not to know what it is but rather to know from what it

arises. For we do not wish to know what courage is but to be courageous, nor to

know what justice is but to be just […]

Though Aristotle says that knowing 'what virtue is' is not what is most valuable, he

implies that this knowledge is still valuable in itself (cf. I. 1, 1214a10-12), and what he

does identify as most valuable is still a kind of knowing—namely, knowing 'from what

virtue arises' (ἐκ τίνων ἐστίν, 1216b21). The final lines may suggest the doctrine that the

end of practical philosophy is action—at least to someone who has read the *NE*—but it is

a striking fact that the *EE* never clearly states this doctrine.

By contrast, Aristotle in the *NE* repeatedly emphasizes that there is a

philosophical knowledge the end of which is action, and he draws from this explicit

doctrine several important consequences. Very early in the treatise, Aristotle observes

that youths, akratics and any others who follow their feelings will acquire practical

knowledge 'in vain' (ματαίως) and 'unprofitably' (ἀνωφελῶς) precisely because 'the end

is not knowledge but action' (τὸ τέλος ἐστὶν οὐ γνῶσις ἀλλὰ πρᾶξις; *NE* I. 3, 1095a5-6).

Aristotle also clarifies that the *NE* is not a theoretical treatise:

[…] ἡ παροῦσα πραγματεία οὐ θεωρίας ἕνεκά ἐστιν ὥσπερ αἱ ἄλλαι (οὐ γὰρ ἵνα εἰδῶμεν τί ἐστιν ἡ ἀρετὴ σκεπτόμεθα, ἀλλ' ἵν' ἀγαθοὶ γενώμεθα, ἐπεὶ οὐδὲν ἂν ἦν ὄφελος αὐτῆς) (*NE* II. 2, 1103b26-29)

[…] the present treatise is not for the sake of contemplation, as are the others—for we are not engaging in this inquiry in order to know what virtue is but in order to become good since otherwise the inquiry would be of no advantage.

Here Aristotle seems to suppose that the value of practical knowledge properly derives from action, not from knowing itself, and he closes the *NE* with a similar observation (*NE* X. 9, 1179a33-b4). It is also not hard to see how the doctrine from the suggested note can account for this revised conception of practical philosophy—for if the practical intellect is teleologically oriented to action, and practical philosophy perfects the practical intellect, then practical philosophy too is teleologically oriented to action.[88]

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[88] An anonymous reader has proposed to me an alternative explanation for why Aristotle in the *EE* never says that the end of practical philosophy is action: viz., Aristotle takes this point to be obvious to his Eudemian audience. I believe we should reject this explanation for many reasons, but here are five. First, the explanation is the opposite of what we should expect given the popular hypothesis that the *EE* was written for a more 'philosophical' audience, while the *NE* was written for a more 'political' audience, as suggested by e.g. P. Simpson (trans. and comm.), *The* Eudemian Ethics *of Aristotle* (New Brunswick, 2013), xii), L. Jost, 'The *Eudemian Ethics* and Its Controversial Relationship to the *Nicomachean Ethics*' ['Relationship'], in R. Polanksy (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to the* Nicomachean Ethics (Cambridge, 2014), 410-427 at 419-21, and Kenny, *Perfect*, 141. It is philosophers, not politicians, who need to be reminded that the end of practical philosophy is not contemplation. Second, Aristotle in the *Protrepticus* does not seem to recognize a philosophical knowledge the end of which is action, and that shows that the Nicomachean account of practical philosophy is not obvious. Third, as we noted above, the *EE* characterizes its investigation as at least partly theoretical, and this claim conflicts with the *NE*'s account of its own investigation (e.g. II. 2, 1103b26-29). Fourth, Aristotle in the *NE* repeatedly emphasizes that the end of practical philosophy is action, and even implies that the majority of people do not understand this (*NE* II. 4, 1105b12-18); consequently, it is implausible that Aristotle in the *EE* knew this truth but thought that it was so obvious that it was not even worth mentioning. Fifth, as we will see in the following section, practical philosophy's end determines its proper methodology, and the differences between the *EE* and *NE*

2.4

Aristotle's thoughts on practical philosophy's end also have consequences for its proper methodology. We briefly touched on one of these consequences already—namely, that students of practical philosophy should not be prone to following their feelings—but here we focus on the degree to which exactness (ἀκρίβεια) should be pursued.

