

The unity of the virtues in Aristotle, in Alexander of Aphrodisias, and in the Byzantine commentators

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Abstract

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Aristotle's argument in *Nicomachean Ethics* 6 for the mutual implication of the virtues by one another is developed, and others added to it, in a repertory of arguments for this thesis in section 18 of the *De anima libri mantissa* (*Supplement to the Book On the Soul*) attributed to Alexander of Aphrodisias. The last part of this is echoed in no.22 of the *Ethical Problems* attributed to Alexander; nos. 8 and 28 of the same collection are also relevant. A distinction can be drawn between the mutual implication of the virtues and the unity of virtue in some stronger sense; the arguments in the texts attributed to Alexander are examined to see whether they imply the latter more clearly than Aristotle's own argument does, and the conclusion is drawn that some do so because of the use they make of the conception of the noble as the goal of virtuous action, or of virtue as a whole of parts. The treatment of Aristotle's argument in the Byzantine commentaries is characterised by a preoccupation with the special status of practical wisdom.

1. That the virtues in some sense form a unity was a thesis apparently maintained by the historical Socrates (1). It plays a part in the aporia at the end of the *Laches*, and is the theme of the major part of the *Protagoras*. In a fundamental article (2) Gregory Vlastos distinguished between the unity of the virtues and their "biconditionality", the claim that the possession of any one virtue implied the possession of any other, so that the possession of one implies the possession of all. And he further distinguished two ways of understanding the unity of the virtues. If that thesis is understood in the strongest sense (1), the words for the different virtues — in the *Protagoras*, wisdom, temperance, justice, piety and courage, though from the *Republic* on piety is dropped from what became the canonical list of the cardinal virtues — all in fact have the same meaning, so that the use of different words simply reflects a failure to appreciate the facts of the case. To this Vlastos contrasted the view which he argued most accurately captures the position of Plato's Socrates in the *Protagoras*, that (2) the words for the different virtues do indeed apply to a single underlying reality, in such a way that they may all correctly be applied to every instance of virtuous action, but particular instances can nevertheless be most properly named with reference to one particular virtue, so

that, while all courageous acts are also just, and *vice versa*, nevertheless actions that primarily display courage can meaningfully be distinguished from actions that primarily display justice. In the present discussion I shall reserve the label (3) for "biconditionality", which I shall refer to as "the mutual implication of the virtues" and understand as the claim that, while each virtue is a different thing or property, as a matter of contingent, though no doubt explicable fact no-one can possess some of them without possessing the others.

Aristotle discusses the mutual implication of the virtues in the final chapter of *Nicomachean Ethics* 6 = *Eudemian Ethics* 5. He there draws a distinction between natural virtue (*phusike arete*) and virtue proper (*kuria arete*), the former being that possessed by animals and children as well as by human adults (1144b1-12); natural virtue becomes true virtue by the addition of intelligence (*nous*) or practical wisdom (*phronesis*) (12-17), so that while Socrates was wrong to think — in Aristotle's interpretation — that the virtues are instances of practical wisdom (3), he was right in that virtue proper cannot exist without practical wisdom (17-30). Being good in the proper sense therefore requires practical wisdom, and having practical wisdom implies having moral virtue (*ethike arete*) (30-32) (4).

The mutual implication of the virtues is not yet explicit, though the reference to moral virtue in the singular in 1144b32 could be seen as implying it (and indeed as implying more, unity in sense (2)). But Aristotle then goes on to say that this makes it possible to answer the dialectical argument that the virtues can be separated from one another because no-one is equally well endowed by nature in respect of all of them, and therefore some of them will be possessed before others. This, Aristotle argues, applies to the natural virtues, but not to those in respect of which a person is called good without qualification. For the presence of practical wisdom, which is single, will involve the presence of all the virtues (plural) of the latter type (1144b32-1145a2) (5). (Exactly what the range of virtues is to which this applies, and how indeed virtues are to be individuated, has been the subject of a debate between Irwin and Kraut, focussing particularly on the issue of the "large-scale" virtues such as magnificence and magnanimity (6); but that issue can be left aside for our present purpose.)

Aristotle continues by commenting that, even if practical wisdom were not involved in action, it would be needed as being a virtue in its own right (1145a2-4). The status of practical wisdom as both being one of the virtues itself and having a special relationship to the others will concern us later in this discussion. He then, notoriously, remarks that right choice involves both practical wisdom and virtue, because "one makes (us have) the goal, the other (makes us) do what leads to the goal" (1145a4-6) (7); although the latter point is not formally in Aristotle part of an argument for the unity of the virtues, I mention it here because we will see it being taken up in the arguments I will go on to discuss.

The interpretation of Aristotle's argument has been the subject of much debate in

recent scholarship (8). There is therefore a particular interest in seeing what ancient interpreters made of it, and where they anticipated points made in more recent discussion, especially since, as Halper remarks, "this unity of virtue doctrine is surprising because it seems contrary to common sense, to Aristotle's own analysis of the individual virtues, and to his general anti-Platonic stance." (9)

2. The text transmitted as the second book of the treatise *On the Soul* by the Aristotelian commentator Alexander of Aphrodisias (late second/early third century A.D.), but labelled *mantissa* or "supplement" by its most recent editor, is in fact a collection of texts on various topics and by different authors (who may well include Alexander himself for some of the texts), though connected with the works certainly attributed to Alexander both by their themes and by their generally Aristotelian character (10). A considerable number of these texts take the form of batteries of arguments for a particular thesis, each successive argument being introduced by *eti*, "moreover". And one among these is a group of arguments (section 18 of the *mantissa*, pp.153-156 Bruns) for the thesis of the mutual implication of the virtues, *hoti antakolouthousin hai aretai*. (The term *antakolouthein* is Stoic, as Pohlenz pointed out.) (11). A section of the *Ethical Problems*, another collection of texts attributed to Alexander but probably rather to be taken as evidence for the activity of Alexander himself and his school, bears the same title and advances arguments which are similar to some of those in the *mantissa* collection. And two further sections of the *Ethical Problems* are concerned with the question whether virtue is related to the particular virtues as a genus to its species or as a whole to its parts.

