PENULTIMATE DRAFT, forthcoming in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*

Virtue and Contemplation in *Eudemian Ethics* 8.3

Roy C. Lee

Abstract: *Eudemian Ethics* 8.3 defends a standard (*horos*), according to which certain actions should promote contemplation. Exactly which actions fall under the scope of the standard is contested. Commentators often limit the scope of the standard to a restricted subset of actions, but such restrictions lead to serious, previously unnoticed inconsistencies. I argue for the interpretation that all actions fall under the standard's prescription by considering the dialectical context of the chapter, as well as the argument Aristotle gives in favor of this standard. The result is that the Eudemian account of virtue includes a further essential feature: virtue aims to promote the most contemplation. This feature should be understood coordinately alongside virtue's other essential features and not as establishing a dominant end.

I.

The end of *Eudemian Ethics* (*EE*) 8.3 makes a notable addition to the work's overall account of virtue. Aristotle thinks that a doctor looks to some standard (ὅρος) not only to judge whether a body is healthy but also to evaluate potential medical interventions as healthy rather than excessive or deficient. In the same way, Aristotle proposes, the virtuous person should have a standard, at least for a certain sphere of action. Concluding an argument that ends the work, Aristotle identifies that standard:

> Therefore, whatever choice or acquisition of natural goods will most promote the contemplation of god—whether of bodily goods, property, friends, or the other goods—this is best, and this standard is finest (1249b18–21).[1]

This is Aristotle's clearest statement of the standard in *EE* 8.3. The standard requires

[1] Citations to the Greek text are to C. Rowe (ed.), *Aristotelis Ethica Eudemia* (Oxford, 2023), also considering C. Rowe, *Aristotelica: Studies on the Text of Aristotle's* Eudemian Ethics [*Aristotelica*] (Oxford, 2023); F. Susemihl (ed.), *Aristotelis Ethica Eudemia* (Leipzig, 1884); and R.R. Walzer and J.M. Mingay (eds.), *Aristotelis Ethica Eudemia* (Oxford, 1991). Translations are adapted from B. Inwood and R. Woolf (eds.), *Eudemian Ethics* (Cambridge, 2013). I read μάλιστα after ποιήσει—also discussed below.

promoting the contemplation of god, and, as stated here, it applies to actions that involve the acquisition of natural goods, which are goods whose value depends on their user's character—often thought to be external goods (1248b27–31).[2]

So which actions exactly fall within the scope of the standard? Aristotle states the standard's scope twice in the chapter, using slightly different language each time, yet he does not explain why the standard should only be used in a limited domain. The interpretive options commentators have favored fall into three groupings. Each interpretation results in a different view of contemplation's relation to ethical virtue and its place within a happy life. On the Most Restrictive Reading, the standard applies only to actions concerning natural goods specifically in excess of virtue's needs.[3] On this view, Aristotle has already completed his considered account of virtue prior to the discussion of contemplation in *EE* 8.3, so the standard only directs the use of natural goods that are not needed for virtuous actions. A fully happy life would involve attending first to the demands of ethical virtue, acquiring whatever natural goods are needed for these virtuous actions, and then, only after meeting virtue's demands, additionally securing the quantity of natural goods needed to promote contemplation. So, the standard

---

[2] Some, like A. Kenny, *The Aristotelian Ethics: A Study of the Relationship Between the* Eudemian *and* Nicomachean Ethics *of Aristotle* [*Aristotelian Ethics*], 2nd edn. (Oxford, 2016), 182–183, believe that this standard for natural goods is supplemented by another standard (1249b21–25). But the chapter only anticipates the one standard for natural goods (1249a23–b7), and the doctor only uses one standard. I argue below that the other formulations are not substantively different.

[3] Its proponents include C. Rowe, *The* Eudemian *and* Nicomachean Ethics*: A Study in the Development of Aristotle's Thought* [*Study*] (Cambridge, 1971); J.M. Cooper, *Reason and Human Good in Aristotle* [*Reason*] (Indianapolis, 1986); S. Broadie, *Ethics with Aristotle* (Oxford, 1991); G. Bonasio, 'Natural Goods in the *Eudemian Ethics*' ['Natural Goods'], *Ancient Philosophy* 41.1 (2021), 123–142; and D. Wolt, '*Phronêsis* and *Kalokagathia* in *Eudemian Ethics* VIII.3' ['*Phronêsis*'], *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 60.1 (2022), 1–23.

of promoting contemplation does not contribute in any way to Aristotle's account of ethical virtue, and contemplation should be sought only after satisfying virtue's requirements.

On the Less Restrictive Reading, the standard directs all actions concerning natural goods, not just the actions concerning natural goods that exceed virtue's needs.[4] This means that all actions concerning natural goods, including those prescribed by virtue, must promote contemplation. The standard supplements the foregoing account of ethical virtue by specifying what virtue requires, but only for actions and choices concerning natural goods. Other virtuous actions may be determined in other ways, or perhaps relative to other standards. So on this view, contemplation is an aim that some, but only some, virtuous actions must promote and is not a defining aim for virtue as such.

On the Unrestricted Reading, the standard applies to all virtuous actions.[5] Since the standard is not restricted to any domain of action related to natural goods, all virtuous actions, in order to count as virtuous, must reflect directly or indirectly the aim of

---

[4] For this view, see J.D. Monan, *Moral Knowledge and Its Methodology in Aristotle* (Oxford, 1968), 127–132; Kenny, *Aristotelian Ethics*, 181–183; J.L. Ackrill, 'Aristotle on *Eudaimonia*', in A.O. Rorty (ed.), *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1980), 15–33, at 30–31; F. Buddensiek, *Die Theorie Des Glücks in Aristoteles'* Eudemischer Ethik [*Theorie*] (Göttingen, 1999), 252–4; F. Buddensiek, 'Contemplation and Service of the God: The Standard for External Goods in *Eudemian Ethics* VIII 3' ['Contemplation'], *Bochumer Philosophisches Jahrbuch für Antike und Mittelalter* 14.1 (2011), 103–124; P. Simpson (trans. and comm.), *The* Eudemian Ethics *of Aristotle* [*Eudemian Ethics*] (New York, 2013), 392–4; and M.D. Walker, *Aristotle on the Uses of Contemplation* [*Uses*] (Cambridge, 2018), 136–9, 162–3.

[5] Here I include T.M. Tuozzo, 'Contemplation, the Noble, and the Mean: The Standard of Moral Virtue in Aristotle's Ethics' ['Standard'], *Apeiron* 28.4 (1995), 129–154; C.D.C. Reeve, *Action, Contemplation, and Happiness: An Essay on Aristotle* [*Essay*] (Cambridge, 2012), 134–140; D. Devereux, '*Theoria* and *Praxis* in Aristotle's Ethics' ['*Theoria*'], in P. Destrée and M.A. Zingano (eds.), *Theoria: Studies on the Status and Meaning of Contemplation in Aristotle's Ethics* (Louvain-La-Neuve, 2014), 178–192; and arguably, R. Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good* (Princeton, 1989), 169–170.

promoting the most contemplation. This represents a substantive, informative addition to Aristotle's account of virtue as a mean: the standard helps to determine where exactly the virtuous mean between excess and deficiency lies. The aim of promoting contemplation is an essential element of Aristotle's considered account of ethical virtue that he has alluded to but not made explicit until the very end.

This paper argues against the two Restrictive Readings of the standard and in favor of the Unrestricted Reading. The Most Restrictive Reading tacitly relies on an important assumption that an earlier Eudemian passage contradicts. On the Less Restrictive Reading, following the standard seems sometimes to lead to instrumental irrationality. However, defenders of the Unrestricted Reading bear the burden of explaining why the standard's apparent restriction to natural goods is not only repeated in the passage but even illustrated with examples. The existing strategies for defending the Unrestricted Reading appeal to certain textual parallels, but they are inconclusive.

I think the challenge to the Unrestricted Reading should be met instead by considering the argumentative context of *EE* 8.3. The references to actions concerning natural goods are not meant to restrict the scope of the standard but rather situate it as part of Aristotle's extended criticism of the Spartan disposition, which prizes actions that acquire natural goods. It is through criticizing the Spartan disposition, especially its improper relation to natural goods, that Aristotle makes his own account of virtue clear. Indeed, the chapter's focus on natural goods and the Spartan disposition, and even its framing interest in the comprehensive virtue *kalokagathia* ('fine-and-goodness') all serve to foreground the protreptic consequence of this account of virtue. If comprehensive virtue requires observing the standard of promoting the most contemplation, then the

happy life of complete virtue must turn toward philosophy. I confirm this reading by showing that the core inference of the argument given for the standard supports the Unrestricted Reading.

In addition to revealing a more unified structure to a chapter that has struck most commentators as disjointed, these arguments support the view that in the *Eudemian Ethics*, the mean in accordance with correct reason is not the last word on what ethical virtue is. Virtue's mean is determined by the standard of promoting contemplation. The mean, at least, is not uncodifiable. This resulting account of virtue requires explaining how an external standard, promoting the most contemplation, might be integrated into an account of virtue, given virtue's other requirements, especially that the agent choose virtuous action for its own sake or for the sake of the fine, rather than for the sake of contemplation. In light of the Eudemian function (ἔργον) argument, I argue that the standard should be best understood to require the indirect promotion of contemplation. Contemplation should be promoted only through virtuous activity, whose own nature sets boundaries on one's pursuit of that aim.

Though this interpretive dispute in *EE* 8.3 is about the scope of the standard, it mirrors the interpretive controversy arising from Aristotle's elevation of the philosophical life over the political life in *Nicomachean Ethics* (*EN*) 10.7–8. There, Aristotle thinks that the philosophical life, distinctively characterized by theoretical contemplation, is superior to the political life, distinctively characterized by its focus on the ethical virtues. Even so, interpreters of the *Nicomachean Ethics* disagree about how prominent a place theoretical contemplation should occupy within the philosophical life, whether a contemplative life is even possible for ordinary humans, and if it is, why and to what extent a contemplative

life should observe the ethical virtues. I acknowledge the interest of this parallel only to set it aside for the present inquiry, which focuses only on the *Eudemian Ethics*.

II.

The Most Restrictive, Less Restrictive, and Unrestricted Readings of the standard of *EE* 8.3 disagree over what subset or sphere of actions fall under the scope of the standard given in 1249b18–21, quoted above. The other passage important to this dispute introduces the context of the standard and how it should be used:

> Since there is some standard also for the doctor, to which they look when they judge that the body is healthy or not, and with reference to which they judge to what extent they should produce each thing, and if it is done well, then the body is healthy, but if less or more then it would be healthy no longer—in the same way too for the virtuous person (σπουδαίῳ), concerning their actions and choices of things by nature good but not praiseworthy, there must be some standard for the possession, choice, and avoidance of how much or how little property and fruits of good fortune. It was said before about these matters to be as reason says. But this is like saying in matters of nutrition to do as medicine and its reason say. While true, this is not clear. (1249a23–b7)

The doctor, qua doctor, aims to produce health. In doing so, they look to a standard of health to determine whether health is present and how to bring it about. Aristotle compares the doctor to the virtuous person, who also looks to a standard. But though the standard helps the doctor achieve their primary aim, for the virtuous person, the standard here is specifically said to be for actions and choices concerning natural goods that are not praiseworthy.

On the Most Restrictive Reading, the standard only applies to actions concerning natural goods in excess of what is needed for virtue. Ordinary virtuous actions will require natural goods, but the quantity and variety the virtuous person should acquire for these purposes is straightforwardly dictated by what is instrumentally necessary. Supposing that the agent already has the natural goods needed for ethically virtuous actions, the standard instructs them to pursue a further quantity of goods: whatever is needed to promote contemplation.

