

reactions and judgments to what we as conscious beings grasp to be the significance of events and of our own responses.

Among the most philosophically provocative parts of the book are his recurrent treatments of the relation of ethics and emotions. Hogan gives significant attention to this general question in each of the chapters on particular emotions. By refusing the approach of physical reductionism even while insisting on the necessity of including an adequate physical and neurological component in any sufficient explanation, Hogan puts himself into a highly defensible position here. Many of his comments are immensely sensible, e.g., “The realm of ethics appears to have something to do with making choices that oppose our egocentric inclination” (p. 254). On the other hand, the book does not offer—understandably so in a book of this complexity!—any particular view of morality or any resolution of the vast differences among moral theories, and so this section might leave one somewhat unsatisfied. It does not attempt to adjudicate the substantive commitments on moral matters that I for one find to be often at work in, say, the very plays of Shakespeare that the author is otherwise handling so deftly. That said, the book renders invaluable service by its integration of various trends in contemporary scholarship on emotional experience, especially for its manner of integrating human affectivity as an intrinsic part of any reliable philosophy of human nature.

Fordham University

Joseph W. Koterski, S.J.

The Virtue of Aristotle's Ethics. By Paula Gottlieb. Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Pp. 193. \$88.00 cloth.

In his *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant famously wrote: “The distinction between virtue and vice can never be sought in the degree to which one follows certain maxims. . . . In other words, the well-known principle (Aristotle’s) that locates virtue in the mean between two vices is false.”¹ Kant is not the first (or the last) thinker to take to task Aristotle’s doctrine of the mean, but he is representative of a line of criticism of Aristotle’s doctrine that argues that ethics is the realm of determinate and necessary principles and that Aristotle’s doctrine of the mean only supplies an indeterminate difference between virtue and vice. In response to such critics (among others), Paula Gottlieb’s *Virtue of Aristotle’s Ethics* provides a defense of Aristotle’s ethical philosophy that is grounded in a re-examination of Aristotle’s doctrine of the mean and what Gottlieb claims are its concomitant doctrines, viz., that for Aristotle virtues are non-remedial and their unity results in an integration of the parts of the soul. She divides her book into two parts—one on ethical virtue and one on ethical reasoning (a subsection of intellectual virtue)—and touches upon additional topics such as the status of Aristotle’s nameless virtues, the notion of the fine (*kalon*), the nature of the practical syllogism, and the relationship between virtue and the political community.

In her defense of Aristotle’s doctrine of the mean, Gottlieb identifies three aspects of the mean. First, she claims that to say that ethical virtue consists in a mean is to say that virtue is a self-sustaining equilibrium rather than a claim about always acting in a moderate fashion. Second, she construes Aristotle’s claim that virtue consists in a mean “relative to us” to ground a position that views the particular contexts and qualities of agents and their actions

¹*Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), Ak. VI: 404. Kant continues: “What distinguishes avarice (as a vice) from thrift (as a virtue) is not that avarice carries thrift too far but that avarice has an entirely different principle (maxim), that of putting the end of economizing not in enjoyment of one’s means but merely in possession of them, while denying oneself any enjoyment from them.”

as morally salient. Finally, she claims that Aristotle's triadic view of ethical virtue—that virtues themselves are means between two different vices that are excesses and deficiencies—has ramifications for determining which characteristics can in fact be virtues. In each instance, Gottlieb aims to provide not only an exegesis of the relevant texts from Aristotle but also support for the claim that Aristotle's doctrine of the mean is “both interesting and true” (p. 3). Further, as the book unfolds, she aims to show that although Aristotle's various doctrines about virtue cannot be deduced from the doctrine of the mean, nonetheless the doctrines are “mutually supporting and interlocking.” For instance, the claim that ethical virtue consists in a kind of equilibrium grounds the claims that the unity of intellectual and practical virtue is a kind of integrity; the particularist account of virtue rules out ethical dilemmas; and the triadic structure of virtue contributes to his defense of political democracy (pp. 92–93, 130; more generally, see pp. 208–09).

Two of the book's most distinctive claims arise from Gottlieb's discussion of the so-called “nameless virtues” (namely, those virtues that Aristotle identifies by description but that lack a Greek term to name them) and her treatment of the unity of the intellectual and ethical virtues.² In the former case, Gottlieb is persuasive in her claim that Aristotle's identification of nameless mean-states shows his fidelity to the doctrine of the mean even in the absence of a name upon which to pin that mean. Further, his willingness to pursue the ramifications of his doctrine—even to characteristics that his own language does not recognize or pick out—conclusively shows that Aristotle's schedule of the virtues is no simple rubberstamp of Greek tradition. As nameless entities, such virtues are largely unrecognized or unanalyzed by Aristotle's predecessors and contemporaries; nor, as Gottlieb puts it, “are they reducible to the parochial Greek culture of the fourth century BCE” (p. 49; cf. p. 41). More controversial is her claim that the nameless virtues as a class “specifically concern human relationships and community” (p. 49). Although Gottlieb is right to take the nameless virtues seriously, it seems questionable that Aristotle intends the group of nameless virtues to have a certain status and set of characteristics *qua* namelessness. Needless to say, named virtues—especially justice but also courage and other virtues—seem equally concerned with interpersonal relationships for Aristotle.

