

**EMBRACING THE HALF:  
ARISTOTLE'S REVISION OF PLATONIC *ERŌS* AND *PHILIA***

A Thesis

by

EMIL SALIM

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of  
Texas A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

May 2006

Major Subject: Philosophy

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	Robin Smith
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	Craig Kallendorf
Head of Department,	Robin Smith

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## ABSTRACT

Embracing the Half:

Aristotle's Revision of Platonic *Erōs* and *Philia*. (May 2006)

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In this thesis, I am investigating the nature of ἔρως (*erōs*) and φιλία (*philia*) in Plato and Aristotle. I have confined this project to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (*EN*) and *Metaphysics*, with a background discussion of Plato's *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*. I will argue for the following claims. First, Plato's *Symposium* poses a dilemma with respect to the object and nature of ἔρως. The dilemma is that the objects of ἔρως must be either particular individuals or the Beautiful itself. Second, Plato's *Phaedrus* may be seen as Plato's attempt to solve the dilemma by giving a synthesis: ἔρως is a virtuous μανία and should be directed to particular individuals *en route* to the Beautiful. However, another problem arises; viz., given Platonic metaphysics, it is difficult to see how the lovers can *genuinely* love one another in and of themselves when the ultimate object of love is the Form of Beauty. Third, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* sees ἔρως as an excess of φιλία. Ἐρως in human relationships must be avoided because it is seen as something bad and irrational, even though it is not a vice. The account of ἔρως and φιλία in *EN* may be seen as Aristotle's attempt to propose another kind of solution to the dilemma by escaping the horns, i.e., by deprioritizing ἔρως in favor of φιλία with

respect to achieving the virtuous life. Fourth, this negative view of ἔρως does not appear in *Metaphysics* Λ. In 1072b3-4, Aristotle writes that the Unmoved Mover moves all things as being loved (ὡς ἐρώμενον). The best interpretation of the phrase ὡς ἐρώμενον is that the Unmoved Mover moves all things by letting them follow their nature. There is a shift of emphasis in Aristotle's philosophy from ἔρως to φιλία, which brings another dilemma with respect to the objects of φιλία, namely between φιλία for particular individuals and φιλία for the good. I will not try to solve the dilemma, but will try to circumscribe the issue.

for mom

Πολλὰ θυγατέρες ἐκτήσαντο πλοῦτον,  
πολλὰ ἐποίησαν δυνατά,  
σὺ δὲ ὑπέρκεισαι καὶ ὑπερῆρας πάσας.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This is a thesis project on the place of ἔρωϝ in Aristotle's philosophy, which is a field that has not truly been investigated in Aristotelian scholarship. I see a possibility to construct a comprehensive account of Aristotle's idea of ἔρωϝ not only based on his ethical works, but also by utilizing other areas in his corpus, such as the metaphysical and biological works. However, given the breadth and depth of the subject, I have confined this project to his *Nicomachean Ethics* (*EN*) and *Metaphysics*, with a background discussion of Plato's *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*.

In this thesis, I am arguing for the following points. First, Plato's *Symposium* poses a dilemma with respect to the object and nature of ἔρωϝ, as concluded in the speech of Alcibiades. The dilemma is that the object of ἔρωϝ must be either (i) particular individuals (as represented in the speech of Aristophanes), or (ii) the Beautiful itself (as represented in the speech of Socrates and Diotima). Option (i) is problematic because ἔρωϝ is neither eternal nor rational even though it is human. Option (ii) is problematic because the object is not human even though it is eternal and rational. It is also problematic because abandoning particular beauties disables one from climbing the *scala amoris* at all. Basically I am agreeing with Nussbaum's interpretation here that in the middle dialogues, Plato's view on the objects of ἔρωϝ is

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This thesis follows *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15<sup>th</sup> ed.

mutually exclusive: we must choose between loving particular individuals and loving wisdom. Furthermore, Plato's view on non-rational elements in the middle dialogues is negative: they are free of and even opposed to cognitive service to human life. With respect to *φιλία*, there are three views in the *Symposium* on its relationship with *ἔρως*: *φιλία* as the counterpart of *ἔρως*, *φιλία* as the product of *ἔρως*, and *φιλία* as identical with *ἔρως*. Both *ἔρως* and *φιλία* are indispensable in a virtuous life.

Second, Plato's *Phaedrus* may be seen as Plato's attempt to solve the dilemma by giving a synthesis: *ἔρως* is a virtuous *μανία* and should be directed to particular individuals *en route* to the Beautiful. The difference between the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus* is that the former suggests that loving particular individuals and loving the Form of beauty are mutually exclusive, whereas the latter suggests that it is possible to love both particular individuals and the Beautiful. Again, this is in line with Nussbaum's interpretation of this issue. Nussbaum believes that in the *Phaedrus* the non-intellectual elements are required to motivate our intellect to go in a certain direction. The non-intellectual elements also have a cognitive task: to give *information* on where goodness and beauty are. Finally, the non-rational elements have intrinsic values of goodness and beauty, and not just an instrumental value. With this picture of *ἔρως*, there is no mutually exclusive either/or relationship anymore between loving particular individuals and loving the Form of Beauty. However, another problem arises, viz., given Platonic metaphysics, it is difficult to see how the lovers can *genuinely* love one another in and of themselves when the ultimate object of love is the Form of beauty. This is problematic since true love must be profitable not only for the

sake of the lovers, but also for the beloved in a genuine way.<sup>1</sup> In the *Phaedrus*, both ἔρως and φιλία are also indispensable in a perfectly virtuous life.

Third, Aristotle's *EN*, by contrast, sees ἔρως as an excess of φιλία. Ἐρως in human relationships must be avoided because it is seen as something bad and irrational, even though it is not a vice. The account of ἔρως and φιλία in *EN* may be seen as Aristotle's attempt to propose another kind of solution to the dilemma by escaping the horns, i.e., by deprioritizing ἔρως in favor of φιλία with respect to achieving the virtuous life. Unlike ἔρως, which is prone to being excessive and irrational, φιλία is completely virtuous in feelings and actions. However, a new dilemma concerning the objects of love seems to appear, viz., whether it can be genuinely directed towards both particular individuals and wisdom in and of themselves.

Fourth, this negative view of ἔρως does not appear in *Metaphysics* Λ. In 1072b3-4, Aristotle writes that the Unmoved Mover moves all things as being loved (ὡς ἐρώμενον). To understand this claim, we need to understand Aristotle's metaphysics of motion. I have argued that (1) Motion is a process instead of an actuality of a certain degree of potentiality; (2) the Unmoved Mover is both a principle and a substance (it is possible to interpret a principle *as* a substance, which is a category of entity); and (3) the best interpretation of the phrase ὡς ἐρώμενον is that the Unmoved Mover moves all things by letting them follow their nature. But here a

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1. Vlastos writes, "Not that Platonic eros is 'egocentric' and 'acquisitive' as Nygren has claimed; it is only too patently Ideocentric and creative. But while it gives no more quarter to self-indulgence than would Pauline *agape* or Kantian good will, neither does it repudiate the spiritualized egocentricism of Socratic *philia*" (*Platonic Studies*, 30).

paradox arises: when human beings follow their own nature, they know that they should have φιλία in their daily life. Recognizing this compels them to accept their humanness, which requires them to accept their imperfection and interdependency with their fellow human beings. Platonic love wishes to have wholeness and perfection. Aristotelian friendship accepts that wholeness and perfection can be attained only by embracing the half and imperfection.

Notice that if the dilemma in Plato is about the objects of ἔρως, Aristotle has succeeded in giving a solution to the dilemma by claiming that ἔρως in terms of human relationship should be avoided. However, there is a shift of emphasis in Aristotle's philosophy from ἔρως to φιλία, which brings another dilemma with respect to the objects of φιλία, namely between φιλία for particular individuals and φιλία for the good. I will not try to solve the dilemma, but will try to circumscribe the issue. Intuitively, I see that the ultimate solution to this issue should be metaphysical: there is no dilemma because in Aristotle's philosophy there is no such thing as the Platonic Forms of the Good and Beauty. When friends love one another, they love particular goodness in and of itself and they help one another cultivate philosophical virtues.

The organization of this thesis is as follows. First, I will discuss Plato's concept of ἔρως and φιλία in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*. Second, I will discuss Aristotle's view of ἔρως and φιλία by referring to the works of some Aristotelian scholars. Third, I will give my own interpretation of Aristotle's concept of ἔρως and φιλία. A short conclusion will be given in the end to recapitulate the discussion and pose further questions that are related to this project

**CHAPTER II**

**ON LOVING THIS OR THAT BEAUTY:**

**ἜΡΩΣ AND ΦΙΛΙΑ IN PLATO'S *SYMPOSIUM***

There are plenty of discussions about ἔρως in the *Symposium*,<sup>2</sup> but there are fewer discussions about φιλία in it. Even fewer are the discussions about the relationship between the two terms. What is the relationship between ἔρως and φιλία in the context of achieving the best life in Plato's *Symposium*? I believe the best way to answer this question is by investigating the occurrences of the two words in certain contexts. I will undertake this task by discussing discourses about ἔρως given by each of the characters in the *Symposium*.

I will argue three things in this paper. First, there are three kinds of relationships between ἔρως and φιλία in the *Symposium*, viz., the positions taken by Phaedrus (P), Pausanias-Eryximachus-Agathon (PEA), and Aristophanes-Socrates-Diotima (ASD). The three positions can be described as follows:

(P) ἔρως is an elevator of φιλία.

(PEA) ἔρως is the originator of φιλία.

(ASD) ἔρως is φιλία (for Aristophanes, the objects of Love are particular individuals, whereas for Socrates-Diotima the objects of Love is the beautiful).

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2. I am using Plato, *Complete Works*, ed., with introduction and notes by John M. Cooper. For the Greek text, I am using *Lysis, Symposium, Gorgias*, trans. W. R. M. Lamb.

Second, based on these findings, I will argue that all the speeches in the *Symposium* see ἔρως and φιλία as an indispensable part of the virtuous life.<sup>3</sup> Third, agreeing with Nussbaum, I will argue that the “real battle” in the *Symposium* is between Aristophanes’ speech and Socrates-Diotima’s. The “battle” is about the objects of love, i.e., about whether one should love particular individuals or true beauty.

The *Symposium* begins with Apollodorus’ saying that “I used to think philosophy was the last thing a man should do” (173a3). But then he says, “After all, my greatest pleasure comes from philosophical conversation, even if I’m only a listener, whether or not I think it will be to my advantage” (173c3). The dialogue is indeed an attempt to give an alternative view that philosophy is one of the most rational things a person should do in order to have meaningful human relationships, particularly love and friendship. Let us begin now with Phaedrus.<sup>4</sup>

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3. However, in Pausanias and Eryximachus’ speeches, the *excessive* love that belongs to the Πάνδημος Ἀφροδίτη must be separated from the virtuous life, but not the one that belongs to the Οὐρανία Ἀφροδίτη.