In the *Protrepticus*, Aristotle distinguishes only one philosophical methodology, and according to this methodology, one should pursue the greatest degree of exactness about the things that one is trying to contemplate or accomplish (X, 84.7-85.23; B46-50). Other craftsmen take their tools and notions 'at a second or third remove' (ἀπὸ τῶν δευτέρων καὶ τρίτων), reasoning 'from experience' (ἐξ ἐμπειρίας, X, 85.5-6; B48); the philosopher alone takes his standard 'from truth and nature itself' (ἀπὸ τῆς φύσεως αὐτῆς καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας, X, 84.25-26; B47), and so can achieve 'the imitation of exact things [τῶν ἀκριβῶν] themselves because he is a contemplator [θεατὴς] of exact things, not of imitations' (X, 85.7-9; B48).[89] Consequently, the philosopher alone can achieve actions that are 'right and noble' (ὀρθαὶ καὶ καλαί, X, 85.19-20; B49).[90] The higher degree of exactness also correlates with a higher degree of truth: 'He who achieves truth most of all [ὁ μάλιστα ἀληθεύων] lives most of all, and this is the person who is wise and contemplates on the basis of the most exact [ἀκριβεστάτην] understanding' (XI, 87.26-28; B85).[91]

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regarding the methodology of practical philosophy cannot be plausibly explained by a difference in intended audience, as even Kenny, 'Reconsiderations', 296 has observed.

[89] …ἀπ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἀκριβῶν ἡ μίμησίς ἐστιν· αὐτῶν γάρ ἐστι θεατής, ἀλλ' οὐ μιμημάτων.

[90] For similar interpretations, see Jaeger, *Development*, 85-90, Düring, *Attempt*, 215-6, and Bobonich, 'Treatises', 20-21.

[91] ζῇ [...] μάλιστα πάντων ὁ μάλιστα ἀληθεύων, οὗτος δ' ἐστὶν ὁ φρονῶν καὶ θεωρῶν κατὰ τὴν ἀκριβεστάτην ἐπιστήμην· Düring, *Attempt*, 215 observes a similarity between the *Protrepticus* and the

Like the *Protrepticus*, the *EE* identifies only one philosophical methodology, which is explicitly said to apply to every branch of learning (I. 6, 1216b35-39), and the *EE* nowhere distinguishes a methodology special to practical philosophy.[92] This is important to note because exactness is clearly presented as a philosophical desideratum in the *Protrepticus* and in Aristotle's theoretical philosophy. Moreover, the *EE* nowhere restricts the exactness to be pursued in ethical discussions, but instead appears to recommend it[93] and to pursue it.[94] Consequently, it seems that the first audience of the *EE*, when encountering the concluding line of *EE* V. 2, would have very naturally assumed that each intellectual part 'will achieve truth most of all' (μάλιστα ἀληθεύσει, 1139b13) only when achieve the greatest possible philosophical exactness, and the audience would have almost certainly understood the words in this way if they had already read the *Protrepticus*.

By contrast, Aristotle in the *NE* clearly distinguishes philosophical methodologies—there is one suitable to theoretical philosophy and one to practical philosophy—and he emphasizes the importance of observing the methodology suitable to each discipline. He contrasts these methodologies in various ways but especially concerning the way exactness (ἀκρίβεια) should be pursued:

Philebus, and it is worth noting that in the *Philebus* Plato also draws a connection between a greater exactness (ἀκρίβεια) and a higher degree of truth (57d-59d).

[92] See e.g. Jaeger, *Development*, 232-4 and Inwood and Woolf, *Eudemian*, xxii-xxiii. However, this is not to say that the *EE* and the *Protrepticus* observe the very same philosophical methodology, as Jaeger, *Development*, 233 observes.

[93] One might read *EE* I. 6, 1216b32-9 as a recommendation to pursue exactness, on which see Bobonich 'Treatises', 26.

[94] Kenny, *Perfect*, 115: 'the *EE* is more systematic and more technical [than the *NE*] and makes more use of the conceptual apparatus of Aristotelian logic and metaphysics. […] [T]he arguments are often more formalized, but the quest for rigour often results in a very crabbed text.'