Defenders of the Most Restrictive Reading have offered two different textual considerations in support for the view.[6] The first, following John Cooper, is a literal reading of the phrase, 'things by nature good but not praiseworthy' (τῶν φύσει μὲν ἀγαθῶν οὐκ ἐπαινετῶν δέ). Things by nature good are natural goods, which were introduced earlier in *EE* 8.3 as competitive goods (περιμάχητα), thought by some to be the greatest: honor, wealth, bodily strength, luck, and power. These goods benefit the virtuous but harm the vicious (1248b27–31). Next, the description 'not praiseworthy' seems to pick out those goods that are not fine. Aristotle describes what is fine at two points in *EE* 8.3. First, he names as fine what is praiseworthy on its own account: the virtues and virtuous actions (1248b20–24). On this first telling, no natural goods are praiseworthy, because they are not virtues nor virtuous actions. But later, Aristotle expands what is fine: things are fine whenever the end for which they are managed and

[6] Notable defenses of the Most Restrictive Reading include Cooper, *Reason*, 136–143 and Broadie, *Ethics with Aristotle*, 183–188, who present the first and second points respectively. Bonasio, 'Natural Goods', 139 loosely follows Broadie, while Wolt, '*Phronêsis*', 18–19 follows Cooper in emphasizing 'not praiseworthy', since the fully virtuous person can already manage praiseworthy natural goods. Rowe, *Studies*, 110–112 describes the standard as severely restricted and does not think that the wise person refers to the standard in thinking about natural goods, as the Less Restrictive Reading holds.

acquired is fine (1249a6–7). On the expanded account, natural goods do count as fine and so as praiseworthy when they are used for the sake of virtuous actions. So, natural goods that are *not* praiseworthy would be natural goods that are not used for the sake of virtues or virtuous actions. Only the actions concerning these goods would fall under the standard of promoting contemplation. Perhaps virtue may require us to undertake certain actions but underdetermine what actions we must perform or how we must complete them.[7] It would be in this discretionary sphere that the standard applies.

There is a serious problem for the Most Restrictive Reading in this form.[8] This interpretation requires that there be a class of unpraiseworthy goods, which do not further any fine purpose but should be acquired and used to promote contemplation. This implicitly assumes that contemplation is not itself a fine, praiseworthy purpose. However, Aristotle is explicit when he first distinguishes the ethical from the intellectual virtues in the *Eudemian Ethics* that 'we praise not only the just, but also the intelligent [συνετούς] and the wise [σοφούς]' (1220a5–7; cf. *EN* 1103a4–10).[9] If theoretical wisdom is praiseworthy in itself, then it is fine, and its corresponding activity, contemplation, would also be fine. This point destabilizes the key distinction for the Most Restrictive Reading,

---

[7] See especially Cooper, *Reason*, 141.

[8] Buddensiek, *Theorie*, 252–4 raises other issues for the Most Restrictive Reading.

[9] Some commentators dispute that the uniquely *Eudemian* books use the words *sophia* or *sophos* to refer to theoretical wisdom in the sense developed in *EE* 5(=*EN* 6). See D. Frede, 'On the So-Called Common Books of the *Eudemian* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*' ['Common Books'], *Phronesis* 64.1 (2019), 100–105; cf. C. Rowe, '*Sophia* in the *Eudemian Ethics*' ['*Sophia*'], in G. Di Basilio (ed.), *Investigating the Relationship Between Aristotle's* Eudemian *and* Nicomachean Ethics [*Investigating*] (London, 2022), 122–136. Even so, theoretical wisdom would be part of what makes a *sophos* praiseworthy. Aristotle's aim is to vindicate as praiseworthy the class of intellectual virtues, which includes theoretical wisdom. Given that Aristotle has already described Anaxagoras as choosing to live for the sake of knowledge of the universe (1216a15), this theoretical dimension to intellectual achievement is not unexpected.

between praiseworthy and unpraiseworthy goods. Natural goods are fine and praiseworthy when they are managed and chosen for a fine aim. But if contemplation is fine, then unpraiseworthy natural goods acquired for the purpose of meeting the standard (i.e., promoting contemplation) themselves thereby become fine and praiseworthy. So if the standard only applies to unpraiseworthy natural goods, then the standard does not apply to natural goods acquired for the purpose of meeting the standard.

To illustrate, the standard says to manage and acquire unpraiseworthy natural goods, like money exceeding what is needed for virtue, to promote contemplation. Before the money has been earmarked for some contemplation-promoting expense, it may well count as unpraiseworthy, because it serves no fine aim. But once the sum of money is acquired and set aside for contemplation, it becomes fine, because it now has a fine aim, contemplation. So, having acquired the money for contemplation's sake, the agent's subsequent use of it for that intended purpose now cannot satisfy the standard, because the standard only applies to natural goods that are not fine, and the money became fine after it was acquired. In order to satisfy the standard, the agent would have to promote contemplation with money that was never acquired or earmarked for the purpose of promoting contemplation. Indeed, natural goods, when they are used to satisfy the standard, thereby become fine and praiseworthy, falling outside the standard's scope.[10] It

[10] There may be another way of understanding when goods become fine. Perhaps things become fine only after they have been acquired *and* used for the fine purpose (καλὰ γάρ ἐστιν ὅταν οὗ ἕνεκα πράττουσι καὶ αἱροῦνται καλὸν ᾖ, 1249a6–7). Merely acquiring goods for future contemplation does not make them praiseworthy, since they have not yet also been used for the sake of a fine end, and so my objection may be avoided. Against this suggestion, I worry that πράττουσι, in its transitive sense, cannot comfortably sustain the meaning 'use' here. The verb might more naturally mean 'achieve' or 'effect', but that would work against this suggestion. I prefer 'manage', but goods can be managed prior to use. More to the point, Aristotle explains at 1249a7–10 that natural goods are fine

is hard, then, to see how someone could ever acquire unpraiseworthy natural goods for the purpose of promoting contemplation and then use them while they are unpraiseworthy to satisfy the standard. If contemplation is fine, the standard becomes practically unfollowable. The designation 'not praiseworthy' is ill-suited for picking out those natural goods exceeding what is needed for virtuous actions.[11]

The order of the chapter's argumentative progression has been cited as another textual consideration in support of the Most Restrictive Reading. Sarah Broadie thinks that the first half of the chapter (1248b9–1249a17) presents a picture of *kalokagathia* 'as if it were *complete without reference to theôria*', while the chapter's second half (1249a23–b25) supplements complete virtue with the standard of promoting contemplation.[12] After all, Aristotle has already concluded (οὖν) that '*kalokagathia* is complete virtue' (1249a16–17) prior to adding the additional requirement to promote contemplation. Assuming further that ethical virtue suffices to determine the quantity of natural goods needed for virtuous actions, someone with complete virtue needs no standard for natural goods used in virtuous actions. So, the standard of promoting

---

for the *kalos k'agathos* because their possession accords with a just distribution, which is a just and so fine end. So, for the *kalos k'agathos*, merely acquiring a natural good for future contemplative use makes it fine, even before it is used for contemplation, because simply by being possessed it is for the sake of the fine (i.e., achieving a just distribution). This makes all the natural goods a *kalos k'agathos* should have fine and so ineligible for use to meet the standard. See also section VI, below, for a discussion of this argument.

[11] Could 'unpraiseworthy natural goods' refer to types of good, rather than to tokens whose status changes situationally? Aristotle lists types of goods at 1249b20 (bodily goods, wealth, friends), but these types of goods do not seem, as types, to be unpraiseworthy (e.g., wealth may typically be used for generosity). Any class of goods that is typically used to promote contemplation would, for that reason, be praiseworthy as a class and so fall outside the standard's scope.

[12] Broadie, *Ethics with Aristotle*, 385 (emphasis original). Though Broadie's position largely aligns with Cooper's here, she does not cite in support of her view the phrase 'good but not praiseworthy', as Cooper understands it.

contemplation can only be for the natural goods that remain unaccounted for after the preceding discussion of complete virtue.

The problem for this approach is that Aristotle never explicitly excludes contemplation from *kalokagathia* in the first half of the chapter. He says *kalokagathia* is composed of (ἐκ) the virtues discussed earlier (1248b9–12). But by this point in the work, Aristotle has already discussed the intellectual virtues, including theoretical wisdom, so theoretical wisdom should be a part of *kalokagathia*. If we read the common books with the *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle says that theoretical wisdom is part of the whole of virtue (1144a5), and the Eudemian function argument identifies complete virtue with the whole of virtue (1219a36–39). So, prior to *EE* 8.3 Aristotle has already said that complete virtue includes theoretical wisdom. Broadie assumes that Aristotle's audience would not be willing to regard contemplation as a fine activity alongside other virtuous activities. Yet Aristotle justifies considering the intellectual virtues to be virtues by appealing to the thought that the wise person is praiseworthy; this appeal would only succeed if his audience was in fact willing to accept that, beyond ethical excellence, intellectual excellence is also praiseworthy. So, neither the phrase 'not praiseworthy' nor the order of the chapter's exposition supports the Most Restrictive Reading's distinction between natural goods used for virtuous action and those that should be used for contemplation.

III.

The Less Restrictive Reading does away with the Most Restrictive Reading's distinction between natural goods needed for virtuous actions and those in excess of virtue's needs. On this view, the standard of promoting contemplation applies to actions concerning all natural goods, not only unpraiseworthy natural goods. Even though the

formulation of the standard at 1249b1 includes the qualification 'not praiseworthy', the formulation at 1249b19 omits it. One might even read 'by nature' in the phrase 'by nature good but not praiseworthy' (1249b1) to modify not only 'good' but also 'not praiseworthy.'[13] Since natural goods are fine only if they are managed or acquired for a virtuous purpose, all natural goods are by nature not praiseworthy, so the standard applies to actions concerning all natural goods.

On the Less Restrictive Reading, the key distinction is between those actions that involve managing natural goods and those that do not. All actions that involve managing natural goods should aim to promote contemplation. What virtue requires for actions that do not involve natural goods is, presumably, determined in some other way. It is important for defenders of the Less Restrictive Reading to explain why a standard is needed only for virtuous actions that manage natural goods. Peter Simpson holds that practical wisdom suffices to guide most particular virtuous actions, but being focused on particulars, it lacks long-term planning capacity, which is supplemented by the standard. Practical wisdom's focus on immediate, particular actions 'does not determine how much and which of the natural goods one should have on hand, just as the doctor's perception of what medicine to give in what quantity and to which patients does not determine how much and which medicines and other instruments he should keep in store ready for use.'[14] Taking another path, Anthony Kenny takes Aristotle to divide the ethical virtues into those that concern natural goods (generosity, magnificence, magnanimity) and those

[13] For the suggestion, see Buddensiek, 'Contemplation', 116n16. Less explicitly, Ackrill, 'Aristotle on *Eudaimonia*', 30–31 may be understood to take this route, too.
[14] Simpson, *Eudemian Ethics*, 392.

concerned with passions (courage, temperance, mildness).[15] The former are guided by the standard for natural goods, while the latter are governed by another standard, 'that one be least aware of the other part of the soul, as such' (1249b24–25).

The main difficulty with the Less Restrictive Reading, in either version, is that the standard of promoting contemplation could require agents to be instrumentally irrational. Suppose that a virtuous agent ought to undertake some actions, not having to do with natural goods, that have some aim other than contemplation. Though these actions do not directly manage or acquire a certain quantity of natural goods, they may still require certain natural goods as means. For instance, repelling invaders from one's own city or an ally's city requires weapons and ships. But actions that acquire those natural goods are required to follow the standard of promoting contemplation. Yet the quantity and kinds of weapons and ships needed to promote contemplation might not be appropriate or adequate to repel invaders. If in all actions concerning natural goods, the agent only sought the quantity appropriate for contemplation, they would not have enough to achieve some of the non-contemplative aims set by virtue. Nothing guarantees that the standard of promoting contemplation will yield the right quantity and variety of natural goods for the virtuous person's non-contemplative actions and aims.

The problem arises because the Less Restrictive Reading divides agency up into one domain having to do with natural goods, subject to the standard, and another domain not having to do with natural goods, with goals or standards of its own. But these two

---

[15] See A. Kenny, *Aristotle on the Perfect Life* [*Perfect Life*] (Oxford, 1992), 100 and Kenny, *Aristotelian Ethics*, 182–3. Similarly, Walker, *Uses*, 136–9 and *passim* holds that there are various standards for practical reasoning in different domains of action. Contemplation is a standard for the domain concerning natural goods, while other domains are determined by other standards.

domains are not easily understood to be naturally autonomous from one another since agents regularly act in both domains when they pursue courses of action. So a standard that applies only to the domain concerning natural goods would lead to conflict with actions from the other domain unless the other domain is also subject to the same or at least a corresponding standard. Yet if the threat of conflict leads us to stipulate that the standard for actions concerning natural goods must also have significant, irrationality-barring implications for actions in the other domain, then the former standard is no longer restricted only to natural goods.