3. The arguments in section 18 of the *mantissa* are not numbered in our primary MS, Venetus Marcianus gr. 258, simply distinguished by paragraph marks; but I will number them here to facilitate discussion (12). Argument (I) is a series of examples from experience, invoked to show that the lack of one virtue will hinder the practice of the others; the coward will not act justly when deterred by a frightening threat, and the unjust man will not be temperate but "will give himself the advantage in pleasant things too" (153.29-154.17). (The first of these examples seems more convincing than the second.) (13). This is followed by (II) an argument from linguistic usage: craftsmen are called "good" with the addition of a reference to the craft, as in the case of a "good carpenter", but a virtuous person is called "good" without qualification, and one who is good without qualification cannot be good in some respects but not in others; therefore one cannot possess one virtue and not the others (154.17-23). To this one might object that a man who is

courageous but unjust can be called "a good fighter". One might respond that in such a case "good" would be applied in respect of the skill rather than the virtue; but Aristotle does at *EN* 6 1144b35-1145a1 say that "good without qualification" applies in respect of virtue proper *as opposed to the natural virtues*.

It is then claimed (III) that the same argument applies to vice as well: a person who is vicious is bad without qualification (rather than "a bad carpenter", for example), and so he cannot simultaneously be good without qualification. Consequently a person who possesses any vice cannot possess virtue (154.23-26). There are two difficulties here. First, the claim that a person who is vicious is bad without qualification seems tendentious: we are perfectly ready to call a person bad because he is unjust without requiring him to be cowardly as well. It looks rather as if the author of the argument has assumed what he is setting out to prove, for it is only if we assume that virtue or vice is an all-or-nothing matter — that it is impossible to possess simultaneously some vices and some virtues — that we will be inclined to say that a person who is bad is bad without qualification.

Second, the argument claims more than it needs to, and thus, paradoxically, weakens its own conclusion. Having established, however dubiously, that a bad person is bad without qualification, all the author needs to do is to infer from this that such a person cannot be good even in a qualified sense, and hence cannot possess any of the virtues: being bad absolutely excludes being good even in a single respect. Instead of that we get the claim that such a person cannot be good without qualification, which implies that he or she cannot possess complete virtue. What we need, however, is the claim that such a person cannot possess *any* virtue.

To be sure, in the previous argument "being good without qualification" was equated not with possessing complete virtue, but just with possessing virtue; and perhaps in the present argument too we should take "bad without qualification" not to mean "bad in respect of all the virtues as opposed to just some", but rather to exclude badness in respect of a craft, for example. For then it does not follow that being bad absolutely excludes being good in a particular respect; a vicious person can be a good carpenter. But in that case what the argument has effectively done is, by connecting the possibility of qualifications only with non-moral applications of "good" and "bad", to exclude the possibility of qualifying the moral applications, so that we cannot say that a person is good in respect of courage but bad in respect of justice. And once again, the most likely reason for taking such a position is that one is treating virtue as an all-or-nothing matter, in other words assuming what the argument is meant to be setting out to prove.

Argument (IV) at 154.26-30, similarly starts from vice. First the author claims that (4) the vices do not imply one another, because some consist in excess and some in deficiency. (The conflict with the preceding argument, which, if read in the first of the two ways indicated, implied that to be bad was to be bad with all the vices, is only apparent: "bad with all the vices" needs to be read in the sense of "lacking all

the virtues" rather than of "possessing all vices, even mutually incompatible and opposed ones" (14). But perhaps this strengthens the case for reading the argument in the second way, so that the possibility of a qualified sense of "bad" does not relate to the possession of particular vices, but not others.) Then, from the claim that (4) the vices do not imply one another, and the further claim that (5) "vice is sufficient for unhappiness", it is inferred that (6) just one vice is sufficient for unhappiness. The author then asks rhetorically "how is it possible to say that a man who is unhappy possesses any virtue?": in other words (7) unhappiness is incompatible with the possession of even one virtue, and so, from (6) and (7), (8) just one vice excludes the possibility of any virtue (15).

(7) is a remarkably strong claim. The sufficiency of virtue for happiness was a Stoic rather than a Peripatetic thesis (everyone, at least in philosophical circles, agreed about the *necessity* of virtue for happiness); but what we have in (7) is not just the claim that virtue is sufficient for happiness, but the even stronger claim that just one virtue is sufficient for happiness. The Stoics would indeed have accepted this, but they would have accepted it only because they accepted the unity of the virtues.

There is also a problem concerning the relevance of (4) to the inference from (5) to (6). (4) would indeed licence the claim that (5) cannot be interpreted as meaning that *all* vices are needed for unhappiness; for (4) shows that the possession of all vices is impossible. Unfortunately, though, (4) does not show this in a way that is relevant to the point at issue. For (4) excludes the suggestion that, for example, one needs to be both foolhardy and cowardly to be unhappy. But surely what is at issue in the debate about the unity of the virtues is whether one can be, for example, just but cowardly. If (6), together with (7), is to licence a claim that this is not possible, (6) must have the sense that cowardice is sufficient for unhappiness even if one is just. What is needed, then, is an argument that one does not need to be both *unjust* and cowardly to be unhappy; and on that (4) appears to have no bearing. Moreover, even apart from this point, (4) does not support the inference in (6) that a *single* vice is sufficient for unhappiness; if (4) rests on the point that vices come in mutually exclusive pairs, as it were, the most it can do is to show that for unhappiness one needs not all the vices, but only half of them. — True, (4) is actually stated in the form "the vices do not imply one another – and how could they when they are opposite to one another, given that some consist in excess and some in deficiency?". It would be possible to read this so that the first clause indicates that every vice is independent of every other, and that gives us what we want to justify (6); but then the problem of relevance is simply shifted from (4) as a whole to its second part, the rhetorical question "and how could they ... and some in deficiency?" (16).