[…] χρή […] τὴν ἀκρίβειαν μὴ ὁμοίως ἐν ἅπασιν ἐπιζητεῖν, ἀλλ' ἐν ἑκάστοις

κατὰ τὴν ὑποκειμένην ὕλην καὶ ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἐφ' ὅσον οἰκεῖον τῇ μεθόδῳ. καὶ

γὰρ τέκτων καὶ γεωμέτρης διαφερόντως ἐπιζητοῦσι τὴν ὀρθήν· ὃ μὲν γὰρ ἐφ'

ὅσον χρησίμη πρὸς τὸ ἔργον, ὃ δὲ τί ἐστιν ἢ ποῖόν τι· θεατὴς γὰρ τἀληθοῦς. (*NE*

I. 7, 1098a26-32)

We should not seek exactness in the same way in all matters, but in each

according to the underlying subject matter, and to the degree that is suited to the

inquiry—for the carpenter and the geometer investigate the right angle differently.

The carpenter investigates the right angle to the extent that this helps his work,

and the geometer investigates what, or what sort of thing, the right angle is, since

he is a contemplator [θεατὴς] of the truth.

Aristotle begins by mentioning two related reasons for restricting the pursuit of exactness

in any discipline: the subject matter may not admit of exactness and the ultimate goal of

the discipline may render attainment of exactness unnecessary.[95] The *NE* discusses both

reasons for limiting the pursuit of exactness in practical philosophy, while the *EE* does

not even mention either. Aristotle focusses on the former reason for limitation in *NE* I. 3

and the latter primarily in the passage above.

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[95] See e.g. R. A. Gauthier and J. Y. Jolif (comm.), *L'Éthique à Nicomaque: Tome II – Première Partie: Commentaire, Livres I-V*, reprint of 2nd edn. [*Livres I-V*] (Louvain, 2002 [1970]), 21, D. Achtenberg, *Cognition of Value in Aristotle's Ethics* (Albany, 2002), 65-86, and D. Scott, *Levels of Argument: A Comparative Study of Plato's* Republic *and Aristotle's* Nicomachean Ethics (Oxford, 2015), ch.7, who recognize these two different reasons for limiting exactness.

Geometry is here used as an example of theoretical thought in general, and Aristotle assumes that the theoretical philosopher, because he is a 'contemplator of the truth' (θεατὴς… τἀληθοῦς, *NE* I. 7,1098a31-32), will seek the greatest degree of exactness about the universal. By contrast, the carpenter, who is evidently not a 'contemplator of the truth,' seeks truth only for the sake of his product, which is particular, and so only seeks that level of exactness that will improve his product. In context, Aristotle is likening the practical philosopher to the carpenter—not the geometer—and so would seem to be repudiating his earlier view in the *Protrepticus*.[96]

Consequently, the original audience for the *NE* would have naturally interpreted the concluding claim of *NE* VI. 2 differently than the original audience for the *EE* would have naturally interpreted the same claim in *EE* V. 2. This is because only the *NE* makes it clear that the practical intellect, unlike the theoretical intellect, will not 'achieve truth most all' by attaining maximum exactness about the universal. In light of *NE* I. 7, 1098a29-32, a reader of the *NE* would naturally suspect that, if the practical intellect does 'achieve truth most of all,' it would do so by successfully aiming at particular action. In fact, Aristotle appears to signal this revised interpretation of 1139b12-13 in the following lines from *NE* II. 7, which have no parallel in the *EE*.

Δεῖ δὲ τοῦτο μὴ μόνον καθόλου λέγεσθαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς καθ' ἔκαστα

ἐφαρμόττειν. ἐν γὰρ τοῖς περὶ τὰς πράξεις λόγοις οἱ μὲν καθόλου κοινότεροί εἰσιν,

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[96] Jaeger, *Development*, 86, G. E. R. Lloyd, *Aristotle: The Growth and Structure of His Thought* (Cambridge, 1968), 36-37, and Gauthier and Jolif, *Livres I-V*, 21 all observe that Aristotle here seems to be rejecting his earlier view in the *Protrepticus*. Bobonich, 'Treatises', 19-22 does not discuss *NE* I. 7, 1098a26-32 in particular, but does contrast the views of the *Protrepticus* and *NE* concerning the pursuit of exactness.

οἱ δ' ἐπὶ μέρους ἀληθινώτεροι· περὶ γὰρ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα αἱ πράξεις, δέον δ' ἐπὶ

τούτων συμφωνεῖν. (*NE* II. 7, 1107a28-32)[97]

We must not only state <our account> in a universal way but also adapt it to

particular cases—for among accounts regarding actions, the universal ones are

common to more cases, but the specific ones are truer. This is because actions

concern particulars, and our account must accord with these.