One way of avoiding the worry about instrumental irrationality is by recasting contemplation as the sole, ultimate, organizing aim of all virtuous actions. If every ordinary virtuous action is thought of as aiming ultimately to promote contemplation, then the quantity or variety of natural goods apt for promoting contemplation will never conflict with what is needed for ordinary virtuous actions. To support this construal, one might point out that virtually all virtuous actions concern natural goods in some way, so, by the standard, virtually all virtuous actions should promote contemplation. Even the virtues Kenny categorizes as passions-directed involve managing natural goods: courage defends them; temperance takes pleasure in them; and mildness directs anger at threats to them. This modified view combines the standard's restriction to actions concerning natural goods with the new claim that all actions concern natural goods. This renders the restriction to natural goods vacuous and ends up similar to the Unrestricted Reading, which denies that the standard is restricted to natural goods in any way. Let us call this

modified view the Vacuous Restriction Reading.[16]

Still, the Vacuous Restriction Reading raises questions, and, because of its similarity to the Unrestricted Reading, faces problems like those the Unrestricted Reading will face. If the restriction to natural goods ends up being vacuous, why does Aristotle include it? Though natural goods are needed in the right quantity for happiness (1153b14–26), there is no textual indication that *all* virtuous actions are concerned with their acquisition or management. Virtue as such is a mean between excess and deficiency, but in the earlier books of the *EE*, this mean was not specific to the management of natural goods. Likewise, in the earlier passages that introduce the notion of a standard (cited below), Aristotle never indicates that the standard only applies, even vacuously, to natural goods. Why is the standard in *EE* 8.3 qualified in this way? I argue in section V, below, for an answer that is available to the Unqualified Reading but not to the Vacuous Restriction Reading. So, the Vacuous Restriction Reading owes an explanation for why the standard is formulated in a roundabout way in terms of natural goods, when its effect is to direct all of our virtuous actions toward contemplation.

IV.

The Unrestricted Reading takes the standard to guide all virtuous actions, not just a subset of them. If the standard is completely unrestricted in scope, then all virtuous actions, in order to count as virtuous, must, in some way, promote contemplation.[17] This introduces a new, essential feature of virtue—that the mean, as such, is determined by the

[16] Buddensiek, 'Contemplation', 117–123 may be understood as defending a version of this view. Cf. Broadie, *Ethics with Aristotle*, 385; Buddensiek, *Theorie*, 252–4.
[17] Though the Unrestricted Reading may also hold that all actions are concerned with natural goods, as the Vacuous Restriction Reading does, this commitment is not necessary for the Unrestricted Reading and plays no role in its defense.

standard of promoting contemplation. The Unrestricted Reading faces a serious problem: the text of *EE* 8.3 is clear that the standard given is a standard for actions concerning natural goods. It repeats this qualification and even twice lists examples of these natural goods. How can the standard be thought to apply directly to all virtuous actions, when its presentation is repeatedly restricted to actions acquiring or managing natural goods?

Defenders of the Unrestricted Reading often position the standard in *EE* 8.3 as fulfilling promises made earlier in the treatise to specify a standard to determine virtue's mean.[18] Two passages from earlier in the *Eudemian Ethics* anticipate the standard of *EE* 8.3. The first forms part of a longer conditional sentence summarizing features of ethical virtue established throughout Aristotle's general discussion of virtue in *EE* 2.1–5:

> We have grasped the division of states corresponding to the various affections, both of those that are excesses and deficiencies, and of the states opposed to these by which people are in accord with the correct reason—what the correct reason is, and what standard we should look to in stating the mean, must be examined later. (1222b5–9)

The other begins the second common book at *EE* 5.1, which introduces the treatment of the intellectual virtues, anticipating their role in expanding the earlier account of virtue as

[18] Devereux ('*Theoria*'), Reeve (*Essay*, 134–140), and Tuozzo ('Standard', 143) all take the standard in *EE* 8.3 not to be limited to actions concerning natural goods, and they all following the general strategy outlined in this section. They disagree about how the standard guides actions. Tuozzo thinks that the prescription for actions concerning natural goods, together with the prescription to minimize perception of the nonrational part of the soul (1249b23–25) together 'dictate, in particular cases, actions and feelings appropriate to one another.' These two formulations cover, respectively, the outward- and inward-facing aspects of moral virtue. Devereux and Reeve deny that the standard applies to particular cases, taking it to guide the choice of a career or to illustrate the structure of practical reason in general, respectively.

a mean, specifically in accordance with the correct reason and its standard:

> In all the states discussed, just as in other matters, there is some mark (σκοπός) at which the person with reason looks as he tightens and loosens, and there is some standard (ὅρος) of the mean states, which we say lie between excess and deficiency, being in accordance with the correct reason. Now this claim is true, but not at all clear. For in other concerns governed by knowledge this is true to say, that one ought to work and to ease off neither too much nor too little, but moderately and as the correct reason says. But assuming that this is all one has, one would be none the wiser, for instance, about how to treat the body if one were to say, 'what medicine and the doctor order.' That is why when it comes to the states of the soul this claim, though true, is not enough, but we must also determine what the correct reason is and what its standard is.[19] (1138b21–34)

Both passages describe states of virtue as lying in a mean between excess and deficiency, relative to correct reason and a standard that helps determine the mean. Moreover, both passages are about virtue in general; neither limits itself to acquiring natural goods.

Like these two passages, *EE* 8.3, 1249a23–1249b7 (quoted above) describes a mean between excess and deficiency, relative to reason and a standard. Furthermore, like the *EE* 5.1 passage, the *EE* 8.3 passage compares the virtuous agent's reasons with the doctor's but rejects the verbal formula 'as reason says' as adequate for determining the mean, because while true, it is not clear.[20] Since these earlier passages anticipate a

---

[19] Text for the common books from I. Bywater (ed.), *Aristotelis Ethica Nicomachea* (Oxford, 1894). On translating ὅρος here, see Devereux, '*Theoria*'.

[20] The method of moving from what is true but unclear to what is true and clear is introduced in *EE* 1.6 and invoked at *EE* 1.7 and 2.1 but is absent from the books unique to the *EN*.

standard for virtue in general, not just for actions that concern natural goods, if the standard in *EE* 8.3 answers the earlier passages' forward references, it would guide all virtuous actions, not just those that concern natural goods.

Yet resting the Unrestricted Reading's case on the textual parallels is tenuous because the parallels are inexact. In *EE* 8.3 the standard is specifically for 'actions and choices of things by nature good but not praiseworthy' and 'whatever choice or acquisition of natural goods […] whether of bodily goods, property, friends, or other goods.' Yet the *EE* 2.5 and 5.1 passages give no indication that the standard for virtue as such was one that would be limited to or articulated in terms of choices of natural goods.[21] It may be tempting to redescribe the specification of natural goods in *EE* 8.3 as a matter of emphasis, not restriction.[22] But *EE* 8.3 does not give a standard for virtue in general and then subsequently emphasize its application for natural goods; the only standard given in the chapter is repeatedly qualified to be about natural goods. What the Unrestricted Reading needs to explain is why Aristotle states the restriction only in *EE* 8.3 twice and with examples, if the standard has no restriction.

In fact, there are alternative explanations available for this discrepancy between *EE* 2.5/5.1 and 8.3 that would cut against the Unrestricted Reading. Some readers think that Aristotle answers his promise for a standard from *EE* 5.1 later in the book when he presents his account of practical wisdom.[23] If this is so, then the question of virtue's

---

[21] See, e.g., Rowe, *Study*, 110 and Broadie, *Ethics with Aristotle*, 375.
[22] See Devereux, '*Theoria*', 187 and Reeve, *Essay*, 139.
[23] For instance, S. Peterson, '*Horos* (Limit) in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics' ['*Horos*'], *Phronesis* 33.3 (1988), 233–250 holds that the promised standard in *EN* 6.1(=*EE* 5.1) cannot be informatively described in advance of a particular situation. So, the general account of *phronêsis* in *EN* 6 is all that it is possible to say about that boundary absent a

standard has been answered long before—and without the help of—*EE* 8.3. So whatever the scope of the standard in *EE* 8.3, it does not answer any need to clarify the standard for virtue in general but only virtue's relation to natural goods, as the Restrictive Readings of the standard suggest. Another possibility is that Aristotle countenances multiple standards, each for a different domain of virtuous actions. In *Protrepticus* (*Protr.*) 10, the politician is said to have certain standards (τινὰς ὅρους) with reference to which they judge what is just, what is fine, and what is beneficial (55.1–3).[24] Reading *EE* 2.5 and 5.1 in light of *Protr.* 10, one might think that Aristotle implicitly countenances a number of standards of virtue, each for a different domain of action, and *EE* 8.3 gives a standard only for the domain of action concerning natural goods. I raise these alternatives not to endorse them but to illustrate why the textual parallel from *EE* 2.5 and 5.1 to 8.3 is, by itself, inconclusive if not inadequate support for the Unrestricted Reading.

Defenders of the Unrestricted Reading have also sought support from subsequent formulations, which omit the restriction to natural goods:

> Therefore, whatever choice or acquisition of natural goods will most promote the contemplation of god—whether of bodily goods, property, friends, or the other goods—this is best, and this standard is finest. And whatever, through deficiency or excess, impedes serving and contemplating god is base. This holds for the soul, and this standard of the soul is best: that one be least aware of the other part of the

---

particular case. (Despite reading *EN* 6.1 this way, Peterson favors Kenny's reading of the *EE* 8.3 standard but sees its attempted codification as inadequate, a fault of the *EE*.)

[24] From Iamblichus, following the pagination of H. Pistelli (ed.), *Iamblichi Protrepticus* (Leipzig, 1888; repr. Stuttgart, 1967). On the basis of the cited passage, Walker (*Uses*, 150) holds that practical reasoning makes use of a number of different standards, each for a different domain of action.

soul, as such.[25] (1249b18–25)

In addition to a standard that demands the use of natural goods to promote contemplation, the passage also condemns whatever prevents the service (θεραπεύειν) and contemplation of god and includes a second standard, of the soul, to be minimally aware of the non-rational part of the soul as such. Some commentators place weight on the formula against preventing contemplation and service to god, because serving or attending to god might require actions expressing ethical virtue, not just contemplation.[26] However, this formula only says what counts as base—it does not prescribe the pursuit of its opposite.

What about the last sentence's prescription, that one be least aware of the other (or non-rational, if one adopts Fritzsche's emendation) part of the soul, as such? This is not formulated specifically in reference to natural goods. It is unclear what exactly the other (or non-rational) part of the soul refers to—whether, for instance, it refers to the vegetative part or to the part that naturally obeys reason's commands (which, for short, I call the subject part).[27] Perhaps this means that one should allow the soul's rational part to contemplate, unencumbered by concern for nutrition and digestion, or perhaps it means we should avoid having the subject part act irrationally in disobeying the rational part. But neither construal would seem to offer the kind of clear practical guidance that would mark a distinct improvement on 'as reason says to do'. How much, after all, is it possible

[25] See section VII for notes on how I take the text here.
[26] See Kenny, *Perfect Life*, 102, who notes a parallel to Plato's *Euthyphro*.
[27] Either might be thought of as the 'other' part of the soul by taking the part that it is other than to be either the commanding part or the reason-involving part that includes both the commanding and the subject parts. If one adopts Fritzsche's emendation, both the vegetative and the subject parts are described as non-rational (ἄλογον, 1219b33; b38–39; 1221b31), though the subject part has a share in reason (τὰ λόγου μετέχοντα, 1219b30; cf. 1219b40–1220a3).

to minimize the other psychic activities? Might one, for instance, neglect one's health to do so?[28] Furthermore, minimizing obstacles to contemplation is, strictly speaking, a separate act from undertaking contemplation. Minimizing obstacles to contemplation might, after all, be followed by inactivity or dreamless sleep. And the question that troubled the Vacuous Restriction Reading remains for the Unrestricted Reading: why does Aristotle not just say in the first standard to promote contemplation in all actions, not only in those concerning natural goods? So, the alternate formulations at 1249b21–25 do not seem to be meaningfully more informative than the statements at 1249b4–7 or 1249b18–21. And if the original standard should be understood according to the Unrestricted Reading, its apparent restriction to natural goods—a feature which sets *EE* 8.3 apart from *EE* 2.5 and 5.1—must still be explained.

V.