4. Richard Patterson insists that “at each level of the ascent the lover is stimulated by the object of *eros* to bring forth *logos* – *logos* which attempt to say, of its object, what is so wonderful about it, what makes it so beautiful. . . . Once that has been identified in *logos*, it becomes apparent that what the lover really found so attractive was not quite what he took it to be, for *logos* reveals that the original object was only beautiful insofar as it embodied, expressed, or, to adopt a more Platonic terminology, imaged or reflected, the new beauty brought to light by *logos*” (“The Ascent in Plato’s *Symposium*,” 196). Some of Patterson’s textual evidence is as follows. First, 210b6-c3: “Next he must deem beauty in souls more admirable (τιμιώτερον) than that in bodies, so that if someone possessed little beauty, but a fitting soul, that would be sufficient to love him and care for him, to seek out and beget *logoi* of a sort that would improve the young.” Second, 210c6-7: “After practices he must proceed to branches of understanding (μαθήματα, ἐπιστήμαι), so that he may see the beauty of these.” Third, 210c7-d6: “and, looking upon much beauty, no longer slavishly love any one beauty, any fair boy or man or any one practice, a servile fool and simpleton, but rather, looking out upon and contemplating the great see of beauty, give birth to many, and beautiful, and magnificent *logoi* and thoughts in philosophy that is free of envy and jealousy.” As Lawrence points out, Patterson seems to be reading the *Symposium* with the perspective of the *Republic*, where the systematic application of reason is at work (Joseph P. Lawrence, “Commentary on Patterson,” 218). I agree with Lawrence that the *Symposium* is more poetic in its presentation of the speeches. This does not mean that the *Symposium* gives a priority to poetry more than to philosophy. Cf. Thomas M. Alexander’s remark on the relationship between philosophy and poetry in

## 1. Phaedrus: ἔρωσ as the elevator of φιλία

The route of Love is depicted as the best way to go if one is to live beautifully (178c). Love gives human beings a sober sense of shame and pride in acting well. Without this knowledge of how to act properly, nothing great can be achieved in life. This is because Love is a wonderful passion that makes a lover manifest his best virtues, especially to his beloved, more than to his family or friends (ἐταίρων, 178d8). The desire to always give the best, motivated by Love, enables a person to do amazing things, and hence be heroic. Love, according to Phaedrus, is stronger than a thousand deaths (179a). Familial feelings and friendly affections are not as excellent as Love in helping a person undertake heroic deeds.

That is why, when Phaedrus presents the first encomium to Love in the *Symposium*, he depicts ἔρωσ as a willingness to sacrifice for the beloved that is more wonderful than friendship. Phaedrus says (179b-d):

Besides, no one will die for you but a lover (οἱ ἐρῶντες), and a lover will do this even if she's a woman. Alcestis is proof to everyone in Greece that what I say is true. Only she was willing to die in place of her husband, although his father and mother were still alive. Because of her love (διὰ τὸν ἔρωτα), she went so far beyond his parents in family feeling (ὑπερεβάλετο τῆ φιλίᾳ) that she made them look like outsiders, as if they belonged to their son in name only. . . . The eager courage of love (τὸν ἔρωτα) wins highest honors from the gods.

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Plato's *Symposium*: "Philosophy is not higher than poetry, it is a higher form of poetry because it, too, is concerned with a type of making, with a shaping of the human drama in order to draw forth its meaning" (*Eros and Poiēsis in Plato's Symposium*: 103). I tend to see that ἔρωσ and λόγος in the *Symposium* are maintained in a state of tension. Moreover, I agree with Lawrence that Patterson is not very accurate in claiming that when one loves a particular body, the beautiful does not reside in that particular body, but in the beauty of *all* bodies. That way, the beautiful in *all* bodies serves as the motivation to love the lower level of the instantiation of beauty. The problem with this account is that there is no more beauty in the physical reality, which seems to be a denial of much of Plato's description of bodily beauties in the *Symposium*. Paul Ricoeur makes an interesting remark on the relationship between ἔρωσ and λόγος: "Happy and rare is the meeting, in living fidelity, between Eros, impatient with all rules, and the institution which man cannot maintain without sacrifice" (*Sexuality and the Sacred: Sources for Theological Reflection*, eds. James B. Nelson and Sandra P. Longfellow, 84).

The talk about Alcestis serves as an illustration that Love is stronger than parent-child friendship as a motivation to live well. This indicates that love and family feelings can be seen as independent of one another. What I mean by “independent” is that family feelings can be present without love and vice versa.

Phaedrus later also praises Achilles for his bravery in avenging his lover, Patroclus. Phaedrus’ strong claim is quite striking, that it is not possible for a person to sacrifice herself unless he is a lover. Yet Love by itself is just a motivation for action. It does not automatically make people act well. People have to choose to Love. One can be in Love without acting based on Love, as in the case of Orpheus, who searched for his dead wife Eurydice, but did not dare to die for Love’s sake. Friendly affection, too, is a motivation to act well. In human society, relationships between parents and children and among friends are inevitable. A life lived well will incorporate a right attitude towards friends and parents/children. But friendship cannot cause one to die for his friends.

It is questionable why Phaedrus denies the possibility that parents might sacrifice their lives for their children or vice versa. Phaedrus’ point seems to be that Love is superior to friendship as a motivation to live well. But in order to make his point, Phaedrus could just say that (1) Love most likely will cause a person to see friendship and friends as less important than love and his beloved, and (2) Love probably will help someone achieve greater things more than friendship. Still, we can see some problems with this revision. With respect to (1), we can ask why Love is more important than friendly affections, and why the beloved is more important than

friends. There must be some reason for regarding the beloved as worthier than one's parents, for example. Unfortunately, the reason is not really given clearly in the Phaedrus' speech. If the reason is just because it is Love, then it will be a bare assertion: Love makes a person choose the beloved instead of his friends because it is Love. It is not a good justification to opt for Love instead of friendship if the reason for that is rather mysterious. With respect to (2), surely Love can help someone achieve greater things than friendship. Yet we still need to ask the rationale for the action, which is not given clearly. Moreover, there is no argument given by Phaedrus to exclude the position that there might be at least one case in life where a person is willing to die for his friends in comparison to a lover who is not willing to die for his beloved.

Having said that, we can still try to understand the relationship between Love and friendly affections as Phaedrus presents it. Both Love and friendly affections are feelings that are present in human relationships. Both affections are necessary ingredients for a good life. Love, though, is nobler than friendship because it more likely brings more honor, since Love can make a person heroic. Love is an elevator of friendly affections in the sense that a person with both friendly affections *and* Love will live a better life than a person who only has friendly affections.<sup>5</sup> The origins and objects of these two affections may be different, but they should be present in one person's life. For example, a father may only have friendly affections towards his

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5. My interpretation here is similar to David Halperin's: "[Alcestis'] love for Admetus – the fundamental motive force behind her act of self-sacrifice – was a strong and militant love because it happened to be accompanied by the *additional ingredient* of erotic passion" ("Platonic *Eros* and What Men Call Love," *Plato: Critical Assessments*, Vol. I, 67).

children. But he needs to have Love for his spouse in order to be more virtuous. The two feelings will remain different from one another in the sense that family affections do not change into Love. Phaedrus might well agree that in a relationship there is only Love, but not family affections. This brings us to the conclusion that the principle of friendly affections may be something different from that of Love. At any rate, having both feelings is the ideal thing to do.

## **2. Pausanias: φιλία as the outcome of ἔρως**

We should begin our eulogy about Love, according to Pausanias, not by praising him, but by first defining his nature. Since Love is not simple, we need to make a proper differentiation of kinds of Love before we can decide which Love we should give praise to the most. He starts his discussion by pointing out that there are there are Common and Heavenly Aphrodite, which give birth respectively to two kinds of Love. The Love of Common Aphrodite is the one that is felt by the vulgar, and it is characterized by the love of the body more than the love of the soul, that is, to the more unstable than stable things. The vulgar do not care about what is noble. However, they are not always bad, even though they only do “whatever comes their way, sometimes good, sometimes bad” (τύχῳσι, 181b8), which is compatible with the fact that the Love of Common Aphrodite “strikes wherever he gets a chance (τύχῃ, 181b2).” This means that the vulgar do not have control over their actions over the power of the Love of Common Aphrodite. They are “hasty” and even “unfair to their loved ones” (182a). That is why the vulgar are sometimes blamed for tainting the reputation of Love. The

Love of Heavenly Aphrodite, by contrast, inspires people to desire not only the body, but more importantly the soul. This Love nourishes the characters of human beings, forms shared human relationships, and brings out the best in life with respect to noble actions. When people are influenced by the Love of Heavenly Aphrodite, they wish to live together and build one another up without evil intention. Love, then, by itself is neither noble nor worthy of praise: “that depends on whether the sentiments he produces in us are themselves noble” (181a).

In a more complex culture, the presence of love can be regarded as a sign of vileness, such as shown by the example of the Persian empire that was lusting for power and rejecting love, and even philosophy and sport, because they probably affect the formation of strong bonds of friendship (φιλίας ἰσχυρὰς καὶ κοινωνίας) and love is able to make people intractable and unruly. Here we may say that if φιλία is not the outcome of ἔρως, at least it is the by-product of ἔρως. Pausanias illustrates this point by reciting the story of Harmodius and Aristogiton, whose love and affection enabled them to attempt to topple down the tyrant Hippias in 514 B.C.<sup>6</sup> In a simpler culture, like in Elis or Boetia, every case of lovers seems to be approved without any difficulty (182b). But then, this indiscriminate approval shows the laziness of the soul of the law-

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6. In the defense for Timarkhos’s prostitution this following reasoning was given by an Athenian general: “He [Timarkhos] will put before you first of all the example of your benefactors, Harmodios and Aristogeiton ... and ... sing praises of the love (*philiā*) of Patroklos and Achilles which is said to have come into being through *erōs* ....” Dover, *Greek Homosexuality*, 41. Dover gives an explanation for this quotation: “Harmodios and Aristogeiton killed Hipparkhos, the brother of the tyrant Hippias, in 514 B.C., and were regarded in popular tradition as having freed Athens from tyranny, though Hippias was not in fact expelled until 510. Both Harmodios and Aristogeiton perished in consequence of their act; Harmodios was the eromenos of Aristogeiton, and Hipparkhos’s unsuccessful attempt to seduce him was the start of the quarrel which had such a spectacular political outcome (Thuc. vi 54-9). . . . The defence envisaged by Aiskhines as likely to be offered on Timarkhos’s behalf by the unnamed general amounts to this: a homosexual relationship can engender the most heroic self-sacrifice” (ibid.).

makers (182d). Pausanias takes a middle way. He does not want to reject Love altogether, but does not want to approve love without qualifications. To him, the customs in his time only provide one way for a person to have an honorable erotic relationship, that is, by loving and being loved according to two principles (184c): (1) the principle governing the proper attitude toward the lover of young men and (2) the principle governing the love of wisdom and of virtue in general. These principles serve as a guardian against two extreme attitudes, that of rejecting love altogether and of receiving cases of love unreasonably. At any rate, Pausanias' point remains the same, that Love, "considered simply in itself[,] . . . is neither honorable nor disgraceful – its character depends entirely on the behavior it gives rise to" (183d).

The relationship between Love and friendly affections in Pausanias' speech is not clear. We have some hints about it at least from two passages. First, we remember that Phaedrus mentions the hostility of the Persian empire towards Love (182c). People there reject Love, even philosophy and sport, since those *might* be a stimulant for the presence of great friendships. The case of Harmodius and Aristogiton is worth looking at more closely. The Greek text reads Ὁ γὰρ Ἀριστογείτονος ἔρωσ καὶ ἡ Ἀρμοδίου φιλία . . . (for Aristogiton's love and Harmodius's friendship . . . ) (182c6-7). It is unclear in the Greek text whether Aristogiton has friendly feelings towards Harmodius or not, and whether Harmodius has passionate romantic feelings towards Aristogiton or not.<sup>7</sup> But one thing that we can conclude here is that the presence of

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7. As a speculation, since Harmodius is the youth and Aristogiton is the older man, probably the former only has friendly feelings towards the latter, but the latter only has romantic passion towards the former.

φιλία can be ascribed to, i.e., is produced by, Love (ὁ ἔρως ἐμποιεῖν, 182c5), presumably the heavenly one. Yet Pausanias claims that φιλία is independent of the Common Love, as indicated by this following passage:

We also consider it shameful for a man to be seduced by money or political power, either because he cringes at ill-treatment and will not endure it or because, once he has tasted the benefits of wealth and power, he will not rise above them. None of these benefits is stable or permanent, apart from the fact that no genuine affection (φιλίαν) can possibly be based upon them. (184b)

We can see that there is a similarity here between the Love of the Heavenly Aphrodite and friendship: both must be based upon something stable or permanent. Unlike Love that has two kinds, there is only one kind of friendship and it is always good in nature.