4. Argument (V), at 154.30-155.6, turns on the claim that virtuous action is action for the sake of what is noble or fine (*kalon*) (17), and that what is noble is undifferentiated *qua* noble. Consequently a person who loves what is noble in courage, but not what is noble in justice, is not pursuing what is noble in courage *qua* noble. (The point can be captured by saying that such a person is not pursuing the noble as such.) Our author then makes the argument more precise by posing a dilemma: either this person does not know what is noble in justice, or he does but does not choose it. In the former case he cannot be said to know what is noble, for the knowledge of what is noble is single (here one might compare the argument in Plato's *Laches* that knowledge of good and evil is the same for past, present and future, so that the definition of courage collapses into that of virtue as a whole: 198d-199e), and in that case he cannot be pursuing what is noble even in courage. If on the other hand he does know what is noble in justice, but does not choose it, then he does not love what is noble, "for as the lover of wine has an affinity to every wine, so the lover of what is noble chooses and loves everything that is noble". Consequently even what he does choose is not chosen for the sake of what is noble. (To the latter horn of the dilemma it might be objected that a person might recognise that a certain course of action was noble but also hold that its price was too high in other terms (18); presumably, though, the question will then arise whether this judgement is one that a virtuous person would endorse. If it is, then the agent's claim to possess the virtue of justice is not called in question: we do not say that a person who commits a minor injustice to save his own life, when acting under a threat for example, is an unjust person because he does not give the nobility of justice absolute priority. If on the other hand the choice is a wrong one, then we have a *prima facie* case for saying that the agent does indeed not know what is noble) (19). It may be noted that the present argument contradicts that for the possibility of alternative courses of action at Alexander, *de fato* 15 185.21-28 (20); for it supposes that a person is only motivated by nobility if he is *always* motivated by nobility. It is also an argument for the unity of the virtues in sense (2) rather than just in sense (3); for the names of the different virtues name different aspects of the knowledge and love of what is noble. While Aristotle's own argument at *EN* 6 1144b32-1145a2 requires that practical wisdom is a unity, and Aristotle holds that practical wisdom cannot exist without moral virtue which makes the end correct, this falls short of a claim that virtue is a unity (rather than a plurality of which each member implies the others) unless one adds the claim that the end is a unity as well, and that is what the present argument does.

The next argument (VI) is that the virtues are concerned with different emotions but have a single goal in what is noble. Therefore the person who has a single virtue, possessing this goal, will do everything that he does for the sake of it, and thus he will possess all the virtues (155.6-13). This essentially repeats the (questionable?) claim in the previous argument that a person who is motivated by nobility at all will be motivated by it always; as such, it turns on a psychological point rather than the appeal to linguistic usage of arguments (II) and (III).

5. Argument VII (155.13-31) claims that the individual virtues are so called as being parts of a single whole, though concerned with different subject-matters, and cannot exist in isolation, "except that we are in the habit of calling fitness (for various things), that is good natural endowments, virtues, applying the name only" (155.26-27). The reference here is probably to the "natural virtues" of Aristotle, *EN* 6 (above, §I) (21); one might also think of the qualified senses of "good" in argument (II) in the present collection, but there the examples were drawn from the crafts and there was no reference to natural endowments (22). Nevertheless, the reference here to individual virtues as being virtues only "with addition" (*meta prosthekes*: so that, for example, courage would be "the virtue concerning fear and confidence") (155.23) echoes the use of the same phrase in argument (II) at 154.19 (23).

A person does not qualify as just on the basis of a single just action; similarly, it is claimed, one would not say a person possessed virtue because he acted for the sake of what is noble in connection with one particular subject-matter (e.g. in contexts where courage is called for) (155.28-31). The argument, it may be noted, again appeals to linguistic usage (24); it also supposes that it is possible to act for the sake of what is noble in some contexts but not in others, which arguments (V) and (VI) denied, but the distinction is only a verbal one, turning on what is or is not to be counted as action "for the sake of what is noble" even in an attenuated sense of that expression. The parts of a whole, in general, are parts only when they complete or make up (*sumpleroun*) the whole — otherwise they are parts only in name (*homonumos*); just so the individual virtues are only virtues when they are present in virtue as a whole (155.24-27) (25). Again, we have an argument for the unity of virtue in a stronger sense than (3), for virtue in any context requires the pursuit of what is noble in every context (155.29-31).

Our argument begins, however, by linking individual virtues not just to different subject-matters (or areas of activity), but to different faculties of rational human soul. It begins by drawing the contrast found in Aristotle, *EN* 1 1102b13-1103a3, between the rational faculty proper and the faculty obedient to reason (155.16-17), and then claims that virtue (i.e. as a whole) is the highest point (*akrotes*) in each faculty (155.17-18) and that each individual virtue relates to a different faculty (155.20-21). It is not clear just how the different virtues are meant to map on to different faculties, or indeed that there are enough faculties to distinguish all the virtues.

The theme of soul-faculties is developed further in the next argument (VIII, 155.31-38), though not in a way that solves this particular problem. The author

distinguishes between a reasoning part of the soul and an emotional (*pathetikos*) part; Alexander elsewhere applies this term to a part of the soul concerned with the ethical virtues and contrasted with the reasoning part (26). No explicit reference is indeed made in these passages to emotions or "passions" (*pathe*); but that virtue is concerned with actions and emotions is argued by Aristotle at *EN* 3 1104b13ff, and two passages from Arius Didymus apply *pathetikon* to the part of the soul which obeys the rational part and which (in the second passage) is receptive of virtue (27). Aristotle, *EE* 2.3 1221b17 refers to gluttons and drunkards having a *pathetike dunamis* to enjoy food and drink contrary to reason (28).

Knowledge of what is good is the virtue of the rational part (29), doing it is the virtue of the emotional part, and neither can exist without the other; it is not "possible to know that good things are good if one does not choose them and have an inclination towards them" (155.34-35). This appears at first sight to be a denial of the possibility of *akrasia*, lack of self-control: one might argue that the akratic who knows what is good but fails to do it has an inclination but fails to act on it, but it seems harder to maintain that he chooses the course of action he fails to follow. But in fact, as argument (IX) will make clear, the solution is that the akratic does not know what is good, in the full sense of knowledge) (30). Consequently "it is not possible to possess the virtue of the reasoning (part) without (those of) the emotional" — which does indeed follow from the foregoing argument: the Greek is, as yet, neutral between "(those of)" and "(that of)", though the sequel implies the latter — "nor any of *these* (the plural is now explicit) apart from that and (apart) from each other". But at this point we may surely ask: even if common usage suggests that there are several other virtues apart from practical wisdom, and even if, where only two relevant faculties of soul are distinguished, all the other virtues must be assigned to a single, emotional, faculty, what ground has been given by *this specific argument* for supposing that one cannot have, for example, justice without courage or courage without justice? (31). To be sure, this *could* be claimed if we import from argument (V) the notion that the knowledge of what is noble in contexts calling for courage and in those calling for justice is an indivisible whole (32); but this just raises the question how far the individual arguments in the collection are intended to be self-contained.

