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An Aristotelian Definition of Friendship*
Paul Schollmeier

Aristotle’s theory of friendship still holds philosophical problems without generally accepted resolutions. One rather important yet unresolved problem is the very problem of what Aristotelian friendship is. Is friendship an altruistic relationship or an egoistic one? In other words, when we enter a friendship, do we perform acts of good will for the sake of our friend or for the sake of ourselves?

Classical philosophers resolve this problem in ways diametrically opposed to one another. One philosopher argues for example that all friendship is altruistic. When we do something for them, we intend to act not for our own benefit but for the benefit of our friends. But another argues that all friendship is egoistic. We do something with the intention of benefiting ourselves through our friends when we act for them.

I wish to analyze Aristotle’s definition of friendship in order to show that his conception of friendship is both altruistic and egoistic. What we shall see is that friendship is essentially good friendship, and that friendship of this sort is altruistic. For those who are good friends act with the intention of advancing the happiness of one another. But friendship also includes relationships that are egoistic. Friendship is accidentally useful and pleasant friendship, and those who are useful or pleasant friends act with the intention of furthering their own happiness.

When he defines friendship, Aristotle states his definition more as one might a definition of a friend:

Friends must bear good will and good wishes for one another, not without recognition, for the sake of one of the objects discussed (Eth. 8. 2. 1156a3-5).

This definition states what friends must do, how they must do it, and why they must. Friends must bear good will and good wishes, they must reciprocate and recognize their good will and good wishes, and they must do so for the sake of their goodness, their usefulness, or their pleasantness. For these three qualities distinguish the lovable objects under discussion (Eth. 8. 2. 1155b18-19).

Aristotle establishes each element of his definition with a succinct argument. These arguments present us with an initial impression of what each element is. He begins with the object of love:

*This paper is an excerpt from my new book, Other Selves: Aristotle on Personal and Political Friendship (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994).
Not everything seems to be loved but only the lovable, and this seems to be either good or pleasant or useful. But the useful would seem to be that by means of which some good or pleasure comes to be so that the good and the pleasant would be lovable as ends (Eth. 8. 2. 1155b18-21).

He states simply that love is for the sake of the lovable, and that the lovable is divisible into the good, the useful, and the pleasant. He adds that the useful is a means and the good and the pleasant are ends. With this addition he implies that his division of lovable objects is exhaustive. For the lovable is what is immediately or mediately good or pleasant.

He next considers the elements of good wishes and their reciprocity. He uses a counterexample to show that friendship requires good wishes and that these wishes must be reciprocated. His counterexample contrasts friendship with love for wine:

... love for a lifeless object we do not call friendship. For there is no reciprocal love nor is there a good wish for the other. To bear a good wish for wine would be ridiculous. If anything, we wish that it may keep so that we may drink it. But we say that it is necessary to wish the good for a friend for his sake (Eth. 8. 2. 1155b27-31).

He uses the contrast between love for a friend and love for wine to show what a good wish in friendship is. A good wish is a wish for the sake of the object of our wish. We apparently wish a friend well for his sake, but we do not usually wish wine well for its sake.

Aristotle's contrast between our love for a friend and our love for wine also shows that a good wish in friendship is reciprocated. For a friend would return a good wish, wine would not. Aristotle gives an another explanation for the element of reciprocity by distinguishing between good will and friendship:

To those who wish what is good we ascribe only good will, if the same wishes do not arise from another. For friendship lies in reciprocal good will (Eth. 8. 2. 1155b32-34).

He asserts that even if we feel good will for him, we cannot yet say that we are friends with another unless he reciprocates our good will.

Aristotle argues finally that friends must recognize their good wishes for one another:

Or must we add that they do so not without recognition? For many people bear good wishes for those whom they have not seen but suppose to be good or useful. And someone among these may feel the same toward them. These people therefore seem to bear good will for one another. But how could someone call them friends?
when they do not recognize how they feel about themselves (Eth. 8. 2. 1155b34-1156a3)?

Obviously friends are aware of the good wishes borne toward one another. But other people who bear good wishes for each other need not be aware that they do.

In establishing each element of this definition, Aristotle would thus appear to follow the usual sequence of events in the development of a friendship. We first feel affection for another person because of his goodness, usefulness, or pleasantness. We allow ourselves to express our affection with good will and good wishes for that person. We do him a favor, in other words. We may then find that he reciprocates our good wishes and good actions. And we may both eventually recognize a continued exchange of good wishes and actions. We are then friends.

