

SELF-LOVE AND ALTRUISM*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Whether morality has rational authority is an open question insofar as we can seriously entertain conceptions of morality and practical reason according to which it need not be contrary to reason to fail to conform to moral requirements. Doubts about the authority of morality are especially likely to arise for those who hold a broadly prudential view of rationality.¹ It is common to think of morality as including various other-regarding duties of cooperation, forbearance, and aid. Most of us also regard moral obligations as authoritative practical considerations. But heeding these obligations appears sometimes to constrain the agent's pursuit of his own interests or aims. If we think of rationality in prudential terms—as what would promote the agent's own interests—we may wonder whether moral conduct is always rationally justifiable. Indeed, we do not need to think of rationality in exclusively prudential terms to raise this worry. The worry can arise even if there are impartial reasons—that is, nonderivative reasons to promote the welfare of others. For as long as there are prudential reasons, a conflict between impartial reason and prudential reason appears possible. Without some reason to treat impartial reasons as superior, the supremacy of other-regarding morality must remain doubtful.² These worries about the authority of other-regarding morality provide some incentive for those who want to defend the rational authority of

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¹ I have discussed some of these issues elsewhere, for instance, in "Rational Egoism, Self, and Others," in *Identity, Character, and Morality*, ed. O. Flanagan and A. Rorty (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990). Here, I focus on developing a nonstrategic form of egoism; I try to give a fuller sense of the historical traditions on which my own account draws so heavily and to present the principal systematic claims, worries, and resources more clearly than I have before.

² For a discussion of one version of this second form of the worry, see my "Kantian Rationalism: Inescapability, Authority, and Supremacy," in *Ethics and Practical Reason*, ed. Garrett Cullity and Berys Gaut (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

morality to try to reconcile the demands of self-interest and other-regarding morality.³

One form of reconciliation assumes that different people's interests are conceptually distinct but argues that they are in fact causally interdependent. This view might be called *strategic egoism*. On this view, it is in the long-term interest of agents to develop, maintain, and act on other-regarding attitudes, because compliance with familiar other-regarding moral norms of restraint, cooperation, and aid is mutually advantageous. Though each would be better off if others comply while she does not, the compliance of others is generally conditional on her own. If so, the way to enjoy the benefits of others' compliance is to be compliant oneself.

I have discussed the limitations of this view elsewhere.⁴ The main problems with strategic egoism have to do with the scope and stability of its justification of other-regarding norms. The strategic egoist can justify other-regarding duties only toward partners in systems of mutual advantage. But it is a common view that morality has a wider scope than this; it imposes obligations of restraint and aid where the agent stands to gain nothing strategically from the cooperation or restraint of the beneficiary. So, for instance, on this view (1) a person can apparently have no reason to be concerned about future generations, and (2) if the wealthy and talented have sufficient strength and resources so as to gain nothing by participating with the weak and handicapped in a system of mutual cooperation and forbearance, the former can have no reason, however modest, to assist the latter. If practical reason is interpreted in terms of strategic egoism but morality is not, then these are limitations in the scope of the rational authority of morality. If morality itself is interpreted in terms of strategic egoism, then these are counterintuitive limitations in the scope of morality itself. Even where the strategic egoist does justify other-regarding norms, the justification is unstable. For on this view, compliance with moral norms is always a second-best option behind undetected noncompliance. So as Glaucon and Adeimantus point out in Plato's *Republic*, if only I were able to enjoy the benefits of the compliance of others without the costs of my own compliance, then I would have no reason to comply (359b8–360d8). But moral norms seem counterfactually stable—they would continue to apply in these counterfactual circumstances—as other-regarding norms that the strategic egoist can justify are not. This counterfactual instability represents a further limitation of the strategic-egoist account of morality or its authority.

³ Because I do not assume that moral requirements must be rationally authoritative, I do not assume that doubts about the authority of morality imply skepticism or relativism. Moral requirements can be objective and important even if immoral conduct is not always irrational. Nonetheless, I have rationalist ambitions; I would like to see how far we can go in the direction of reconciling the demands of morality and the demands of practical reason, without distorting our views of morality or practical reason.

⁴ See my "Rational Egoism, Self, and Others" (*supra* note 1) and "Objectivity, Motivation, and Authority in Ethics" (unpublished).

As long as we rely on pretheoretical understandings of self-interest, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the coincidence between other-regarding morality and enlightened self-interest is at best imperfect and certainly counterfactually unstable.⁵ But there is an important philosophical tradition that insists that we ought to modify our pretheoretical understanding of self-interest on metaphysical grounds. According to this tradition, people's interests, properly understood, are metaphysically, and not just causally, interdependent such that acting on other-regarding moral requirements is a counterfactually reliable way for an agent to promote his own interests. Insofar as this sort of view rests on metaphysical claims about persons, we might call it *metaphysical egoism*. This sort of view is familiar from the Greek eudaimonist tradition, especially the work of Plato and Aristotle, and from the British idealist tradition, especially the work of T. H. Green. The version of metaphysical egoism that I find most promising draws on claims in these two traditions—in particular, Plato's discussions of love in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*, Aristotle's discussions of friendship and political community in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (NE) and the *Politics*, and Green's discussion of self-realization and the extension of the common good in the *Prolegomena to Ethics*.⁶ It develops these claims, in part, by appeal to some familiar, though not uncontroversial, claims about persons and personal identity. Because my own view draws so heavily on work in these two traditions, I want to sketch the principal context and features of these three historical discussions. I hope that the value of seeing their relations to each other and my own view will compensate for the fact that I must ignore or oversimplify a number of complex interpretive issues.

II. EUDAIMONISM AND OTHER-REGARDING VIRTUE

Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle are all eudaimonists; they think that an agent's practical reasoning should be regulated by a correct conception of his own happiness or *eudaimonia*. In the *Euthydemus*, Socrates assumes that we all aim at happiness (278e, 280b); the only issue is how to achieve it (279a, 282a). In the *Crito*, he believes that his practical deliberations about whether to escape his death sentence should be guided only by whether that would be a just course of action (48c–d), because he thinks a good life just is a life of justice (48b). In both the *Laches* and the *Charmides*, the investigations begin with the assumption that the virtues in question (courage and temperance) are important because they would improve and benefit young men if they were to acquire them, and at the end of the *Charmides*, Socrates assumes that if one had reason to be temperate it must be because temperance promotes the happiness of the person who has it

⁵ Cf. Henry Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics*, 7th ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1981), pp. 164–70, 499–503; and Gregory Kavka, "The Reconciliation Project," in *Morality, Reason, and Truth*, ed. David Copp and David Zimmerman (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Allanheld, 1984).

⁶ References to these works will be given parenthetically in the text.

(175d–176a). In later dialogues, Plato also appears to accept eudaimonism. In response to doubts about justice in the *Republic*, he defends the claim that justice is a virtue, to be admired and practiced, by arguing that justice contributes constitutively to the *eudaimonia* of the agent who is just. And in the *Symposium*, Diotima takes the pursuit of one's own *eudaimonia* to be beyond the need for justification (205a). Aristotle too appears to be a eudaimonist. Though people have different conceptions of *eudaimonia*, he thinks we all treat *eudaimonia* as the final good (NE 1095a16–21). *Eudaimonia* is the only unconditionally complete good; all other things are choiceworthy for the sake of their contribution to *eudaimonia* (1097a27–b6). In Book I, Aristotle makes clear that it is the agent's own *eudaimonia* that should regulate his practical reasoning. But this is also brought out when he insists that one would rightly resist undergoing a substantial change—for instance, one by which one was transformed into a god—even if this new being led a better life (1159a6–12, 1166a1–23).

Eudaimonism implies that if practical virtues are to be worth having and acting on then they must be beneficial to the agent. But then eudaimonism poses a clear threat to the recognition of moral or other-regarding virtues; insofar as virtues are traits of character whose exercise contributes to the agent's own *eudaimonia*, it may appear doubtful that other-regarding traits that are conventionally regarded as virtues are genuine virtues. This doubt is explored most fully in connection with justice in Plato's *Gorgias* and *Republic*. The basic problem is that the following four claims are inconsistent:

- (1) Justice is a virtue.
- (2) Virtues benefit their possessor.
- (3) Conventional justice often requires the agent to benefit others at his own expense.
- (4) Conventional justice = justice.

Claim (2) expresses the eudaimonist assumption on which Socrates (the character) and his interlocutors all agree. In the *Gorgias*, Callicles appeals to claims (1) through (3) to deny (4). He distinguishes between genuine or natural justice and conventional justice (483a) and argues that real or natural justice does not require the agent to help others or forbear from harming them, as conventional morality supposes (482d–e, 483a–b, 488b–490a). The naturally just person satisfies his own unrestrained desires (488b). In the *Republic*, Thrasymachus appeals to claims (2) through (4) to deny (1). He accepts the assumption that justice is other-regarding and denies that justice is really a virtue. By contrast, Socrates and Plato are committed to (1), (2), and (4); they deny (3). Though they believe justice is other-regarding, they insist that it also benefits the agent. In the *Republic*, Glaucon and Adeimantus recognize one way in which justice is mutually beneficial, but they insist that this does not afford an adequate eudaimonist defense of justice. Glaucon describes the origin and nature of

justice in terms of a social contract designed to secure mutual nonaggression and advantage (358e–359b). If justice involves conformity to such norms, the real benefit comes from another's justice, not one's own; if one does benefit from one's own justice, this is only because the justice of others is conditional on one's own. When justice is understood this way, it becomes clear why people practice it "as something necessary, not as something good" (358c). If one's own injustice could go undetected, this would apparently be best; one would enjoy the benefits of the justice of others without the costs of one's own. If so, justice is the second-best option, whereas undetected injustice is the first-best (359a). This is illustrated by the ring of Gyges, which enables the person wearing it to become invisible (359b–360d); if I could maintain the appearance of justice, and so secure the benefits of other people's justice, without incurring the costs of actually being just, I would have no reason to be just. Adeimantus and Glaucon claim that it follows that it is the appearance of justice, rather than justice itself, that is valuable (360e–362c, 362e–363e, 365b–367e). They demand that Socrates show that justice is not merely an instrumental good but that it is good "in and by itself" and "for its own sake" (367b4–5, c8–9, e2–4). In so doing, they are rejecting appeal to the purely strategic value of justice and insisting that the eudaimonist defense of justice be counterfactually stable.⁷

Unlike Plato, Aristotle does not explicitly confront eudaimonist doubts about the other-regarding virtues. But he cannot avoid them. Because he also accepts eudaimonist assumptions about the virtues, this raises for him the question of how other-regarding traits such as courage, friendship, and justice, which he treats as virtues, can be genuine virtues.