With respect to the unity of the virtues, Gottlieb's focus upon virtue as an equilibrium nicely brings out another point. Although the *Nicomachean Ethics* analytically treats intellectual and ethical virtues as distinct, his doctrine of the unity of the virtues (namely, that one cannot possess one ethical virtue without possession all of them or that one cannot possess any of the ethical virtues without also possessing *phronêsis*) recasts their division. Although ethical virtue perfects the desiderative or appetitive part of the soul and intellectual virtue perfects the rational part of the soul, the unity of virtue thesis entails the integration not only of the various virtues but also the parts of soul that different virtues perfect. Within the context of his defense of that thesis in *EN* VI.13, Aristotle claims that ethical virtue is “*meta logou*” rather than “*kata logon*” (1149b25–29). Commentators have puzzled over the distinction, and Gottlieb argues persuasively that by claiming that virtue is “*meta logou*” Aristotle means that ethical virtue “involves reason” in the sense that it means that the ethical and intellectual parts of the soul are integrated. Thus, “ethical virtue involves the correct reason when the reason of practical wisdom is fully integrated with, and not just running parallel to, the workings of the non-rational part of the soul. . . . The functions of both parts of the

²The chapters discussing the nameless virtues and the unity of virtues were previously published (as is the chapter on the practical syllogism). Although the book incorporates these chapters into Gottlieb's broader defense of Aristotle's doctrine of the mean, their analytical insights seem to me independent (although certain supportive) of the book's thesis.

soul must be intimately connected” (p. 105). The separation of ethical and intellectual virtue is thus an analytical abstraction; the parts of the soul are in fact related as the convex to the concave: “one cannot have either side properly without the other” (cf. *EN* I.13.1102a28–32).

Although there is much in Gottlieb’s analysis that rings true with Aristotle’s texts, in some places I found it harder to see the case that what Gottlieb claims about Aristotle’s doctrine is interesting—or more accurately, scholarly controversial. Although Gottlieb notes at the outset of her book that her engagement with Aristotle scholarship is selective and adduced only when it advances her own interpretation (p. xiv), in several instances her non-engagement results in the defense of claims that one doubts many scholars would quibble with. For instance, in her chapter on the notion of the fine (or “fine motivation”), she addresses the problem that Aristotle claims both that virtuous action is done for its own sake and for the sake of the fine. Gottlieb persuasively argues that these are compatible; further, she rightly points out that Aristotle’s most extended treatment of the fine take place in his discussion of the virtue of courage. But after reviewing the chapter several times, I am hard pressed to identify what Gottlieb thinks is the content of the fine except to note that it “involves reason” or is possessed by one who has integrated the intellectual and ethical virtues. Earlier in the chapter she notes that her approach differs from Gabriel Lear’s 2004 book *Happy Lives and the Highest Good* (p. 134 n1), a seminal work that examined the notion of the fine, but there is no explanation of why or articulations of alternative explanations of the content of the notion of the fine. Given that Aristotle notes in several places that every ethical virtue aims at the fine and that Gottlieb’s book is focused especially on the nature of ethical virtue, this seems a serious omission. As higher level principles within Aristotle’s *Ethics*, are the notions of the fine and the mean identical? Do they capture different components of virtuous behavior? Is it possible to hit the mean without aiming at the fine (or *vice versa*)? Given the work that scholars such as Terrence Irwin and John Cooper have done on the notion of the fine, it seems a pity that their scholarship was not engaged at length.

In other places, Gottlieb asserts claims that are certainly true about Aristotle, but she omits discussion of what makes those claims also interesting. For instance, Gottlieb devotes a chapter to the question of whether Aristotle’s list of individual ethical virtues is exhaustive or whether he fails to include relevant virtues. Gottlieb runs through a list of possibilities—such as meekness, benevolence, or piety—and shows why they are precluded on the basis of Aristotle’s notion of the mean (for instance, that every virtue need exhibit the triadic structure of excess-mean-deficiency). Although in places she recognizes that the question is related to the question of the compatibility of Aristotelian and Christian ethics, it seems somewhat uninteresting to rule them out on formulaic grounds such that hope is an emotion for Aristotle or charity (presumably *caritas*) is captured by the notion of generosity. It is too much to ask for a full-scale examination of the difference between Aristotelian and Christian worldviews; but to find the truly interesting reasons why Aristotle would deny, e.g., that Paul’s hope, faith, and charity are in fact virtues, I suspect one has to go beyond issues about the triadic structure of virtue.

Gottlieb’s response to the Kant quotation with which I began my review illustrates this lack of deeper discussion also. Gottlieb quotes Kant’s criticism of the doctrine of the mean (p. 22 n7) and construes Kant’s criticism as consisting in the claim that Aristotle’s doctrine of the mean is nothing other than the doctrine to be moderate. Gottlieb is correct to claim that Aristotle’s doctrine of the mean consists in a contextualized equilibrium or sensitive response to changing particulars and that Aristotle would deny that there exists a decision procedure or algorithm for determining right action (pp. 23, 36–37). That is a true but ultimately uninteresting response to Kant’s position. Kant’s criticism of the doctrine of the

mean is not a quibble about the interpretation of Aristotle but a profound question about the very nature of ethics—whether practical reason can arrive at universal and necessary moral laws or only what Kant in the *Grounding* calls counsels of prudence (*Grounding* Pt. II., Ak. 416–17). No doubt, such a question goes beyond simple textual exegesis, but addressing it seems requisite for a truly interesting defense of the doctrine of the mean against Kantian criticisms.

Boston University

Thornton C. Lockwood, Jr.