6. Argument (IX) (155.38-156.6) fills the gap in argument (VIII), by relating practical wisdom to the individual virtues. Knowing what is good belongs to practical wisdom, choosing what is good to the moral virtues, and practical wisdom and the moral virtues imply each other. Consequently, anyone who possesses a single moral virtue must possess practical wisdom, and thus will possess the other moral virtues as well. This is essentially Aristotle's own argument at *EN* 6 1144b35-1145a2; it also repeats the point about knowledge of

argument (IV), but now formulated in terms of practical wisdom rather than of the unified knowledge of all that is noble in action. Here however, by contrast with argument (VII), the possibility of *akrasia* is explicitly acknowledged: that knowing what is good implies choosing it "is why we say that the person who lacks self-control does not have knowledge in the proper sense and without qualification" (156.1-2) (33).

Argument (X) makes no reference to individual virtues at all. It is of interest chiefly because it echoes the passage in the text of Aristotle immediately following that reflected in argument (IX). Every action in accordance with virtue involves both having the right goal and acting in the right way; the former belongs to moral virtue, the latter to practical wisdom, and each implies the other. (156.6-10). From this we can indeed extract the argument that performing a single action virtuously involves possessing both moral virtue and practical wisdom; but to reach the conclusion that all actions will then be performed virtuously we will need either the claim that if one's goal is nobility in one action it will be nobility in all actions, or the claim that if one knows what is noble in one context one will know what is noble in all contexts, or, indeed, both: cf. arguments (V) and (VI) above.

Arguments (IX) and (X) are however developed further in argument (XI) (156.10-27). Practical wisdom can only exist where there is also knowledge of the correct goal (otherwise, as Aristotle had argued at *EN* 6 1144a23-b1, it would merely be cleverness, *deinotes*), and practical wisdom is concerned with every possibility for action (*prakton*) (34). Therefore the possession of practical wisdom implies the knowledge of the correct goal in every possibility for action, and hence unites all the moral virtues with itself; and, since the possession of any one moral virtue implies the possession of practical wisdom, the possession of any one moral virtue implies the possession of all the others (35).

Argument (XI) concludes with the comment "it is not easy, according to Theophrastus, to grasp the differences between the virtues in such a way that they do not have something in common between them; but they are named according to what predominates (in each)." (36) Presumably Theophrastus implied that you should not define the virtues in such a way that they have nothing in common. The formulation "they are named according to what predominates (in each)" could be seen as anticipating Vlastos' interpretation of the unity of the virtues in sense (2). Stobaeus records an argument that the possessor of each ethical virtue has practical wisdom *kata to idion*, but the possessor of practical wisdom has the individual ethical virtues *per accidens* (37); whether this formulation goes back to Theophrastus is questionable (38).

7. As already mentioned, the unity of the virtues is also the theme of three of the

collection of *Ethical Problems* attributed to Alexander (39). *Ethical Problem 22* bears the same title, "that the virtues imply one another", as does section 18 of the *mantissa*; the titles of the pieces in these collections are probably not original (40), but in the case of *Ethical Problem 22* the title is drawn from the opening sentence. This text is probably a fragment of a longer discussion, since it begins with "also" and since the ending seems grammatically incomplete (41). The points made are similar to arguments (X)-(XI) of *mantissa* 18, though the wording is different.

The text begins by saying that the mutual implication of the moral virtues can be shown from choice. Right choice requires both practical wisdom and moral virtue, for the latter makes us pursue the end, because "one makes (us have) the goal, the other (makes us) do what leads to the goal": as in argument (X) of *mantissa* 18, this derives from Aristotle, *EN* 1145a5-6, though here the wording is identical to Aristotle's, which it is not in the *mantissa*. And, as in argument (X) of *mantissa* 18, the text proceeds to another argument introduced by a "Moreover" before any conclusion about the mutual implication of the virtues has actually been drawn.

Ethical Problem 22 then proceeds to claim, as in argument (XI) of *mantissa* 18, that possessing any moral virtue involves possessing practical wisdom, and that possessing practical wisdom involves possessing moral virtue, for otherwise it will be not practical wisdom but cleverness (42). The point that the possession of a single moral virtue involves practical wisdom is here made at the start of the argument (143.1), while in *mantissa* 18 it is postponed till 156.21. But the *Ethical Problem* fails, in the present state of the text, to make the point, crucial if a conclusion concerning the mutual implication of the virtues is to be drawn, that the possession of practical wisdom implies the possession of *all* the moral virtues. It does however make the point, absent from argument (XI) in the *mantissa*, that moral virtue is the virtue of the appetitive (*orektike*) faculty; one may compare argument (VIII) in the *mantissa*, but there the reference is to the emotional faculty rather than to the appetitive (43).

8. *Ethical Problems* 8 and 28 present two different discussions of the same problem. One is naturally led to see them as, perhaps, two papers prepared for a single seminar; the temptation should perhaps be resisted (44). Virtue, it is argued in both texts, is not a genus with the particular virtues as its species, because the removal of one virtue implies the removal of both virtue in general and all the other particular virtues as well, which does not apply in the case of genera and their species (to supply an example, if the species "cat" ceased to exist it would not follow that "animal", "dog" and "horse" ceased to exist). This argument clearly presupposes the mutual implication of the virtues. In *Problem 8*, however, though not in *Problem 28*, the point is made that even if all the virtues do not mutually imply one another, the removal of one of them, practical wisdom, would involve

the removal of virtue in general (and, by implication, of all the other virtues). On the other hand, it is argued in both texts, virtue cannot be a whole with the individual virtues as its parts, for then the definition of virtue as a whole would not apply to the individual virtues.

Although the problem is stated in similar terms in both texts, the solutions are different. Problem 8 offers two. The first is to suggest that the virtues are related by what has come to be called "focal meaning" (*aph' henos* or *pros hen*) (45), so that if what comes first is removed it takes with it both the things that follow it and what they have in common. The text does not explicitly state what the primary item is in the case of the virtues, but clearly it must be practical wisdom. As with arguments (VII) and (VIII) in *mantissa* 18, however, this solution seems to have given more thought to the relation between practical wisdom and the other virtues than to that between those other virtues themselves. For the natural implication, at least, of the words "where one is first, another second" (128.12-13) is that we are dealing with a complete series, so that there is also a third and a fourth. But how are we then to decide which of the virtues other than practical wisdom comes second, which third, and so on? It may indeed be that this point should not be pressed, and we are dealing not with an ordered series but just with a case of focal meaning, which does not for Aristotle involve the placing of every derivative item in a precise sequence. Then however the question arises, is this first solution actually meant to answer the first horn of the dilemma and to show that virtue can in some sense be a genus? For while there is evidence for Alexander holding that there can be a genus whose members form an ordered series (46), our text rightly describes what is said *aph' henos* or *pros hen* as ambiguous (*pollakhos legomena*), and the definition of a genus has to apply to all its members in the same sense.