III. PLATONIC LOVE

One way to look at the Platonic view of love (*eros*) is as a resource for addressing a natural objection to the eudaimonist defense of justice in the *Republic*. In response to eudaimonist doubts about justice from Thrasym-

⁷ Some might deny the relevance of counterfactual instability. It has been suggested that the Epicureans thought that they did not need to consider merely counterfactual challenges to justice. See Cicero, *De Officiis* iii 39, and *De Re Publica* iii 27; cf. A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 135. If my commitment to other-regarding norms would collapse in radically different circumstances, does this show that there is anything wrong with my commitment to them in actual circumstances? Even if one's commitments in some counterfactual circumstances—for instance, those in which everyone was self-sufficient and invulnerable—seem irrelevant to one's commitments in actual circumstances, other forms of counterfactual stability are more difficult to ignore. The story of Gyges, though fictional, merely makes vivid considerations that are often at work in real-life situations. Often I can fail to observe norms of cooperation, aid, and nonaggression with assurance of impunity. In these cases, it is as if I had a ring of Gyges. If Gyges has no reason to honor these norms, neither do I in such cases. And even in circumstances in which compliance with other-regarding norms is rational, the accessibility of Gyges' circumstances suggests that my commitment in actual circumstances is to my own self-interest, not to other-regarding morality. Cf. Terence Irwin, *Plato's Ethics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), section 130.

achus, Glaucon, and Adeimantus, Plato defends the claim that justice is a genuine eudaimonic virtue by arguing that justice contributes constitutively to the *eudaimonia* of the agent who is just. The value of justice depends on Plato's conception of justice as a psychic state in which one's appetites and emotions are regulated by practical deliberation about one's overall good. It is reasonably clear why this sort of psychic justice contributes to the agent's own eudaimonia. What is not clear is what psychic justice has to do with the conventional other-regarding justice about which eudaimonist doubts were expressed in the first place. Indeed, we seem to be back where we started. For it is unclear why someone whose actions are regulated by a concern for his own overall good should take anything more than a strategic interest in the well-being of others. If there is no systematic connection between psychic justice and other-regarding justice, then Plato's defense of justice is fallacious.⁸

Plato's account of love in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus* suggests such a connection.⁹ The best sort of love, Plato thinks, aims at what is good or fine (*Symposium* 201a, 204d, 205d, 206b–e), in particular, at *producing* what is good or fine (206c–208b). Plato believes that virtue is fine, and that virtue, conceived of as a psychic state in which one's appetites and emotions are regulated by practical deliberation about one's overall good, is the controlling ingredient in a good life. So when A loves B, Plato concludes, A will aim to make B virtuous (*Symposium* 209a, 212a). Such love benefits the beloved, because one benefits by becoming virtuous precisely insofar as one is better off being regulated by a correct conception of one's overall good. Plato also believes, however, that the lover benefits from loving another (*Phaedrus* 245b), as he must if he is to reconcile love of another with his eudaimonism. The key to seeing how Plato can reconcile interpersonal love with self-love is to appreciate the way in which he thinks that reproducing one's virtuous traits in another is an approximation to immortality (*Symposium* 206c–208b).

According to Plato, my own persistence requires intrapersonal reproduction. My own continued existence, despite both compositional and qualitative change, is a matter of reproducing my traits into the future.

Now although we speak of an individual as being the same so long as he continues to exist in the same form, and therefore assume that a man is the same person in his dotage as in his infancy, yet, for all we call him the same, every bit of him is different, and every day he is becoming a new man, while the old man is ceasing to exist, as you can see from his hair, his flesh, his bones, his blood, and all the rest

⁸ Cf. David Sachs, "A Fallacy in the *Republic*," in *Plato II*, ed. Gregory Vlastos (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1971).

⁹ This perspective on Platonic love is suggested and explored in Terence Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), pp. 241–42, 267–73, and Irwin, *Plato's Ethics*, ch. 18.

of his body. And not only his body, for the same thing happens to his soul. And neither his manners, nor his disposition, nor his thoughts, nor his desires, nor his sufferings, nor his fears are the same throughout his life, for some of them grow, while others disappear. . . . In this way every mortal creature is perpetuated, not by always being the same in every way, as a divine being is, but by what goes away and gets old leaving behind and in its place some other new thing that is of the same sort as it was. (*Symposium* 207d3–208b12)¹⁰

To persist I must reproduce my existing traits into the future. But if my own continued existence is to be good for me, then I must reproduce my valuable traits into the future, and this requires me to reproduce my virtuous traits into the future. Though Plato mentions both physical and psychological persistence, it is clear that his real concern is with psychological persistence. For he regards the soul essentially as a capacity for deliberation, decision, and action (*Phaedrus* 245c–e), and he regards the dominant component of *eudaimonia* as consisting in the proper psychic ordering of the agent's soul. My persistence, then, requires my psychological reproduction into the future, and if this is to be good for me, it should involve the reproduction of those parts of my psychology that contribute to my virtuousness. But interpersonal love involves the reproduction of my virtuous traits in another, who can live beyond me; this is why interpersonal love is correctly viewed as the next best thing to immortality (*Symposium* 206c1–209e5). It also explains why spiritual intercourse and love are better than bodily intercourse and love; spiritual love begets greater and more valuable progeny (*Symposium* 209a1–e4). This allows us to regard someone like Socrates or Solon as more fecund and closer to immortality than someone like the old woman who lived in the shoe (who had so many children she didn't know what to do).

On Plato's view, then, intrapersonal and interpersonal love are parallel; indeed, love of another is really just a special case of self-love. I extend myself into the future by reproducing my traits into the future. When I reproduce myself systematically I persist; when I don't, I do not. But I can also reproduce myself somewhat less systematically in others by sharing thought and discussion with them, in particular, about how best to live (*Apology* 38a). On this view, the interests of those whom I love become part of my interests in just the sort of way that the interests of my future self are part of my overall interests. On this view, my concern for my beloved's good, as for my own future good, is not unconditional; it is choiceworthy as a constituent part of my overall good. As such, however, it is choiceworthy in itself.

¹⁰ This translation from the *Symposium* is adapted from that of Michael Joyce in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961).

IV. ARISTOTELIAN FRIENDSHIP

Aristotle assumes that virtues must contribute to the agent's own *eudaimonia*. But then he owes us an explanation of how the other-regarding traits such as courage, friendship, and justice, which he recognizes as virtues, are genuine virtues.

Aristotle links virtue with what is fine (*kalon*) (NE 1103a10, 1120a24, 1122b6–8). In the *Rhetoric*, he links what is fine with what is beneficial to others.¹¹

Virtue is, according to the usual view, . . . a faculty of conferring many great benefits. . . . The parts of virtue are justice, courage, temperance, magnificence, magnanimity, liberality, gentleness, prudence, wisdom. If virtue is a faculty of beneficence, the highest kinds of it must be those which are most useful to others, and for this reason men honor most the just and the courageous. . . . (1366a36–b6)

[Also fine are] all those actions done for the sake of others, since these less than other actions are done for one's own sake; and all successes which benefit others and not oneself; and services done to one's benefactors, for this is just; and good deeds generally, since they are not directed to one's own profit. (1367a4–6)

Insofar as this conception of virtue is tied to the good of others, it is recognizably a moral conception of virtue. The obvious question is whether the moral virtues are eudaimonic virtues.

Though Aristotle's own ethical views in the *Nicomachean Ethics* begin from reflection on common beliefs, his views sometimes revise common sense, even a reconstructed common sense of the sort presented in the *Rhetoric*. Significantly, Aristotle's own account of the relation among virtue, the fine, and the good of others is different from that found in the *Rhetoric*. For in the *Nicomachean Ethics* he links virtue with what is fine and what is fine with a *common good* (1122b21, 1123a5, 1129b15–18). He brings this out in his discussion of proper self-love:¹² "And when everyone competes to achieve what is fine and strains to do the finest actions, everything that is right will be done for the common good, and each person individually will receive the greatest of goods, since that is the character of virtue" (NE 1169a8–12). In linking virtue with a common good, Aristotle is rejecting the popular contrast, noted in the *Rhetoric*, between other-regarding concern and the agent's own good, and is attempting to link eudaimonic virtue with moral virtue. For Aristotle, as for Socrates and Plato, the real test case for this claim would seem to be

¹¹ Translations of passages from the *Rhetoric* are from the revised Oxford translation in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

¹² Translations of passages from the *Nicomachean Ethics* (NE) are from *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Terence Irwin (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1985).

justice, because justice is perhaps the most clearly other-regarding virtue (*Rhetoric* 1366a36–b6); in fact, general justice is complete virtue in relation to another (*NE* 1129b20–30).

Aristotle's insistence on the connection between justice and a common good suggests that we look to his account of friendship for help in constructing a eudaimonist defense of justice, because friendship is the virtue appropriate to communities or associations in general and includes the perfection of justice (1155a22–28, 1159b25–1160a8).¹³ If so, this gives a special importance to his discussion of friendship that could explain why he devotes what might otherwise seem to be disproportionate attention (two whole books) to friendship.¹⁴

Initially, Aristotle suggests that all forms of friendship involve reciprocal concern for the other's own sake (1155b28–33). He then identifies three different kinds of friendship: friendship for *advantage*, friendship for *pleasure*, and the *best* kind of friendship (*NE* VIII 3–8). Both advantage-friendship and pleasure-friendship, Aristotle then claims, involve something less than concern for the other's own sake (1156a11–13). Advantage-friendship typically involves the concern one develops for other members of mutually beneficial cooperative schemes; such friends last as long as they share common and mutually advantageous goals. Pleasure-friendship involves strong and intense emotions among friends that reflect the pleasure each takes in the qualities and company of the other; these friendships involve a strong attachment and concern for the other, but these attachments are not stable insofar as they are based on transient emotional intensity. Both kinds of friendship are to be contrasted with virtue-friendship. This is friendship among people similarly virtuous in which each cares about the other for the other's own sake.

Aristotle anticipates some of his claims about the justification of virtue-friendship (which begins at IX 4) in VIII 12, where he suggests that we should take parental friendship as our model of friendship. The parent is concerned with the child's welfare for the child's own sake. This concern is appropriate on eudaimonist grounds, because the parent can regard the child as "another-self" (1161b19, 28). The child can be regarded as another-self of the parent, because the child owes its existence and physical and psychological nature in significant part to the parent; this both echoes and helps explain the common view that a parent's interests are *extended* by the life of the child.¹⁵ Aristotle suggests that similar claims can be made

¹³ My understanding of Aristotle's account of friendship and its role in his ethical theory has been influenced by Terence Irwin, *Aristotle's First Principles* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), esp. ch. 18.

¹⁴ Even justice gets only one book (*NE* V), and it is not uncommon to regard friendship, unlike justice, as a comparatively minor virtue.