Second, in relation to the attempt to achieve a virtuous life, it is φιλία that is responsible for the intellectual aspect and character building in an erotic relationship (185a):

By the same token, suppose that someone takes a lover in the mistaken belief that his lover is a good man and likely to make him better himself (διὰ τὴν φιλίαν ἐραστοῦ), while in reality the man is horrible, totally lacking in virtue . . . .

Notice that the Greek text explicitly says that it is not Love that is the cause of the betterment of the beloved, but the friendly feelings. Genuine affections, then, are a necessary condition for virtuous living. But if friendly feelings are the outcome of the Heavenly Love, then love cannot be absent in a virtuous life. Other instances of φιλία, such as parental affections and affections between rulers and the ruled, are not necessarily generated by Heavenly Love.

### 3. Eryximachus: φιλία as the result of ἔρως

Eryximachus' speech uses Pausanias' distinction between two kinds of Love.<sup>8</sup> But Eryximachus goes further in applying the distinction not only in the realm of human character and arts, but also in the realm of both gods and concrete material objects (186a).<sup>9</sup> He is concerned not only about the harmonious character of music, but also the concord between elements in material bodies.<sup>10</sup> If Pausanias thinks that Love can lead us towards loving beautifully or in an ugly way, Eryximachus thinks that Love has either life or death force. The finer species of Love brings harmony and agreement, while the bad one incites chaos and destruction. To illustrate this point, Eryximachus says that “the love manifested in health is fundamentally distinct from the love manifested in disease” (186b). Eryximachus believes that the Love force is present in many, if not all, fields of human life: medicine, physical education, farming, music, poetry, and so forth. These subjects investigate the effects Love brings to certain things, whether it makes them recover or deteriorate. But Eryximachus' emphasis in his speech is specifically about the power of Love in bringing harmony and unanimity

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8. Ludwig Edelstein gives an interesting interpretation of Eryximachus' role in the banquet. He writes, “Eryximachus . . . lays the foundation for the whole contest. He holds the conversation together at the point where it is in danger of breaking up. As there would be no encomia of Eros without him [since he was the one that gave Phaedrus credit for suggesting the topic of the discourse], there would be no praise of Socrates without his insistence [that is, by his insisting that Alcibiades give a speech instead of ruining the party]” (“The Role of Eryximachus in Plato's *Symposium*,” 96).

9. “But Eros exists in the souls of men not only toward beautiful people, but also toward many other things and in other things – in the bodies of all animals, in what grows in the earth, and in general in all that is.”

10. “For attunement is concord, and concord a kind of agreement – it is impossible for agreement to derive from things at variance so long as they are at variance; on the other hand, it is impossible to attune what is at variance and does not agree – just as rhythm too derives from the quicker and slower, which had before been at variance but afterward come to agree. Music here, like medicine there, puts agreement into all these things, implanting Eros and unanimity with each other. And music in turn is knowledge of the things of love concerning attunement and rhythm. It is not hard to diagnose the things of love in the very constitution of attunement and rhythm, nor is the twofold Eros there yet.” (187b-c)

(ὁμόνοιαν, 187c4). The kind of Love that is felt by good people, which is the Heavenly one, must be protected and nourished. About the vulgar one, Eryximachus is not suggesting that we eliminate it because it is not entirely bad, as long as one can be careful in enjoying pleasures without falling into debauchery. But this is as difficult as regulating appetites within the proper boundaries.

The relationship between Love and friendly affections in Eryximachus' speech with respect to attaining a good life is not very clear. At least there are two passages that indicate that both genuine affections and Love are necessary elements for a virtuous life. The first is in 186d6:

The physician's task is to effect a reconciliation (φίλα) and establish mutual love (ἐρᾶν ἀλλήλων) between the most basic bodily elements.

The word φίλα, from φίλος, indicates a kind of friendly bond. We have seen that Heavenly Love brings harmony to the bodily elements. When Eryximachus adds "reconciliation" to mutual love, perhaps he is talking about the same thing. The word καί in the sentence can just mean "that is." If this is the case, then "to effect a reconciliation" *is* "to establish mutual love."

Our second passage gives more information about the relationship between Love and genuine affections (188c-d):

Our object is to try to maintain the proper kind of Love, and our deference to the other sort, when we should have been guided by the former sort of Love in every action in connection with our parents, living or dead, and with the gods. The task of divination is to keep watch over these two species of Love and to doctor them as necessary. Divination, therefore, is the practice that produces loving affection (φιλίας) between gods and men; it is simply the science of the effects of Love on justice and piety.

This passage is Eryximachus' illustration for harmony in the domain of religious practices. Heavenly Love is needed to guard human beings from impiety (ἀσέβεια), which seems to break human bonds. But then Eryximachus talks about the practice of divination (ἡ μαντική) as the practice that produces friendship between gods and human beings. The divination must supervise (ἐπισκοπεῖν) the two species of Love and doctor (ἰατρεύειν) them if needed. It seems that the divination uses custom (θέμιον) and piety (εὐσέβειαν) as the standard to keep watch on the two species of Love. When Heavenly Love is guarded properly, friendship between gods and human beings most likely will arise.

From this discussion, we may derive the conclusion that in order to have a good life, one must have both kinds of Love taken care of properly. The presence of friendship seems to result from the presence of Love. Now, we can go back to interpret our first passage. Based on our view about the relationship between Love and friendship, Eryximachus seems to be saying there that to have friendship, we need to have mutual Love. If this is correct, then genuine affections here are not independent of Love as a tool to have a good life. Friendship, anyway, is one of the wonderful gifts from the god of Love (188d9).

#### **4. Aristophanes: φιλία as ἔρως for wholeness**

Aristophanes took over the conversation after he recovered from his hiccups. The suggestion given by Eryximachus to Aristophanes about the Sneeze Treatment might very well be a sign of his friendship for him in the setting of a lovely and orderly

symposium. Since Eryximachus had talked earlier about medicine and harmony in relation to Love and friendship, we can well interpret Aristophanes' hiccups case, which involved his yielding to Eryximachus' speech, as a live and immediate illustration of how the orderly sort of Love in the body (τὸ κόσμιον τοῦ σώματος, 189a3) creates a bodily harmony. After Eryximachus' talk, Aristophanes seemed to be making a joke about whether the Sneeze Treatment really did incite Heavenly Love in his body, which was then followed by the reconciliation of opposite bodily elements that cured the hiccups. Eryximachus was apparently being serious about that. But he knew too well that Aristophanes was a comedian. Eryximachus might understand that Aristophanes was yet about to offer his friendship in a very different way, through his supposedly funny oration. Surprisingly, the oration turns out to be not only comical, but also very tragic and touching. It is an oration about the journey of human beings towards wholeness, a journey in which we are ready to take part now as we discuss it.

Human beings, according to Aristophanes, have missed the power of Love. Had they understood it, they would already have built beautiful shrines for the god. One of the reasons that the god is worthy to receive human worship is that “he loves (φιλανθρωπότατος) the human race more than any other god” (189c8). The wonder of the god of Love's love towards human beings is obvious from the fact that human beings have rebelled against the gods, and presumably against Love himself, but still he loves them in a way that surpasses how the other gods love them. The three primitive kinds of human beings were so powerful that they threw their fists against the gods. The comedy is that their form was round and they rolled around, but they dared

to fight against the most powerful. The gods assembled and decided to cut them into halves to weaken them. That way, the human beings would not be able to show their *hubris* anymore, yet they could still exist and serve the gods. After being cut, they were cured by Apollo. We remember in Eryximachus' speech that every cure is made possible by the force of Heavenly Love. But this physical recovery is not enough. The separation they experienced was not only physical, but also psychological and even existential. They felt that their existence was incomplete without the other half of their being. First they longed to be with one another all the time that they neglected other things in life, even their need for sustenance. One by one they died miserably.<sup>11</sup> Then Zeus took pity on them and gave them the ability to have intercourse. They could be consoled with the sexual intimacy and their ability to reproduce, hence they were able to be productive in other areas of life. Aristophanes concludes (191d),

This, then, is the source of our desire to love each other. Love is born into every human being; it calls back the halves of our original nature together; it tries to make one out of two and heal the wound of human nature.

That is why Aristophanes thinks that Love loves human beings more than other gods. The god of Love not only spared them from death, but wanted them to experience their original unity – by the permission of Zeus. Note that the unity here is not just sexual unity. It is a reunion of the soul of the halves that is important. It is obvious, says Aristophanes, that besides the sexual intimacy, “the soul of every lover longs for

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11. Arlene W. Saxonhouse writes, “Eros . . . when there is no sexuality and only longing, leads to death. It is to these humans that Aristotle refers in his discussion of unity from diversity – the individuals for whom the discovery of the appropriate mate is of such importance that they destroy themselves and each other – their diversity – in their unity. It is not only a lack of clothing and shelter that kills them; the unity which they achieve, despite their diversity, transforms them into beings who no longer show any potential. They are whatever they might be. At such point they need no others; they become asocial and apolitical. In Aristotle's model they become either gods or beasts” (“The Net of Hephaestus: Aristophanes' Speech in Plato's *Symposium*,” 25).

something else” (192d). This going back to the original nature is the only proper way to preserve the life of human beings. When the reunion is achieved, love has been brought back to perfection.<sup>12</sup>

The relationship between friendly affections and Love in Aristophanes’ speech is not clear either. We have seen above that the god of Love himself loves human beings with *φιλία* (189c8). One passage that is worth our noticing is 192c, which is one of the most beautiful passages in Aristophanes’ myth (192c):

And so, when a person meets (*ἐντύχη*) the half that is his very own, whatever his orientation, whether it’s to young men or not, then something wonderful happens: the two are struck from their senses by love (*φιλία*), by a sense of belonging to one another (*οἰκειότητι*), and by desire (*ἔρωτι*), and they don’t want to be separated from one another, not even for a moment.

The origin of friendly feelings and Love are is the same here, viz., a person’s meeting the other half. But the relationship between Love and friendship is not specified further. It is possible that *φιλία* and *ἔρως* are actually two different names for the same desire. The two passages serve as textual evidences for this interpretation:

That’s why a man who is split from the double sort (which is used to be called “androgynous”) runs after women (*φιλογύναικός*). (191d9)

Many lecherous men have come from this class, and so do the lecherous women who run after men (*φίλανδροί*). (191e1)

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12. Again, Saxonhouse writes (ibid., 21-2), “Why then for Aristophanes is our ancient form our *τέλος*? It is a form without *ἔρως* (pain) because it is self-complete. Its spherical shape indicates the absence of a beginning or an end. It requires nothing more to be complete. There is no interdependence among the spherical bodies. They do not need each other, even for the sake of procreation. The absence of need makes them divine rather than human. Their perfection makes them models towards which humans can strive, that is, the gods we have now are inferior representations of perfection. The ancient spherical beings, our ancestors, are our true gods. There is no political life among these ancient beings. There are no families. Both cities and families (and lovers) indicate the absence of perfection. Both reveal men as needful creatures who cannot survive or procreate on their own. Political life and families arise from a sense of partiality, something these spherical creatures do not feel.”

Both of these passages talk about sexual orientation. However, the “running after” is not only about physical sexuality, but also about regaining wholeness. Love itself is defined by Aristophanes as “the name for our pursuit of wholeness, for our desire to be complete” (193a). A little ambiguity arises here since now Love is not seen as the god of Love anymore, but as a desire to be whole.<sup>13</sup> It seems, then, that genuine affections *are* Love in this latter sense since they are desires to be whole as well. Love is needed through and through because it brings human life back to its original nature, which is necessary for us to be happy and blessed (μακαρίους καὶ εὐδαίμονας, 193d6).