I propose a different kind of defense of the Unrestricted Reading. I concede that the explicit textual statements of the standard imply that Aristotle is thinking specifically about natural goods. Still, I think there are two considerations that strongly favor taking Aristotle's point to apply to virtue in general and not just to those actions concerning natural goods. I present the first consideration in sections V–VI and turn to the second in section VII. The first consideration is the dialectical context of the standard, which explains why Aristotle's specific interest in natural goods is actually part of a broader

[28] For instance, Peterson, '*Horos*', 249: 'The phrase 'as little as possible' invites the question, "And exactly how little is that?" It thus seems to be no helpful advance to the question, "What is the limit?"' I take part of Peterson's point here to be that on a certain reading, this formulation of the standard could be too demanding, requiring the self-abnegation of ordinary human activities for contemplation's sake.

account of virtue in general.[29] Commentators often treat the presentation of the standard as the beginning of a new discussion after the conclusion of Aristotle's criticism of the political disposition attributed to the Spartans.[30] However, it is precisely because Spartan virtue wrongly aims at natural goods that the standard is presented as a corrective for actions and choices concerning natural goods. Taking the standard out of its argumentative context is what causes the interpretive difficulties discussed above. Aristotle is not just stipulating how natural goods should be used; he is showing how a mistaken account of virtue should be corrected. Aristotle's own view is the corrected account of virtue. This comports with the Unrestricted Reading.

Commentators have focused on the phrase 'things by nature good but not praiseworthy' (1249b1), as a way of delimiting the standard's scope. However, Aristotle's earlier criticism of the Spartans supports an overlooked explanation for why he is interested specifically in a standard for unpraiseworthy natural goods. There is a connection between two claims: first, natural goods are fine whenever they are managed and acquired for the sake of a fine aim (1249a6–7), like virtue or virtuous action; second, those with the Spartan disposition do fine things only accidentally (1249a14–16).[31] Doing

---

[29] Here I am using 'dialectical' to mean responding to an argumentative opponent—not relating to the ancient practice or philosophical method of dialectic.

[30] For short, I call this 'Spartan virtue', even though the civic disposition (ἕξις πολιτική) in question is not, in my view, genuine virtue, and the Spartans are but one group to whom Aristotle attributes this disposition.

[31] The literature disagrees about how exactly the Spartans err and whether their error makes them unhappy. See J. Whiting, 'Self-Love and Authoritative Virtue: Prolegomenon to a Kantian Reading of *Eudemian Ethics* VIII 3' ['Self-Love'], *Aristotle, Kant, and the Stoics: Rethinking Happiness and Duty* (Cambridge, 1996), 162–199; R. Barney, 'Comments on Sarah Broadie "Virtue and Beyond in Plato and Aristotle"', *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 43 suppl. (2005), 115–125; S. Broadie, 'The Good, the Noble, and the Theoretical in *Eudemian Ethics* VIII.3' ['The Good'], in J. Cottingham, and P.M.S. Hacker (eds.), *Mind, Method, and Morality: Essays in Honour of Anthony*

some action that is accidentally fine or accidentally virtuous means that the agent's aim was not a fine or virtuous thing, but the action turned out to be virtuous (or sufficiently like a virtuous action) due to coincidence. Since Spartans characteristically do fine actions for the sake of an aim that is not fine, natural goods are not fine for them. Since what is fine is explained in terms of what is praiseworthy (1248b20–21), natural goods are not fine nor praiseworthy for those with Spartan virtue. So, the phrase 'things by nature good but not praiseworthy' picks out exactly the Spartans' natural goods.

The fact that the Spartans are the ones who have unpraiseworthy natural goods is especially salient because for those with Spartan virtue, natural goods play a specific role. Spartan virtue is introduced and described primarily by its aim. In characterizing Spartan virtue, Aristotle says, 'For though they think they should have virtue, it is for the sake of natural goods' (1248b40–41). Since natural goods are unpraiseworthy for the Spartans, the Spartans think they should have virtue for the sake of what turn out to be 'things by nature good but not praiseworthy'. Because Spartan virtue aims at unpraiseworthy natural goods, actions and choices concerning unpraiseworthy natural goods have a kind of special, final status for someone with Spartan virtue. For such an agent, learning that natural goods should actually promote contemplation would change which actions are the best, most final actions. If the actions that pursue natural goods cannot be regarded as the most final, but are only really good for bringing about contemplation, then one should have virtue for the sake of contemplation, not natural goods.

Kenny (Oxford, 2010), 3–25; T. Irwin, 'The Wild and the Good' ['Wild'], in by G. Di Basilio (ed.), *Investigating*, 188–206; and Wolt, '*Phronêsis*'. Since I think that the standard in *EE* 8.3 is a corrective to Spartan virtue, and the standard specifically applies to 'actions and choices', my view is that the Spartans at least in some cases act and choose wrongly, as a genuinely virtuous person would not.

The argumentative context of *EE* 8.3, then, suggests a specific purpose of the standard for unpraiseworthy natural goods. The phrase 'actions and choices of things by nature good but not praiseworthy' does not function restrictively, to delimit the scope of the standard. Rather, it functions dialectically, to target and correct Spartan virtue by providing a new final aim. In Spartan virtue, actions that manage and acquire natural goods may be the most choiceworthy and final actions, but these final actions also structure and organize the less final actions that contribute to the result they aim to achieve. Many actions may not directly contribute to the acquisition of natural goods, but they may prepare the way for the other actions that acquire natural goods later on. These preparatory actions will vary in their extent, duration, and expected outcome, as a function of what final aim they support. For instance, courage for the sake of natural goods might seek out confrontation to achieve honor or plunder, while courage for the sake of contemplation might be satisfied with quelling aggressive threats and then turning from war to leisure.[32] So, correcting the aim of Spartan virtue has downstream consequences for a fuller range of actions, too.

Aristotle's point then is not just that Spartan virtue is defective; his criticism indicates how it can be corrected. And this correction indicates a necessary condition of virtue which is a part of Aristotle's own considered view of virtue. The Spartans think that virtue is for the sake of natural goods. But virtue should really aim at what the natural goods should be used for, contemplation. So, adopting my dialectical interpretation of the phrases concerning natural goods in the second half of *EE* 8.3 gives the Unrestricted Reading an answer to its most pressing problem. Aristotle repeats that

[32] See also *Politics* (*Pol.*) 7.14, 1333b12–18.

the standard given in *EE* 8.3 applies to actions that acquire natural goods. But the standard is for the virtuous person's actions concerning what, *for the Spartans*, are good but not praiseworthy—the goods which Spartan virtue mistakes to be most final. Since the aim of Spartan virtue eventually affects many actions done from that disposition, by correcting its central mistake, its aim, the standard in fact guides virtuous actions in general, not only some limited sphere of actions. So, Aristotle's interest in *EE* 8.3 is not primarily in how to use natural goods, but to show that those who value them too much neglect the proper aim of both natural goods and of virtue, contemplation.

VI.

After Aristotle concludes (οὖν) that *kalokagathia* is complete virtue (1249a16–17), he turns to the topic of pleasure (1249a18–22), before introducing the standard at 1249a23. Pleasure does not seem connected either to Spartan virtue or to the standard. So why not think that Aristotle is turning to another topic? If Aristotle turns to a different topic after his discussion of the Spartans before the standard, then perhaps the chapter is not as unified as my dialectical interpretation would suppose.[33] On the contrary, I maintain that even if Aristotle has different argumentative targets in the chapter, they are unified by his overarching interest in genuine virtue's effects and requirements. This aim is apparent in light of two often overlooked pieces of contextual information. The first is the contested meaning of the terms *kalokagathia* and *kalos k'agathos* (its adjective form); the second is virtue's role in harmonizing different evaluative categories. In short, Aristotle's focus on *kalokagathia* anticipates the protreptic consequence of his account of

[33] Many readers (e.g., Broadie, 'The Good', 4) have seen the chapter instead as divided into two separate, only loosely related parts. I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for pressing this point.

virtue by situating his account of virtue's standard within a broader discourse about the kind of life one's education should prepare one to lead. This life of virtue he is describing really is happy because it unifies the good, the fine, and the pleasant. And the standard provides clear guidance for someone to achieve this kind of life.

By the time Aristotle is writing, the word *kalos k'agathos* had come to be a contested appellation.[34] Especially among sophists, the term is used to refer to an ideal of ethical cultivation or educational achievement, which would be the expected result of the course of study they offered. Plato attests to this usage. He makes Protagoras say, 'I consider myself to be such a person, uniquely qualified to assist others in becoming *kalon kai agathon*' (*Prt.* 328b1–3). Socrates, in the *Laches*, laments having no money to give to the sophists, 'who professed to be the only ones able to make me *kalon te k'agathon*' (186c3–4).[35] In the *Apology*, Socrates recalls asking Callias who can be 'sought and hired as a supervisor for [his] sons, who would make them *kalô te k'agathô* in respect of their proper virtue' (20a8–b2). Callias answers Evenus, who, like the other sophists named—Gorgias, Prodicus, and Hippias—purports to teach this for a fee. In these passages, a

[34] The term has both a social sense, indicating aristocratic status, and an evaluative sense, denoting a kind of ethical ideal, someone who is well brought up or who has achieved noble feats. Though the social and evaluative meanings are related, it is the evaluative sense which is contested here. My discussion has benefitted from the study of F. Bourriot, *Kalos Kagathos - Kalokagathia: D'un Terme de Propagande de Sophistes à Une Notion Sociale et Philosophique; Étude d'histoire Athénienne* (Hildesheim, 1995). My argument in this section does not, however, rely on Bourriot's controversial account of the term's Spartan origin; cf. P. Davies, '"Kalos Kagathos" and Scholarly Perceptions of Spartan Society', *Historia: Zeitschrift Für Alte Geschichte*, 62.3 (2013), 259–279.

[35] Translations modified from J.M. Cooper and D.S. Hutchinson (eds.), *Plato: Complete Works* (Indianapolis, 1997). Sometimes Plato does not use the term in reference to sophists, e.g., *Tht.* 142b7; *Rep*. 405a7, but even in these cases, the term picks out an ethical and educational ideal that is what the sophists would promise to teach. See also Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.6.13, Aristophanes, *Nub*. 101, and Isocrates, *Antid*. 220.

kalos k'agathos is one who has attained an ideal of cultivation and education in virtue, which sophists especially promised to their students.

The term was also used by proponents of competing programs of education to elevate their vision of the ethical ideal. Specifically, Athenian admirers of Sparta's military success and power regarded its rigorous, state-mandated education and training program as key to its political success, regularly transforming youths into exemplars of virtue, especially, courage. The Spartans' reputation for courage on the battlefield is often thought to be a credit to the training system that produced them. According to Thucydides, after hearing of the Spartan surrender at Sphacteria, an Athenian ally taunted his Spartan captive, asking him whether the Spartans who had died in battle had been their *kaloi k'agathoi* (Thuc. 4.40). The sneer plays on Sparta's reputation for forming courageous warriors, now embarrassed by the surrender. More explicitly, Xenophon praises Sparta for exceeding all other cities in virtue, being the only one to make the teaching and cultivation of virtue and *kalokagathia* a public responsibility (*Lac.* 10.1–4, cf. *Mem*. 3.5.15). And Isocrates criticizes the Spartans for committing injustices that belie the virtue of a *kalos k'agathos* (*Panath.* 183). Thus, the question of whether the Spartans are exceptional with regard to virtue was both contested and related to the discourse about what kind of an education it would take to produce a *kalos k'agathos*. When Aristotle weighs in on *kalokagathia* in *EE* 8.3, he invokes this usage of the term in inquiring about what the ethical ideal requires and whether the Spartans, who are sometimes praised in this discourse, really are worthy of the title.[36]

[36] *Pol.* 7.14 describes a group of Laconophiles with whom Aristotle disagrees: 'Thibron and all the other writers' praise the Spartan lawgiver for the training that enabled their power (1333b18–21). Thibron's work is unknown, but Xenophon would belong here.

Furthermore, when Aristotle calls the standard of promoting the most contemplation the standard of *kalokagathia* (1249b26), he is positioning his own ethical ideal within the discourse. By denying that the Spartans are *kaloi k'agathoi* (1249a1–2), he is contrasting his own virtuous ideal with their civic disposition. He is also anticipating a contrast between his ideal and any non-contemplative ethical ideal—not only that of the Spartans but also that of sophists who promised to teach *kalokagathia*. For instance, Callicles, in the *Gorgias*, discourages excessive philosophizing: 'For even if one is naturally well favored but engages in philosophy far beyond that appropriate time of life, he will necessarily become inexperienced in everything that someone who is to be *kalos k'agathos* and well regarded needs to be experienced in' (484c8–d2). Isocrates holds that study should be limited if it is not useful (see especially *Antid.*, 261–269). By denying contemplation's value, they make the same mistake the Spartans do. Aristotle's use of the term *kalos k'agathos*, then, draws out the protreptic implication of his account of virtue's standard, specifically against Spartan virtue, but also against the wider backdrop of this discourse, which is dismissive of contemplation. Yet if virtue turns out to aim at contemplation, then someone aspiring to *kalokagathia* should indeed turn their life toward philosophy. This protreptic upshot, largely absent through the preceding Eudemian account of virtue, turns out now to be a necessary part of it.