¹⁵ Insofar as this is true, Aristotle can provide further justification for his assumption that there are posthumous benefits and harms and that the welfare of one's loved ones and the success of one's projects, after one is dead, are part of a complete good (*NE* 1100a10–31, 1101a23–30).

about friendship between siblings. In virtue of living together, siblings causally interact in important ways and share many things in common, and thus can regard each other as other-selves (1161b30–35).

Despite important differences between familial friendship and virtue-friendship, Aristotle's account of familial friendship brings out clearly what is crucial to his justification of the other-regarding concern of virtue-friendship. Aristotle explains the justification of virtue-friendship in terms of proper *self-love* (1166a1–2, 10, 1166a30–32, 1168b1–1169a12). "The excellent person is related to his friend in the same way as he is related to himself, since a friend is another self; and therefore, just as his own being is choiceworthy for him, the friend's being is choiceworthy for him in the same or a similar way" (1170b6–9). One plausible interpretation of Aristotle's claims about the relation between friendship and self-love is reminiscent of Plato's analogy between intrapersonal and interpersonal reproduction in his account of philosophical *eros*. Aristotle believes that proper self-love requires a proper conception of the self and of what is beneficial for the self. After insisting that the important features of interpersonal friendship are to be found in intrapersonal friendship, Aristotle writes:

Hence he [the virtuous person] wishes goods and apparent goods to himself. . . . He wishes and does them for his own sake, since he does them for the sake of his thinking part, and that is what each person seems to be. He wishes himself to live and to be preserved. And he wishes this for the part by which he has intelligence more than any other part. For being is a good for the good person, and each person wishes for goods for himself. And no one chooses to be another person even if that other will have every good when he has come into being. . . . Rather [each of us chooses goods] on condition that he remains whatever he is; and each person would seem to be the understanding part, or that most of all. (1166a15–23)

Later, in distinguishing proper from vulgar self-love, Aristotle makes a similar claim:

However, it is this [the virtuous person] more than any other sort of person who seems to be a self-lover. At any rate, he awards himself what is finest and best of all, and gratifies the most controlling part of himself, obeying it in everything. And just as a city and every other composite system seems to be above all its most controlling part, the same is true of a human being; hence someone loves himself most if he likes and gratifies this part. (1168b28–34)

In these passages Aristotle wants, in part, to identify a person with the controlling part of his soul or his understanding. We know that Aristotle thinks a human is essentially a psycho-physical compound in which reason can regulate thought and action (1097b24–1098a16, 1102b13–1103a3).

If so, it would be reasonable for him to think that the persistence of an individual consists in the continuous employment of his rational faculties to regulate his thought and action. Moreover, we know that the virtues of character involve the rational part of the soul regulating the nonrational part of the soul in such a way that the nonrational part of the soul harmonizes with the exercise of practical reason (1102b25–28) and that the correct exercise of practical reason—the proper realization of an individual’s essence—is the controlling ingredient in his *eudaimonia* (1098b15–16, 1099b17–27, 1100b1–11, 1100b31–34). This would explain why Aristotle thinks that proper love for oneself involves a concern for one’s practical reason and its virtuous exercise.

If this is what underlies Aristotle’s account of proper intrapersonal love, we can see how he thinks interpersonal love or friendship might be modeled on it. I preserve or extend myself by exercising my practical reason—forming beliefs and desires, deliberating about them, and acting as the result of deliberate choice. But the same sort of psychological interaction and interdependence can be found, presumably to a lesser extent, between two different persons. On Aristotle’s view, friends share similar psychological states, such as aims and goals (1170b16–17), and live together (1159b25–33, 1166a1–12, 1171b30–1172a6). Even if psychological similarity is necessary for friendship, it is clearly insufficient; it should be produced and sustained by living together and sharing thought and discussion (1157b5–12, 18–21, 1170b10–14). This account of interpersonal psychological dependence among friends allows us to see how Aristotle thinks we can view a friend as another-self and thus how he can view the justification of friendship in terms of self-love. So, for example, Aristotle thinks that the way in which a (decent) parent nurtures, educates, and provides opportunities for her child establishes psychological relations between them that justify us in claiming that the child’s well-being extends the well-being of the parent (1161b17–29). It is this same sort of psychological interdependence that exists between friends who share thought and discussion that justifies each in seeing the other as extending his interests and, hence, as another-self. But then we can see how Aristotle can think that friendship involves concern for the friend’s own sake and yet admits of eudaimonist justification. If B extends A’s interests, then B’s interests are a part of A’s. This is true when A and B are the same person and when they are different people. My friend’s good is a part of my own overall good in just the way that the well-being of my future self is part of my overall good. On this view, my friend’s good, like my own future good, is not unconditionally complete; it is choiceworthy as a constituent part of my overall good. As such, however, it is a complete good, choiceworthy in itself.

Indeed, Aristotle can extend the scope of his eudaimonist justification of interpersonal concern from friends to other members of a just political community. It is true that he recognizes that virtue-friendship cannot hold on the scale of a political community that is just (NE 1158a11–12,

1170b29–1171a20; *Politics* 1262b3–20) and that political communities are associations for mutual advantage and do not involve the best sort of friendship (*NE* 1160a11–15). Nonetheless, political communities that are just have to a significant degree the two features that are crucial to the justification of virtue-friendship and familial friendship: there is commonality of aims and aspirations among members of the political association, and this commonality is produced by members of the association living together in the right way, in particular, by defining their aims and goals consensually (1167a25–28, 1155a24–28). Insofar as this is true, members of such a political association can see the interests of other members implicated in their own interests. And members of such a community can aim at justice for its own sake, because justice, Aristotle believes, promotes the *common* good, which is presumably the good common to them insofar as they are members of an interdependent political community (1129b15–18). This begins to explain Aristotle's reasons for his well-known belief that we are essentially political animals (*NE* 1097b9–12; *Politics* 1253a2) and that, as a result, the complete good for an individual can only be realized in a political community.

V. GREEN ON SELF-REALIZATION AND THE COMMON GOOD

Green belongs to the nineteenth-century tradition of British idealism, but his own ethical views are in some ways similar to important strands in the Greek eudaimonist tradition and were in fact heavily influenced by his study of Plato and Aristotle. These aspects of his views are clearest in his principal ethical work, the *Prolegomena to Ethics*.¹⁶ Whereas he thought that Plato and Aristotle had too narrow a conception of various virtues and the common good (*PE* 257, 261–62, 265–66, 270, 279–80), he thought they were right to ground an agent's duties in an account of *eudaimonia* whose principal ingredient is a conception of practical virtue regulated by the common good (253, 256, 263, 271, 279).

Like other idealists, such as F. H. Bradley, Green thinks that the proper conception of self-realization involves the good of others as a constituent part. For Bradley, this kind of reconciliation is a direct consequence of a fundamentally anti-individualist metaphysics that treats persons as aspects of an interpersonal organic unity.¹⁷ From my perspective, this risks assuming something too close to what one wanted to see proved. By contrast, Green argues for reconciliation and any collectivist metaphysical claims from recognizably individualist premises.¹⁸

¹⁶ T. H. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, ed. A. C. Bradley (New York: Thomas Crowell, 1969); references to specific sections of this work will be given parenthetically in the text.

¹⁷ See F. H. Bradley, *Ethical Studies*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), esp. essay V.

¹⁸ To my mind, Green's ethical theory is vastly superior to Bradley's; it is not only better informed as to the history of ethics and less dogmatic, but also much more subtle and resourceful.

Green thinks that moral responsibility requires capacities for practical deliberation and that practical deliberation requires self-consciousness. Nonresponsible agents, such as brutes and small children, appear to act on their strongest desires or, if they deliberate, to deliberate only about the instrumental means to the satisfaction of their desires (86, 92, 96). By contrast, responsible agents must be able to distinguish between the *intensity* and *authority* of their desires and deliberate about the appropriateness of their desires and aims (92, 96, 103, 107, 220).¹⁹ But this requires one to be able to distinguish oneself from particular desires and impulses and to be able to frame the question about what it would be best on the whole for one to do (85–86).²⁰ Green thinks that the process of forming and acting on a conception of what it is best on the whole for me to do is a process of forming and acting on a conception of my own overall good (91–92, 128).

A man, we will suppose, is acted on at once by an impulse to revenge an affront, by a bodily want, by a call of duty, and by fear of certain results incidental to his avenging the affront or obeying the call of duty. We will suppose further that each passion . . . suggests a different line of action. So long as he is undecided how to act, all are, in a way, external to him. He presents them to himself as influences by which he is consciously affected but which are not he, and with none of which he yet identifies himself. . . . So long as this state of things continues, no moral effect ensues. It ensues when the man's relation to these influences is altered by his identifying himself with one of them, by his taking the object of one of them as for the time his good. This is to *will*, and is in itself moral action. . . . (146)

To be a moral agent, Green thinks, requires distinguishing oneself from one's beliefs and desires, deliberating about them, and acting on those deliberations. He concludes that an agent should see his own good as consisting in the full realization of these deliberative faculties (172, 180–81, 192, 234, 239, 254).

Moreover, Green believes that full self-realization can take place only in a community of ends (183–84, 190–91, 199, 232) in which no one can “contemplate himself as in a better state, or on the way to the best, without contemplating others, not merely as a means to that better state, but as sharing it with him” (199). I must view others as my “alter egos”

¹⁹ Here, as elsewhere, Green shows the influence of both Butler and Kant. Cf. Bishop Butler, *Fifteen Sermons Preached at the Rolls Chapel*, abridged as *Five Sermons*, ed. Stephen Darwall (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1983), sermon II, paragraphs 13–14; Immanuel Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. J. Ellington (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1981), pp. 446–48, 457, 459–60 (Academy pagination); and Kant, *The Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. L. W. Beck (Indianapolis: Library of Liberal Arts, 1956), pp. 61–62, 72, 87 (Academy pagination).

²⁰ Cf. Terence Irwin, “Morality and Personality: Kant and Green,” in *Self and Nature in Kant's Philosophy*, ed. Allen W. Wood (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).

(191, 200) and aim at a common good (202, 236). But why? Green thinks that capacities for practical deliberation require self-consciousness and ground self-realization. *Self-realization* involves aiming at a “permanent” or overall good. But an agent’s interactions with others extend the effects of his deliberations more widely and, hence, make his own life more permanent and complete (229–32).

That determination of an animal organism by a self-conscious principle, which makes a man and is presupposed by the interest in permanent good, carries with it a certain appropriation by the man to himself of the beings with whom he is connected by natural ties, so that they become to him as himself and in providing for himself he provides for them. Projecting himself into the future as a permanent subject of possible well-being or ill-being—and he must so project himself in seeking for a permanent good—he associates his kindred with himself. It is this association that neutralises the effect which the anticipation of death must otherwise have on the demand for a permanent good. (231)

Green is not explicit about how family members or others with whom I associate make my good more permanent. The interest he thinks an agent is justified in taking in others seems to depend on the shared life of the agent and others (232). Practical reason relies on self-consciousness and thus aims at a life that realizes well one’s deliberative capacities. These capacities are exercised in the reflective pursuit of activities that involve judgment, planning, and control. But cooperation with others on common ends allows one to participate in larger and more complex projects that affect others and have more lasting significance (191, 232). Insofar as I enter into such relationships and contribute to such projects, I extend my deliberative control and thus extend my own good. But as my deliberations and those of others become interdependent, so do our interests. Though Green thinks small, intimate associations make for a fuller realization of our moral capacities than a solitary existence does, he thinks that we achieve still fuller self-realization when we participate in more-inclusive political communities regulated by liberal principles.