It may be relevant that there is some reason to think that, where discussions attributed to Alexander give alternative solutions, the last solution is the tacitly preferred one (47). For the second solution in *Problem* 8 answers the other horn of the dilemma, by claiming that the definition of virtue in general does not apply to the individual virtues, and that virtue can therefore after all be a whole of parts. The definition of virtue in general is given as "the best state of the whole rational soul": one may compare 155.13-19 at the start of argument (VII) in *mantissa* 18, where the point is made in an even stronger form, claiming that the individual virtues will not even be virtues, considered in themselves apart from the whole. As in argument (VII), "the whole rational soul" presumably includes both the rational part proper and the part obedient to reason, so that virtue as a whole will include both the intellectual virtue of practical wisdom (and, no doubt, the other intellectual virtues not concerned with action) and also the moral virtues. But there is no explicit reference to practical wisdom in the second solution in *Problem* 8, and no indication that it has a special role in unifying the virtues.

Problem 28, on the other hand, argues that the definition of the whole does apply to every part of a *uniform* whole, and that the virtues form such a whole, because

complete or perfect (*teleia*) virtue involves possessing all the virtues in the same way; such a person is said to perform courageous or temperate acts depending on the particular subject-matter in each case. the natural or incomplete virtues (157.32) are each concerned with different things, and it is this that gives the impression that the virtues proper too are distinct; but in fact, when the virtues have been completed by being mixed with each other to produce a uniform whole, they are all, it is implied, involved in every virtuous action (157.32-158.2) (48). This, we may note, implies a unity of the virtues in a stronger sense than (3); whether it amounts to (1) or only to (2) will depend on whether it is nevertheless legitimate to claim that a particular action can be described as predominantly manifesting, for example, courage (49). 157.30-158.1 seems to imply otherwise:

it *seems* that activity is with each one of them, when it is concerned with the things with which the being of incomplete and natural courage, say, is concerned. But [a person] does not act with [the proper virtue in question] alone in respect of those [actions] of which virtue is reasonably predicated in a single sense on account of such a mixture of things which are similar to one another (my emphasis) (50).

The second sentence *could* be read as allowing that, although a person performing a truly courageous act does not act with courage alone but all the virtues, nevertheless his action is predominantly an instance of courageous action. But there is nothing in the text to require it, and the reference just before this passage to the combination of the virtues as a uniform whole argues against it. True, the text goes on to conclude that

these indeed we call *virtues* in the proper sense (158.1-2: my emphasis)

but the use of the plural here may just be a concession to ordinary — and Aristotelian — usage (51). Here too no reference is made to practical wisdom; indeed the term *phronesis* and its cognates appear nowhere in *Ethical Problem 28*.

9. Two treatments of *EN 6* from the Byzantine period may be briefly mentioned: the commentary by Eustratius (c. 1050-1120 A.D.) (52) and the anonymous paraphrase, composed at some date before 1366 A.D., dubiously attributed to an otherwise unknown Heliodorus of Prusa (53). I begin with the latter, because the issue it raises (like the work itself) is narrower in scope.

The anonymous paraphrase of *EN 1144b32-35* fails to bring out the issue of the interrelation between the virtues *other* than practical wisdom. In that respect it is reminiscent of arguments (VII) and (VIII) in *mantissa 18*. I translate first of all the text of Aristotle:

But in this way one could also refute the argument by which someone might claim dialectically that the virtues are separated from each other, because the same person is not most well endowed by nature for all of them, and so will have acquired one already but not yet another. This is possible in the case of the natural virtues ...

and then the anonymous paraphrase (*CAG* 19.2 133.34-40):

From this one could also refute a certain opposing argument, if it were introduced. For it seems that it is possible for practical wisdom to be separated from moral virtue. For the same person is not well endowed by nature for all (virtues), in such a way as to be able to acquire all the moral virtues and practical wisdom together; so he will have acquired the one, but not yet the other. Well, this is possible in the case of the natural virtues ...

In effect, an emphasis on the special role of practical wisdom has been introduced into the statement of the objection, with the consequence that the relation between the other moral virtues is less prominent in the discussion.

A similar preoccupation is apparent in the much fuller discussion of Eustratius, who shows a concern with the relative ranking of practical wisdom and moral virtue already in his discussion of 1144b13-17 (at 399.36-400.21), giving pride of place to the former. Unlike the author of the anonymous paraphrase, Eustratius correctly understands the statement of the objection, in 1144b32-35, as concerned with the relation between the virtues generally, rather than specifically with that between practical wisdom and the other virtues (*CAG* 20 403.31-35); and he expands Aristotle's statement of the role of practical wisdom in the solution (1145a1-2) in the light of 1145a4-6:

And in this way necessarily all (the virtues) will reciprocally accompany each other, the moral (virtues) proposing ends that are good, and practical wisdom finding the things that lead to these. (*CAG* 20 404.16-18)

But then, when he comes to the statement at 1145a2-4 that practical wisdom would be required as a part of virtue in its own right even if it did not have this special relation with the other virtues, he argues not just that it is a virtue in its own right but that it is superior to the others:

But (practical wisdom) will not on this account be second and some servant to (the goals and ends) (54), since it will also be independent (*autoteles*). For it would be needed even if it did not contribute to actions, because it is the virtue of a part of the soul, namely the reasoning part. So practical wisdom is also superior to the moral virtues, since it is the virtue of a superior part. For the reasoning part is superior to the spirited and desiring (parts), to which the moral virtues belong (*CAG* 20 404.28-33) (55).