The second contextual point to note is that the good person (ἀγαθός) described in *EE* 8.3 is someone Aristotle has introduced before. In *EE* 8.3, the good person is someone for whom natural goods are good (1248b27–28). But natural goods can be harmful for some people because of their dispositions, if, for instance, they are foolish or unjust, just as the diet of a healthy person would be harmful to someone who is sick

(1248b32–34). In *EE* 7.2, Aristotle distinguishes things good without qualification (ἁπλῶς) from things that are good for some particular person (τινί) given their particular circumstance or condition (1235b31–36). Though what is good without qualification is good for anyone in a standard or good condition, what is good for a particular person might differ if they are in a defective condition. *EE* 7.2 gives an example like that of *EE* 8.3: some medical intervention might be good for someone who is sick but not someone who is healthy.[37] Though the unqualified and the particular good can come apart, 'they should harmonize, and this is what virtue brings about' (1237a2). So, both in *EE* 7.2 and 8.3, the things that are good by nature or good without qualification are harmful for some but beneficial to the virtuous.[38] The Greek word for virtue, ἀρετή, has no cognate adjectival form; Aristotle often uses good (ἀγαθός) and excellent (σπουδαῖος) to describe someone who is virtuous, and this is how we should take good person in *EE* 8.3.[39]

These two points help make sense of the argumentative arc of *EE* 8.3. The chapter begins by recalling the preceding discussions of the particular virtues and then considering the virtue that arises from them, *kalokagathia*.[40] From even the term's

---

[37] As the example of the body shows, good ἁπλῶς and good τινί are both relatives; they differ in being related to different objects—one to a standard, good, or healthy one, the other to a defective one. Though this example illustrates what is the good and pleasant for the body, the situation for the soul is similar (1236a1–2).

[38] At *EE* 7.2, 1237a4–5, Aristotle identifies natural goods as goods without qualification.

[39] The good person of *EE* 8.3 is sometimes thought to fall short of genuine virtue because they are contrasted with the *kalos k'agathos* and because the Spartans are called good. I reject both these claims below for relying on unsupported emendations. Further, since *EE* 7.2 does not indicate that it is describing someone whose goodness falls short in any way, it would be surprising if in *EE* 8.3, someone with a matching description, and who is also called ἀγαθός now turns out to be so called only in a secondary or incomplete sense.

[40] Perhaps ἐκαλοῦμεν ἤδη (1248b11–12) indicates that Aristotle had discussed *kalokagathia* already in a part of the common books since revised, but the discussion may also have been oral or belonged to another work. For instance, in *Protr.* 53.1, the term appears at the end of a discussion distinguishing necessities and joint causes (συναίτια)

common usage, it should be clear that whoever merits this appellation must have the particular virtues. Aristotle then distinguishes things that are fine from things that are good. Fine things are goods that are, furthermore, choiceworthy for their own sake and praiseworthy in themselves (1248b19–21). He uses this distinction in goods to distinguish between two ways people may be described: being good and being *kalos k'agathos*. He describes a good person in terms of benefitting from good things and a *kalos k'agathos* in terms of having fine things and doing fine actions for their own sakes. While the account of the good person is familiar from *EE* 7.2, the account of the *kalos k'agathos* is new, yet it is formulated in such a way that should be broadly acceptable to proponents of a range of different, competing ethical ideals. A *kalos k'agathos* has and does intrinsically choiceworthy, praiseworthy, good things. There may be disagreement about what things are good, choiceworthy, and praiseworthy, but neither sophist nor Laconophile would dispute the claim that someone they call *kalos k'agathos* would have and do choiceworthy, praiseworthy, good things.

Aristotle's aim, then, is to show that even on a neutral account of *kalokagathia*, the good, virtuous person described at length in the *Eudemian Ethics* is the one who deserves that title. This is not a trivial or question-begging conclusion, because, as Aristotle notes, the good and the *kalon k'agathon* are different properties: they differ not only in name but also in themselves (1248b17–19). Because these characteristics are explicated in terms of different types of goods, if these types of goods bear no essential

---

from goods in the proper sense (ἀγαθὰ κυρίως) but is not otherwise explicated. In any case, *EE* 8.3 gives no reason to think that Aristotle is remembering a regimented or technical usage of the term. Sophists, Spartans, and Laconophiles, too, would claim that their ethical ideal embodies the whole of (what they think is) virtue.

relation to one another, then it could turn out that the good person and the *kalos k'agathos* also bear no essential relation to one another.

Addressing the Laconophiles, Aristotle considers whether the sometimes-esteemed Spartans might be worthy of the title. They are not, because they mistakenly regard virtue as being for the sake of natural goods: 'For this reason, they are fierce men, for while they have natural goods, they do not have *kalokagathia*' (1249a1–2).[41] The Spartans lack *kalokagathia* because they only do fine actions coincidentally—a result of instrumentalizing virtue for the sake of natural goods (1249a14–16)—while the *kalos k'agathos* does fine actions for their own sake. Though natural goods are not fine for the Spartans (as argued in section V), they are fine for the *kalos k'agathos*, who, characteristically, does and has fine things. At 1248b37–38, these fine things were virtuous actions and virtues, but now they include natural goods, too.

At 1249a8–11, Aristotle explains why (γάρ) natural goods are fine possessions for

[41] Following Irwin, 'Wild', I reject the commonly accepted emendation of ἀγαθοί at 1249a1 for the ἄγριοι of PCBL, along with Solomon's second ἀγαθά at 1249a2 (which Rowe rejects), and Spengel's <καλῷ κ> at 1249a13 (which Rowe accepts); the latter two emendations, especially the last, help make sense of the first. Such extensive emendations are only acceptable if the MSS text makes no sense without them. Yet Irwin shows that there is a coherent argument without the emendations if we understand Aristotle to identify the *agathos* with the *kalos k'agathos* at 1249a13–14, instead of distinguishing them all the way through, as many readers think. The great advantage of Irwin's reading is that it makes sense of the text without adopting these several unsupported, meaning-changing emendations. It also makes Aristotle's treatment of the Spartans consistent between *EE* 8.3 and *Pol.* 2.9 and 7.14–15. For a challenge to Irwin's reading, see C. Bobonich, 'The Good or the Wild at Aristotle *Eudemian Ethics* 8.3?', *Classical Philology* 118.2 (2023), 172–193. My interpretation expands on Irwin's result by identifying the *agathos* from *EE* 8.3 with the good person from *EE* 7.2, and by drawing on historical context to explain why it fits Aristotle's dialectical aim to identify the *agathos* with the *kalos k'agathos* after initially distinguishing them. Additionally, I take the argument from justice at 1249a7–10 to support indirectly the identification of the good and *kalos k'agathos*. I take it to be further confirmation for this reading that it can unify the first half of the chapter (1248b9–1249a17) with the second half (see below).

the *kalos k'agathos*. Natural goods are fine when the aim for which they are managed or acquired is fine. Being a virtue, justice is fine, and justice requires a distribution of natural goods in accordance with worth. The *kalos k'agathos* is worthy of these goods, so simply by being possessed, natural goods would serve a fine aim (i.e., a just distribution of natural goods) making these goods themselves also fine.

However, the same argument from justice also shows that natural goods are fine for the good person. The good person, too, does many fine actions on their own account (1249a14).[42] Because the good person is virtuous, they are also just, and since they are virtuous, they are also worthy of having goods (1131a24–29). Their possession, then, of natural goods also helps to fulfill the distribution required by justice, making natural goods fine for them as well (1249a13). So, for the good person, as for the *kalos k'agathos*, the beneficial things and the fine things are the same. The explanation for this is that the good person does many fine actions. Since the *kalos k'agathos* is first described in terms of having and doing fine things, this makes the good person the true *kalos k'agathos*. Spartans, though described by their admirers as *kaloi k'agathoi*, turn out not to be because they do fine things coincidentally—a result of the kind of virtue they are taught. When Aristotle concludes that *kalokagathia* is complete virtue, he ties *kalokagathia* to the language from the *EE* 2.1 function argument, which identified the highest good as the activity of complete virtue over a complete life (1219a39–40). Aristotle is taking the title to which Laconophiles and sophists alike lay claim and

[42] I take the subject of ἔπραξεν to be the unemended ἀγαθῷ at a13. Aristotle is entitled to claim that the good person does fine actions because the good person is one for whom natural goods are good (1248b27–28) and *EE* 7.2 has already established that virtue, which is fine, is what makes goods without qualification good for them (1237a2).

showing that it really belongs to the one who lives by the account developed in the *EE*.

Next, Aristotle pivots to consider pleasure. The short section that follows (1249a18–22) reminds the reader that what is good without qualification is also pleasant and that what is pleasant without qualification is also fine. In fact, it was in *EE* 7.2 that Aristotle also argued that what is good without qualification is also pleasant without qualification (1235b33), and that what is fine is pleasant (1237a6–7). These claims about pleasure and the fine were a part of Aristotle's account of the agent for whom goods without qualification were also good, i.e., the good person.[43] So, after declaring the good person to be the deserving recipient of the title *kalos k'agathos*, Aristotle adds what he previously established: that what is good and fine for the good person is also pleasant.

The convergence of the good, fine, and pleasant recalls the beginning of *EE* 1.1. Aristotle disagrees with the gateway inscription at Delos, which assigns the categories of best, finest, and most pleasant to different objects: 'For happiness, being the finest and best of all things, is the most pleasant' (1214a1–7). The argument for the convergence of these three evaluative categories—good, fine, and pleasant—is one of the overarching projects of the *Eudemian Ethics*.[44] The fact that these categories converge for the good

---

[43] The claim that pleasure arises only in action points back to the conclusion from *EE* 6.12 that pleasure is unimpeded natural activity (1153a14). Though *EE* 6.12 supports the claim that a happy life is pleasant (1153b14–15), the inference at 1249a20 that happiness is *most* pleasant is difficult (cf. G. Bonasio, 'The Pleasure Thesis in the *Eudemian Ethics*', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 60.4, (2022), 521–536).

[44] Aristotle's opening programmatic claim is not just the positive claim that the good is also fine, and pleasant, but the stronger, superlative claim that the best, finest, and most pleasant converge in happiness. Though the chapter, up to 1249a20, seems to focus on the convergence of the three evaluations, there are textual clues that the chapter's next aim is to vindicate the stronger, superlative claim (e.g., the truly happy person lives most pleasantly, 1249a20–21; the standard of promoting contemplation is finest, 1249b21; the standard of being aware of the non-rational part least is best, 1249b24). However, if Aristotle has an argument for the stronger, superlative claim, it is not straightforward.

person is a further sign that the good person really is in fact happy and achieves the ethical ideal—unlike the Spartan, for whom natural goods are not fine.

The section on pleasure, then, does not turn the reader's interest away from the foregoing account of *kalokagathia* but rather unites the account of the good person, now shown also to be *kalos k'agathos*, with previously established claims about the relation between the good, the pleasant, and the fine. As previously established, the convergence of the good, fine, and pleasant depends on virtue. Virtue not only enables one to benefit from unqualified goods and enjoy fine things as such but also makes one eligible to take pleasure in what is pleasant without qualification. After all, the unqualified pleasures of acting virtuously are available only to someone who is virtuous (1237a27–28). Virtue's role in the convergence of evaluative categories that the good person achieves makes it important to determine what virtue really is, and in particular, what genuine virtue requires that Spartan virtue lacks: the aim given by the standard. So, Aristotle presents his own account of the standard as a correction to the Spartan conception of virtue. The Spartans think that virtue is for the sake of natural goods, but the actions and choices that pursue what they think virtue's end is should really serve the aim of promoting contemplation, and what counts as virtue's mean must be readjusted accordingly.

The chapter's parts, then, are all united in their interest in the genuinely virtuous, good person. There is a consistent line of thought that moves from identifying *kalokagathia* as the complete virtue of the good person, to the good person's relation to the pleasant and the fine, to the standard for the virtuous, good person. Perhaps Aristotle could have started the chapter from 1249a23, omitting the discussion of *kalokagathia*, the Spartans, and pleasure. But then the chapter would only be about a final necessary

condition of virtue, not about the ethical ideal that someone with genuine virtue achieves, and it would not reappropriate a term often used to describe non-contemplative ethical ideals for use to elevate Aristotle's own contemplative ethical ideal. The contrast with the Spartan draws out the significance of this necessary condition of virtue: it entails an ideal that requires reorienting one's life toward philosophical contemplation.