Aristotle here explains that the 'truer' (ἀληθινώτεροι) accounts in practical philosophy, as

opposed to theoretical philosophy, are the accounts that are closer to the particular.

If Aristotle implements this methodological principle in the *NE*, as one would

expect he would, that could illuminate at least two other differences with the *EE*. First,

the undisputed books of the *NE* emphasize that actions are 'among particulars' (ἐν τοῖς

καθ' ἕκαστα) (*NE* III. 1, 1110b6-7; cf. 1111a23-4), that particulars admit of variability

(*NE* III. 1, 1110b8-9; cf. I. 3, 1094b11-22), and that it falls to perception, informed by

experience, to judge these particulars well.[98] By contrast, such remarks are absent from

the undisputed books of the *EE*.[99] Second, the Nicomachean discussions of the specific

virtues and of friendship are not just longer than the parallel Eudemian discussions, but

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[97] With Bywater, *Ethica*, I read κοινότεροί in line 1107a30, which is found in the principal manuscripts, though the alternative reading κενώτεροί could also work for my purposes.
[98] See A. J. London, 'Moral Knowledge and the Acquisition of Virtue in Aristotle's 'Nicomachean' and 'Eudemian Ethics'' ['Knowledge'], *The Review of Metaphysics* 54.3 (2001), 553-583 at 566-71. On the need for perception to judge particulars, see *NE* II. 9, 1109b20-23, and IV. 5, 1126b2-4. On the need for the student of ethics to have suitable experience of particulars, see *NE* I. 3, 1095a2-4; I. 4, 1095b3-9, and II. 1, 1103b23-5.
[99] London, 'Knowledge', 570-1. On the basis of this and other related considerations, London, 'Knowledge', 581 cautiously speculates that the remarks in *NE* VI concerning the importance of knowing particulars 'either did not appear in [the Eudemian version of] the common books […] or did appear there but in an attenuated form.'

describe more nuances in character and circumstance, contain more examples, and offer more specific pieces of advice than the Eudemian discussions, which, by contrast, can seem 'austerely philosophical.'[100] It seems that, when Aristotle wrote the *NE*, he was especially intent on guiding his students closer to the particulars in which excellent actions occur.[101]

    Consequently, when one reads the concluding lines of *NE* VI. 2 against the background of the *NE*, but particularly II. 7, 1107a28-32 and I. 7, 1098a29-32, Aristotle would seem to be saying that the practical and theoretical intellects will 'achieve truth most of all' in different ways. When the theoretical intellect seeks what is most true, it seeks what is most universal, i.e. the principles, which admit of maximum exactness. By contrast, when the practical intellect seeks what is most true, it seeks what is more particular (*NE* II. 7, 1107a29-31), which does not admit of maximum exactness (*NE* I. 3, 1094b11-22; I. 7, 1098a26-28). And while the perfected practical intellect must consider the universal (*NE* II. 7, 1107a28), the exactness of this consideration is still curtailed by the ultimate goal of action (*NE* I. 7, 1098a29-32). The key explanation for this difference seems to be that Aristotle in the *NE* clearly conceives of the practical intellect—and consequently of practical philosophy—as having an essential teleological orientation to

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[100] Kenny, *Perfect*, 141: 'The *NE* is more fluent, less austerely philosophical, less telegrammatic in its arguments than the *EE*.' Jost, 'Relationship', 417: '[The *NE* is] fuller in discussion of various points and more generous with examples than its more austere sibling [i.e. the *EE*], on the whole.'
[101] Jost, 'Relationship', 417-9 suggests that these different treatments of the specific virtues might be explained by a difference in intended audience. This might also be true. However, even if it is, the difference in methodology can at least partly explain the difference in intended audience, but not vice versa—for if Aristotle in the *EE* follows a theoretical methodology, pursuing exactness and focusing on more universal accounts, he would naturally write his treatise for an audience with antecedent knowledge of philosophy, but if Aristotle in the *NE* follows a practical methodology, eschewing exactness and focusing on more specific accounts, he would naturally write his treatise for a broader audience. See also footnote 88 above.

action. In this way, the account of the practical intellect from the suggested note seems to have consequences for our interpretation of the concluding lines of *NE* VI. 2.