### **5. Agathon: φιλία as the creation of ἔρως**

The celebration of Love continues with Agathon’s speech. Agathon begins his talk by speaking about how he ought to speak. In praising the god of Love, he feels compelled to speak about his nature first, then his gifts. The reason is that “you must explain what qualities in the subject of your speech enable him to give the benefits for which we praise him” (195a). He insists that Love is the happiest among the gods because he is the most beautiful and the best. He also believes that Love is the source of all beauty and goodness (197c). The god of Love is charming both in his nature and his appearances. He is the youngest among the gods, with absolute delicacy. Agathon praises the exquisite color of his skin and how good-looking he is. Yet outward appearances themselves are just the expression of the god’s moral virtues. Agathon adores the god of Love because the god possesses of the cardinal virtues of the Greeks:

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13. Gerasimos Santas interprets this issue with a conclusion that “eros (a lover) cannot be a god” (“Plato’s Theory of Eros in the *Symposium*: Abstract:” 69).

justice, temperance, courage, and wisdom. The virtues that are present in the world, according to Agathon, naturally spring from the god of Love. Love not only dwells in delicate and beautiful places, but also transforms anything he touches into a thing having a Love-like quality, full of virtues and delicacy. Even other gods, including Zeus, were once pupils of the god of Love in matters of wisdom: Apollo in prophecy, the Muses in music, etc.

One possible way to interpret the relationship between Love and other beauty in the world is by using a universal quantifier. Agathon says that Love “is himself the most beautiful and the best; after that, if anyone else is at all like that, Love is responsible” (197c). In other words, for all  $x$ , if  $x$  is beautiful and good,  $x$ 's being that way can be ascribed to Love. One instance of this is the case of poetry. Agathon believes that “the god is so skilled a poet that he can make others into poets: once Love touches him, *anyone* becomes a poet” (196e). It seems, though, that Love himself is not the form of beauty or the good. Perhaps we may say that his task in the universe is to instantiate the forms of beauty and goodness, much more like the demiurge (cf. the occurrence of *δημιουργία* in 197a3).

If this universal quantification is acceptable, then we can easily say that friendly feelings arise from Love. There is at least one passage in Agathon's speech that support this interpretation (195c):

Those old stories Hesiod and Parmenides tell about the gods – those things happened under Necessity, not Love, if what they say is true. For not one of all those violent deeds would have been done – no castrations, no imprisonments – if Love had been present among them. There would have been peace and brotherhood (*φιλία*) instead, as there has been now as long as Love has been king of the gods.

The reasoning given by Agathon here is simply that because there was no Love, there was no friendly affection either. If we are allowed to require the presence of Love as a necessary condition for the presence of friendly affections, we can say that if there were friendly affections, then it is necessary that Love was present as well. Notice that Agathon's theory of Love is very virtuous and free of wild passions. In every aspect of our lives, Love takes care of us, guiding us and guarding us against vileness. That is why Love is our comrade and savior. He is the source of all our virtuous actions.

Before we proceed to Socrates and Diotima, let us summarize our findings on the first five speeches. First, Phaedrus might suggest that love and friendly affections have different origins and objects. However, both are needed for virtuous life since love is depicted as a better way of life than friendship. Second, Pausanias and Eryximachus see Heavenly Love as responsible for generating friendship. Heavenly Love cannot be absent in a virtuous life, but uncontrolled Common Love must be avoided. Third, Aristophanes sees Love as necessary for human beings to return to their original state of wholeness. Interestingly, Aristophanes suggests that *φιλία* is ἔρωσ with respect to desire for wholeness. It is a desire for *particular individuals* that can complete us as human beings. Fourth, Agathon also sees Love as the producer of friendship.

We can conclude that the first five speeches in the *Symposium* see ἔρωσ as indispensable in virtuous living. We can also conclude that, in the first five speeches, *φιλία* is a necessary but not sufficient condition for virtuous living. A person needs to have friendly and family affections to be virtuous. Furthermore, only in the speech of

Phaedrus is there a possibility for φιλία to have a separate principle from ἔρως. In the rest of the speeches, φιλία is not independent of ἔρως in the sense that (1) the former is generated by the latter (Pausanias, Eryximachus, Agathon) or (2) the former *is* the latter with respect to the desire for wholeness (Aristophanes).<sup>14</sup> We are now ready to hear Socrates and Diotima's wisdom about Love.

## 6. Socrates and Diotima: ἔρως as the φιλία for wisdom

The beauty of Agathon's speech worries Socrates a little bit. He is not sure now whether he really understands Love (cf. 177e). It is possible, of course, that Socrates does not really mean what he says. His remarks that he will "not be able to say anything that came close to them [Agathon's speech] in beauty" (198b) is perhaps just a rhetorical introductory note for his later point that Love is not beautiful. To Socrates, "Love is the love of something . . . and he loves things of which he has a present need" (201a). However, Love is the love of beauty and never of ugliness. It follows from this that Love is not beautiful because it desires beauty. By the same reasoning, Love is not good either, since good things are beautiful and Love lacks beauty.<sup>15</sup>

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14. For an interesting discussion of the structures of the dialectic of *goodness* and *love* in the *Symposium*, see Kenneth Dorter, "A Dual Dialectic in the *Symposium*:" 256-27. Dorter believes that there is no linear ascent of the concept of goodness and love in the *Symposium*, but rather dialectic relations. For example, with respect to goodness, the speech of Phaedrus promotes self-sacrifice, in contrast with that of Pausanias that promotes "self-seeking behavior in the guise of justice."

15. I will not discuss whether Socrates's arguments against Agathon are valid not since the issue is beyond the scope of this paper. Two of the articles that discuss this issue are by Andrew Payne, "The Refutation of Agathon: *Symposium* 199c-201c:" 235-53 and by Alan Soble, "Love is not Beautiful: *Symposium* 200e-201:" 43-52. One of the main debates is about whether "love" in the speech of Socrates should be understood as the subject or object of love or the *relation* between the lovers, i.e., the desire for the beautiful. Soble insists that if love is the relation between the lovers, love can be understood as *one* beautiful thing among others that pushes people towards the Beautiful.

Socrates proceeds to present an account given by Diotima, who sees Love as the intermediate of two extremes. Love is neither wise nor ignorant, neither mortal nor immortal, neither beautiful nor ugly, neither totally rich nor penurious. Love is of “the good forever (ὁ ἔρως τοῦ τὸ ἀγαθὸν αὐτῷ εἶναι ἀεί)” (206a9-10). Love then is not about being loved, but about loving:

Love is . . . in love with what is beautiful, and wisdom is extremely beautiful. It follows that Love must be a lover of wisdom and, as such, is in between being wise and being ignorant. (204b4)

As a correction to Socrates’s claim that the object of Love is the beautiful, Diotima insists that the object of Love is the reproduction and birth in the beauty in respect to the body and soul. It is this reproduction that enables a person to own the good eternally. That is why Love loves immortality as well (207a). Diotima points out the incompleteness of Phaedrus’ account about Alcestis’ willingness to die for her husband (208d). Diotima believes that Alcestis would have not done that had she not expected to be immortal by means of being remembered because of her virtue. The desire to own the good stems from the wish to obtain happiness in life, which is the final answer for any question about utilities. The talk about possessing the good forever makes Love universal because the good can be present in any aspect of human life.

As stated before, the manifestation of goodness in human life is preserved by the act of reproduction. Diotima talks about two kinds of pregnancy with respect to giving birth to beauty. The first is physical pregnancy. Those who care less about wisdom tend to pursue women and concern themselves with reproduction in the ordinary sense of the word, viz., the multiplication of progeny. Those who are pregnant

in soul will find another soul to educate. Reproduction here will be both in the realms of body and knowledge. The beauty in the lover recognizes the beauty in the beloved. The lover will help the beloved reach immortality by guiding him in his ascent to the very idea of beauty itself.

With a proper training, the beloved will be a leader himself. He will first find beauty in particular individual bodies. He then will realize that actually all the beauties are one and the same. He knows eventually that he should love *all* beautiful bodies. But even further still, he will soon find out that the beauty of the soul is more valuable than the beauty of the bodies and will seek to give birth to ideas for the betterment of young people. The next step is that he will be forced (ἀναγκασθῆ) to gaze at the beauty of observances and laws, before he moves on to perceiving the beauty of the branches of knowledge. Finally, he will reach the idea of Beauty itself, which is the final destination of his pursuit of wisdom: “But the lover is turned to gloriously beautiful ideas and theories, in unstinting love of wisdom” (210d6). At this point, he can really help other people follow the path he has taken. This is a blissful ascent as opposed to the rebellious ascent (εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνάβασιν, 190c1) made by Aristophanes’ three kinds of human beings. In Aristophanes’ case, the human beings did not succeed in their attempt for an ascent to the gods, and they ended up staying on the earth in a diminished condition. In the case of Diotima’s account of the ascent, a true lover will be able to experience the ascent and will be able to “return” to earth, promoting the instantiation of the Beauty in human life, in order to bring more people to go “upwards for the sake of this Beauty” (211c).

The relationship between Beauty and virtue is clear: only those who have experienced this pure and absolute Beauty can be truly virtuous, as opposed to those who can only produce images of virtue (212a). Here we have a strong justification for saying that ἔρως is sublimated into philosophy. The friendly affections among human beings are strengthened by the love of wisdom, which is Love itself (209c6):

such people, therefore, . . . have a former bond of friendship, because the children in whom they have a share are more beautiful and more immortal.

Friendship between human beings itself is not enough for virtuous life. One must have Love for Beauty,<sup>16</sup> which is philosophy. Friendship can help people become virtuous because they can help one another climb the ladder of Love.

There is also a kind of “ladder” as well with respect to the role of desire (ἐπιθυμία) in the *Symposium*.<sup>17</sup> Pausanias first mentions, concerning the healthy and diseased constitutions of the body, that “dissimilar subjects desire (ἐπιθυμῶ) and love (ἐρᾶ) objects that are themselves dissimilar” (186b6). This desire is of something related to physical matters. The same use of this word occurs in Aristophanes’ speech, which is actually a comment on Eryximachus’ idea of desire and Love:

The hiccups have stopped all right – but not before I applied the Sneeze Treatment to them. Makes me wonder whether the ‘orderly sort of Love’ in the body calls for

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16. F. C. White insists that love is not directed toward the beautiful, but of the Good. He writes, “It may well be a traditional and popular view that the ultimate object of love is beauty, but it is not Diotima’s. On the contrary, she is at pains to correct it, arguing at length that whatever role beauty plays in love, it is always subordinate to that of the good” (“Love and Beauty in Plato’s *Symposium*,” 153). Though I see a possibility that White might be right, I also see that the “traditional” view, as White construed it, is plausible. For example, Diotima says that Εἶπερ που ἄλλοθι, βιωτὸν ἀνθρώπων, θεώμενῳ αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν (211d). As Halperin says (pp. 85-6), “[Diotima’s] insistence that *eros* is a desire for ‘birth and procreation in the beautiful’ does not bear at all on the identity of the erotic object. Rather . . . Diotima is speaking entirely to the question of the erotic aim – that is, she is attempting to specify what the lover wants his erotic object *for*, what he wishes to do with it or to accomplish by means of it.”

17. ἔρως is a *form* of ἐπιθυμία. See Ann R. Cacoullou, “The Doctrine of Eros in Plato,” 89-92.

(ἐπιθυμῆι) the sounds and itchings that constitute a sneeze, because the hiccups stopped immediately when I applied the Sneeze Treatment. (189a3)

Notice that the desire here is still physical, since it is about the harmony between bodily elements. But when Aristophanes starts talking about the craving of human beings to be united, he uses the word to refer to a desire for something more abstract, viz., a reunion of the souls:

And supposed they're perplexed, and he asks them again: "Is this your heart's desire (ἐπιθυμῆιτε), then – for the two of you to become parts of the same whole, as near as can be, and never to separate, day or night? Because if that's your desire (ἐπιθυμῆιτε) . . ." (192d6,8)

The objects of desire in Diotima's speech are even more abstract, viz., the desire for wisdom (204a1), the desire for good things or for happiness (205d2), the desire to "give birth" (206c4), the desire for immortality (207a1), and the desire (ἐπιθυμητής) for intelligence (203d6). In a sense, there is an "ascent" with respect to the objects of desire in the *Symposium* up to Diotima's account of Love.