VII.

After prospectively describing the standard for the genuinely virtuous person's dealing with the goods that the Spartans regarded as virtue's aim from 1249a23–b7, Aristotle then gives an argument, from 1249b7–25 to identify and justify it. Some aspects of the argument's text and interpretation are contested, but the argument's core inference is fortunately clear. And this central inference is my second consideration in favor of—and the clearest statement of—the Unrestricted Reading. The argument arrives at its conclusion that the standard requires promoting contemplation from a premise that describes the contemplation of god as the aim of practical wisdom (*phronêsis*). It is because, properly speaking, practical wisdom issues commands for the sake of god that the standard promotes the contemplation of god. Because the argument's key premises contain no restriction to any class of goods, the conclusion that is licensed from the argument should contain no such restriction as well.

Here is the argument:

> [1] δεῖ δὴ ὥσπερ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις πρὸς τὸ ἄρχον ζῆν, καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἕξιν καὶ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τὴν τοῦ ἄρχοντος, οἷον δοῦλον πρὸς δεσπότου καὶ ἕκαστον πρὸς τὴν ἑκάστου καθήκουσαν ἀρχήν. ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ ἄνθρωπος φύσει συνέστηκεν ἐξ ἄρχοντος καὶ ἀρχομένου, καὶ ἕκαστον ἂν δέοι πρὸς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀρχὴν ζῆν [2]

αὕτη δὲ διττή· ἄλλως γὰρ ἡ ἰατρικὴ ἀρχὴ καὶ ἄλλως ἡ ὑγίεια· ταύτης δὲ ἕνεκα ἐκείνη· οὕτω δ’ ἔχει κατὰ τὸ θεωρητικόν. οὐ γὰρ ἐπιτακτικὸς ἄρχων ὁ θεός, ἀλλ’ οὗ ἕνεκα ἡ φρόνησις ἐπιτάττει. διττὸν δὲ τὸ οὗ ἕνεκα, διώρισται δ’ ἐν ἄλλοις, ἐπεὶ κεῖνός γε οὐθενὸς δεῖται. [3] ἥτις οὖν αἵρεσις καὶ κτῆσις τῶν φύσει ἀγαθῶν ποιήσει μάλιστα τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ θεωρίαν, ἢ σώματος ἢ χρημάτων ἢ φίλων ἢ τῶν ἄλλων ἀγαθῶν, αὕτη ἀρίστη, καὶ οὗτος ὁ ὅρος κάλλιστος· ἥτις δ’ ἢ δι’ ἔνδειαν ἢ δι’ ὑπερβολὴν κωλύει τὸν θεὸν θεραπεύειν καὶ θεωρεῖν, αὕτη δὲ φαύλη. ἔχει δὲ τοῦτο τῇ ψυχῇ, καὶ οὗτος τῆς ψυχῆς ὁ ὅρος ἄριστος, ἂν ἥκιστα αἰσθάνηται τοῦ ἄλλου μέρους τῆς ψυχῆς, ᾗ τοιοῦτον.

[1] Indeed it is necessary, just as in other things too, to live by (πρός) that which rules and by the state and the activity of that which rules, like a slave by their master, and each thing by its proper ruling principle (ἀρχήν). And again, since a human being is by nature composed of that which rules and that which is ruled, each part [or: person] would also have to live by its [their] own ruling principle. [2] There are two kinds. For the craft of medicine is a ruling principle in one way and health in another: the former is for the sake of the latter. This is true for the contemplative part (θεωρητικόν). For god is not a ruler who gives commands, but that for the sake of whom practical wisdom gives commands. And ‘that for the sake of which’ is double (the distinction has been made elsewhere), yet god is in need of nothing. [3] Therefore (οὖν), whatever choice or acquisition of natural goods will most promote the contemplation of god—whether of bodily goods, property, friends, or the other goods—this is best, and this standard is finest. And whatever, through deficiency or excess, impedes serving and contemplating god is

> base. This holds for the soul, and this standard of the soul is best: that one be least aware of the other part of the soul, as such.[45] (1249b7–25)

Interpretations of the passage have diverged on three questions. First, is it each part of the soul or each person who must live by the ruling principle in question?[46] If each part of the soul has a ruling principle, the passage gives two ruling principles, not just one. Second, does 'the contemplative part' refer to the rational part of the soul, or to the specifically scientific-rational part of the soul of *EE* 5 (ἐπιστημονικόν, 1139a12)?[47] Third, when Aristotle refers to god throughout the passage, does he refer to the external god of the universe, or does he mean the god within—the soul's contemplative capacity?[48]

Here is a summary that remains neutral about these disputes:

[1] Each person/part of the soul must live by their/its ruling principle.

[2] For the relevant person/part, living by their/its ruling principle requires practical wisdom to issue commands for the sake of god.

---

[45] Numbering added for ease of reference. I retain the place of the sentence διττὸν δὲ τὸ οὗ ἕνεκα, διώρισται δ᾽ ἐν ἄλλοις after φρόνησις ἐπιτάττει following the MSS, rather than after οὐθενὸς δεῖται as Rowe proposes. At b19, I read μάλιστα after ποιήσει, following PCB, rather than after θεοῦ, which Rowe prints, following L. At b23, I keep the MSS τῇ ψυχῇ, which Rowe's emends to ἡ ψυχή, and τῆς ψυχῆς at b24, which Rowe brackets.

[46] Broadie, 'The Good' and W.J. Verdenius, 'Human Reason and God in the *Eudemian Ethics*' ['Human Reason'], in P. Moraux and D. Harlfinger (eds.), *Untersuchungen Zur Eudemischen Ethik* (Berlin, 1971), 285–297 hold that there are two ruling principles, one for each part of the soul, while Kenny, *Aristotelian Ethics*, 174–178; Rowe, *Study*, 68–69; and M. Woods, *Aristotle:* Eudemian Ethics, *Books I, II, and VIII* [*Eudemian Ethics*], 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1992), 181 hold that the one ruling principle in question is for each person.

[47] Rowe, *Study*, 68–69 and Woods, *Eudemian Ethics*, 180–184 think the ruler is the rational part of the soul, subparts undistinguished. Kenny, *Aristotelian Ethics*, 174–178 and Verdenius, 'Human Reason' think the ruler is the scientific-rational part.

[48] F. Dirlmeier, *Aristoteles: Eudemische Ethik* (Berlin, 1962), ad loc. is the primary defender of internal-god reading. It has been criticized by Rowe, *Study*, 69; Woods, *Eudemian Ethics*, 183–184; Kenny, *Aristotelian Ethics*, 174–178; and Buddensiek, 'Contemplation', 114.

> [3] So, agents should live by the standard of promoting the most contemplation (in the appropriate domain).

Each step of the argument corresponds to the section of the passage above labeled with the same number. Though [3] is presented with an inferential particle (οὖν), it is not valid to infer from [1] and [2]. There is no reason [3], a conclusion about the standard of promoting contemplation should follow from [2], a claim about the aim of practical wisdom's commands, unless Aristotle implicitly assumes some connection like the following:

> [C] Practical wisdom's commands are issued for the sake of god only when the agent lives by the standard of promoting the most contemplation (in the appropriate domain).

This link between promoting contemplation and issuing commands for the sake of god should be acceptable to Aristotle whether one thinks that the references to god in the passage are to the internal, divine capacity for contemplation or to the external god of the universe. If god refers to the internal capacity for divine contemplation, practical wisdom would issue commands for the sake of god by issuing actions that prepare and allow the agent to engage in divine contemplative activity. If god refers to the external god of the universe, practical wisdom's commands would be for the sake of contemplation in a different sense. Plants and animals partake in the divine through reproduction, which allows them to be like god insofar as they are able, approximating divine eternity through the immortality of their species.[49] Human beings can be like god in a further respect,

---

[49] See *De Anima* 415a26–b7. This construal would likely take οὗ ἕνεκα as involving a sense of approximation. See, for instance, G.R. Lear, *Happy Lives and the Highest Good: An Essay on Aristotle's* Nicomachean Ethics (Princeton, 2004).

through human contemplation. So, practical wisdom might issue commands for the sake of god by selecting activities that allow one to approximate god's own contemplation.

With the addition of [C], the argument is straightforward. Agents should follow the standard of promoting contemplation in the appropriate domain because this standard is a necessary condition for practical wisdom to issue commands for the sake of god, which itself is necessary for living by the ruling principle, which every kind of living thing must do. The conclusion to abide by the standard of promoting contemplation follows from the premise that practical wisdom issues commands for the sake of god, which it does through promoting contemplation. This Aristotle calls the finest standard. Aristotle then draws a second conclusion from the same premises: whatever through excess or deficiency prevents the contemplation and service of god is base. This conclusion is supported by the same argument. If contemplation is a worthy goal, then what impedes it is bad.[50]

A final account of the standard follows from applying the formula for what is base that has just been given to the soul (1249b23).[51] Whatever impedes contemplation is base, and when it comes to the soul as a whole rather than just to the contemplative part,

---

[50] Rhetorically, however, by adding θεραπεύειν, Aristotle is making the new point that contemplation and actions that further it should be valued as religious observances because of the relation they bear to god. This is part of a broader project of appropriating the religious connotation of θεωρία for philosophy. See A.W. Nightingale, *Spectacles of Truth in Classical Greek Philosophy: Theoria in Its Cultural Context* (Cambridge, 2004).

[51] It seems that τοῦτο refers to the immediately preceding account of what is base. Aristotle is applying that account now to the soul (ἔχει [...] τῇ ψυχῇ) to yield a standard for the soul (τῆς ψυχῆς ὁ ὅρος). The first standard (b19–21) applies to the contemplative part and describes the aim of practical wisdom's commands, while this standard (b23–25) applies to the soul as such and describes the 'other' part as minimizing base obstacles to contemplation as a complement to the activity of the contemplative part. This suggestion makes sense of the sentence without Rowe's changes. Cf. Rowe, *Aristotelica*, 224–5.

what impedes contemplation is awareness of the other part of the soul, as such, so this should be minimized.[52] What is the other part of the soul, as such? Since the only part of the soul mentioned by name is the contemplative part, the 'other' part in question appears to be other-than-contemplative. Since some passions of the non-contemplative part of the soul are necessary for bringing about or realizing contemplation, the requirement cannot be to minimize all such perceptions. Rather, the minimand is awareness of the non-contemplative part, insofar as it is other-than-contemplative, that is, not supporting contemplation—say, by focusing on some distracting end, or by disobeying commands that bring contemplation about. So, taken together, the various formulations of the standards at the conclusion of the argument at 1249b18-25 enjoin the commanding part of the soul to issue commands that promote the contemplation of god, and the subject part to support contemplation by obeying these commands strictly and nothing else.

The core thought behind the argument as a whole is that the standard of promoting contemplation (in the appropriate domain) is underwritten by practical wisdom's aim. It is because practical wisdom orders for the sake of god that the standard requires promoting contemplation. This raises a difficulty for the Restrictive Readings. Practical wisdom is a capacity that accompanies all virtuous action as the correct reason that accompanies action (1144b23–24). If practical wisdom aims to promote contemplation, why should this aim find expression only in a domain of actions concerning the acquisition or disbursement of natural goods? Practical wisdom is the

[52]Aristotle describes thought and perception as competing movements such that the stronger can expel the weaker: for this reason people deep in thought (ἐννοῦντες) sometimes do not perceive what is before their eyes (*Sens.*, 447a14–16) and thought (διανοία) helps to drive illusory images out (*Insomn.*, 461a1). See E. Cagnoli Fiecconi, 'Aristotle on Attention', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 103.4 (2021), 602–633.

virtue of the part of the rational soul concerned with things that admit of being otherwise (1139a5–10), and there is no principled restriction of this part of the soul to a domain of actions concerning natural goods. Of course, many, if not all, of the actions practical wisdom prescribes may use, involve, or presuppose natural goods. But practical wisdom guides action as such, and if contemplating god is its aim, there is no reason to restrict the fulfillment of its aim to actions having to do with natural goods. So, even though Aristotle is addressing the status of natural goods in *EE* 8.3, the argument he provides for his conclusion is stronger than the immediate context demands. In context, Aristotle is explaining why a disposition that aims at procuring natural goods, such as the Spartans', should in fact aim at contemplation. But Aristotle secures this conclusion by arguing that the intellectual virtue that accompanies *all* actions aims at contemplation.