3

This paper has presented an argument for two interrelated but distinct theses: (1) lines 1139a31-b11 of *NE* VI. 2 should be moved before the word κοινωνεῖν at 1139a20, and (2) *NE* VI. 2 as whole is a Nicomachean revision of an originally Eudemian text. The theses naturally combine with one another, but they do not require one another: one could accept the first without the second, and vice versa.

With regard to the first thesis, it is worth observing that, in the judgment of Gauthier, we do not have a truly critical edition of the *NE*.[102] And so I here emphasize that when we finally do have such a critical edition, it should not, like the edition of Bywater, ignore questions about the origin and composition of the *NE*. Instead, the awaited edition should take seriously the hypothesis that the first editor of the *NE* made mistakes, and in particular, it should move lines 1139a31-b11 before the word κοινωνεῖν at 1139a20 or at least report this proposal in the apparatus. Translators, who need not exercise the same degree of caution concerning the text, should likewise rearrange the text in order to correct the errors of the first editor.[103]

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[102] Gauthier, *Introduction*, 301. D. Frede, *Aristoteles: Nikomachische Ethik. Erster Halbband: Übersezung und Einleitung* (Berlin/Boston, 2020), 217 observes that the situation has not changed since 1970 because no one has yet produced a classification (e.g. a stemma) by which to judge the value of all the relevant manuscripts.
[103] Gauthier, *Introduction*, 87.

With regard to the second thesis, our argument has fairly clear ramifications for our interpretation of *EE* V. 2, *NE* VI. 2, and the common books more generally. If lines 1139a31-b11 really are a Nicomachean note, then that fact is highly relevant to our evaluation of those interpretations and translations of the *EE* that present the 'common books' *in toto* as *EE* IV-VI. And if Aristotle revised his conception of the practical intellect—and consequently, his conceptions of practical philosophy and practical methodology—sometime after he wrote the *EE*, then that fact could help to explain why he was motivated to write the *NE* in the first place. Our discussion of the composition of the *NE* VI. 2 also suggests various ways in which our interpretation of the text could be improved: for example, lines 1139b12-13 should be treated as the conclusion of the argument present in lines 1139a21-31; the apparent commitment to degrees of truth in the concluding lines should be further investigated (cf. *aPo* II. 19, 100b5-17 and *Meta* α. 1 993b19-31); the desire-based account of the practical intellect in the suggested note should be given priority over the apparently object-based account in *NE* VI. (≈*EE* V.) 1, 1139a6-12; and the distinction between truth and practical truth should be interpreted along the lines of e.g. *NE* I. 7, 1098a26-32 and II. 7, 1107a28-32, passages which seem to be informed by the desire-based account from the suggested note.

Finally, developmental considerations have largely fallen out of fashion in Aristotle scholarship, and because I have introduced them, I here close by addressing what may be a lingering worry: am I proposing that we descend down the rabbit hole of developmental hypotheses never to return? I certainly am not. I have assumed throughout this paper that Aristotle continually revised the majority of treatises, and this has the

result that each treatise is, in a sense, 'contemporaneous with every other.'[104] Thus, those scholars who strive for a systematic interpretation of Aristotle's philosophy have reason to do so. Nevertheless, these scholars should still seek to know which treatises were continually revised and which were not; they should recognize that Aristotle seems to have died before completing these revisions, which inevitably left tensions in the text; and they should likewise acknowledge that these tensions may sometimes be profitably resolved by prioritizing the doctrines expressed in what seem to be 'later' passages. Consequently, developmental considerations, far from impeding us from a unified view of the Aristotelian philosophical system, may very well be necessary in order to attain it.[105]

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[104] Burnyeat, 'Case', 179.

[105] For helpful comments and discussion, I thank Angelos Chianotis, Caleb Cohoe, Patricio Fernandez, Allan Hillman, Marta Jimenez, David Kaufman, Hendrik Lorenz, Marko Malink, Patricia Marechal, Jessica Moss, Oliver Primavesi, several anonymous reviewers, and audiences at the Institute for Advanced Study, Transylvania University, the 2019 meeting of the Alabama Philosophical Society, and the 2020 Central Division meeting of the APA. I am especially grateful to the editor, Rachana Kamtekar, whose comments improved the paper in various respects.

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