The same case happens with the case of friendly affections. We have seen that in Eryximachus' account, friendly affections are present for the sake of health. We have also seen in other speeches that friendly affections are present in friendship among human beings. One important note is about Aristophanes' speech that suggests particular individuals as the object of friendly affections (which is ἔρωσ itself). This is a direct contrast with Diotima's, where friendly affections ultimately have a glorious object, viz., wisdom.<sup>18</sup>

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18. See K. J. Dover, "Aristophanes' Speech in Plato's *Symposium*:" 47-8. F. M. Cornford gives us the "usual" interpretation of Diotima's ladder of love: "There are four stages in this progress. The first step is the detachment of Eros from the individual person and from physical beauty. . . . Next, we must learn to value moral beauty in the mind above beauty of the body, and to contemplate the unity and

Up to this point, I have tried to show that the relationship between friendly affections and Love with respect to attaining a virtuous life in the *Symposium* up to Diotima's speech can be divided into three kinds. First, in the speech of Phaedrus, Love is an elevator of friendship. Second, in Pausanias, Eryximachus, and Agathon's encomia, Heavenly Love is the originator of friendship. Third, in the speeches of Aristophanes and Socrates-Diotima, Love is equated with friendship. However, in Aristophanes' speech the objects of love are particular individuals, whereas in the speech of Socrates-Diotima the object of love is the beautiful. Throughout the *Symposium* Heavenly Love is necessary for virtuous living, whereas the improper Common Love must be avoided.<sup>19</sup>

I have also made an attempt to show that there is a progression with respect to the objects of desire, friendly affections, and Love in the *Symposium*.<sup>20</sup> The progression goes from the physical world to the world of ideas, particularly the idea of Beauty. It

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kinship of all that is honourable and noble – a constant meaning of τὸ καλόν – in law and conduct. . . . The third stage reveals intellectual beauty in the mathematical sciences. . . . The final object – beyond physical, moral, and intellectual beauty – is the Beautiful itself” (“The Doctrine of Eros in Plato’s *Symposium*,” *Plato: A Collection of Critical Essays*, vol. II, ed. Gregory Vlastos, 126-7).

19. Cf. Cacoullous: 97: “For those of us who are interested in the structure of the moral life, the important question which ought to be put is whether or not the erotic drive or erotic motivation – the desire to create and the actual concentrating of energies towards the achievement of specifiable goals – constitutes a necessary and sufficient condition for the adoption and pursuit of the moral point of view, in Platonic terms, for the achievement of *arete* or excellence. Plato would say that this is a necessary condition but not sufficient. Partly because he conceived of *arete* in the way he did and partly because he does place a premium upon education and knowledge of the Forms, *eros* for Plato must be fortified by intellectual training. This is especially true for those persons who are capable of achieving the highest sort of knowledge and virtue.” If we may read Cacoullous’s interpretation of Platonic ἔρως into the distinction between Heavenly Love and Common Love, then perhaps we can say that Heavenly Love is Love with excellence.

20. I disagree with Drew A. Hyland who tries to differentiate between ἔρως, ἐπιθυμία, and φιλία in too strict a way. “‘Ἐρως, Ἐπιθυμία, and Φιλία in Plato:’” 32-46. He writes, “there is a distinction between ἐπιθυμία, Ἐρως and φιλία, and that the distinction hinges on the presence and degree of reason” (ibid.: 40). I have tried to show that even ἐπιθυμία can be directed to wisdom. By the same token, φιλία can be directed to wine and horses.

might be useful to examine the relationship between this ascent in the *Symposium* and the one with respect to the divided line in the *Republic*.<sup>21</sup> Now, I will discuss the last speech in the *Symposium* and argue for the third point in my paper, viz., that the “battle” in the *Symposium* is between Aristophanes and Socrates-Diotima with respect to the objects of love, i.e., about whether the proper objects of love should be particular individuals or the Form of beauty.

### **7. The Speech of Alcibiades as a Gateway to Plato’s *Phaedrus***

As beautiful as Diotima’s speech is, it is not the final word in the *Symposium* about Love. Alcibiades comes drunk and insists that he wants to tell the truth about Socrates (214e). Alcibiades falls deeply in love with Socrates. He cannot live with him, but cannot live without him either (216c). The fact that his love is unrequited by Socrates makes him suffer every time he is with Socrates. Yet, he is not ready to lose Socrates altogether. It is not a coincidence that the dialogue takes place at Agathon’s place, which literally means the place of “the good”. Socrates at least acts as if he is falling in love with the good, which is symbolized in the dialogue by Agathon.<sup>22</sup> Socrates is terrified by the fierceness of Alcibiades’s passion (φιλεραστίαν) (213d6). Alcibiades, on the other hand, is falling in love with a particular individual, viz., Socrates. Instead of praising Love, Alcibiades praises Socrates.

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21. Cacoullos has briefly tried to do this (Cacoullos: 98).

22. Gary Alan Scott and William A. Welton point out that there are two kinds of ἔρως in the speech of Alcibiades: Alcibiades’s and Socrates’s. The former is acquisitive and jeopardizes others’ freedom because it is prideful and excessive. The latter, by contrast, is liberative since it is the desire to free people from the bondage of the shadows (e.g., traditions and myths) (“An Overlooked Motive in Alcibiades’ *Symposium* Speech:” 67-84).

The reason for Alcibiades's encomium on Socrates is at least threefold. First, Alcibiades adores Socrates for his friendship. Even though there is no explicit mention about friendship between Alcibiades and Socrates, Alcibiades tells a story about how Socrates saved his life in the battle between Athens and Potidaea (220e). Socrates's bravery reminds us of Phaedrus' speech about how Love helps people do amazing things, including sacrificing themselves for their friends. Second, he praises Socrates for his uniqueness (221d). Socrates is incomparable to anyone in his bizarre ideas. Third, he praises Socrates for being able to entrap souls with his philosophy. Alcibiades is well aware that Socrates has driven him crazy because of philosophy. Alcibiades sees philosophy as madness (*μῶνία*), a thing characterized by Bacchic frenzy (218b3). In his words,

Well, something much more painful than a snake has bitten me in my most sensitive part – I mean my heart, or my soul, or whatever you want to call it, which has been struck and bitten by philosophy, whose grip on young and eager souls is much more vicious than a viper's and makes them do the most amazing things. (218a5)

Alcibiades's whole life is just “a constant effort to escape from [Socrates] and keep away” (216b). Yet it is inevitable that he is drawn back by being possessed by Socrates's magic.

Above all, though, Alcibiades knows that the most important thing in his life is to be the best man he can be (218d). He also knows very well that there is no other person who can help him achieve that besides Socrates. The problem is that he is not satisfied with Socrates's frigid attitude towards him. He wants more intimacy, more sexuality. The fact that he sometimes wrestles in the gymnasium with Socrates without getting sexual at all frustrates him. But Socrates is well known for his sobriety and

virtuosity. Socrates was never drunk and he is not interested in beautiful bodies.

Socrates never even got tired. He did not sleep until the evening after the symposium ended.

Martha Nussbaum insists that the real tension in the *Symposium* is between the speeches of Aristophanes and of Socrates-Diotima. As I said earlier, Diotima's idea of love is not the final word in the *Symposium*. The reason is that the *Symposium* ends with Alcibiades:

With his claim that a story tells the truth and that his goal is to open up and to know, he suggests that the lover's knowledge of the particular other, gained through an intimacy both bodily and intellectual, is itself a unique and uniquely valuable *kind* of practical understanding, and one that we risk losing if we take the first step up the Socratic ladder. (The *Phaedrus* will develop this suggestion, confirming our reading.)<sup>23</sup>

Nussbaum's point is that Alcibiades sees that non-rational elements in human life, such as personal interactions, emotions, and imagination, serve as "cognitive resources" for being virtuous in particular situations. These elements also help a person to know the beloved in a different way from propositional knowledge. Despite the vulnerability, madness, and "chanceness" that accompany it, loving a particular individual is indispensable if one wishes to climb the ladder of love. But there is a dilemma here.<sup>24</sup>

In Nussbaum's words,

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23. Martha Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness*, 190.

24. There is a word-play in the *Symposium* between the verb ἐρωτάω and the noun ἔρωσ. Socrates seems to say that he has dual mastery of the art of questioning and the art of love. See C. D. C. Reeve, "Telling the Truth About Love:" 92-3. It is possible to say that the *Symposium* is not an answer, but a question about love. See also an interesting analysis by David L. Roochnik on this issue in "The Erotics of Philosophical Discourse:" 117-29. Roochnik writes, "To understand *ta erotica* is thus to understand the primacy of the question, that mode of discourse emanating from the knowledge of ignorance" (ibid.:128). Another kind of dilemma is pointed out by R. A. Markus: "either perfect happiness (which consists in perfect possession of the good and the fulfillment of all desire – cf. 204E) is impossible of attainment; or love must cease, since it must, by definition, involve unsatisfied desire, on the attainment of perfect happiness. There is no escape between the horns of the dilemma short of re-

We see two kinds of value, two kinds of knowledge; and we see that we must choose. One sort of understanding blocks out the other. The pure light of the eternal form eclipses, or is eclipsed by, the flickering lightning of the opened and unstably moving body. You think, says Plato, that you can have this love and goodness too, this knowledge of and by flesh and good-knowledge too. Well, says Plato, you can't. You have to blind yourself to something, give up some beauty.<sup>25</sup>

I also see that the passage 206e supports Nussbaum's claim that the "battle" in the *Symposium* is between Socrates/Diotima and Aristophanes: "'Now there is a certain story,' she said, 'according to which lovers are those people who seek their other halves. But according to my story, a lover does not seek the half or the whole, unless my friend, it turns out to be good as well.'"

Price disagrees with Nussbaum's exclusive reading of the *Symposium*.<sup>26</sup> He believes that there must be a degree of inclusivism in the *Symposium*, even though the degree is undefined. The extreme exclusivist view is wrong because "Diotima's theme is that Beauty itself is supremely beautiful, and not that the lesser beauties are no beauties at all."<sup>27</sup> Price is not categorizing Nussbaum into the extreme exclusivist camp. Nussbaum would agree that the lesser beauties are beauties in lesser degrees "in amount and in location."<sup>28</sup> The exclusivism in Nussbaum involves the inevitable action to exclude the lesser beauties once one reaches the true beauty, since those lesser beauties are ephemeral in nature.<sup>29</sup>

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defining 'love' in a way which loosens its logical connexion with 'unsatisfied desire'" (*Plato: A Collection of Critical Essays*, vol. II, ed. Gregory Vlastos, 136).

25. Nussbaum, 198.

26. *Love and Friendship in Plato and Aristotle*, 43ff.

27. *Ibid.*, 44.

28. Nussbaum, 180.

29. See also Price, "Martha Nussbaum's *Symposium*:" 290. Price writes, "I would concede that Socrates may ultimately be discarding the love of persons for a love of Forms. That is not my preferred understanding (cf. Price 1989, 45-54); yet it seems probable that, if this is what Socrates is saying, it is what Plato approves (at the time of writing). But the *Symposium* offers less support for supposing that

Price mentions the roles of the beloved in the process of climbing the ladder of love: (1) he perhaps has some instantiation of certain kinds of beauties, which makes him attractive to the lover who are interested in those kinds of beauties; (2) he may receive new types of beauty from the lover, that the lover's life is flowing through him. It is the second role that can help us question the exclusivist interpretation. Since the goal of the ascent is to reach immortality by mental procreation, then it is compatible to say that even until the end of the ladder, the lover still loves the beloved in the sense that he is procreating in the soul of the beloved, hence actualizing his love for immortality. Price insists that

if the ascent-passage has standardly been read as describing a discarding of persons for the sake of Forms, that is, if I am right, the result of two connected mistakes (whose effect is only slightly mitigated by an inclusive reading): confusing the loved one's role as an object of contemplation (in which he is soon largely superseded) with his role as a recipient of thought, and taking the passage out of context.<sup>30</sup>

Price concludes that the individuals as the objects of love are retained throughout the ascent. When the lover reaches the true Beauty, the contemplation of the Form brings intense experience that "at once refreshes and eclipses the experience with which he began: gazing upon the Form of Beauty is even more, incomparably more, ravishing than looking at the forms of boys."<sup>31</sup>

One potential problem in Price's suggestion is that if the experience of the true Beauty only reminds the lover of the beloved, then actually there is no love of

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Socrates would have us discard individuals on behalf of a beauty that is uniform and unvariegated, and it is that claim that ascribes to him a view that even Plato could hardly have held without reservation."