Having defined friendship, Aristotle qualifies one element of his definition--the element of bearing good will and good wishes for another. This qualification allows him to distinguish what he calls essential friendship from what he calls accidental friendship. An examination of this distinction will permit us to understand more clearly what friendship itself is and what its species are. We shall see that friendship of one species is altruistic, and that friendship of two species is egoistic.

Aristotle first divides friendship into its species by distinguishing the loves exhibited in its species. He distinguishes these loves by distinguishing their objects:

The lovable objects differ as species from one another, and therefore so do their loves and their friendships. There are therefore three species of friendship, equal in number to the lovable objects. For in accordance with each object there is reciprocal love and it is recognized. Those loving one another wish what is good to one another in the respect in which they love each other (Eth. 8. 3. 1156a6-10).

He argues that friendship has three species. One person may bear good wishes with reciprocation and recognition for another person as for someone good, someone useful, or someone pleasant. For one may love another as someone good, useful, or pleasant.

Aristotle now makes his qualification. He implies that because of these differences in lovable objects, some friends bear good wishes for others altruistically, and some friends bear good wishes for others egoistically. He argues that those whom he calls good friends act for the sake of another essentially, for they advance the good of another itself as an end. But those who are useful and pleasant friends act for the sake of another accidentally,
for they advance the good of another only as a means to some other end of their own.

In this argument Aristotle appears to make use of a distinction which he explains more fully in another passages. The distinction is that between acting essentially and accidentally. When he discusses justice, he assumes that some one who does what is just for its own sake, does what is essentially just. At least he clearly asserts that some one who does what is just for the sake of something else, does what is accidentally just (Eth. 5. 8. 1135b2-8). But he explains more explicitly in his discussion of weakness of will that when we choose or pursue one thing for the sake of another, we choose or pursue our end essentially and our means accidentally (Eth. 7. 9. 1151a35-1151b2). In other words Aristotle assumes that we act essentially for the sake of an end and accidentally for the sake of a means.4

Aristotle takes up useful and pleasant friendships first. He implies that useful and pleasant friends bear good wishes for one another egoistically. For he argues that useful and pleasant friends love one another only as a means to an ulterior end of their own. Instead of loving another as being who he is, friends of these kinds love each other as having useful or pleasant qualities:

These people do not feel affection for another as someone loved but as someone useful or pleasant (Eth. 8. 3. 1156a15-16). They thus do not love one another essentially but for the sake of something received from the other:

Those loving for the sake of utility do not love one another essentially but rather as some good comes to be for themselves from each other. Similarly those loving for the sake of pleasure, for men do not feel affection for witty people for having certain qualities but because they give themselves pleasure (Eth. 8. 3. 1156a10-14).

These friends therefore love one another accidentally. For they love each other only to procure some good for themselves:

These friendships are therefore accidentally friendships, for the person loved is not loved as the very man he is but as he furnishes them some good or pleasure (Eth. 8. 3. 1156a16-19).

A useful friend thus loves for the sake of his own good, a pleasant friend for the sake of his own pleasure (Eth. 8. 3. 1156a14-15).5

Aristotle implies that good friends love one another altruistically. For he argues that good friends love each other as an end. Good friends love one another for the sake of the goodness of the other. For they are good men, and they wish what is good to each other as being good:
Perfect friendship is the friendship of good men and of men who are similar according to their virtue. For they wish things that are good similarly to each other as good men and they are essentially good (Eth. 8. 3. 1156b7-9).

These friends thus love one another for the sake of the other and not accidentally:

Those who wish the good to their friends for the sake of them are the most friends, for they do this for their sake and not accidentally (Eth. 8. 3. 1156b9-11).

The one friend thus loves the other friend for the sake of the other.

We thus see that friendship is essentially altruistic. For it is essentially good will and good wishes, reciprocated and recognized, for the sake of the goodness of another. And that friendship is only accidentally good will and good wishes, reciprocated and recognized, for the sake of the usefulness or pleasantness of another.

When he discusses good will itself, Aristotle also argues that we may feel good will for the sake of another or for the sake of ourself. That is, he distinguishes altruistic from egoistic good will. But he does not distinguish essential from accidental good will. With an analogy to erotic love, he reminds us that good will is the beginning of friendship:

Good will seems to be the beginning of friendship, as the pleasure of sight is the beginning of erotic love. For no one loves erotically unless he has been carried away by the form of his lover (Eth. 9. 5. 1167a3-5).