In the *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle is more permissive in using the word *phronêsis* frequently outside of its technical meaning as practical wisdom.[53] However, even in the books unique to the *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle unambiguously uses the word *phronêsis* with the specific practical meaning my interpretation requires. In *EE* 3.7, Aristotle distinguishes genuine virtues from the other virtues better described as merely natural virtues: 'As will be discussed in what follows, each virtue exists in a way by nature and in another way with *phronêsis*' (1234a28–31). *Phronêsis* attends each of the genuine

[53] *EE* 1.1–2.1 uses the word *phronêsis* in ways that do not follow the technical sense introduced in the common books. In these cases, the word seems to be used more broadly to mean wisdom, which may also include theoretical wisdom. However, these broad uses of the word seem to be limited to the early parts of the treatise. As H. Lorenz, 'Virtue of Character in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 37, (2009), 177–212 at 210 points out, later uses of *phronêsis*, especially in *EE* 3.7 and *EE* 8 do seem to convey consistently the word's specifically practical sense. Cf. G. Pearson, '*Phronêsis* as a Mean in the *Eudemian Ethics*', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 32 (2007), 273–295; Frede, 'Common Books'; and Rowe, '*Sophia*'.

ethical virtues, and its contribution distinguishes genuine virtue from natural virtue.[54] This role for *phronêsis* is the same as the role described in *EE* 5.13. So, if *phronêsis* aims to promote contemplation, and *phronêsis* accompanies each genuine virtue, then the aim of promoting contemplation should apply to all of the ethical virtues. It is hard to see how Aristotle might limit this feature of *phronêsis* only to actions concerning natural goods. So, the Unrestricted Reading finds its clearest positive expression in the statement in *EE* 8.3 that practical wisdom commands for the sake of god by promoting contemplation.

From this general statement about practical wisdom's aim, it follows that actions guided by practical wisdom within any specific domain—including but not only the domain concerning natural goods—should also reflect practical wisdom's aim of promoting contemplation. By drawing the narrower conclusion about actions relevant to Spartan virtue, Aristotle does not retroactively revise the general aim of practical wisdom so that its aim only guides the narrower domain. In presenting the standard for natural goods, when Aristotle says, 'It was said before about these matters to be "as reason indicates"' (1249b4), he need not be understood as referring to a previous, now-lost discussion specifically about the mean for natural goods. Rather, he is referring to the passages at *EE* 2.5/5.1, where the standard of virtue in general is said to be in accordance

[54] Wolt, '*Phronêsis*', 20–21 cites two other passages (*EE* 2.11, 1227b13–17; 8.1, 1246b24–27) that appear to allow an enkratic agent to have *phronêsis*, which should be impossible if *phronêsis* plays the role of unifying the virtues. However, in neither passage does Aristotle speak in propria persona. In one parenthetical remark at *EE* 8.1, he seems to assimilate *phronêsis* with self-control, suggesting one can be prudent without having the ethical virtues. But this claim forms part of an argument for a conclusion later rejected as strange (1246b28). In *EE* 2.11, Aristotle seems to say that what makes one's reason right is self-control, rather than *phronêsis*, but immediately after saying this, he clarifies that he is attributing this view to 'those who believe that virtue provides correct reason'—a view he rejects (1227b17–19, b35–1228a1).

with correct reason (1222a8–9; 1138b20). So, the standard of *EE* 8.3 is looking back to answer the promises from *EE* 2.5 and 5.1. However, their continuity is not an assumption required for my reading—as it is for the defenses of the Unrestricted Reading considered in section IV—but rather a consequence of my reading, and it is supported independently by my dialectical reading of the phrase 'things by nature good but not praiseworthy' and the core inference of the argument from 1249b7–25.

VIII.

On the interpretation I have advanced, the standard of *EE* 8.3 describes the relationship between ethical virtue and contemplation as productive: ethical virtue aims to promote contemplation. The promotion of contemplation is a goal for ethical virtue in the sense that it determines the mean between excess and deficiency. But how exactly does this productive relationship inform the kind of state ethical virtue is? Is ethical virtue merely a matter of promoting contemplation? I propose that virtue's productive relationship with contemplation should be understood coordinately alongside its other features, so that acting virtuously is a matter of promoting the most contemplation while preserving virtue's other essential properties.

When Aristotle turns from the virtuous person's pleasure to the standard, he introduces it in comparison to the doctor, at 1249a23–b7, quoted above. The doctor's standard is used to make judgments about health, namely, whether it is present and what must be done to attain it. In particular, the standard helps determine what kinds of medical interventions would be excessive, deficient, or just right, since in medicine, as in other endeavors (1220b21–26), what conduces to its aim, health, is a mean between excess and deficiency. On the Unrestricted Reading, the standard for the virtuous person

works similarly. The standard of promoting the most contemplation determines what counts as excessive or deficient relative to virtue's mean.

Even so, saying that ethical virtue aims essentially at promoting contemplation does not specify how much contemplation should be effected or how demanding this requirement to promote contemplation might be. The word *malista* at 1249b19 suggests an answer: whatever will most of all promote contemplation. But most of all relative to what? In formulating the standard, Aristotle identifies 'whatever choice or acquisition of natural goods will most promote the contemplation of god' (ἥτις οὖν αἵρεσις καὶ κτῆσις τῶν φύσει ἀγαθῶν ποιήσει μάλιστα τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ θεωρίαν).[55] Here, *malista* could be picking out whatever action will promote contemplation more or better than any other action available would, or it could be picking out those actions that promote contemplation more than they effect any other result. Two actions might both result in more contemplation than any other product, yet one of them might still promote more contemplation than the other. The sentence immediately following suggests that Aristotle is picking out the action that promotes more contemplation than any other action would:

[55] The word order here (μάλιστα after ποιήσει) is in PCB and is adopted by Susemihl and Walzer and Mingay. However, L has and a Latin fragment suggests ποιήσει τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ μάλιστα θεωρίαν, which Rowe, *Aristotelica*, 224 adopts on the grounds that it is less expected. The latter order makes it more plausible to take μάλιστα with θεοῦ rather than ποιήσει or θεωρίαν (though without requiring it). If μάλιστα is understood with θεοῦ, then the standard picks out whatever action promotes the kind of contemplation (in unspecified quantity or duration) whose object is god most of all, as opposed to some other object. Perhaps the wise person can see how much contemplation to promote but not whom to contemplate. But the Spartans need to be told that a certain quantity of natural goods is too much. If Aristotle is only clarifying whom to contemplate, not how much to contemplate, then the standard would not give a clear account of how many natural goods to acquire—like saying 'as medicine and its reason say to do.' So, even if we keep μάλιστα after θεοῦ as Rowe prefers, we should still take μάλιστα to describe a quantity of contemplation that the Spartans' natural goods should enable.

whatever through excess or deficiency impedes contemplation is base. It seems, then, that Aristotle's concern is with the quantity of contemplation effected, not with whether contemplation is the most prominent constituent of the action's result. For between two mutually incompatible actions that promote contemplation more than any other result, it might still be that choosing one of them would impede contemplation if doing so results in significantly less contemplation than choosing the alternative would.

Though *malista* more often has the sense of 'most importantly' than 'most in quantity', actions and choices that treat promoting contemplation as most important would understandably promote the greatest quantity or duration of contemplation, other things equal. Admittedly, Aristotle is not explicit here about how promoting the most contemplation of god should be understood—whether, for instance, focused contemplation weighs more than scatterbrained contemplation, or even whether the contemplation of others is counted or discounted relative to one's own.[56] However this is decided, a natural way to read *malista* here would be that it picks out the choices and actions that treat contemplation as most valuable and, accordingly, promote contemplation more than other actions that accord contemplation less value would.

Still, identifying contemplation as the most valuable object of promotion need not

[56] On the question of whose contemplation is in question, Broadie, 'The Good', 23 allows that 'some serve [god] through practical measures for advancing the position of [theoretical] studies in the *polis*, whether by political, or financial, or even legislative support.' In the *EE* Aristotle describes virtue as having a political dimension: it is taught by the law and has the effect of making citizens treat each other justly. Yet, even if the standard can be satisfied through acts that help others contemplate, since contemplation is itself (not just its promotion) a part of complete virtue, one cannot be happy without contemplating for oneself. Still, it is possible to combine some contemplation of one's own with actions that advance the contemplation of others. This, however, does not yet say how Aristotle weighs the contemplation of others against one's own or whether this involves aggregating contemplation across individuals.

imply that it is the *only* valuable object of promotion, subordinating every other object of promotion to its maximization. In interpreting the requirement to promote the most contemplation, we can distinguish between direct promotion and indirect promotion. If Aristotle's requirement is to promote contemplation directly, then whether agents satisfy the standard depends entirely on whether they promote the greatest quantity of contemplation. This would effectively be a requirement to maximize contemplation. A direct promotion interpretation would identify contemplation (and only contemplation) with the highest good, the primary object worthy in itself of pursuit.[57] Non-contemplative considerations like the agent's motives, feelings, or character states would then only be valuable only insofar as they are instrumental or ancillary to the aim of promoting contemplation.[58] On an indirect promotion interpretation, the agent's promotion of contemplation would necessarily be mediated by rules, policies, or, in Aristotle's case, virtuous character states. When an agent acts, they should act as virtue requires, but what virtue is, is determined separately in terms of what promotes the most contemplation. So, on the indirect promotion view, the requirement to promote contemplation does not apply directly to the agent but is a defining aim specifically for the agent's character states.

The case for taking Aristotle's view toward contemplation to be one of indirect promotion follows from the function argument of *EE* 2.1, whose conclusion is an account

[57] This view would cohere best with strict intellectualist readings of the *EE* (though some such readers, e.g., Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good*, 11, avoid the term 'maximize'). For instance, citing 1249a23–b27, D. Ferguson, 'The "Belonging to a Kind" Reading of the Eudemian *Ergon* Argument', *Ancient Philosophy* 42.2 (2022), 471–492 at 490 defends the class of 'intellectualist readings of the *EE*, according to which *eudaimonia* is just theoretical activity according to virtue'.

[58] If they were valuable in themselves, they might conflict with contemplation, which, on this view, is happiness. On a standard eudaimonist picture, there is no reason to have a certain motive or feeling if having it detracts from one's happiness.

of the highest good, happiness, as 'the activity of complete virtue over a complete life' (1219a39–40). 'Complete' is glossed explicitly as the whole of virtue rather than a part. So, happiness, the best thing human beings can achieve in action, is the activity of complete virtue, a whole which includes all the parts of virtue.[59] Theoretical wisdom is only one part of complete virtue (1144a4–6), but ethical virtue is another. The agent who sacrifices the activity of one part of virtue, ethical virtue, for another part, theoretical wisdom, would not achieve the activity of complete virtue because happiness is a whole that must include both. And even if ethical virtue is a mean that promotes contemplation, its value is not reduced to its instrumental relation to contemplation. Ethically virtuous activity is worthy of pursuit in its own right because it is itself a part of happiness. This supports an indirect promotion account because the account makes happiness unachievable by one who forgoes ethical virtue to promote contemplation.

The indirect promotion account has a further upshot. The function argument makes happiness the activity of complete virtue. One feature of ethical virtue is its aim, promoting contemplation. But ethical virtue has many other features, extensively described earlier in the *EE*. If any of these features resist being reduced to an instrumental relation to contemplation, then acting from virtuous states that most promote contemplation will mean promoting contemplation within or alongside the constraints imposed by these other essential features of virtue. What might these features be?

It might be especially difficult for a direct promotion account to explain the

[59] This is confirmed in *EE* 8.3 when Aristotle identifies *kalokagathia* with complete virtue (1249a16–17), having introduced it as arising from (ἐκ) the particular virtues discussed individually earlier in the treatise (1248b11). For a defense of an inclusive reading of *EE* 2.1 function argument, see R.C. Lee, 'The Function Argument in the *Eudemian Ethics*', *Ancient Philosophy* 42.1 (2022), 191–214.

characterization of the virtues as choiceworthy for their own sake and praiseworthy on their own account (1248b19–24; cf. *EN* 1105a32). How could justice or moderation be intrinsically choiceworthy and praiseworthy if its value lies only in its ability to promote contemplation? Relatedly, the *EE* describes the connection between virtue and the fine (καλόν) in its characterization of courage: 'For courage is obedient to reason, and reason commands one to choose the fine' (1229a1–3). Additionally, Aristotle says, 'Virtue causes people to choose everything for the sake of something, and this is that-for-the-sake-of-which, the fine' (1230a30–31). How exactly Aristotle conceives of the fine is controversial, but in the *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle thinks that things other than contemplation can be fine (1249a5–6). This suggests, then, that Aristotle does not require contemplation to be the virtuous agent's only aim, or at least that the requirement to promote contemplation is self-effacing—it requires the promotion of contemplation through not consciously trying to do so. In any case, virtue requires agents to be responsive to features of actions other than the action's relation to contemplation. These aspects of virtue make it hard to see ethical virtue as simply instrumental. On an indirect promotion reading, then, they constrain the agent's promotion of contemplation to only those actions that are fine and intrinsically choiceworthy and praiseworthy.