30. Price, *Love and Friendship in Plato and Aristotle*, 49.

31. *Ibid.*, 53.

individuals in the end of the ascent.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, the final word in the *Symposium* is not Diotima's but Alcibiades's, which seems to support the exclusive interpretation, even though not the extreme one. Alcibiades's speech would allow the retaining of individuals as objects of love until the lover reaches the Form of Beauty, where he has to abandon the temporary for the love of eternity. Price's suggestion that immortality involves the reproduction of ideas in the soul of the beloved is more compelling. But still Nussbaum could answer the objection by pointing out that it is the idea of immortality itself that is ultimate in the lover's mind, and not the individual of the beloved. In Price's interpretation, it seems that the beloved is still being used as merely a utility for a better end.

I do not find Price's account more persuasive than Nussbaum's. The ascent passage in the *Symposium* support's Nussbaum's claim that in the end of the ladder, particular individuals are no longer objects of love: "he will see the beauty of knowledge and be looking mainly not (μηκέτι) at beauty in a single example" (210d). Diotima also insists that the true beauty is "always in one form; and all the other beautiful things share in that . . . . [O]ne goes always upwards (ἀεὶ ἐπαυλιέναι) for the sake of this Beauty" (211b-c). Of course, going upwards does not always mean discarding what is left. However, given the ascent passage about looking no more to

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32. Cf. David L. Roochnik, "The Erotics of Philosophical Discourse:" 127. He writes, "Philosophical discourse is erotic in origin. It is maniacally perverse: it turns away from all that is naturally familiar to human being, namely the particularized world of bodies, cities, and sciences. It is about everything: its object is universal. This, however, it cannot articulate theoretically. Its object is not being as being, but (being as being) as object of desire. This means two things: first, that philosophical discourse desires objective knowledge; second, that it can never loosen itself from the discoursing agent in order to make visible with certainty an undisturbed object. Its object is seen through a kaleidoscopic lens manufactured by an erotic being who desires to overcome finitude."

the particular beauties, the passage about always going upwards for the sake of Beauty strengthens the fact that the particular individuals must eventually be forsaken.

If Nussbaum is correct, it seems then Plato's *Symposium* ends with a big question on how to reconcile friendship, Love, and madness.<sup>33</sup> The reconciliation of these three things may be found in Plato's *Phaedrus*, especially when Socrates talks about the fourth kind of madness. If that is the case, then we can see the speech of Alcibiades as a shining gateway to Plato's *Phaedrus*.

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33. Martin Warner insists that the speeches culminate in Socrates's speech "which attempts to integrate all the symposiasts' claims in a comprehensive account which frees itself from their flaws by going beyond them. "Dialectical Drama: The Case of Plato's *Symposium*:" 166. One problem with Warner's contention is that it seems to ignore the ongoing tension in Alcibiades's speech between the love of Alcibiades for Socrates and the interest of Socrates for Agathon. Another problem with his account is that we see in the speech of Socrates some big revisions of the ideas in the earlier accounts. For example, Socrates sees ἔρως not as god but as daemon, and that the true and ultimate object of love must be wisdom and not particular individuals. These revisions suggest that there is no attempt of integrating the speeches in the *Symposium* into a comprehensive account.

### CHAPTER III

#### WHOSE MADNESS? WHICH LOVE?:

#### ἜΡΩΣ AND ΦΙΛΙΑ IN PLATO'S *PHAEDRUS*

In the end of the *Symposium*, we are left with a dilemma with respect to the objects of love. On the one hand, we can love particular individuals, but then our love will be ethereal and sometimes full of negative emotions. On the other hand, we can love wisdom, which is something that we can have forever. However, excluding particular individuals as objects of love would make love inhuman, since it seems natural that we love our fellow human beings in the recognition of our passions to be whole. Furthermore, it would not be possible to climb the *scala amoris* at all. Notice that the nature of love in the *Symposium* is defined with respect to its objects. In a sense, the *Symposium* is an aporetic dialogue, since the problem about the objects of love is left unresolved in the hands of Alcibiades. However, one thing is clear in the *Symposium*, viz., that ἔρωσ is indispensable in a virtuous life.

It is time to move on to Plato's *Phaedrus*. Agreeing with Nussbaum, I will argue that the *Phaedrus* is an attempt by Plato to solve the dilemma given in the *Symposium* by using dialectic.<sup>34</sup> On the one hand, love seems to be an irrational

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34. I will assume that the *Phaedrus* was written later than the *Symposium*. See Leonard Brandwood, "Stylometry and Chronology," *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, ed. Richard Kraut, 112. Cf. R. G. Tanner, "Plato's *Phaedrus*: An Educational Manifesto?" *Understanding the Phaedrus*, ed. Livio Rossetti, 221. Tanner writes, "I believe the present text must be dated shortly after 376 B.C., and that its composition or revision was prompted by the death of Gorgias. The death of Lysias may have helped to prompt either this dialogue (if, as Thompson conjectures, it was ca. 378 B.C.) or else Thesleff's «first draft»." Tanner also claims that *Phaedrus* emphasizes the pedagogical element in the context of philosophical yet romantic relationship more than the *Symposium*.

madness that is closely related to being overwhelmed by passion instead of by intelligence. On the other hand, true love seems to require sobriety. We see a similarity here with the problem posed in the *Symposium*, since the tension in the *Phaedrus* is also between love for particular beauty and love for *true* beauty. The *Phaedrus* suggests that it is possible to see that love is a perfectly rational madness and serves as a reminder of the true beauty.<sup>35</sup>

The structure of this chapter is as follows. First, I will explain Lysias's view of love and friendship. Lysias thinks that we should be non-lovers instead of lovers. Second, I will describe Socrates's two opposing speeches on love. Socrates first affirms Lysias's negative view on love, but then refutes it and praises love. Third, I will explain the dialectical nature of Socrates's speeches and his view on rhetoric and writing. Using the discourses on love, Socrates claims that rhetoric without truth is despicable and writing is useless if it is a mere rhetorical tool. Fourth, I will discuss Nussbaum's arguments that the second speech of Socrates gives a possible solution to the dilemma in the *Symposium*.

### 1. Lysias: φιλία is superior to ἔρως

Lysias insists that we should be non-lovers instead of lovers. The arguments for this claim are manifold. First, a lover would be full of regret once his desire has passed

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35. F. C. White's contention that Nussbaum "writes as if love in the *Phaedrus* were concerned solely with humans, a thing altogether of this world" seems to be wrong ("Love and the Individual in Plato's *Phaedrus*:" 396 [n.2]). Nussbaum writes that "we advance towards understanding by pursuing and attending to our complex appetitive/emotional responses to the beautiful; it would not have been accessible to intellect alone," *The Fragility of Goodness*, 215. Also, "The erotic appetite is now not a blind urge for the 'replenishment' of intercourse; as we have seen, it is responsive to beauty and serves as a guide as to where true beauty will be found," *ibid.*, 217.

away (231a). The cause of the regret is that the lover usually has done a lot of favors, maybe excessively, for his beloved. After all the infatuation, he would realize that his effort to please the beloved was just empty since his desires have faded away. The important thing to note here is that such action is something *imposed* (ἀνάγκη) upon the lover's will, as opposed to something voluntary. A non-lover (a friend), by contrast, always does the best by choice. The non-lover is in control of his actions. Second, a lover is always worried about the gain he would get from the romantic relationship (231b). He has spent a lot of time, energy, and perhaps money for the beloved. He even has neglected his own business *for the sake* of the beloved. But surely there is no selflessness in such romantic relationship. The lover wishes to receive something good in return, or else he would complain to the beloved. A non-lover is different. He is doing something good for another person because he wants to, without any agenda to get something in return. This will save him from something bad (κακός). Third, a lover would not be the best friend, since once he finds another more attractive person, he would neglect and even ridicule his first beloved if that would make the new beloved happy (231c). Fourth, a lover is comparable to a sick person in the sense that he is not thinking straight (231d). This point is similar to the first point, viz., that a lover is out of control since he is driven not by reason, but by desire. Fifth, a non-lover can build decent friendship (φιλία) with more people than just with those who are in love with him, who are not really good friends (231e). Sixth, a lover would do something good to the beloved more because he wants to be admired, perhaps for his success in enchanting the beloved (232a). He does not really care about doing what is best, but

more about what brings him glory and popularity in the eyes of society. Seventh, other people usually suspect that when a lover and his beloved are found together in a conversation, the togetherness must be related with satisfying their desire (232b). Friendship is free from this accusation, since people always need to converse with each other. This point is interesting since even though society would praise the lover for getting the beloved, the same society would also ridicule them because of the dynamic of the relationship that is limited only to eroticism. Eighth, a lover is full of jealousy and possessiveness (232c). He does not want to lose his beloved and isolate the beloved from other friends. This would make the beloved unable to develop his potentials, including his intelligence. A non-lover, by contrast, would bring all the excellence out of the other person's character. Ninth, a lover loves the beloved before knowing his character (233a). A lover is unable to decide whether he wants to be friends with the beloved once the desire has gone. Non-lovers are more superior since they befriend other people first before doing anything good to them. That is why there should be no worry in a friendship that the give and take will ever end. Tenth, a lover will not be able to give right judgment toward the beloved because he is afraid of being disliked (233b). A lover tends always to praise the beloved and never gives correction. Progress in the character of the beloved is not really possible in this kind of interaction.

Lysias concludes his arguments by emphasizing four points. First, similar to the first and the fourth point, love overwhelms the lover and makes him out of control. He is not the master of himself. A lover is not able to control his desire, including anger. He is impatient toward his beloved and usually does not tolerate small mistakes. This is

very different from a friend. A friend wishes that his friend learn from mistakes and improve his character. That is why friendship is more long lasting. The second point in the conclusion is an answer to a very important question: “Have you ever been thinking that there can be no strong friendship in the absence of erotic love?” (233d). Lysias believes that that kind of thinking is questionable. He believes that we could still care for our family and friends even though there is no romantic love. Remember that in the *Symposium*, Phaedrus’ speech states that erotic love is more heroic than friendship. Lysias is rejecting that notion here. The third and final concluding point made by Lysias is about the object of our caring. Care must be directed only toward those who deserve it, viz., good and decent friends who will not leave their friends because of trivial things. Care must be given to steady friends who will maintain the friendship for the rest of their lives. This implies that we probably cannot have such friendship with all people and we should not care about all people, since the quality of the relationships would not be deep.

Socrates, after hearing Lysias’s speech read by Phaedrus, sees the speech as creating a sort of Bacchic frenzy *for* Phaedrus, which is reminiscent of Alcibiades’s observation in the *Symposium* about Socrates’s philosophy. However, Socrates is not very impressed with the speech since Lysias seems to be repeating the same points several times. His speech is not the clearest among the Greeks. Socrates is then challenged and forced by Phaedrus to give a better speech about love, to which we now turn.