Continuing with his analogy, he asserts that without good will no one can be friends, but to be friends good will by itself is not enough:

He who delights in the form of another does not yet feel erotic love, but he does so only when he also longs for him when absent and desires his presence. And thus it is not possible for people to be friends unless they come to have good will, but those who feel good will are not yet friends. For they only wish what is good for those for whom they have good will, but they would do nothing with them and nor would they trouble themselves for them (Eth. 9. 5. 1167a5-10).

But with time and familiarity, good will can become friendship:

Therefore someone might say metaphorically that good will is idle friendship, and that when it is prolonged and has arrived at familiarity, good will becomes friendship. But it does not become friendship for the sake of utility nor friendship for the sake of pleasure. For good will does not come to be for these things (Eth. 9. 5. 1167a10-14).
The implication is that good will can become good friendship, for it does not become useful or pleasant friendship.

Aristotle also explains that we feel good will for the sake of the good qualities of another:

Generally good will come to be for the sake of virtue and goodness when a man appears to someone to be noble or courageous or to have a quality of such sort . . . (Eth. 9. 5. 1167a18-20).

But we do not feel good will for the sake of the useful qualities of another:

But he who wishes someone to do well in the hopes of enriching himself through him does not seem to feel good will for him but rather for himself, just as no one is a friend of another if he treasures him for the sake of some utility (Eth. 9. 5. 1167a15-18).

We apparently feel good will toward ourself, for we act for the sake of our own benefit. Presumably we also feel good will for ourself when we act for the sake of the pleasant qualities of another. For we would act for the sake of our own pleasure.8

We might wish to note that friends who are essentially friends need not appear to differ in their actions from those who are accidentally friends. For a good friend performs good actions for another, and his friend returns the good actions. And a useful or pleasant friend might also perform good actions for another, and his friend might return his good actions. But essential friends differ greatly from accidental friends in their intentions. Good friends perform their good offices with the intention of advancing the good of another. Useful and pleasant friends perform their offices with the intention of advancing their own good.

Aristotle does in fact argue that only because they resemble good friendship, do useful and pleasant friendships appear to be friendship at all. Because of their similarities to good friends, people call friends those who love one another for the sake of utility or for the sake of pleasure:

People call friends even those who feel affection for the sake of utility, just as cities may be called friends. For alliances among cities seem to come to be for the sake of their own interests. People also call friends those who feel affection for each other for the sake of pleasure, just as children do. So perhaps we must also say that such people are friends and that the species of friendship are many—primarily and chiefly the friendship of good men as good men and in the accordance with similarities, the other species. For as having some good and some similarity, in that respect they are friends (Eth. 8. 4. 1157a25-32).

Useful friends resemble good friends because good men are useful to one another, pleasant friends resemble good friends because good men are
pleasant to one another:
Friendship for the sake of pleasure is similar to good friendship, for good men are pleasant to one another. Similarly friendship for the sake of utility is too, for good men are also useful to one another (Eth. 8. 4. 1156b35-1157a3).
But good friendship remains dissimilar to useful and pleasant friendship. For good friends are useful and pleasant to one another for the sake of each other, but useful and pleasant friends are so for their own sake.9

The fact that they differ as essential and accidental friendship also explains why good friendship and useful and pleasant friendship have another noteworthy difference. Good friendship is more stable than either useful or pleasant friendship. Because they continue to be like each other, good friends have a relationship which tends to last a long time:
Friendship of good men lasts as long as they are good, and virtue endures (Eth. 8. 3. 1156b11-12).
But because they do not remain like each other, useful and pleasant friends do not have a relationship which lasts as long. They last only as long as the friends find one another useful or pleasant:
Useful and pleasant friendships are easily dissolved if the friends do not remain like one another, for if they are no longer pleasant or useful, they cease to love each other (Eth. 8. 3. 1156a19-21).
After they attain their own ends, useful and pleasant friends often find each other to be no longer useful or pleasant (see also Eth. 8. 3. 1156a21-24 and 1156a34-1156b1).

Aristotle does admit that pleasant friendship can become stable. But his admission only reinforces his distinction between essential and accidental friendships:
Many pleasant friends however are constant if from familiarity they feel fondness for their characters, these being similar (Eth. 8. 4. 1157a10-12).
Pleasant friendships become stable if the friends become aware of their characters and their characters are similar. In a word pleasant friends may become good friends.