Green concludes that if proper self-realization implies that the good of each includes in part the good of others, then this undermines the popular contrast between self-love and benevolence (232). We should view those with whom we participate in such associations as “alter egos,” for whom we care as we care about ourselves (191, 200). We should weight their interests with our own, and see ourselves as compensated when we make what would otherwise be sacrifices to them and to our common projects (376). Indeed, Green goes so far as to claim that when each is engaged in proper self-realization, there can be no conflict or competition of interests (244).

VI. PERSONS, PERSISTENCE, AND DELIBERATIVE CONTROL

Like Plato, Aristotle, and Green, I want to explore the resources for a eudaimonist defense of other-regarding concern that models interpersonal relations and concern on intrapersonal relations and concern. My version of metaphysical egoism, like theirs, relies on certain assumptions about persons and personal identity.

Locke distinguished between persons and men (or, as we might say, human beings) and claimed that the concept of a person is a normative or “forensic” concept.²¹ In both morality and law, persons are responsible agents; it is only persons who can properly be praised and blamed, because it is only persons who can properly be held accountable for their actions.²² Plato, Aristotle, and Green all see nonresponsible agents, such as brutes and small children, as acting on their strongest desires. By contrast, responsible agents can distinguish between the intensity and authority of their desires. For Plato, Aristotle, and Green, this requires being able to deliberate about one’s overall good and to regulate one’s appetites and emotions and, ultimately, one’s actions in accord with these deliberations (*Republic* 437e–442c; *De Anima* II 2, and NE 1102b13–1103a3, 1111b5–1113a14; PE 91–92, 96, 103, 107, 128, 146, 220). If so, capacities for practical deliberation—formulating, assessing, revising, choosing, and implementing projects and goals in light of a conception about what is best—are essential to being a person.

Deliberative capacities may be essential to being a person, but this does not itself tell us what the persistence of a particular person consists in. Persons appear to survive some physical and psychological changes, but not others. If we distinguish sameness of person from sameness of human being, it is arguable that what personal identity consists in, and what distinguishes substantial from nonsubstantial change for a person, is some kind of continuity of mental life.

For it is arguable that it is only those physical changes that destroy continuity of mental life that destroy a person; other physical changes are alterations in a persisting person. For instance, brain damage that preserves important elements of a continued mental life is nonsubstantial change and harm; but destruction of the brain is (normally) substantial change, in particular, death, because it terminates a heretofore continuous stream of consciousness.

Moreover, it seems clear that certain psychological changes and incapacities do or would produce substantial change, regardless of the sort of

²¹ John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), book II, chapter xxvii, sections 8, 15, 17–21, 23, 26.

²² Nonresponsible agents might usefully be praised or blamed for forward-looking (e.g., deterrent) reasons; but they do not *deserve* praise or blame. Moreover, in claiming that ‘person’ is a “forensic” concept, Locke means not only that only persons can be held responsible but also that holding P2 responsible for P1’s actions only makes sense if P2 = P1. I am here appealing to the former claim. I doubt the latter claim is true; I suspect responsibility presupposes deliberative control, rather than identity.

physical change involved in this mental change and regardless of the physical continuity that might exist through this psychological change. So, for example, if I enter an irreversible and complete vegetative state, then, other things being equal, this is a substantial change that destroys me, regardless of how this psychological change is realized physically and whether my body continues to function.

Furthermore, there are thought experiments in which important kinds of mental and physical continuity, which normally go together, come apart, and in which our intuitions about personal identity seem to track psychological relations. Locke imagines that the same person might inhabit different bodies at different points in time, as when the person of a prince might come to occupy the body of a cobbler if the consciousness of the prince is somehow transferred to the body of the cobbler.²³ But Locke leaves the mechanism by which such a transference might occur unspecified. Sydney Shoemaker describes a more satisfactory case of body switch that involves brain transplant.²⁴ In Shoemaker's case, surgical techniques have advanced so that brains may be surgically removed, reconnected, and transplanted in ways that preserve psychological continuity. Two patients, Brown and Robinson, have fairly similar bodies, and each undergoes brain surgery in which the brain is removed; however, during the procedures, their brains are inadvertently put into the wrong bodies. The person with Robinson's brain and Brown's body dies on the operating table due to complications. The surviving patient—call him Brownson—has Brown's brain and Robinson's body. Though Brownson has Robinson's body, all of his intentional states (e.g., his beliefs, desires, and intentions) are similar to and causally dependent on Brown's, rather than Robinson's, intentional states. Is Brownson Robinson or Brown (or neither)? If we were to enter Brownson's hospital room without knowing what had transpired in the operating room, presumably we would initially identify Brownson as Robinson. But as we talked to Brownson, our views would likely change. Brownson has apparent memories of Brown's life, not Robinson's. He intends to finish writing a book like Brown's book, not Robinson's. And he is eager to return to Brown's wife and children, whereas Robinson had no wife or children. When we learned what had transpired in the operating room, it would seem natural to view the inadvertent brain-transplant as a body switch. People receive artificial limbs or organ transplants; a body switch is just an extreme case of this. If so, Brown is the surviving recipient and Robinson is the dead donor. That is, Brownson is Brown. Our intuitions about Brownson seem to support a mentalistic, rather than a bodily, view of personal identity.²⁵

²³ Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, sections 14, 15, and 19.

²⁴ Sydney Shoemaker, *Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963), p. 23.

²⁵ However, Brownson does have one very important part of Brown's body, viz., his brain. There is, therefore, a kind of physical criterion of identity—one that defines personal iden-

On one such mentalistic view, what makes persons at different times the same person and, hence, what unites different parts of a single life is psychological continuity.²⁶ A series of persons is psychologically *continuous* insofar as contiguous members in the series are psychologically well connected. A pair of persons are psychologically *connected* insofar as the intentional states (e.g., beliefs, desires, and intentions) and actions of one are causally dependent upon those of the other. Of particular importance, given our views about persons, are *deliberative* connections that hold among actions, intentions, and prior deliberations in the deliberate maintenance and modification of intentional states and in the performance of actions that reflect these prior deliberations. Connectedness is a matter of degree; it is a function of the strength and centrality of individual connections and the number of connections.²⁷ Continuity can also be a matter of degree; given two chains A and B, if the links in A are better connected than the links in B, then any points in A will be more continuous than any points in B. On this view, personal identity consists in maximal psychological continuity.

VII. INTERPERSONAL SELF-EXTENSION

But personal identity cannot consist in psychological continuity alone, as is demonstrated in fission cases in which a single stream of consciousness divides into two equal branches.²⁸ Consider the following case. Tom, Zeke, and Zach are identical triplets and get in a serious car accident. Zeke and Zach are brain-dead; Tom is not, but his body is hopelessly mangled. Assume that it is possible to transplant Tom's brain into Zeke's body and that this preserves Tom's psychological continuity. If we do this (case 1),

ity in terms of continuity of the brain—that can accommodate the kind of body swap in Brownson's case. But this is an implausible form of the physical criterion. The obvious question is "Why is the brain especially important?" No one thinks that the foot, the nose, or even the heart is necessary or sufficient for personal identity. The brain is a candidate only because in this case, and most others, continuity of the brain is what secures continuity of mental life. But then the reason for focusing on the brain is psychological, not physical. This supports a psychological criterion, however, not a physical one.

²⁶ Similar mentalistic views are defended by Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), part III; and Sydney Shoemaker, "Personal Identity: A Materialist's Account," in Sydney Shoemaker and Richard Swinburne, *Personal Identity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984).

²⁷ Some kinds of psychological connections may seem more central or important than others. For instance, my career goals and plans and the actions that depend upon them seem more central to my psychological profile than my preference about what shirt to wear on a particular morning and the actions that depend on that preference. But my career aims seem more central than my fashion preferences largely because more of my beliefs, desires, intentions, and actions depend on the former than on the latter. If so, perhaps qualitative differences among psychological connections can be cashed out in purely quantitative terms.

²⁸ The problem of fission for mentalistic views about personal identity was first raised, I believe, by Thomas Reid; see Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, ed. Baruch Brody (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1969), p. 357. Fission and its significance are discussed by David Wiggins, *Identity and Spatio-Temporal Continuity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967); Robert Nozick, *Philosophical Explanations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), ch. 1; Parfit, *Reasons and Persons*, ch. 12; and Shoemaker, "Personal Identity," sections 12–13.

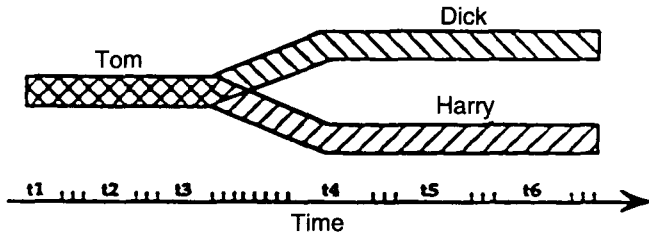


FIGURE 1. Fission and psychological continuity.

we regard Tom as the surviving recipient and Zeke as the dead donor (Zach is simply dead). Now assume that half the brain is sufficient to sustain psychological continuity.²⁹ If half of Tom's brain is seriously damaged and we transplant the healthy half into Zeke's body (case 2), Tom again survives. If, however, Tom's entire brain is healthy and we transplant half of it into Zeke's body and half into Zach's (case 3), then we have a case of fission. Call the recuperating patient in Zeke's body Dick and the one in Zach's body Harry. There is just as much psychological continuity between Tom and Dick and between Tom and Harry as there was between Tom and the recuperating patient—that is, Tom—in cases 1 and 2. (See Figure 1.) There seem to be five main options about how to describe what happens to Tom during fission and his relationship to Dick and Harry.

- (i) Tom does not survive fission; in particular, he does not survive as Dick or as Harry.
- (ii) Tom survives as Dick, rather than Harry.
- (iii) Tom survives as Harry, rather than Dick.
- (iv) Tom survives as Dick and as Harry.
- (v) Tom survives as the scattered person consisting of Dick and Harry.

Each answer is initially hard to believe.