10. The arguments we have surveyed have been of different types with different consequences. Aristotle's own argument for the mutual implication of the virtues turns on the distinction between natural virtues and virtue proper, and the claim that practical wisdom is required for every virtue in the latter sense. Whether Aristotle is arguing just for the mutual implication of the virtues, or for their unity in the stronger sense (2), is not entirely clear. Argument (IX) in *mantissa* 18 echoes Aristotle's argument (XI), and *Ethical Problem* 22, reinforce this by connecting with it the point that practical wisdom implies knowledge of the goal, which in Aristotle is not explicitly part of the argument for the mutual implication of the virtues but immediately follows it. Arguments (V) and (VI) in *mantissa* 18, by emphasising the unity of what is noble as the goal of all virtuous action, seem to imply the unity of virtue in sense (2). So too do argument (VII) in *mantissa* 18 and the second solution in *Ethical Problem* 8, by regarding virtue as a whole of differentiated parts, and *Ethical Problem* 28, by regarding it as a whole of uniform parts; and (II) and (III), which appeal to linguistic usage. On the other hand argument (I) in *mantissa* 18, turning on empirical cases where the lack of one virtue hinders the operation of another, and argument (IV), concerned with the implications of the relation of individual virtues and vices to happiness, seem on the face of it at least (56) to argue only for the mutual implication of the virtues (3).

Notes

(1) In addition to Plato's evidence, this is suggested by the views of Euclides and the Megarian school; cf. Diogenes Laertius 2.106 and 7.161, with C.H. Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, 13-14. (Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 3.9.4-5 also attributes to Socrates the identification of all the other virtues with wisdom, but for Xenophon's dependence on Plato cf. Kahn, op. cit., 29-31, 393-401). [back](#)

(2) G. Vlastos, 'The Unity of the Virtues in the *Protagoras*', in his *Platonic Studies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981) 221-269, especially 221-252. Cf. also T. Penner, 'The Unity of Virtue', *Philosophical Review* 82 (1973) 35-68; Kahn, op. cit. 218-224. [back](#)

(3) The Greek simply has the plural: *phroneseis*. [back](#)

(4) It is to be noted that "moral virtue" is here applied to the person who is good in the proper sense. The contrast between natural virtue and virtue proper does not correspond to, but cuts across, that at *EN* 1 1103a4-10, 2 1103a14-15 between

moral virtues and intellectual virtues. Practical wisdom is an intellectual virtue, but it is makes the moral virtues moral virtues in the proper sense of that term. [back](#)

(5) T.H. Irwin, *Plato's moral theory : the early and middle dialogues*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977, at 55-56, compares the argument in Plato (*Meno* 88bd) that so-called "virtues" in the absence of knowledge of good and evil may actually be harmful. Cf. also id., 'Disunity in the Aristotelian virtues', in J. Annas and R.H. Grimm, eds., *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* suppl. vol. 1, 1988, 61-78, at 67-69, and R. Kraut, 'Comments on "Disunity in the Aristotelian virtues", by T.H. Irwin', in the same volume, 79-86, at 82. At (1988) 62 n.2 Irwin notes an apparent counter-example at *EN* 3 1115a19-22, which suggests that a person may be cowardly but generous. He convincingly argues that such a person's generosity, lacking wisdom, is not to be taken as generosity in the proper sense. [back](#)

(6) Irwin (1988) and Kraut (1988), cited in the preceding note. [back](#)

(7) Cf. also Aristotle, *EN* 6 1144a20-22; and on the discussion to which these claims have given rise, recently A.D. Smith, 'Character and Intellect in Aristotle's Ethics', *Phronesis* 41 (1996) 56-74, with further references. [back](#)

(8) See E. Telfer, 'The unity of the moral virtues in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 90 (1989-1990) 35-48; P. Gottlieb, 'Aristotle on dividing the soul and uniting the virtues', *Phronesis* 39 (1994) 275-290, especially 278 n.10; E. Halper, 'The Unity of the Virtues in Aristotle', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 17 (1999) 115-143; Irwin (1988: above, n.5) 67-69, and Kraut (1988: above, n.5) 82. — Irwin's discussion in (1988) here is explicitly confined to the mutual implication of the virtues, as opposed to their unity in a stronger sense (60 n.1); but see below, n.21. [back](#)

(9) Halper, op. cit., 115. [back](#)

(10) The dating of the *mantissa* and the other collections (the *Quaestiones* and *Ethical Problems*) attributed to Alexander, and of the individual items within them, is uncertain, and a fourth- or even sixth-century date has been suggested for some of this material; cf. F.M. Schroeder, The Provenance of the *De Intellectu* attributed to Alexander of Aphrodisias , *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 8 (1997) 105-120, and R.W. Sharples, *Alexander of Aphrodisias: Quaestiones 1.1-2.15*, London: Duckworth, 1992, 50 n.126. [back](#)

(11) M. Pohlenz, *Die Stoa: Geschichte einer geistigen Bewegung*, Göttingen, 1948-1949, 1.358. [back](#)

(12) The individual arguments are numbered in the MS only in *mantissa* sections 3, 4, 6, 7, 9 and 20; in 7 and 9 the numbering breaks off part way through. [back](#)

(13) With this argument one may compare Gottlieb, above n.8, 287-288. Telfer, above n.8, 47 notes a similar argument suggested in J.L. Ackrill, *Aristotle the*

Philosopher, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981, 137, and comments "This is not Aristotle's argument, but with regard to ideal moral virtues it is a sound one", and further that it "... yields a better argument from Aristotle's point of view for the unity of the virtues than those based on moral knowledge" (emphasis mine). If so, *mantissa* 18, too, will have improved on Aristotle. But the separation of this argument from that concerning practical wisdom seems questionable, even if the *mantissa* does not make the connection. (Ackrill himself makes no explicit reference to practical wisdom in stating the argument, but his account is a very brief one, and he does go on to discuss practical wisdom in his next paragraph.) Halper, above n.8, 119-120 argues that a person who performs an act in accordance with one virtue actually displays a degree of every passion that is appropriate in the context, and thus has *all his passions under the control of practical wisdom*. And Gottlieb, loc. cit., arguing that incorrect disposition with respect to one passion will distort judgements relating to another, and *vice versa*, sees this as reflecting the fact that ethical virtue must be *meta tou orthou logou* (EN 6 1144b27). [back](#)

(14) I am grateful to Pamela Huby for raising this point. [back](#)

(15) It may be noted that, if we allow the possibility of intermediate states between vice and virtue, it is not necessary at this stage of the argument to suppose that unhappiness, and hence that the possession of just one vice, implies the possession of all vices, just the absence of any virtues. I am grateful to Inna Kupreeva for this point. [back](#)