We would conclude then that friendship includes three species, that good friendship is the essential species, and that good friendship is altruistic. We would also conclude that useful and pleasant friendships are accidental species, and that they are egoistic.

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7
Notes

1 Cooper attempts to argue that not only good friends but also useful and pleasant friends do what is good for the sake of the qualities of one another (Cooper, "Forms," pp. 631-632).

2 Adkins argues that good friends as well as useful and pleasant friends act for the sake of their own good or pleasure (Adkins, pp. 39 and 42-43).

3 Irwin suggests that we cannot wish wine well for its sake because it has no desires or aims of its own. He argues that we can act for the sake of a friend because we can help him fulfill his aims and desires (Irwin, Ethics, p. 359). But I think that we can wish wine well for the sake of its wineness. Some oenophiles seem to do so with rare vintages.

4 Cooper argues that we act for the sake of the essential or accidental qualities of our friends. He explains that essential qualities are good qualities, and they are properties which a person has because he realizes his human nature. Accidental qualities are useful and pleasant qualities, and they are properties which a person has because he answers to the needs of another (Cooper, "Forms," pp. 634-635). I would argue that we cannot distinguish good friends from useful and pleasant friends by their essential and accidental qualities. For we may find that good qualities possessed by another are also useful and pleasant, and that the useful and pleasant qualities of another are also good. People who are good do in fact find one another to have qualities which are at once good, useful, and pleasant (Eth. 8. 3. 1156b12-17).

Annas also argues that friends have essential or accidental qualities. She asserts that essential qualities are good qualities which belong to an individual person, and accidental qualities are useful and pleasant qualities which anyone may have (Annas, "Friendship," pp. 548-549). But we cannot distinguish essential and accidental qualities in this way. For good qualities may belong to anyone. Both intellectual and moral virtue are after all qualities which we possess because of our human nature. And of course only one individual may have an useful or pleasant quality, such as an idiosyncratic sense of humor.

5 Cooper believes that all friendships are altruistic. He contends that not only good friends but also useful and pleasant friends bear good wishes for the sake of their friends. Good friends bear good wishes for one another for the sake of their essential qualities, and useful and pleasant friends do so for the sake of their accidental qualities (Cooper, "Forms", pp. 631-635). He adds that good friends really love one another for the sake of the other, and useful and pleasant friends do not. For good friends recognize each other for whom they actually are, and useful and pleasant friends do not (pp. 640-641). But Cooper himself eventually concedes in effect that useful and pleasant friends do not love the accidental qualities of one another except for the sake of their own good or pleasure. For he asserts that they dissolve their friendship if they no longer expect to receive anything from one another (Cooper, "Forms", pp. 634, n. 1, pp. 635-638, and p. 637, n. 14).

Price agrees that Cooper severely qualifies the good will found in useful and pleasant friendships when he states that a useful or pleasant friend must remain useful or pleasant for the friendship to continue. And he cites the same passages (Price, ch. 5, pp. 150-151).

Cooper attempts to argue that useful and pleasant friends do not act for the sake of some good or pleasure to be received from one another, and that these friends rather bear good wishes for the sake of one another because of some good or pleasure already received from the other. He bases this argument on the assumption that "the most natural way" to read δέι at Eth. 8. 2. 1156a3-5 and presumably at Eth. 8. 3. 1156a14-15 is not prospectively but retrospectively. That is, a person does not bear good wishes for another because of any hope about what the other may be or do in the future but because of a recognition of what the other has been or done in the past (Cooper, "Forms", pp. 632-634).
Cooper however appears to overlook an important grammatical distinction. Aristotle uses διά with an accusative to signify an end and with a genitive to signify a means. He obviously uses it with a genitive to indicate a means at Eth. 8. 2. 1155b18-21. He asserts that the useful is διά οὐ some good or pleasure comes to be, and that goodness and pleasure are lovable ὡς τέλη. And he uses διά with an accusative at Eth. 8. 3. 1156a14-15 to indicate an end as the synonymous phrase at 1156a10-12 tells us. He says that those who love διά χρήσιμον love another ἡ γίνεται τί αὐτοῖς παρ᾽ ἄλλην ἄγαθόν. Unfortunately the phrase at 1156a12-14 is ambiguous. He says that those who love διά ἰδιονήν love ὡς ἡδείς αὐτοῖς. But at 1156a16-19 Aristotle asserts that those who love κατὰ συμμετεχόντας love one another ἡ πορίζουσιν οὐ μὲν ἄγαθόν τι οὐ διὰ ἰδιονήν.