## 2. The First Speech of Socrates: A Confirmation of Lysias's View

The discussion is about whether a boy should make friends with his lovers rather than those who do not love him. Socrates will speak with his head covered because he is not sure whether he can give good arguments in his speech (237a). To understand the issue better, it is important to talk about the nature of love and its effects. Socrates begins with the claim that love is some kind of desire. However, Socrates reminds us that those who are not in love still have a desire toward what is beautiful. Human beings are torn between two principles, the desire for pleasure and the pursuit of what is best based on judgment (237e). Sometimes the desire for pleasure is in control over reason, which brings outrageousness (ὑβρις). The outrageousness takes many forms. One form is gluttony, which is the desire for food. The other form is called ἔρωξ, which is the desire for human bodies. Socrates's etymology of the word is interesting, since Socrates mentions that it is from force (ῥώμη) (238c). But when reason is the master, human beings are in the state of being in the right mind (σωφροσύνη).

A lover, who is a slave to desire for pleasure, will try to keep the beloved for himself by being superior to the beloved in such a way that the beloved must depend on him. A lover is not trying to develop all the potentials of the beloved and could be manipulative in order not to lose the beloved. A lover will even *inhibit* the mental and physical development of the beloved if it is necessary. He will be jealous of other people who are trying to do good to the beloved. Moreover, a lover will want the beloved to be deprived of any possessions so that the beloved will want to accompany

him. In that way, the beloved is by necessity forced to give pleasure to the lover. Notice that the idea of necessity appears several times already. The first was when Socrates was forced by necessity to give the speech. The second was the talk about ἔρωσ as something controlling. The third was when Socrates was talking about being taken by “the Nymphs’ madness” (238d). Now, Socrates is talking about the necessity of the beloved to give pleasure to the lover. Socrates’s point is that the lover is harmful to the beloved, not to mention that after the desire has gone, the lover would try to flee away from his promises to the beloved. The friendship of a lover is not based on any goodwill at all, but it is very manipulative: “Do wolves love lambs? That’s how lovers befriend a boy!” (241d).

### 3. The Second Speech of Socrates: A Denial of Lysias’s View<sup>36</sup>

Socrates feels obligated, though, to be more charitable to the notion of romantic love since ἔρωσ is the son of Aphrodite. He now will try to offer praise for the god of Love with his head uncovered. Socrates sees that madness (μανία), which is a characteristic of romantic love, can bring the best things in life if it is divine (244a).

Socrates observes that there are several kinds of madness. The first is prophetic madness. This madness makes the prophetess of Delphi and the priestesses of Dodona out of their minds when they are on duty. However, because the madness is a gift of the

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36. Tomás Calvo points out that Socrates’s first speech is not entirely the same in content with Lysias’s speech. Socrates in fact states that he will not argue for τὸ τῷ μὴ ἐρῶντι χαρίζεσθαι. Calvo insists that Socrates’s first speech adds dual truth to Lysias’s, viz., the truth that love is an egoistic desire and that rhetoric is dominated by this kind of desire. “Socrates’ First Speech in the *Phaedrus* and Plato’s Criticism of Rhetoric,” *Understanding the Phaedrus*, 47-60.

gods, they are still better off in predicting the future than those people who are clear-headed but use human science to understand the future. Madness as a tool for the inspiration of prophecy is attributed to Apollo. Second, there is mystical madness that is attributed to Dionysus. This kind of madness possesses people and brings safety to them from present and future troubles. Third, there is madness attributed by the Muses that instills the sense of poetry to the poets. It is better for the poets to be possessed by the Muses than not, since they will be able to produce better poems.

These three kinds of madness have the same characteristic, viz., those who are possessed by them are out of control. However, being out of control is not necessarily bad if it is caused by the gods. Socrates relates the discussion of madness to the idea of friendship. It is true that when one is in love romantically, he is out of control. But that is not necessarily a bad thing if the cause of the madness is something divine.

Socrates's task is then to prove that love is sent by the gods for the benefit of the lovers and the beloved.

To undertake the task, Socrates first discusses the nature of the soul, whether it is divine or human. This is actually a reassertion of the earlier conundrum stated by Socrates: "Am I a beast more complicated and savage than Typhon, or am I a tamer, simpler animal with a share in a divine and gentle nature?" (230a). Socrates asserts that the soul is immortal since the soul moves and whatever moves is eternal. There must be an eternal, imperishable self-mover that functions as the source of motion. The immortal souls in the *Phaedrus* are the self-movers and they do not need external

source for motion.<sup>37</sup> The idea of an Aristotelian Unmoved Mover does not appear here, since it seems to be redundant for the self-movers to have the Unmoved Mover as another source of motion.

Regarding the structure of the soul, it is like a union of a pair of winged horses and their charioteer. The souls of the gods consist of good horses and sober drivers, whereas the souls of human beings have one good horse, which loves modesty and self-control, and one bad horse, which loves indecency. The drivers will have a difficulty in controlling the chariot since the two horses are going in different directions. Socrates gives a mythical explanation of how the wings of the horses of human beings fell away: it is because the chariot cannot afford going to the upper level of heaven where the gods were having a festivity. The upper level of heaven is a place where the plain truth lies as is. The souls of man were in rivalry, trying to reach to the top of the region of heaven, but they were too heavy since one of the horses is driving them to the opposite direction. The souls of human beings had to land on earth and take human bodies to become living beings. Those who have seen some of the truth in heaven, which are the Forms, would become philosophers and lovers of beauty (φιλοσόφου ἢ φιλοκάλου) by way of recollection (248d). The horses of the souls will become winged again only through philosophical remembering. The philosophers will be like mad people since they are focusing their life on the divine. This is what

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37. Aristotle will develop his metaphysics of motion later and his theory of the soul in a more sophisticated manner. In chapter V we will discuss the relationship between ἔρωσ and motion, and we will compare Aristotle's *Metaphysics* L with Plato's *Phaedrus* on this issue.

Socrates called the fourth kind of madness, viz., the madness of the philosophers in seeing the truth and loving the beautiful.<sup>38</sup>

We arrive here at the crucial part of the explanation about ἔρωϲ. Here love is seen not as something irrational or out of control, but totally virtuous.<sup>39</sup> Love is aroused by wisdom itself. The objects of love are not particular individuals but the beautiful itself. This is different from Lysias's account of Socrates's first speech, that love is always being out of control, irrational, and vile, and is directed to particular individuals. Lysias seemed to say that φιλία is directed to the good and ἔρωϲ is not concerned about what is good at all. However, Socrates here tries to show that ἔρωϲ must ultimately be directed to the beautiful.

The interesting thing is that Socrates is not saying that the objects of love cannot be particular individuals at all. He believes that particular individuals can be objects of love as long as their souls are philosophical and lordly in nature (φιλόσοφος τε και ἡγεμονικὸς τὴν φύσιν) (252e).<sup>40</sup> The beloved then will be seen as the cause

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38. As M. Dyson points out, it is not only the followers of Zeus can be true philosophical lovers. The followers of other gods can attain that highest goal as well (252c-253c) as long as they aim to recollect the knowledge of the Forms. By the same token, followers of Zeus could fail to live a philosophical life and fall into the love of honor. "Zeus and Philosophy in the Myth of Plato's *Phaedrus*:" 309. The *Phaedrus* utilizes the talk about gods to express various characters that can grasp the true beauty: "Ares' followers will be quick to feel dishonour, Zeus' will be capable of wise leadership, Hera's will be kingly" (ibid.: 311).

39. A. W. Price believes that "even the best madness falls within the genus of the irrational (265e3-4)" ("Reason's New Role in the *Phaedrus*," *Understanding the Phaedrus*, 243-4). Price shows that "the eyes" are the ones responsible for seeing the Beautiful. But The Beautiful as a Platonic Form is also captured by reason. Price concludes that "Reason's new role is an aspect of the marriage of love and philosophy" (ibid., 245). I agree with Price that the best madness is a part of non-rational elements in human life. However, the best madness is totally virtuous in the sense that it has a cognitive role in a virtuous life.

40. I agree with Paul W. Gooch's critique of Nussbaum. Nussbaum might be too strong in saying that in the *Phaedrus*, Socrates sees Phaedrus as the beloved, "the particular individual" ("Has Plato Changed Socrates' Heart in the *Phaedrus*?" *Understanding the Phaedrus*, 309-12). This is not to

for the lovers to reach the beautiful, since the latter desire to find the character of the gods in the character of the beloved and to develop such character (253c):

This, then, any true lover's heart's desire: if he follows that desire in the manner I described, this friend who has been driven mad by love (ἔρωτα μανέντος φίλου) will secure a consummation (τελετή) for the one he has befriended (τῷ φιληθέντι) that is as beautiful and blissful as I said – if, of course, he captures him.

In fact, only those who love particular individuals for the sake of the love of the beautiful are called lovers (249e). The beloved, on the other hand, *unconsciously* sees himself in the self of the lover just as if he were seeing himself in a mirror. He is nonplussed about why he is yearning for the presence of the lover all the time. He thinks that what he has is friendship (φιλία) and not romantic love, and he longs to touch, kiss, and lie down with the lover as his best friend.

The relationship between the lover and the beloved can be manifested in two ways. First, it can be totally virtuous and modest in the sense that the interaction is controlled not by the bad horses, but by the good horses. The lover and the beloved become a philosophical pair. There should not be sexual intercourse between them. The interaction between them would be modest and not manipulative: the lover will not abuse the willingness of the beloved to give *anything* he wants. Upon their death, their wings will grow out and they will finally be able to see the Forms. Second, the relationship can be consumed by passion and not totally virtuous. There will be moments in their relationship where their minds are not totally in control, e.g., when

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say that Socrates is not attracted at all to Phaedrus' beauty. In fact, as Victorino Tejera points out, Socrates "is blocked, overcome (*eklagēnai*) by the eroticism of the situation" ("The *Phaedrus*, Part I: A Poetic Drama," *Understanding the Phaedrus*, 291). It seems to me, though, that the philosophical lovers in the *Phaedrus* must have deeper relationships than just mere attraction or sexual intercourse. The ironic part is that Socrates praises the philosophical lovers who love each other *without* sexual passions. Socrates's lust toward Phaedrus is then suppressed and hence Socrates preserves his integrity.

they are drunk. In this case, the lover and the beloved will also be able to reach the higher level of heaven, but not as quickly as those who are completely virtuous and modest. The interesting thing is that there is a situation where the lover and the beloved are no longer in love, but only in the state of mutual friendship. Friendship is characterized by keeping the vows the friends have exchanged and seems to be free of the madness of love. But this kind of mutual friendship is *weaker* than the philosophical pair, which has friendship and is always driven by the divine madness of love.<sup>41</sup> The non-lovers will not be able to reach the beautiful since they are restraining themselves from experiencing the beautiful by refusing to be in love.

Notice that Socrates's argument perhaps can be applied only to the souls who have previously seen the Forms before they were entrapped in the bodies. For those who have not perceived reality as it is, there is no hope of remembering the beautiful, since there is nothing to remember. For the latter, it seems that being in love or not does not really matter since they are not able to grow the wings of their horses.

#### 4. The Dialectic of Love

I agree with Nussbaum that the interpretation of ἔρωϝ in the *Phaedrus* is a possible solution to the dilemma in the *Symposium* (and in the *Republic*). The dilemma in the *Symposium* arises because there is a choice within the non-rational aspects of human life: “the boy must choose, simply, between good sense and madness, between

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41. Even though one may argue that friendship is also something divine, since it is of Zeus (Διὸϝ φιλίῳ) (234e).

good control by intellect and a disorderly lack of control.”<sup>42</sup> Nussbaum believes that the second speech suggests that there is no exclusive disjunction between *μανία* and *σωφροσύνη* in a virtuous life, since the former can cause greater good in some aspects of life (244a) while by the same token, the latter sometimes can bring “narrowness in vision.”<sup>43</sup> According to Nussbaum, the second speech gives three new positive points about non-rational elements in human life, including *μανία*.<sup>44</sup> First, the non-intellectual elements are required to motivate our intellect to go in a certain direction. The exclusion of appetites and emotion will result in the weakening of the personality. Nussbaum reminds us that even divine beings have horses, one of which represents the non-rational elements, that have to be nurtured. Nussbaum states that “the starved philosopher [who is deprived of emotions] may, in his effort to become an undisturbed intellect, block his own search for the good.”<sup>45</sup> Second, the non-intellectual elements have a cognitive task to give *information* on where goodness and beauty are. For Plato, certain high insights come through the *guidance* of passions. If in the middle dialogues the movement of the soul inevitably must leave the body, in the *Phaedrus* it is impossible to separate the sensual aspects of human life from intellectual enterprises. Furthermore, the interaction between the philosophical lovers in the *Phaedrus* will bring self-understanding through understanding the lover of the beloved. In Nussbaum’s words, “Once ‘looking to the lover’ was opposed to looking to philosophy (239a-b). Now the lover’s soul is a central source of insight and understanding, both

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42. Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness*, 205.