(16) I am grateful to Inna Kupreeva for discussion of this argument. [back](#)

(17) J. Annas, *The Morality of Happiness*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1993, 123 and nn.249-252, compares Aristotle, EN 1105a31-32, 1115b11-13, 1116a11. [back](#)

(18) I owe this point to Richard Sorabji. [back](#)

(19) Cf. Aristotle, EN 1110a19-b1: S. Sauvé Meyer, *Aristotle on Moral Responsibility*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1993, 93-121, especially 117-118. [back](#)

(20) Cf. R.W. Sharples, *Alexander of Aphrodisias On Fate*. London: Duckworth, 1983 148-149. [back](#)

(21) Irwin (1977, above n.5) 207 argues that for Aristotle at EN 6 1144b32-1145a2 complete virtue includes all the virtues. [back](#)

(22) Cf. Annas, op. cit. in n.17, 131 and n.267, comparing Cicero, *On Laws* 1.45. [back](#)

(23) I am grateful to Inna Kupreeva for this point. [back](#)

(24) I am grateful to Alan Lacey for this point. [back](#)

(25) The Stoics spoke of the virtues as completing happiness: *SVF* III 73, 106, 107.

I am grateful to Inna Kupreeva for this point. [back](#)

(26) Alexander, *in top.* 145.23-32 and 190.9-11, noted by H.J. Blumenthal, *Aristotle and Neoplatonism in Late Antiquity*, London: 1996, 154-155, in the course of arguing that Alexander's *De anima* and *De intellectu* do not refer to a "passive" (*pathetikos*) intellect opposed to an "active" intellect, Alexander's term for the former being rather "material intellect". Blumenthal notes (153) that *pathetikos* is used of intellect by Aristotle himself once, at *DA* 3.5 430a24, and (157-9) that the expression "passive intellect" is noted and criticised by Proclus in his commentary on Euclid in a way that shows that it was used by someone before Proclus himself — Blumenthal suggests Iamblichus, Syrianus, or Plutarch of Athens — but does not occur in discussion of Aristotle's *DA* until the sixth century A.D. Whether we can use this as corroborating evidence for what in any case seems likely, that *mantissa* 18, or at least this part of it, was composed before that date, on the grounds that *pathetikos* would not have been used in the way it is here if the later use was familiar, is uncertain; for discussions of distinct philosophical issues often developed their own semi-independent traditions, and might preserve their own distinctive terminology. [back](#)

(27) Arius Didymus ap. Stobaeus 2.7.1 (p.38.6 Wachsmuth) and 2.7.13 (p.117.9 Wachsmuth). [back](#)

(28) I am grateful to Inna Kupreeva for this reference. [back](#)

(29) This is not the *only* virtue of the rational part; there are other intellectual virtues, as *EN* 6 makes clear. But it is the one that is relevant to ethics. [back](#)

(30) Against Telfer, *op. cit.* in n.8, 38-40. [back](#)

(31) The problem here, of an argument that fails explicitly to distinguish one moral virtue from another, is to be distinguished from that referred to in n.6 above, of just *which* moral virtues are supposed to be involved in the mutual implication; cf. especially Kraut (1988, above n.5) 80. [back](#)

(32) Gottlieb, above n.8, 278 n.10 notes that in medieval discussion of the unity of the virtues the question of the unity of practical wisdom was central, citing the comprehensive treatment by O. Lottin, 'Aristote et la connexion des vertus morales', in *Autour d'Aristote: Recueil d'Études de philosophie ancienne et médiévale offert à Monseigneur A. Mansion*, Louvain: publications universitaires, 1955, 343-364. [back](#)

(33) Cf. Aristotle, *EN* 1147b11-17. [back](#)

(34) 156.22; cf. also 156.10, "it is impossible for the person to have practical wisdom who does not have it concerning everything". This point was not made explicit in arguments IX and X, but it is essential to the argument, as Irwin (1988, above n.5) 71 notes in connection with Aristotle himself: "we may still resist the

reciprocity of the virtues, if we argue that wisdom can be divided into different partial insights distributed between separable virtues." Irwin shows that this is not acceptable to Aristotle by citing *EN* 6 1140a25-28: "it seems to be characteristic of the person with practical wisdom to deliberate well concerning what is good and beneficial for himself, not in a particular way, e.g. what is good for health or for strength, but what for living well altogether." Cf. also Halper (above, n.8) 116, arguing that 1144a11-b1 rather than 1144b30-1145a2 is Aristotle's principal justification for the unity of the virtues, and noting the assumption that the absence of one virtue will distort judgements relating to all of them. [back](#)

(35) Telfer, op. cit. in n.8, 42 notes that even the akratic has the right conception of the end (*EN* 7 1151a20-26); her solution is to argue that he will not possess it securely (44). But, as Halper (above, n.8) 130 n.13 rightly argues, the akratic, who has knowledge of the end but fails to use it, can hardly be described as possessing practical wisdom. Similarly Kraut (1988: above n.5) 83 claims that Aristotle's argument only shows that the person who has one virtue must at least be *self-controlled* (*enkrates*) in the contexts with which the other virtues are concerned, for the self-controlled person too "has the right conception of the good"; against this Irwin (1988: above n.5) 88 argues that the self-controlled person's attitude to the temptations he resists, being different from that of the virtuous person who is not even tempted, will affect his deliberation concerning other issues too. [back](#)

(36) 156.21-27 is fr. L18 in W.W. Fortenbaugh, *Quellen zur Ethik Theophrasts*, Amsterdam: Grüner, 1984 = fr.460 in W.W. Fortenbaugh, P.M. Huby, R.W. Sharples and D. Gutas, *Theophrastus of Eresus: Sources for his Life, Writings, Thought and Influence*, Leiden: Brill, 1992. Is Theophrastus deliberately echoing, and reversing, the statement of the Athenian Stranger at Plato, *Laws* 12 963d that it is not difficult to say how the virtues differ, but not easy to see why they all have the name "virtue"? (Cf. Kahn, op. cit. in n.1 above, 219). [back](#)

(37) Stobaeus, *Anth.* 2.7.20 (p.142.8-13 Wachsmuth = Theophrastus fr. L12 Fortenbaugh (1984)/449A FHS&G). [back](#)