Price cites several passages to show that διά is interchangeable with ἢνεκά. But he concludes that διά indicates both the goal of a friendship and its ground in a friend (Price, ch. 5, pp. 151-152 and n. 27). Price too neglects to take into account the object of διά and its case. But in all the passages cited by him διά does take an accusative.

Irwin agrees that διά is ambiguous, but he also fails to consider the case of its object. He only asserts that the preposition may refer to either the final cause or the efficient cause. And he cites Eth. 8. 3. 1156a31 and Eth. 10. 2. 1172b21 as examples of Aristotle using it to refer to a final cause (Irwin, Ethics, p. 359). I would note that in both passages cited Aristotle uses διά with an accusative.

I am afraid that Cooper tries to have his friends and to turn them to good advantage too though he himself asserts that to do so is incoherent (Cooper, "Forms", pp. 631-632). What Cooper appears to do is to discuss mixed friendships. These friendships are good friendships in part and in part useful or pleasant friendships. The people in these relationships sometimes act in an altruistic way and sometimes in an egoistic way. Cooper himself actually describes them as acting in these ways (Cooper, "Forms," pp. 638-640). But I still have to argue that Cooper describes friendships which are predominantly egoistic, for he states that the people in them part their ways if they do not get want they want.

Price appears to agree partially. He implies that Cooper discusses mixed friendships, but he believes that Cooper discusses mixed friendships of the wrong kind. That Cooper believes useful and pleasant friends feel good will for the useful and pleasant qualities of another, he rightly asserts. But he himself asserts without textual evidence that useful and pleasant friends feel good will for the human qualities of another (Price, ch. 5, pp. 158-159 and n. 36).

Citing Cooper, Kraut also argues that Aristotle discusses mixed friendships. He argues that to wish and to act for others for their sake is not to benefit them as a means to another end. But he continues that the possibility of a complex motivation is left open. That is, we can benefit another in part for his sake and in part for our sake (Kraut, Aristotle, ch. 2, pp. 78-79 and nn. 3-4). Kraut thus implies that friendship is in part egoistic and in part altruistic. A son who benefits his father for example also gains something for himself because he performs an ethical action (pp. 84-86). But Kraut too describes a mixed friendship which is predominantly egoistic. For he ascribes to Aristotle the view that an agent undertakes every action for the sake of his own interest though not always for the sake of his maximal interest. A son who helps his father may forgo an opportunity to indulge in philosophical activity, but he takes advantage of an opportunity to engage in a morally virtuous activity (pp. 84-86 again).

Adkins argues that all friendships are egoistic. He contends that all friends act for the sake of their own good or pleasure. Good friends bear good wishes for the sake of essential qualities of one another in order to obtain some good or pleasure for themselves, and useful and pleasant friends bear good wishes for the sake of accidental qualities of one another in order also to obtain good or pleasure for themselves. Adkins argues that Aristotle employs a linguistic trick to suggest a false distinction between good friendship and useful and pleasant friendship. Aristotle suggests that good friendship is altruistic and useful and pleasant friendships are egoistic when he opposes ἐκ εἴνων ἢνεκα to κατὰ συμμετεχόν at Eth. 8. 3. 1156b7-12. For κατὰ συμμετεχόν calls to mind the earlier argument at 1156a16-19, which opposes ἡ ἐστίν ὄσπερ ἐστίν to ἡ πορίζουσιν οὐ μὲν
But Aristotle's distinction is a true one, and it is the same one that he used before. His distinction is between acting for the sake of another as an end and acting for the sake of another as a means. Aristotle in fact opposes not only εκείνην but also συμβεβηκό? with an accusative to κατά συμβεβηκό?. For he asserts that those who wish what is good do not wish what is good κατά συμβεβηκό? at 1156b10-11.

Adkins also relies on Aristotle's argument that good friends love what is good and pleasant both absolutely and for themselves (Eth. 8. 3. 1156b12-23). He argues that a good friend bears good wishes for another for the sake of what is good and pleasant absolutely, but that what is good and pleasant absolutely is what is good and presumably pleasant for himself (Adkins, p. 39 and p. 39, n. 1). I have to concede that this passage is ambiguous. But to me Aristotle would appear to make his usual point that what is good and pleasant absolutely is good and pleasant relatively to good men (for example, see Eth. 8. 2. 1155b21-26). I would argue that what is good and pleasant relatively to a good man who bears good wishes for another is also good and pleasant relatively to a good man who receives good wishes from another. Only what intention he has tells us whether a good man acts for the sake of what is good and pleasant absolutely and for himself or for the sake of what is good and pleasant absolutely and for his friend.