²⁹ There is clinical evidence that suggests that severing the corpus callosum can produce two distinct spheres of consciousness, corresponding to the right and left hemispheres of the brain. See, for example, R. W. Perry, "The Great Cerebral Commissure," *Scientific American*, vol. 210 (1964); and Thomas Nagel, "Brain Bisection and the Unity of Consciousness," in *Personal Identity*, ed. John Perry (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975). When hemispheres are severed, dividing consciousness, each hemisphere can "learn" to perform some functions that the other had performed for the united brain, and in some patients various capacities usually found in only one hemisphere are found in both. Insofar as this is true, the possibility of dividing the brain and preserving two qualitatively identical but distinct streams of consciousness is not so fantastic. A residual empirical obstacle is that the functionality of a single hemisphere of the brain seems to depend upon the integrity of the brain stem, which does not admit of division. But these empirical obstacles to dividing the brain are not important, I think. What we would or should say about personal identity in merely counterfactual circumstances can constrain what we think personal identity consists in and what its significance is, and this can affect what we can or should say about personal identity and its significance in actual circumstances.

Against (i), we might note that there is just as much psychological continuity between Tom and Dick and between Tom and Harry as there was between Tom and the recuperating patient—that is, Tom—in cases 1 and 2. If Tom survives in cases 1 and 2, how can he fail to survive fission? Surely, he has the same reasons to be concerned about Dick and about Harry in case 3 as he did to be concerned about himself in cases 1 and 2. As Derek Parfit says in his discussion of fission, how can a double success be counted a failure?³⁰

Moreover, neither (ii) nor (iii) seems plausible. Dick and Harry have exactly equal claims to being Tom. It is true that one, but not the other, could nonetheless be Tom. But in virtue of what facts would one of them, rather than the other, be Tom? If we believe that personal identity must consist in facts about the relations among the physical and/or psychological states of persons, their claims to be identical to Tom must stand or fall together.

But they cannot each be Tom; (iv) must be false. Identity is a transitive relation (if $A = B$ and $B = C$, then it must be true that $A = C$). And it seems clear that Dick is not the same person as Harry; they wake up in different hospital beds, have distinct streams of consciousness, and go on to lead different lives. But if Dick is not identical to Harry, then Tom cannot be identical with Dick and with Harry (if $B \neq C$, then it cannot be the case both that $A = B$ and that $A = C$).

Nor can Tom survive as a scattered person, viz., the sum of Dick and Harry. In part because persons are normatively significant entities—the bearers of rights and responsibilities—persons must be functionally integrated systems; if one is to be held responsible for one's actions, then one's actions must be caused in the right way by one's beliefs, desires, deliberations, and choices. But Dick and Harry are not functionally integrated. For instance, other things being equal, Dick's deliberations and intentions do not cause Harry to act, and Harry's pain does not cause Dick to engage in pain-avoidance behavior. Tom must be identical to a person. Dick and Harry are each persons; they do not together constitute a person.

The best response, I believe, is to accept (i) and claim that Tom does not survive fission. The transitivity of identity requires that any account of the relation of identity must be one-one, rather than one-many. But psychological continuity is a one-many relation. Thus, whereas fission preserves psychological continuity, it cannot preserve identity. To preserve identity, psychological continuity must take a nonbranching form. Our view about personal identity would then be something like this:

P2 is identical with P1 just in case P2 is (sufficiently) psychologically continuous with P1 and there is no other continuer of P1 that is as continuous with P1.

³⁰ Parfit, *Reasons and Persons*, p. 256.

But fission seems to preserve what justifies concern; Tom seems to have as much reason to be concerned about Dick and about Harry as he did to be concerned about himself in cases 1 and 2. If this is true, we should conclude that what principally matters with respect to the rationality of concern is psychological continuity, rather than personal identity per se.³¹

Fission is a case of *interpersonal psychological continuity*. It is an exotic case. Though exotic, it is the limiting case of a very common phenomenon. Though I am normally most strongly continuous with myself in the future, I can be psychologically continuous with others with whom I interact psychologically. Interpersonal, as well as intrapersonal, psychological continuity is quite common. Interpersonal connections and continuity can be found among intimates who interact on a regular basis and help shape each other's mental life; in such relationships, the experiences, beliefs, desires, ideals, and actions of each depend in significant part upon those of the others. We can see this in the familial friendships that Plato, Aristotle, and Green all take as their model. Parents make plans for their children that affect the children's actions, opportunities, and experiences; they impart information and teach skills; they make suggestions, act as sounding boards, and set limits. In these and countless other ways, parents help shape their children's faculties, experiences, beliefs, desires, values, opportunities, and goals. Similar relations hold among spouses and friends who share experiences, conversation, and plans. They can also be found, to a lesser extent, among partners in cooperative ventures where the deliberations, desires, plans, and expectations of each are formed together and conditioned by each other. More generally, membership in various sorts of associations will affect the beliefs, desires, expectations, and plans of members so as to establish significant interpersonal psychological continuity among the association's members. In these ways, interpersonal psychological connectedness and continuity can extend broadly, even if the degree of connectedness (and sometimes continuity) often weakens as these relations extend further.

In more normal (nonbranching) interpersonal cases, what distinguishes intrapersonal continuity and interpersonal continuity is the *degree* of continuity. There are more numerous and more direct psychological connections—between actions and intentions and among beliefs, desires, and values—in the intrapersonal case. And where the connections among links in a chain are all weaker, continuity between any points in the chain will also be weaker. If so, we can see how I am more weakly continuous with my intimates than I am with myself. We can also see how I might be continuous with others, besides my intimates, even if more weakly so. I

³¹ If so, Parfit is wrong to claim (as he does in *Reasons and Persons*, pp. 259–60, 278–79) that it is an “empty question” which answer is right because they all describe the same outcome. I am unsure myself whether psychological continuity, rather than identity, is all that matters; if it can matter, in the relevant way, that psychological continuity takes a unique or nonbranching form, then identity will have some independent value. However, it is enough for present purposes that psychological continuity has significant independent value.

interact directly with others, such as colleagues and neighbors, and this interaction shapes my mental life in certain ways, even if the interaction in such cases is less regular than is my interaction with intimates and even if the effect of such interactions on my mental life is less profound than is the effect produced by interaction with my intimates. Moreover, I interact with a much larger net of people indirectly, when our psychological influence on each other is mediated by other people and complex social institutions, though the continuity thus established is, as a result, weaker. Indeed, the nature of my relationship to others and of the bonds among us is a function of the degree of interpersonal psychological continuity among us. In branching cases, such as fission, there is no intrinsic psychological difference between intrapersonal and interpersonal relations, not even one of degree. Tom bears the same intrinsic psychological relations to Dick and Harry in case 3 as he does to his recuperating self in cases 1 and 2. What makes fission an interpersonal case is simply that continuity takes a one-many form.

If so, the separateness or diversity of persons is not so fundamental.³² Insofar as distinct individuals are psychologically connected and continuous, each can and should view the other as one who extends her own interests in the same sort of way that her own future self extends her interests. Precisely because it is the limiting interpersonal case, fission brings this out most clearly. In nonbranching cases, such as cases 1 and 2, psychological continuity extends Tom's interests in the sense that later selves inherit, carry on, and carry out the projects and plans of earlier selves. In nonbranching cases, it also extends Tom's life. In the fission case, however, continuity does not literally extend Tom's life, only because it takes a one-many form. But, by virtue of being fully psychologically continuous with Tom, Dick and Harry will each inherit, carry on, and carry out Tom's projects and plans (though presumably in somewhat different directions over time). This seems to be a good ground for claiming that Dick and Harry extend Tom's interests, in the very same way that his own future self would normally extend his interests, even if they do not literally extend his life. This helps us better understand the common claim, which Plato, Aristotle, and Green all endorse, that in more conventional interpersonal cases there is interpersonal extension of interests. Among intimates, they claim, B's good can be regarded as a part or component of A's good. The ground they offer for this claim is that A and B interact and help shape each other's mental life; the experiences, beliefs,

³² In this way, I agree with Parfit, who thinks that personal identity is "less deep" and normatively less significant on the psychological reductionist view; see *Reasons and Persons*, chs. 14 and 15. Unlike Parfit, however, I do not think that this follows from considerations about the metaphysical depth of a reductionist view per se; it follows from seeing that there is interpersonal, as well as intrapersonal, psychological continuity and that the difference between the two is at most a matter of degree. I discuss this issue somewhat more fully in "Rational Egoism and the Separateness of Persons," in *Parfit and His Critics*, ed. Jonathan Dancy (Oxford; Blackwell, forthcoming).

desires, ideals, and actions of each depend in significant part upon those of the other. These are the sorts of conditions of psychological continuity and connectedness that are maximally realized in normal intrapersonal cases and in fission cases. Here they are realized to a very large extent in familiar interpersonal cases. This means that each should regard the good of those to whom she stands in such relationships as a constituent part of her overall good, just as she should regard the good of her own future self as a constituent part of her overall good. This allows us to agree with Aristotle and Green that insofar as A and B are psychologically connected and continuous, each is justified in regarding the other as "another-self" (NE 1161b19, 28, 1169b6, 1170b7) or an "alter ego" (PE 191, 200).

On this view, interpersonal psychological interaction and dependence provide a metaphysical-egoist justification of other-regarding conduct and concern. Of course, concern itself is an ingredient in many associations, especially intimate associations. For instance, concern is part of what it is to be a friend to someone, whether the friendship is toward another or toward oneself. But this does not mean that our justification of concern is circular. For we can justify concern for associates in terms of other associative relations. Typically, concern is preceded by other kinds of associative relations. For instance, people interact with each other before they display the special concern for each other characteristic of friends or neighbors.³³ The development and expression of this concern arises from and is justified by these past interactions and shared history. Moreover, it is significant for the purposes of my argument, that people often have these associative reasons for concern without having and expressing (proportionate) concern. Concern takes the form of a cluster of dispositions, among other things, to share the other's joys and sorrows, to keep abreast of developments in the other's life, to protect the other against certain sorts of harms and risks, and to advance the other's plans and prospects in certain ways. If so, concern for oneself or another clearly contributes to *further* psychological interdependence. In this way, associative relations justify concern, which can strengthen associative relations, which then justifies further concern, and so on. There is no circularity here.

However, even if we accept this much of the metaphysical-egoist justification of other-regarding concern, a number of foundational worries remain. It is worth raising these worries and exploring resources for reply.

VIII. THE GOOD OF SELF-EXTENSION

What is the *value* of interpersonal self-extension? We might agree that proper self-love requires a concern for others proportional to the amount of interpersonal psychological interaction and dependence that already exists between oneself and others. But presumably the amount of inter-

³³ Even parental concern for a newborn is preceded by decisions, plans, and actions on the parent's part on which the newborn's existence and condition depend.

action one has with others, as well as the form it takes, is often under one's control. Why should one cultivate interpersonal psychological relations? It seems a circuitous way to benefit oneself. Why not just spend my financial, emotional, and intellectual resources directly on myself, rather than cultivating relationships through which I can then benefit myself?