(38) Cf. Fortenbaugh (1984: above, n.36) 174, 182, against H. von Arnim, 'Arius Didymus' Abriß der peripatetischen Ethik', *SitzB. Wien* 204.3 (1926) 68-9. [back](#)

(39) Translated in R.W. Sharples, *Alexander of Aphrodisias: Ethical Problems*, London: Duckworth, 1990. See also A. Madigan, 'Alexander of Aphrodisias: the Book of *Ethical Problems*', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II.36.2 (1987) 1260-1279, at 1262-1263. [back](#)

(40) See I. Bruns, *Supplementum Aristotelicum* 2.2, Berlin: Reimer, 1892, xi. [back](#)

(41) See Sharples, op. cit. in n.39, 56 n.183. The suggestion there that the text could be grammatically complete if *de* in 143.2 is taken as apodotic should be withdrawn; the sense this would give, that practical wisdom implies moral virtue if moral virtue implies practical wisdom, is unacceptable, and in any case it is clear

that the argument is incomplete where the text in its present state breaks off (see further below). [back](#)

(42) Aristotle, *EN* 6 1144a23. [back](#)

(43) Above, at n.26. [back](#)

(44) Cf. R.W. Sharples, ‘The School of Alexander?’, in R. Sorabji (ed.), *Aristotle Transformed*. London: Duckworth, 1990. 83-111, at 110 and nn. [back](#)

(45) Cf. Aristotle, *Metaph.* Gamma 2.1003a33ff.; G.E.L. Owen, ‘Logic and Metaphysics in some earlier works of Aristotle’, in I. Düring and G.E.L. Owen (eds.), *Aristotle and Plato in the mid-fourth century*, Göteborg 1960, 163-90, reprinted in G.E.L. Owen, *Logic, Science and Dialectic*, London 1986, 180-199. [back](#)

(46) See, with P. Moraux, *Alexandre d’Aphrodise: Exégète de la noétique d’Aristote*, Liège and Paris 1942 (*Bibliothèque de la faculté de philosophie et lettres de l’université de Liège*, 99) 57-58, Alexander, in *Metaph.* 210.6-8; Sharples, op. cit. in n.39, 34 n.90, and the other references there. [back](#)

(47) Moraux, op. cit. in n.46, 36-37. [back](#)

(48) As Chrysippus claimed: Plutarch, *De Stoic. rep.* 1046EF = *SVF* 3.299. (But the contradiction that Plutarch goes on to generate with Chrysippus’ claim that a particular action can manifest a particular virtue (1046F-1047A = *SVF* 3.243) is a spurious one; cf. A.A. Long and D.N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, 384. For other views, claiming the unity of the virtues in sense (1), cf. Plutarch, *De virtute morali* 440E-441A = Long and Sedley 61B.) [back](#)

(49) As Chrysippus claimed; see the preceding note. [back](#)

(50) Translation based on that at Sharples (1990, above n.39) 76, modified. [back](#)

(51) The contrast between a uniform whole in *Ethical Problem* 28 and a whole of (implicitly) non-uniform parts in *Ethical Problem* 8 naturally recalls that between the parts of a lump of gold and the parts of a face at Plato, *Protagoras* 329d. [back](#)

(52) On Eustratius cf. H.P.F. Mercken, ‘the Greek commentators on Aristotle’s *Ethics*’, in R. Sorabji (ed.), *Aristotle Transformed*, London: Duckworth, 1990, 407-443, at 410-419. [back](#)

(53) The facts concerning this commentary are set out by D.M. Nicol, ‘A paraphrase of the *Nicomachean Ethics* attributed to the Emperor John VI Cantacuzene’, *Byzantinoslavica* 29 (1968) 1-16. Cod. Laurent. LXXX 3 xiv-xv has at fol.97 a statement that John Cantacuzene *had this copy made* in 1366; Nicol shows (12) that there is no suggestion that, as has sometimes been suggested, he was the author. The statement gives us a *terminus ante quem* for the composition

of the paraphrase. The attribution to Heliodorus appears in another MS, cod. Par. gr. 1870, which was copied by the notorious 16th-century forger Constantine Palaeokappa (on whom cf. J.E. Sandys, *A history of classical scholarship*, vol.1, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1921, 408; I owe this reference to my colleague Robert Ireland): Nicol comments that "Heliodorus of Prusa is almost certainly a product of Palaeokappa's fertile imagination" (14) and concludes that the identity of the author of the paraphrase (which has also been attributed to Andronicus of Rhodes and to Olympiodorus) is irrecoverable. J. Barnes, 'An Introduction to Aspasius', in A. Alberti and R.W. Sharples (eds.), *Aspasius: the earliest extant commentary on Aristotle's Ethics*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999, 1-50, at 13, is thus in error in attributing the paraphrase itself to Palaeokappa and dating him (as the attribution necessarily requires) in the 14th century; he also refers (13 n.45) to a *distinct* commentary "by the Emperor John Cantakuzenos ... which apparently derives from Olympiodorus", but this, as already indicated, is another MS of the same paraphrase, is not by John, and does not seem to derive from Olympiodorus. [back](#)

(54) The text has *autôi*, which is presumably singular for plural, referring back to *tôn skopôn kai tôn telôn*. [back](#)

(55) Eustratius, as Gottlieb (above, n.8) 278 n.9 notes, here employs the Platonic tripartition of the soul: cf. 400.30ff., where he takes the reference to Socrates at 1144b18 to be to the *Republic* specifically, and argues that it was reasonable for Socrates to call the virtues wisdom or knowledge with reference to their superior aspect, just as human beings are called rational even though they also have irrational faculties (401.2-12). (He then goes on to introduce a gratuitous comparison with the virtue of a politician, who has knowledge, as opposed to that of a citizen, which is to obey those who are more illustrious, *emphanesteroi*: 401.12-18). There is indeed some warrant for the adoption of the Platonic tripartition in Aristotle's classification of *orexeis* at *DA* 2.3 414b2; cf. Kahn, op. cit. in n.1, 262. On Eustratius' Christian Neoplatonism, and on this discussion of Socrates in particular, cf. Mercken, op. cit. in n.52, 418. [back](#)

(56) I say "on the face of it" because an appeal to the unity of the virtues in a stronger sense seems the natural way to legitimise premiss 7 in argument (IV). Above, §2. [back](#)