Adkins does cite Eth. 1. 1. 1155a1-12 (Adkins, pp. 40-41). In this passage Aristotle probably uses ordinary opinion to explain why we need friends. He argues that even rich men seem to need friends to do well by and to protect their riches. And that poor men need friends to fall back on. I find this passage to be ambiguous too. For we do not know what intentions these men have when they help their friends. And even men in good friendships at times seek help from their friends though they do so reluctantly (see Eth. 9. 11. 1171b15-19).

What Adkins appears to do is to show that useful and pleasant friendships can exist between good men. I would not deny that good men can have useful and pleasant friendships, that these friendships can rest on their good qualities, and that these friendships can be egoistic. But I would again argue that good men can also have good friendships, and that their good friendships can rest on their good qualities and be altruistic.

Without using the distinction between essential and accidental good will, Alpern agrees that Aristotle qualifies the element of good will in his definition of friendship. What he asserts is that Aristotle's definition is a partial and preliminary characterization of friendship. The element of good will applies to friendship in general. But after the division of friendship into its species this requirement wholly applies to good friendship, and it applies imperfectly to useful and pleasant friendships. He also asserts that though all friendship requires good will, only good friendship has good will which is disinterested. Useful and pleasant friendships do not (Alpern, pp. 309-310).

Walker too agrees that friendship in all its species does not genuinely satisfy the condition of good will though he does not discuss essential and accidental good will either. He argues that only good friends wish each other well for their own sakes, and that useful and pleasant friends do not really feel affection for each other (Walker, pp. 186-187). But he does observe that good friendship is essentially friendship, and that useful and pleasant friendships are accidentally friendship (p. 188).

Price agrees with Walker. But he prefers to speak not of a determinate definition which is qualified but of a determinable definition which is presumably determined (Price, ch. 5, pp. 138-140).

Cooper argues that good will is present not only in good friendships but also in useful and pleasant friendships. He cites Eth. 9. 5. 1167a 10-15 to the effect that Aristotle recognizes a spontaneous good will which arises toward someone with good character. And he implies that good will which arises for useful or pleasant qualities is not spontaneous (Cooper, "Forms," pp. 632 and 641-643). But Aristotle does not divide good will into spontaneous and nonsensitive types. What he does is assert that good will involves only sudden and superficial fondness and does not entail doing things together (Eth. 9. 5. 1166b34-1167a3). And that love involves tension and desire and entails familiarity (1166b32-34).
Incidentally, Cooper would have to agree that Aristotle uses δικ with an accusative at Eth. 9. 5. 1167a10-14 to indicate an end. For he translates the synonymous term ἔνι as "for the sake of" (Cooper, "Forms," pp. 641-643). And at 1167a15-18 Aristotle obviously uses δικ with a genitive to indicate a means.

Irwin also argues that Aristotle restricts good will to good friendship. He too cites Eth. 9. 5. 1167a10-14. He asserts that good will in useful and pleasant friendship has an instrumental justification (Irwin, Principles, ch. 18, nn. 2-3). Price agrees, and he also cites Eth. 9. 5. 1167a10-14 and 1167a14-18 (Price, ch. 5, pp. 152-154). Adkins is in agreement as well (Adkins, pp. 41-42).

Citing Psycl. 2. 5. 417b2-7, Couloubaritsis observes in general that one passion can become another through alteration (Couloubaritsis, "Philia," pp. 41-42). Couloubaritsis also offers a specific explanation of how good will develops into friendship. Good will is an achievement of thought which reaches its end. This achievement is an immobility which disposes us favorably toward someone else. And in its immobility, good will tries to surpass itself by engendering fondness (Couloubaritsis, "Philia," pp. 51-54). I would argue rather that good will itself does not engender fondness, but that a person toward whom we feel good will occasions it. For a person who is an object of good will is virtuous, and a virtuous person is lovable.

The distinction between essential and accidental friendship is the key to the solution of the problem of focal analysis. Aristotle uses the conception of focal analysis in the Eudemian Ethics to show how the definitions of good, useful, and pleasant friendship are related to one another. The problem is whether he also uses focal analysis in the Nicomachean Ethics to compare the definitions of these species. The solution is that he does.