The metaphysical egoist should claim that interpersonal self-extension promotes my *eudaimonia* in distinctively valuable ways. As Aristotle makes most clear, it is in my interest to exercise those capacities that are central to the sort of being I essentially am (*NE* I 7). If I am essentially a person, then a principal ingredient in my welfare must be the exercise of my deliberative capacities. Indeed, if we endorse a deliberative conception of welfare or *eudaimonia*, we can begin to explain how prudence can be a requirement of practical reason. For when prudence is understood in deliberative terms, it aims at the exercise of the very deliberative capacities that make one a responsible agent, capable of having and acting on reasons for action. Moreover, if my persistence depends upon the extension of my deliberative control into the future, we can see how the exercise of my deliberative capacities is part of my welfare. But then it can be claimed that interpersonal psychological dependence of the sort discussed can extend my interests in important ways.

The central premise of the argument is that I am not self-sufficient at producing a complete deliberative good.³⁴ Again, Aristotle's claims are especially instructive (*NE* 1162a20–24, 1170a5–7; *Politics* 1253a25–27, 1261b10–15). “For it is said that the blessedly happy and self-sufficient people have no need of friends. For they already have [all] the goods, and hence, being self-sufficient, need nothing added. But your friend, since he is another yourself, supplies what your own efforts cannot supply” (*NE* 1169b4–6). Part of what Aristotle may have in mind is that cooperative interaction with others is mutually beneficial and that family, friends, and neighbors protect each other from misfortune by sharing their resources (1170a5). Important as these benefits are, however, they appear to give interpersonal interaction only strategic or instrumental value.

Aristotle can and does have something more in mind. He focuses on the sharing of thought and discussion, especially about how best to live, as well as cooperative interaction. Sharing thought and discussion with another diversifies my experiences by providing me with additional perspectives on the world. By enlarging my perspective, it gives me a more objective picture of the world, its possibilities, and my place in it. This both

³⁴ Insofar as the metaphysical-egoist attempt to reconcile self-interest and other-regarding moral demands depends upon the fact that people are not individually sufficient for a complete deliberative good, the reconciliation depends upon contingent facts, and the resulting defense of the authority of other-regarding demands will not hold in all possible worlds. But this sort of counterfactual instability is very different from that which afflicts strategic egoism (cf. note 7); for the worlds in which strategic egoism fails are very similar to the actual world (indeed, they include the actual world), whereas the worlds in which metaphysical egoism fails are very different from the actual world. As a result, it is not clear that the sort of counterfactual instability that afflicts metaphysical egoism is a problem.

explains and qualifies how we should understand Plato's and Aristotle's suggestion that part of the value of intimates, with whom one shares thought and conversation, consists in their providing a "mirror" on the self (*Phaedrus* 255d5, and *NE* 1169b34–35). Insofar as we regard the exercise of deliberative capacities as the chief ingredient in *eudaimonia*, we can see how self-understanding and self-criticism are both parts of *eudaimonia*. Interaction between those who are psychologically similar provides a kind of mirror on the self. Insofar as my friend is like me, I can appreciate my own qualities from a different perspective; this promotes my self-understanding. One need only think of the familiar way in which parents experience pride and sometimes chagrin when they see various habits and traits of their own manifested in their children. But interaction with another just like me does not itself contribute to self-criticism. This is why there is deliberative value in interaction with diverse sorts of people many of whom are not mirror images of myself. This suggests another way in which I am not deliberatively self-sufficient. Sharing thought and discussion with others, especially about how to live, improves my own practical deliberations; it enlarges my menu of options, by identifying new options, and helps me better assess the merits of these options, by forcing on my attention new considerations and arguments about the comparative merits of the options. Here we might appeal to Socratic and Millian claims about the deliberative value of open and vigorous discussion with diverse interlocutors.³⁵ Moreover, cooperative interaction with others allows me to participate in larger, more complex projects and thus to extend the scope of my deliberative control over my environment. In this way, I spread my interests more widely than I could acting on my own. Here too diversity can be helpful; cooperation among people is improved and extends the interests of each person further when it draws on diverse talents and skills. This, I think, is part of what Green has in mind in claiming that cooperation with others on common ends contributes to a more permanent good for the agent (*PE* 191, 232). In these ways, interpersonal psychological relations arguably make for fuller realization of my deliberative capacities.

IX. NONINSTRUMENTAL CONCERN

Is egoistic concern too *instrumental*? Morality seems to require not just that we perform the actions it demands of us but also that we fulfill its demands from the right sort of motives, and sometimes morality seems to require not just that we benefit another but that we do so out of a concern

³⁵ This is a latent theme in Plato's early and transitional dialogues; it comes closer to the surface in the *Gorgias*, where greater probative value is attached to discussion with diverse and more radical interlocutors. Cf. Terence Irwin, "Objectivity and Coercion in Plato's *Dialectic*," *Revue Internationale de Philosophie*, no. 156/157 (1986), pp. 49–74. The deliberative value of freedom of expression and diversity of opinion and lifestyle is an important strand in John Stuart Mill's arguments against censorship, moral legislation, and paternalism, especially in *On Liberty*; see my "Mill's Deliberative Utilitarianism," *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, vol. 21 (1992), pp. 67–103.

for the other for her own sake. This is certainly true about the concern owed to intimates. If justified concern for another is, as the metaphysical egoist claims, a special case of self-love, then mustn't such concern be at bottom instrumental? If so, this is objectionable because it fails to justify concern for others for their own sakes and because it threatens to make the justification of other-regarding concern insufficiently stable.

In assessing this complaint, it is instructive to look at the Socratic view of love and friendship and compare it with Platonic and Aristotelian views. In Plato's *Lysis*, Socrates maintains that one who had a complete good would have no need of love or friendship and that friendship can only exist between people who stand to gain from association with each other (215a–b). In this way, friendship is predicated on mutual benefit (214c). This view of love and friendship fits nicely with Socrates' eudaimonism, which implies that I have reason to care for another insofar as this contributes to my own *eudaimonia*. For Socrates, however, such concern must be instrumental. For he believes that only an unconditionally complete good is intrinsically valuable: "All such value as this is set not on those things that are procured for the sake of another thing, but on that for the sake of which all things are procured" (219e9–11).³⁶ Those things desired for the sake of something else are not intrinsically, but only instrumentally, valuable (219c–220b). But a lover, according to Socrates, values his beloved for the sake of the lover's own *eudaimonia*. It follows that a lover can love his beloved only instrumentally, and this is incompatible with caring about one's beloved for his own sake.

However, Platonic and Aristotelian eudaimonism do not require purely instrumental concern for the beloved. Whereas Socrates assumes that valuing something for the sake of another always reflects purely instrumental concern, Plato and Aristotle reject this assumption.

In the *Republic*, Glaucon and Adeimantus demand that Socrates show justice to be beneficial *in itself* and not simply for its normal causal consequences (357a–367e). Plato subsequently defends justice by arguing that justice secures the right ordering of the agent's soul and thus contributes to his *eudaimonia*. If we are to make sense of Plato's defense of justice as a response to the challenge that Glaucon and Adeimantus pose, we must interpret him as arguing that justice is valuable for its *intrinsic*, as well as its extrinsic, consequences. If justice contributes to the agent's happiness, because justice is a part of the agent's happiness, then Plato will have shown that justice is valuable "in and by itself" (367b4, e2–4). Plato does regard justice as the controlling part of *eudaimonia*; he hopes to show that one is always better off being just than being unjust, no matter what the extrinsic consequences of justice and injustice turn out to be (360e–362c). But this *comparative* claim does not assume that justice is sufficient for a

³⁶ This translation from the *Lysis* is by J. Wright in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato* (supra note 10).

complete good. In particular, the comparative claim allows Plato to recognize the value of external goods, independent of virtue (361e4–362a2). But then Plato's view seems to be that *eudaimonia* is a whole of which justice (and virtue generally) is a proper part. Justice is desirable for the sake of something else, namely, *eudaimonia*. But being desirable for the sake of *eudaimonia* does not imply that justice is only instrumentally valuable; it is valuable in itself for its constitutive contribution to happiness. If Plato can make this claim about justice, he can make this claim about friendship and love. The lover can love his beloved for the contribution this makes to the lover's own *eudaimonia* and for the beloved's own sake if the good of the beloved is a constituent part of the lover's own *eudaimonia*.

On Aristotle's view, a good is complete if it is chosen for its own sake, and a good is unconditionally complete if all other things are chosen for its sake and it is not chosen for the sake of something else (NE 1094a18–19, 1097a27–b6). Aristotle believes that *eudaimonia* is the only unconditionally complete good; all other goods are chosen for its sake. Some goods chosen for the sake of *eudaimonia*, though not choiceworthy in themselves, are choiceworthy as causal means to some ingredient of *eudaimonia*; these goods are incomplete, instrumental goods. But other goods—such as the virtues—that are chosen for the sake of *eudaimonia* are also choiceworthy in themselves. They are chosen for the sake of *eudaimonia* in the sense that they are constituent parts of *eudaimonia*; they are valuable in their own right for their constitutive contribution to a valuable life. Such goods are complete or intrinsic goods, not mere instrumental goods, though they are not unconditionally complete goods. Here Aristotle is making explicit the sort of assumptions Plato must make about justice in *Republic* II–IV; in Aristotle's terms, Plato thinks justice is a complete good, but not an unconditionally complete good. If the lover treats the good of his beloved as a complete good that is also choiceworthy for the sake of his own *eudaimonia*, the lover is concerned for the other's own sake while valuing his beloved's well-being for the constitutive contribution this makes to his own *eudaimonia*.

Thus, both Plato and Aristotle have the analytic resources to provide a eudaimonist justification of interpersonal concern that is derivative but not instrumental. When I undergo a present sacrifice for a future benefit, I do so because the interests of my future self are interests of mine. The on-balance rationality of the sacrifice depends upon its promoting my overall good. But because the good of my future self is part of this overall good, concern for my overall good requires, as a constituent part, a concern for the good of my future self. In this way, concern for my future self for its own sake seems compatible with and, indeed, essential to self-love. If psychological relations extend an agent's interests, then the good of others can be part of my overall good just as my own future good can be. Though the on-balance rationality of other-regarding action depends upon its promoting my overall good, concern for my overall good requires, as a

constituent part, concern for the welfare of those to whom I am appropriately psychologically related. This is why Plato and Green view interpersonal love as the next best thing to immortality (*Symposium* 206c1–209e5; *PE* 231) and why Aristotle and Green claim that a proper conception of how others figure in self-love undermines the popular contrast between self-love and altruism (*NE* IX 8; *PE* 232).³⁷

X. SCOPE

Another worry concerns the *scope* of the metaphysical-egoist justification of other-regarding concern. If its justification of other-regarding conduct and concern is limited to those to whom one is already psychologically related, then the scope of this egoist account of the authority of morality may seem disturbingly narrow. The scope of egoistic concern will be especially narrow if the relevant relations obtain only among intimates and like-minded members of small associations. But the metaphysical egoist can claim that the relevant interpersonal relations do and should extend quite widely.