Besides virtue's restriction to the fine and what is choiceworthy in itself, there are other features of virtue, which, depending on how they fit into Aristotle's considered account, may impose additional constraints on the agent's promotion of contemplation. Prior to *EE* 8.3, Aristotle had already determined that virtue is the best disposition, brought about by the best things, and productive of the best actions; it is habituated; it is concerned with pleasures and pains; it is concerned with decision; it makes the aim of a

decision correct; it is a mean between excess and deficiency; it accords with the correct reason; it is accompanied by practical wisdom (1234a29–31); it is thought useful for the political craft by preventing citizens from wronging one another (1234b22–25); and it brings about the harmony of what is good for a particular individual and what is good without qualification, among other things. Perhaps some of these properties may be part of the essence of virtue; others may be necessary properties that follow from its essence. Yet even after describing virtue in these ways, Aristotle regards his account of virtue as true but not clear. What is needed in addition for a true and clear account is the provision that virtue promotes the most contemplation. In case there are multiple states that satisfy all of virtue's previously described necessary properties, *EE* 8.3 clarifies that the best—that is, the virtuous—state is the one that additionally satisfies the standard of promoting the most contemplation.

On the indirect promotion view, this final criterion in *EE* 8.3 is not the only essential property of virtue, by reference to which all of virtue's other characteristics are explained. Rather, it is one among virtue's several necessary properties. Its addition does not undo the other characterizations of virtue. Being a good, virtuous person requires choosing courses of action that seek out and promote contemplative activity. However, ethical virtue also imposes motivational requirements on the agent's actions, requires that the agent choose the fine, plays a role carefully designed by the lawmaker to help citizens get along, and so on. A virtuous state could not bid an agent to pursue contemplation in way that violates virtue's other necessary characteristics without losing its status as a virtue, and happiness requires the activity of complete virtue. These necessary features of virtue provide further constraints on the agent's pursuit of contemplation beyond those

imposed by moving from direct to indirect promotion. The shape and boundaries of some of these other characteristics of virtue remain contested, and how these other characteristics turn out will affect how demanding or constrained the requirement to promote contemplation is. Still, *EE* 8.3 moves toward a clearer picture of how ethical virtue and contemplative activity are related in the *EE*. Contemplation is virtue's defining aim, alongside virtue's other requirements.

IX.

The final chapter of the *Eudemian Ethics* contains what seem to be disparate argumentative aims, but I have argued that they are unified by an overarching concern to clarify what virtue is for the good person. Understood dialectically, the chapter is not making a point about natural goods; rather, its aim is to clarify what virtue is and the happy life it enables one to lead. Throughout the chapter's discussion of the standard, mention of natural goods serves to frame Aristotle's own account of virtue as a corrective for Spartan virtue. Though sometimes admired, the Spartans fall short of the ethical ideal of *kalokagathia* because the kind of disposition they have fails to bring together the good, the fine, and the pleasant, as happiness requires. The good person though—that is, one who exhibits the virtues of the *Eudemian Ethics*—does have the kind of virtue that brings these categories together, genuine virtue. What is distinctive about this kind of virtue is that it orients one's life toward the aim of contemplation.

The lesson to draw then from *EE* 8.3 is that Aristotle's account of virtue's mean requires the addition of a standard in order to be fully true and clear. A consequence of this interpretation is that Aristotle, at least in the *Eudemian Ethics*, regards an account of virtue given only in terms of the mean and the correct reason as falling short of being

fully true and clear. Virtue needs additionally a standard—not just the judgment of the wise person—that is explicit in quantitative terms: promote the most contemplation. Indeed, the contrastive framing of *EE* 8.3 gives reason to think that one's account of virtue should be explicit enough to explain why another group of people often thought to have virtue and who sometimes perform actions that are at least coincidentally fine, are not in fact virtuous and fall short of the ethical ideal. Even without a standard, Aristotle might say of the Spartans that they fail to choose fine actions for their own sake, but that is only a symptom of their defective virtue; its ultimate explanation is the standard. What the standard allows Aristotle to do is to diagnose the error in the Spartan disposition and prescribe a correction in such terms that even those who do not have complete virtue or agree what it is can see what should be done instead and why.[60]

[60] I am grateful to Christopher Bobonich, Alan Code, Willie Costello, Corinne Gartner, Terence Irwin, Rachana Kamtekar, and two anonymous referees for their generous comments on earlier versions of this paper. Additional thanks to Ashley Attwood, Grant Dowling, Daniel Ferguson, Landon Hobbs, Josh Ober, Matthew Pincus, Thomas Slabon, and Rupert Starling for their helpful suggestions and feedback. I presented parts of this paper to audiences at the APA Central Division Meeting and Stanford University and benefitted from their questions and discussions. This research was completed with the financial support of the Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship from the American Council for Learned Societies.

Bibliography:

Ackrill, J.L., ‘Aristotle on *Eudaimonia*’, in A.O. Rorty (ed.), *Essays on Aristotle’s Ethics* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1980), 15–33.

Barney, R., ‘Comments on Sarah Broadie “Virtue and Beyond in Plato and Aristotle”’, *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 43 suppl. (2005), 115–125.

Bobonich, C., ‘The Good or the Wild at Aristotle *Eudemian Ethics* 8.3?’, *Classical Philology*, 118.2 (2023), 172–193.

Bonasio, G., ‘Natural Goods in the *Eudemian Ethics*’ [‘Natural Goods’], *Ancient Philosophy*, 41.1 (2021), 123–142.

Bonasio, G., ‘The Pleasure Thesis in the *Eudemian Ethics*’, *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 60.4 (2022), 521–536.

Bourriot, F., *Kalos Kagathos - Kalokagathia: d’un terme de propagande de sophistes à une notion sociale et philosophique: étude d’histoire athénienne*, 2 vols (Hildesheim, 1995).

Broadie, S., *Ethics with Aristotle* (Oxford, 1991).

Broadie, S., ‘The Good, the Noble, and the Theoretical in *Eudemian Ethics* VIII.3’ [‘The Good’], in J. Cottingham, and P.M.S. Hacker (eds.), *Mind, Method, and Morality: Essays in Honour of Anthony Kenny* (Oxford, 2010), 3–25.

Buddensiek, F., ‘Contemplation and Service of the God: The Standard for External Goods in *Eudemian Ethics* VIII 3’ [‘Contemplation’], *Bochumer Philosophisches Jahrbuch für Antike und Mittelalter*, 14.1 (2011), 103–124.

Buddensiek, F., *Die Theorie Des Glücks in Aristoteles’* Eudemischer Ethik [*Theorie*], (Göttingen, 1999).

Bywater, I., ed., *Aristotelis Ethica Nicomachea* (Oxford, 1894).

Cagnoli Fiecconi, E., 'Aristotle on Attention', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 103.4 (2021), 602–633.

Cooper, J.M., *Reason and Human Good in Aristotle* [*Reason*] (Indianapolis, 1986).

Cooper, J.M., and Hutchinson, D.S. (eds.), *Plato: Complete Works* (Indianapolis, 1997).

Davies, P., '"Kalos Kagathos" and Scholarly Perceptions of Spartan Society', *Historia: Zeitschrift Für Alte Geschichte*, 62.3 (2013), 259–279.

Devereux, D., '*Theoria* and *Praxis* in Aristotle's Ethics' ['*Theoria*'], in P. Destrée and M.A. Zingano (eds.), *Theoria: Studies on the Status and Meaning of Contemplation in Aristotle's Ethics* (Louvain-La-Neuve, 2014), 155–205.

Dirlmeier, F., *Aristoteles: Eudemische Ethik* (Berlin, 1962).

Ferguson, D., 'The "Belonging to a Kind" Reading of the Eudemian *Ergon* Argument', *Ancient Philosophy*, 42.2 (2022), 471–492.

Frede, D., 'On the So-Called Common Books of the *Eudemian* and the *Nicomachean Ethics'*, *Phronesis*, 64.1 (2019), 84–116.

Inwood, B., and Woolf, R. (eds.), *Eudemian Ethics* (Cambridge, 2013).

Irwin, T., 'The Wild and the Good' ['Wild'], in G. Di Basilio (ed.), *Investigating the Relationship Between Aristotle's* Eudemian *and* Nicomachean Ethics [*Investigating*], (London, 2022), 188–206.

Kenny, A., *Aristotle on the Perfect Life* (Oxford, 1992).

Kenny, A., *The Aristotelian Ethics: A Study of the Relationship Between the* Eudemian *and* Nicomachean Ethics *of Aristotle* [*Aristotelian Ethics*], 2nd edn. (Oxford, 2016).

Kraut, R., *Aristotle on the Human Good* (Princeton, 1989).

Lear, G.R., *Happy Lives and the Highest Good: An Essay on Aristotle's* Nicomachean Ethics. (Princeton, 2004).

Lee, R.C. 'The Function Argument in the *Eudemian Ethics*', *Ancient Philosophy* 42.1 (2022), 191–214.

Lorenz, H. 'Virtue of Character in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 37, (2009), 177–212

Monan, J.D., *Moral Knowledge and Its Methodology in Aristotle* (Oxford, 1968).

Nightingale, A.W., *Spectacles of Truth in Classical Greek Philosophy: Theoria in Its Cultural Context* (Cambridge, 2004).

Pearson, G., '*Phronêsis* as a Mean in the *Eudemian Ethics*', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 32 (2007), 273–295.

Peterson, S., '*Horos* (Limit) in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics' ['*Horos*'], *Phronesis*, 33.3 (1988), 233–250.

Pistelli, H. (ed.), *Iamblichi Protrepticus* (Leipzig, 1888; repr. Stuttgart, 1967)

Reeve, C.D.C., *Action, Contemplation, and Happiness: An Essay on Aristotle* [*Essay*] (Cambridge, 2012).

Rowe, C., *Aristotelica: Studies on the Text of Aristotle's* Eudemian Ethics [*Aristotelica*] (Oxford, 2023).

Rowe, C., *Aristotelis Ethica Eudemia* (Oxford, 2023).

Rowe, C., '*Sophia* in the *Eudemian Ethics*' ['*Sophia*'], in G. Di Basilio (ed.), *Investigating*, 122–136.

Rowe, C., *The* Eudemian *and* Nicomachean Ethics*: A Study in the Development of*

Aristotle's Thought [*Study*] (Cambridge, UK, 1971).

Simpson, P. (trans. and comm.), *The Eudemian Ethics of Aristotle* [*Eudemian Ethics*] (New York, 2013).

Susemihl, F. (ed.), *Aristotelis Ethica Eudemia* (Leipzig, 1884).

Tuozzo, T.M., 'Contemplation, the Noble, and the Mean: The Standard of Moral Virtue in Aristotle's Ethics' ['Standard'], *Apeiron*, 28.4 (1995), 129–154.

Verdenius, W.J., 'Human Reason and God in the *Eudemian Ethics*' ['Human Reason'], in P. Moraux and D. Harlfinger (eds.), *Untersuchungen Zur Eudemischen Ethik* (Berlin, 1971), 285–297.

Walker, M.D., *Aristotle on the Uses of Contemplation* [*Uses*] (Cambridge, 2018).

Walzer, R.R., and Mingay, J.M. (eds.), *Aristotelis Ethica Eudemia* (Oxford, 1991).

Whiting, J., 'Self-Love and Authoritative Virtue: Prolegomenon to a Kantian Reading of *Eudemian Ethics* VIII 3' ['Self-Love'], in S. Engstrom and id. (eds.) *Aristotle, Kant, and the Stoics: Rethinking Happiness and Duty* (Cambridge, 1996), 162–199.

Wolt, D., '*Phronêsis* and *Kalokagathia* in *Eudemian Ethics* VIII.3' ['*Phronêsis*'], *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 60.1 (2022), 1–23.

Woods, M., *Aristotle:* Eudemian Ethics, *Books I, II, and VIII* [*Eudemian Ethics*], 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1992).