Aristotle states in the Eudemian Ethics that definitions are related by focal analysis when a primary definition is implied by another definition, but another definition is not implied by a primary one. He gives an example. The definition of medical doctor is implied by that of medical instrument, but the definition of medical instrument is not implied by that of medical doctor (Eud. Eth. 7. 2. 1236a15-33). Owens points out that Aristotle's reference to the primary definition is graded. For the definition of medical art is also implied by the definition of medical doctor (Owens, pp. 131-132 and n. 6).

Aristotle asserts in the Nicomachean Ethics that good friendship is primarily and chiefly friendship, and that useful and pleasant friendships are friendship in accordance with some similarity (Nic. Eth. 8. 4. 1157a30-32). Now we can see that the definition of good friendship and those of useful and pleasant friendship are similar because all three definitions contain the element of good will. We can also see that the definition of good friendship is implied by those of useful and pleasant friendships, but the definitions of useful and pleasant friendship are not implied by that of good friendship. For good friendship entails good will essentially, but useful and pleasant friendships entail good will accidentally. Our assumption is that what is essentially good will is implied by what is good will accidentally.

Owens also asserts that focal analysis is present. He argues that the human association which is highest is imitated in lesser ways by the lower associations (Owens, pp. 132-133, n. 8). But he does not distinguish between essential good will and accidental good will. He states only that even though they differ essentially from the primary instance, the secondary instances are genuinely and literally friendships (pp. 132-133, n. 6).

Gauthier offers a solution similar to mine too. He asserts that the conception of friendship is a conception in which unity is found only in a relationship in which the unique term which realizes it perfectly is referred to by the terms which realize it imperfectly (Gauthier and Jolif, vol. 2, p.686). He apparently assumes that virtuous friendship is not defined in relation to useful and pleasant friendships. At least he asserts that useful and pleasant friendships are defined in relation to virtuous friendship (pp. 668-669).

Fraisse adds an interesting element to my interpretation. He argues in favor of focal analysis, and he explains that good friendship alone attains its essential unity. For only in virtuous friendship do useful and pleasant friendship find their unity. In it friendship attains its qualitative
perfection, and toward it accidental friendship evolve (Fraîse, pt. 2, pp. 225-232; see also pp. 202-217 and 217-226).

Fortenbaugh however denies that focal analysis is present in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. He attempts to argue that each species of friendship is defined by its own function. Good friends have the goal of loving each other for the sake of one another, useful friends have the goal of loving each other for the sake of personal benefits received, and pleasant friends have the goal of loving each other for the sake of the pleasure provided (Fortenbaugh, pp. 52-53). He according argues that the definitions of these species are not conceptually dependent on one another (pp. 58-59). Fortenbaugh even recognizes that good friendship rests on well wishing which is not self-interested, and that useful and pleasant friendship rest on well wishing which is self-interested (p. 55). But he still fails to see that good friendship is wishing what is good essentially for the sake of another, and that useful and pleasant friendships are wishing what is good accidentally for the sake of another.

Walker agrees that good friends wish one another well for the sake of each other, and that useful and pleasant friends do so for their own sake (Walker, pp. 186-187). He apparently would also agree that good friendship is essentially friendship, and that useful and pleasant friendships are accidentally friendship (p. 188). But nonetheless he does not believe that the definitions of these three species are amenable to focal analysis because of his rather strict conception of focal analysis. Walker argues that an element in the primary definition would have to be implied in a secondary definition by a relative phrase. And that an element in the primary definition could not be accidentally possessed by a secondary definition (pp. 192-194).

Price appears to argue that Walker does indeed present arguments to show that focal analysis is present (Price, ch. 5, pp. 141-141). Yet he too ultimately denies that an analysis of this sort is present. He apparently does so on only the slightest evidence. He notes only that the standard adjective for good friendship in the *Eudemian Ethics* are "primary" or "first", and in the *Nicomachean Ethics* these adjectives are "perfect" or "complete", and that "primarily and chiefly" are opposed to in "accordance with some similarity" at Nic. Eth. 8. 4. 1157a30-32 (pp. 137-138). But he also expresses some reservations about Aristotle's definition of focal analysis. He despairs of a decisive solution because Aristotle does not define sufficient conditions for focal analysis (pp. 134-137).
Bibliography