Psychological connectedness does not require like-mindedness. Though Aristotle sometimes speaks as if the relevant relations among friends must involve similar beliefs and values (*NE* 1159b3–5, 1161b35, 1162a13, 1165b17, 1166a7, 1167a23–b10, 1170b16), it is not clear that this is or should be an essential feature of his position, at least insofar as he seeks to model interpersonal concern on intrapersonal concern. For within my own life, I exercise deliberative control and establish psychological connections with my future self when I intentionally modify beliefs, desires, or values, as well as when I maintain them unchanged. Now it may be that my successive selves will typically be fairly similar; perhaps wholesale and instantaneous psychological change is impossible or at least would involve a substantial change, which I would not survive. But intrapersonal psychological dependence is compatible with significant qualitative change. This allows us to explain how it is that we have prudential reason to undertake changes in our characters that count as improvements; our persistence requires only deliberative control, not fixity, of character.³⁸ If so, it seems that, in the interpersonal case, Aristotle should allow for friends to be psychologically dissimilar, provided the mental states and actions of each friend exert significant influence on those of the other.³⁹

³⁷ Jennifer Whiting objects to the colonial or imperial perspective that she thinks the egoist must impose on interpersonal concern; see Whiting, "Impersonal Friends," *The Monist*, vol. 74 (1991), pp. 9–10. Purely instrumental concern for another, of the sort to which Socrates seems to be committed, is colonial or imperial in some straightforwardly objectionable way. But where the egoist can justify derivative but noninstrumental concern for others, it is unclear what the moral objection to the egocentric perspective is.

³⁸ For more discussion of these issues, see my "Rational Egoism and the Separateness of Persons" (*supra* note 32).

³⁹ In discussing the puzzle about whether to wish one's friend the good of divinity, Aristotle claims that one who cares about the friend for the friend's own sake would not wish this

Indeed, if others are to extend my interests by diversifying my experiences, by providing me with resources for self-criticism as well as self-understanding, by broadening my deliberative menu and improving my deliberations, and by allowing me to engage in more complex and varied activities, it is important that we be different and not too like-minded (*Politics* 1281a42–b15). Moreover, psychological influence can be exerted between people, on each other, even when they have not had direct interactions, as when two people influence each other through their conversations with a common third party. The ripple-effects on others of our conversations, plans, actions, and relationships can extend quite widely.

Moreover, continuous selves need not be connected. Any elements in a series are continuous just in case contiguous members in the series are well connected; this implies that noncontiguous members (e.g., the end-points) of such a series are continuous even if they are not well-connected or connected at all. If so, people can be psychologically continuous who are not at all connected, provided they are members of a series of persons each of whom is connected to some degree with his neighbor in the series. There is room for debate about the comparative roles of continuity and connectedness within a suitable mentalistic view of personal identity.⁴⁰ Perhaps both relations matter and extend one's interests, but I think it is clear that continuity must matter.⁴¹ If so, then the relations that justify other-regarding concern can extend far beyond the circle of those with whom one regularly interacts.

In thinking about the proper scope of eudaimonistic concern, it is worth thinking about differences between Aristotle and Green with respect to the scope of the common good. I noted that despite differences between virtue-friendship, which serves as his principal model for friendship, and political association, Aristotle can extend the central elements of his eudaimonist defense of friendship to political association, because political communities that are just have to a significant degree the two features that are crucial to the justification of virtue-friendship and familial friendship: there is commonality of aims among members of the political association, and this commonality is produced by members of the association living together in the right way, in particular, by defining their aims and goals consensually (*NE* 1167a25–28, 1155a24–28). This establishes a common good among citizens, each of whom has a share in judging and

good on the friend, because the friend would not survive the transformation (*NE* 1159a5–11). This seems right. But persistence does not require fixity of character over time. Thus, while it is plausible that one should not wish on oneself or others the good of divinity, it is not plausible that one should not wish on oneself or others significant improvement of character; rather, this is just what friendship toward oneself and others requires. If so, then concern for someone, whether oneself or another, for his own sake requires neither similarity nor fixity of character. Insofar as Aristotle disagrees (esp. 1165b17–30), his claims seem problematic.

⁴⁰ For a brief discussion, see my "Rational Egoism and the Separateness of Persons."

⁴¹ Continuity must figure in a mentalistic account of identity if only to meet Reid's demand that any criterion of identity be transitive; see Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* (*supra* note 28), p. 358.

ruling (*Politics* 1275a22–33). Justice aims at a common good (*NE* 1129b15–18), and this, we said, is how Aristotle can construct a eudaimonist defense of justice. But this conception of the common good is still quite limited. Restricted as it is to those whom Aristotle thinks are fit for citizenship, it excludes women, barbarians, slaves, and manual laborers (*Politics* 1278a3–9); indeed, he thinks that manual laborers ought to be drawn exclusively from a pool of barbarians and natural inferiors (1329a24–26). It is these restrictions on the common good that Green finds unacceptable:

The idea of a society of free and law-abiding persons, each his own master yet each his brother's keeper, was first definitely formed among the Greeks, and its formation was the condition of all subsequent progress in the direction described; but with them . . . it was limited in its application to select groups of men surrounded by populations of aliens and slaves. In its universality, as capable of application to the whole human race, an attempt has first been made to act upon it in modern Christendom. (*PE* 271)

As the last part of this passage suggests, Green's own conception of the common good is universal; full self-realization and the securing of a really permanent good occurs only when each respects the claims made by other members of a maximally inclusive community of ends (214, 216, 244, 332).⁴²

There are good eudaimonist reasons for recognizing a more inclusive common good than Aristotle does. First, there already are significant forms of personal, social, and economic interaction and interdependence between Aristotle's citizens, on the one hand, and women, slaves, manual laborers, and resident aliens, on the other. The arguments for recognizing a common good based on interpersonal self-extension require including them in the common good. Perhaps Aristotle's view is that they are part of a common good, but not of a political common good, because they are unfit for sharing in political rule. He thinks that some—such as slaves and, to a lesser extent, women—are naturally inferior (*Politics* II 4–7, 12–13). They are, he thinks, like the nonrational part of the soul; they can apprehend and follow the reason of another but they are incapable of the sort of deliberation involved in ruling and necessary for human happiness (1254b20–24, 1260a12–22). If so, these natural inferiors, even if part of a common good, are better suited to manual labor than to citizenship.⁴³

⁴² Insofar as he conceives the common good universally, Green's view is perhaps closer to the Stoic than to the Aristotelian view. See Cicero, *De Finibus* iii 63. This aspect of the Stoic view is emphasized in Julia Annas, *The Morality of Happiness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), ch. 12.

⁴³ Part of Aristotle's justification for restricting citizenship assumes that manual labor is inimical to deliberation and virtue (*Politics* 1329a35–38). Dull and repetitive labor over which the worker has no control is menial and can only be instrumentally valuable to the extent that it furnishes life's necessities. But manual labor need not be menial in this way. As long as the farmer or artisan has responsibility for and control over production, distri-

This argument clearly rests on the assumption of natural inferiority. Aristotle might think that he has empirical support for his position. His observations about women and slaves might lead him to suppose not simply that they had achieved less by way of individual and civic accomplishments than full-fledged citizens, but also that they were, in one sense, capable of less. But this sort of incapacity is presumably the *product*, rather than the cause, of being denied citizenship. Aristotle realizes that capacities must be properly cultivated and stimulated in order to develop properly. If I have not been given a proper education and training or suitable deliberative opportunities and responsibilities at various points in my development, I will not be prepared for proper deliberation about the management of my own affairs or those of the community. Use it, or lose it. Thus, even if everyone had equal innate capacities, we should expect the unequal development of deliberative capacities in systems where education and deliberative opportunities and responsibilities are distributed unequally. But then the unequal capacities that discriminatory practices and institutions produce cannot be appealed to as justification for those practices and institutions. So there appears to be no good reason for Aristotle not to recognize the claims to citizenship that existing patterns of interaction justify. This provides a backward-looking justification for recognizing a more inclusive conception of the common good. Moreover, as we have seen, interaction with others contributes to the full realization of my deliberative powers by diversifying my experiences, by providing me with resources for self-criticism as well as self-understanding, by broadening my deliberative menu and improving my deliberations, and by allowing me to engage in more complex and varied activities. Moreover, the deliberative value of this interaction is enhanced when others have diverse perspectives and talents. This provides a forward-looking justification for recognizing a more inclusive conception of the common good.

Because this push toward a more inclusive conception of the common good is motivated by Aristotelian considerations, it is a friendly amendment to Aristotle. But can the common good be genuinely universal in scope, as Green wants it to be, if it is the result of interpersonal interaction? For then there must be someone—the proverbial remotest Mysian (Plato, *Theaetetus* 209b8)—with whom one has no previous relation, however indirect.⁴⁴ Should it somehow come within my power to help the remotest Mysian, at little or no cost to myself, it might seem that the eudaimonist cannot explain justified concern for him. This might seem like a defect in an account of the scope of morality or its authority.

If the remotest Mysian and I stand in no relations of connection or continuity, then his good is not already part of mine. Thus, I can have no

bution, and the organization of his labor process, manual labor can and will involve the exercise of important deliberative capacities. By Aristotelian criteria, meaningful manual labor ought to be an intrinsic good.

⁴⁴ The introduction of the proverbial remotest Mysian into discussions of the scope of ethical concern is discussed by Annas, *The Morality of Happiness*, ch. 12.

backward-looking eudaimonistic reason to be concerned about him. But I can have forward-looking reasons. For it is now within my power to interact with him, and all the reasons for cultivating interpersonal self-extension (see Section VIII above) apply and provide a forward-looking rationale for concern. Even when the remotest Mysian and I have no prospect of further interaction, my assistance will enable or facilitate his pursuit of his own projects, and this will make his subsequent actions and mental states dependent upon my assistance. Indeed, other things being equal, the greater the assistance I provide, the greater is my involvement in his life. To the extent that another's actions and mental states are dependent upon my assistance, I can view the assistance as making his good a part of my own. Assistance to the remotest Mysian earns me a share, however small, of his happiness, much the way care and nurture of my children grounds posthumous interests I have in their continued well-being. This is why Green thinks that self-realization involves contributing to a larger, more permanent and comprehensive good (PE 229–32). If so, it seems a eudaimonist can legitimately seek a universal common good, of the sort Green contemplates.

XI. WEIGHT

A final worry concerns the *weight* of the reasons for other-regarding concern. Both connectedness and continuity are matters of degree. Normally, there are more numerous and direct psychological connections among successive stages within a single life than between lives. And where the connections among links in a chain are all weaker, continuity between any points in the chain will also be weaker. If so, we can see how I am more weakly continuous with my intimates than I am with myself. We can also see how I might be continuous with others, besides my intimates. I interact directly with others, such as colleagues and neighbors, and this interaction shapes my mental life in certain ways, even if the interaction in such cases is less regular than is my interaction with intimates, and even if the effect of such interactions on my mental life is less profound than is the effect produced by interaction with my intimates. Moreover, I interact with a much larger net of people indirectly, when our psychological influence on each is other is mediated by other people and complex social institutions. We can think of the degrees of connectedness and continuity in terms of a set of concentric circles, with myself occupying the inner circle and the remotest Mysian occupying the outer circle. As we extend the scope of psychological interdependence, the strength of the relevant psychological relations appears to weaken and the weight of one's reasons to give aid and refrain from harm presumably weakens proportionately. Despite the wide scope of justified concern, it must apparently have variable weight. Is such an *interpersonal discount rate* acceptable?

This depends, in part, on the precise shape of the interpersonal discount rate. As long as psychological connectedness is itself one of the psychological relations that matter, then there will be an interpersonal discount rate, because an agent will be differentially psychologically connected to others. But as long as psychological continuity is also one of the relations that matter, a significant level of concern can be justified for anyone with whom one is psychologically continuous. Suppose A is friends only with B, whereas B is also friends with C. All else being equal, A is as continuous with his friend's friend, C, as he is with his friend, B. Insofar as continuity is one of the relations that matter, then, A has as much reason to be concerned about his friend's friend as about his friend. He will have reason to give greater weight to the interests of his friend insofar as connectedness also matters. These points generalize beyond friendship. So the importance of psychological continuity ensures that a significant threshold of concern can be justified well out into outer circles. There will nonetheless be significant differences in the degree of concern that can be justified, above this threshold, in different circles if connectedness has independent significance.

This kind of interpersonal discount rate need not be a threat to our understanding of other-regarding morality or its authority. For it is commonly thought that, even if morality has universal scope, the demands that it imposes are a function not simply of the amount of benefit that one can confer but also of the nature of the relationship in which one stands to potential beneficiaries. Common-sense morality recognizes more stringent obligations toward those to whom one stands in special relationships—for instance, toward family and friends and toward partners in cooperative schemes—than toward others.⁴⁵ Aristotle, for one, clearly accepts this sort of *moral discount rate*; he thinks that, all else being equal, it is better to help and worse to harm those to whom one stands in special relations than it is to do these things to others (*NE* 1160a1–6, 1169b12; *Politics* 1262a27–30). It seems a reasonable hypothesis that the interpersonal relationships that have special moral significance are just those relationships of psychological interaction and interdependence that extend one's interests. If so, then there will be a moral discount rate that is isomorphic to the egoist interpersonal discount rate. Indeed, it would be a virtue, rather than a defect, of this justification of other-regarding concern that it embodies an interpersonal discount rate.

XII. THE BALANCE OF REASONS

The metaphysical egoist models interpersonal relations and concern on intrapersonal relations and concern and thereby extends the boundaries

⁴⁵ C. D. Broad calls this interpretation of common-sense morality "self-referential altruism"; see Broad, "Self and Others," in *Broad's Critical Essays in Moral Philosophy*, ed. David R. Cheney (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1971).

of self-interest and self-love so as to include the good of others. This view figures importantly in Platonic and Aristotelian eudaimonism and in Green's ethics of self-realization. I have tried to articulate one conception of metaphysical egoism that draws on these traditions and appeals to plausible claims about persons and their persistence. This view implies a conception of interpersonal relations that should lead us to see people's interests as metaphysically, and not just strategically, interdependent. Moreover, this egoist justification of other-regarding conduct is robust. We can explain how each should view this interdependence as good; interpersonal self-extension makes possible the fuller realization of the deliberative powers of each. We can also explain how the justification of other-regarding concern is derivative but noninstrumental. We can defend an inclusive conception of the common good and thereby offer a defense of other-regarding conduct with wide scope. Finally, we can see how differences in the very relations that, on this view, justify concern appear also to be morally significant differences. Metaphysical egoism implies that complying with other-regarding duties is a counterfactually reliable way of advancing the agent's own overall good, properly conceived. This is a significant result, whether we understand practical rationality in exclusively prudential terms or not.

However, my argument, even if successful, does not itself imply that the authority of other-regarding moral demands is overriding or supreme. Unlike Green, I do not see these claims as establishing the strong thesis that there can be no conflict or competition of interests among people (*PE* 244).⁴⁶ I have argued that the good of others is a necessary and distinctively valuable part of an agent's overall good. But it is one aspect of an agent's overall good that must interact and may compete with more self-confined aspects. When I expend intellectual, emotional, and financial resources on meeting the legitimate claims of others, this contributes to my overall good in distinctive ways; but it also consumes resources that might have been spent on my education, my vocation, or my avocations. There are opportunity costs to every commitment, even especially important commitments, and sometimes the opportunity costs of important commitments are themselves important. If so, other-regarding and more self-confined aspects of an agent's overall good are distinct and at least potentially conflicting.

The only prospect I see for a principled and largely noncompetitive accommodation of these two aspects of self-interest requires that we focus our prudential evaluation not on individual actions or types of action but on comprehensive modes of life. There are familiar ways of partitioning our lives and regulating these parts so that they are directed at different

⁴⁶ I am not sure that this strong thesis can be reached from recognizably individualist premises; it may require fundamentally anti-individualist metaphysical claims, according to which persons are merely parts of an interpersonal organic whole and must view their own well-being in terms of the proper functioning of the whole of which they are a part.

aspects of prudence. For instance, we go some way toward meeting other-regarding demands of those with whom we are not in regular contact by channeling resources through community and international charitable organizations. This can be done in predictable and comparatively nonintrusive ways. We divide the rest of our time, energies, and resources into various spheres, involving work, friends, family, and personal activities. Of course, there are better and worse ways of allocating one's time, energies, and resources both within and among these spheres. But the idea is that there are ways of conceiving of these spheres and dividing one's energies among them so that even if many of one's actions contribute disproportionately to distinct components of self-interest, one's actions as a package might promote well all the different components of one's good.

Arguably, the best prospects for accommodation can be found in circumstances of *democratic equality*, in which democratic institutions operate against a background of personal and civic liberties and opportunities and comparative social and economic equality that establishes a decent minimum standard of living. Democratic decision-making affords the opportunity for widespread participation by people with diverse perspectives in a process of mutual discussion and articulation of ideals and priorities. As a result, democratic processes establish psychological interdependence more widely, make possible participation in public deliberations, and improve the quality of the personal deliberations of members of such a society. A background of personal and civic liberties with comparative social and economic equality makes possible more widespread development of individual talents and capacities, and this will expand the range of experiences, values, and perspectives that individuals can enjoy vicariously and draw on in their own deliberations. Democratic equality would not only exercise the deliberative powers of each but also would provide a background against which one might be able to accommodate other-regarding and more self-confined aspects of self-interest. For one division of moral and political labor that might make accommodation possible would be for individuals largely to be free to express partial commitments to themselves, their intimates, and their immediate associates, provided the political community they live in ensures each the resources, education, and opportunities necessary to realize his own deliberative good effectively. This kind of partiality would be legitimate in systems of democratic equality, once an individual had met his responsibilities of democratic citizenship.

But then the legitimacy of this kind of partiality requires a certain level of material and economic prosperity and institutions of democratic equality. Even when we are dealing with local political communities, these conditions are infrequently met. But if, as Green and I believe, the proper conception of the common good is maximally inclusive, then it seems that the political condition of partiality that is metaphysically prudent is very hard to satisfy. Many local political communities lack requisite material

and economic prosperity or otherwise fail to produce democratic equality, and there is no global community that is able or willing to establish democratic equality within and among local communities. Until such time as these local and global political conditions are met, significant partiality may be difficult to justify even from the point of view of prudence. This suggests that the accommodation of self-regarding and other-regarding aspects of self-interest is a political good and achievement, not fully within any one person's control.⁴⁷

Whether and to what extent there can be a successful accommodation of other-regarding and self-confined aspects of self-interest is an important issue that requires further study. But this does not simply leave us where we started. For I have argued that the good of others forms a distinctive part of the agent's overall good, a part whose importance must be reckoned with in the balance of reasons. This is an important claim. Even if practical reason is exclusively prudential, it vindicates the weak rationalist thesis that there is always reason to act on other-regarding demands, such that failure to do so is *pro tanto* irrational. It is less clear whether it helps vindicate the strong rationalist thesis that there is always overriding reason to act on other-regarding demands, such that failure to do so is on balance irrational. This depends upon the resolution of other issues. If practical reason is exclusively prudential, the plausibility of the strong rationalist thesis will depend upon whether self-confined and other-regarding aspects of an agent's overall good can be accommodated in noncompetitive ways. As I have suggested, there may be possible circumstances of democratic equality that allow this accommodation, but it is unlikely that they already obtain generally. If democratic equality does not obtain generally, it will be hard to maintain the strong rationalist thesis on purely prudential grounds. If, however, as I am inclined to believe, practical reason has impartial as well as prudential dimensions, then the prospects for a reasonably strong rationalist thesis look better.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ The claims I sketch in this section for a principled accommodation of self-confined and other-regarding aspects of self-interest bear some resemblance (I'm not sure how much) to claims that Thomas Nagel and Samuel Scheffler make about the reconciliation of personal and impersonal moral demands; see Nagel, *Equality and Partiality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), and Scheffler, *Human Morality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), esp. ch. 8. One difference is that whereas Nagel and Scheffler are concerned about the accommodation of different aspects of morality, I am concerned about the accommodation of different aspects of self-interest. It is also worth noting apparent similarities between my claims and claims Hegel makes in *The Philosophy of Right*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), and *Introduction to the Philosophy of History*, trans. Leo Rauch (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1988). My claim that proper self-realization requires partitioning one's life into differentially regulated spheres is like the Hegelian claim that it is only by participating in the three very differently organized spheres of family, civil society, and the state that one is able fully to realize oneself in the modern world. My claim that accommodation of these two aspects of self-interest is not always possible and would be a political accomplishment is like the Hegelian claim that reconciliation is a possibility only in the modern world. Unlike Hegel, however, I am not confident that full accommodation is yet possible.

⁴⁸ Cf. my "Kantian Rationalism: Inescapability, Authority, and Supremacy" (*supra* note 2).

For then both impartial reason and prudence, in one voice, will speak in favor of other-regarding morality, and only prudence, in another voice, might speak against it. How often the balance of reasons will tip toward other-regarding morality will depend upon the details of metaphysical egoism, impartial reason, and other-regarding morality. Nonetheless, I hope to have said enough about the nature and resources of metaphysical egoism to show that it has an important role to play in our understanding of the rational authority of morality.

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