43. *Ibid.*, 213.

44. *Ibid.*, 214-22.

45. *Ibid.*, 214.

general and concrete.”<sup>46</sup> Third, the non-rational elements have intrinsic values of goodness and beauty, and not just an instrumental value, since the *Phaedrus* mentions that ἔρωϑ is a god that is completely good, and not just a mediator between the Good and human beings (242e). The philosophical lovers nurture one another in goodness and beauty. Love itself, then, is something beautiful and must be desired. That means the virtuous life must incorporate ἔρωϑ, which would require the lovers to have a second order desire, viz., a desire for Love. One important point made by Nussbaum is that the best lovers in the *Phaedrus* reject having sexual intercourse not because the *Phaedrus* rejects non-rational elements as something that have to be avoided, but because sexual intercourse would inhibit the cultivation of better feelings such as the feelings of tenderness, respect, and awe.

Another important thing to discuss here is Nussbaum’s claim that Socrates’s second speech is the final word in the *Phaedrus* with respect to the notion of ἔρωϑ, viz., it is the *apologia* for both ἔρωϑ and poetic writing. Nussbaum’s arguments may be reconstructed as follows. First, after the first speech Socrates says that he must purify himself (243a). This is the point where Socrates applies the sentence “there’s no truth to that story” from the palinode of Stesichorus to his first speech. Second, Socrates says that his first speech is the speech *by* Phaedrus, Pythocles’ son, from Myrrhinus, while the second speech is of Stesichorus. Nussbaum interprets this, saying “by this he means, we suppose, that it expresses Phaedrus’ current view, what he would say right

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46. Ibid., 218.

now if asked to give himself advice.”<sup>47</sup> Nussbaum makes an important argument that both Lysias’s speech and Socrates’s first speech might represent Plato’s view in the middle dialogues that there is an exclusive either/or between reason and madness, which is then recanted. Third, in the second speech Socrates uncovers his head. According to Nussbaum, the purpose of the head covering in the first place is that Socrates attacked erotic passion, which is something shameful.<sup>48</sup> I agree with this, but would add that the head covering is also intended to show that Socrates sees the content of his first speech as not his own. This is apparent from his remarks in 237a that he feels that he might not be able to give good arguments for his speech. The uncovering then suggests that in the second speech Socrates is *confident* about what he is saying.

Notice that Socrates continues the discussion about Love by questioning the usefulness of rhetoric as speech and writing with respect to attaining truth. The aim of the discussion is to further undermine Lysias’s conclusion that we should be non-lovers instead of lovers. Socrates first points out that Lysias’s speech is a kind of rhetoric and it is not very useful because it is not aiming at conveying the truth, but is mere persuasion for Lysias’s advantage. In fact, a rhetorician would not care about what is good and just as long as they can convince other people, which is the case in the courts of law where people are trying to win the case without regard to presenting the truth. Socrates believes that this ignorance of what is really good deserves reproach (277d). A rhetorician would try to understand the nature of the souls of his hearers, but it is

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47. Ibid., 207.

48. Ibid., 201-2.

because he wants to be effective in his speech, viz., that they can adjust the content and the style of the speech in order to win consent from the hearers.

Socrates wants to show that Lysias writes “artlessly” (ἄτεχνον) (263a). He shows that Lysias’s speech is not organized well, but put together as if it is an epigram. The first and last parts of the speech are the same, but the middle part is just something random. Lysias does not explain the word “love” in its fullest sense either. The problem is that the word can mean something bad, but it can also mean something divine. The ambiguity of words gives way to deception. That is why rhetoricians are fond of discussing words with more than one meaning. Socrates’s point is that Lysias’s interpretation of love is not the only one available for living virtuously and that perhaps Lysias does not fully understand about love. However, “as the Spartan said, there is no genuine art of speaking without a grasp of truth, and there never will be” (261a). Lysias’s speech is not an art because he might be deceiving himself as a result of his ignorance of the subject of his speech.<sup>49</sup>

Socrates suggests that, instead of doing rhetoric without truth, we philosophize by doing dialectic (278d). Socrates calls himself a lover of discourse (φιλολόγω) (236e) and a lover of learning (φιλομαθητής) (230d). That is why Socrates does not immediately reject Lysias’s view, but instead agrees with it first and then shows that there is an alternative interpretation for the idea of love. That way, Socrates is showing the practice of dialectic himself while talking about dialectic. The method he proposes to use in the *Phaedrus* is one of division: “First, you must know the truth concerning

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49. Suddenly here we are reminded of Plato’s cave and the whole idea of finding the clear and distinct truth instead of staying in the deception of the blurry shadow.

everything you are speaking or writing about; you must learn how to define each thing in itself; and, having defined it, you must know how to divide it into kinds until you reach something indivisible” (277c). Words are floating in the air and bursting into a pluriformity of semantical discourses. It is imperative that we speak lucidly of the meaning of terms. Socrates proceeds, concerning philosophy: “Second, you must understand the nature of the soul, along the same lines; you must determine which kind of speech is appropriate to each kind of soul, prepare and arrange your speech accordingly, and offer a complex and elaborate speech to a complex soul and a simple speech to a simple one. Then, and only then, will you be able to use speech artfully, to the extent that its nature allows it to be used that way, either in order to teach or in order to persuade” (277c). The method of division does not preclude art and poetry, as long as they help us convey philosophical truths.

There is also a dialectic with respect to the role of *φιλία* in the *Phaedrus*. In 237c, Socrates proposes that the discussion must begin with clarifying the definition, nature, and power of love. Up until now, we can conclude that in the *Phaedrus* Socrates does give an exact definition of love by rejecting the speech of his own first speech, which is in line with Lysias’s that claims that *φιλία* is superior to *ἔρως* because the former is more rational than the latter. But here *φιλία* is primarily directed toward particular individuals. But in the second interpretation, *φιλία* is directed both to particular individuals (256e) *for the sake of attaining true beauty and wisdom* (256a).<sup>50</sup>

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50. An interesting appearance of *φιλία* is in 279c. There Socrates uses the word as referring to the *harmony* of external possessions and internal richness. Another instance where it is used for harmony between people is in 237c.

Moreover, in the second interpretation, life should be directed simply at loving *through* philosophical discourses (ἀπλῶς πρὸς Ἔρωτα μετὰ φιλοσόφων λόγων τὸν βίον ποιῆται) (257b).

We see here that “the battle” in the *Symposium* is supposed to be settled because one can simultaneously love the particular individuals and the ultimate beauty and knowledge. This positive view on non-rational elements of human life, including on ἔρωτος, allows lovers to love each other and climb the ladder of love. Nussbaum thinks that the lovers love each other not as “exemplars of beauty and goodness” but “one another’s character, memories, and aspirations – which are, as Aristotle too will say, what each person is ‘in and of himself’.”<sup>51</sup> Given Plato’s metaphysics that the lovers *are* exemplars of beauty and goodness, what we can say at most is that the lovers love one another’s character *without* realizing that they are exemplars of beauty and goodness. But if they realize that the true beauty is not in themselves, then surely they must love one another because of that true beauty, even though their love for each other is itself worthy and not only instrumental.<sup>52</sup>

My suggestion to approach the problem in the *Symposium* is to differentiate between proximate and ultimate objects of love, both of which are worthy. The lovers’ love for one another is the manifestation of the *same* love for proximate objects, whereas the lovers’ love for true beauty is their love for the ultimate object of love. I

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51. Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness*, 220.

52. Price, *Love and Friendship in Plato and Aristotle*, 98, writes “It is a mistake to try to solve the problem for love at first sight; once love has got going, the beloved will be singled out by a unique role within a historical relationship. . . . To infer that what I really love is not a person, but a complex of repeatable qualities and irrepeatable relations, seems a category-mistake: we must not confuse the object of an emotion with its grounds (whether these are its reasons, citable by the subject, or its causes, perhaps hidden from him).”

claim that it is the *same* love because the *Phaedrus* only speaks about the same  $\mu\alpha\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$ , which is directed towards both particular individuals and true beauty. There is no hierarchy of worthiness between love for proximate objects and ultimate objects: it is the same kind of love, and both objects are necessary to be loved in a virtuous life. It is true the view of  $\epsilon\rho\omega\varsigma$  in the *Phaedrus* eliminates the exclusive either/or character of the objects of love as indicated in the *Symposium*. But still the problem remains about whether we can love someone *genuinely* in and of herself with such Platonic metaphysics.

F. C. White believes that we can.<sup>53</sup> If the meaning of “loving someone for his sake” is “loving that person as something that constitutes our final goals”, then he believes that we can love a person for his sake *qua* an image of the true beauty. White gives an analogical argument for his claim:

If we love Helen for her own sake, in virtue of her physical beauty, we have similarly good grounds for loving a portrait of Helen for its own sake<sub>1</sub>,<sup>54</sup> provided that the portrait adequately captures her beauty. In such cases we can love the image because it is an image, and at the same time love it for its own sake<sub>1</sub>. We can love the portrait of Helen because it is an image of her, recalling her to mind when she is absent and so on, and also love it for its own sake<sub>1</sub> – for the beauty of form which it itself possesses.<sup>55</sup>

The problem with this analogy is that we can love the statue of Helen and stop there without loving Helen. This is not the case with Platonic metaphysics. One should not

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53. F. C. White, “Love and the Individual in Plato’s *Phaedrus*,” 396-406.

54. By “for its own sake<sub>1</sub>” White means that Helen is pursued as the final end, but for *our* interest. This is differentiated from “for its own sake<sub>2</sub>” that emphasizes Helen’s sake, not ours. White writes, “The Forms of Beauty, Wisdom, Temperance and the like are not lovable for their own sakes<sub>2</sub>, since they do not have interests. But a person who resembles those Forms and thereby has the qualities of beauty, wisdom and temperance is lovable for his own sake<sub>2</sub>. For in addition to having these and similar qualities he is a person, and being a person he has interests” (ibid.: 401). White does not suggest that Plato has an idea that there are interests of persons *qua* persons. White’s intention here is to show that in the *Phaedrus* there is a notion of loving the beloved for his own sake. This excludes the simplistic interpretation of the lovers’ love as being entirely egoistical.

55. Ibid.: 399.

just love the image of the true beauty and stop there for the sake of the image. Loving the image of beauty is not the ultimate goal in Platonic metaphysics; loving the true beauty is. It seems to me that Platonic metaphysics does not allow a person to love particular individuals for their sake since they are supposed to be stimuli for true beauty. I can grant White's point that we can love particular individuals for their sake *qua* images of the true beauty. But the Platonic metaphysics demands a justification for the love for particular individuals. The justification is that a person must love true beauty *through* loving particular individuals. I do not see it as possible that the lovers in the *Phaedrus* can genuinely love other people for their sake. White himself suggests that when the lovers love one another, they do not love the individuality of the other person, but the *qualities* instantiated in that person. This seems to be problematic because it is more difficult now to say that we love other people for their sake, since what we are looking for is not *them*, but the qualities in them. This is also Vlastos's conclusion concerning Platonic love:

When he [Plato] speaks of ἔρωϛ for a person for the sake of the Idea, we can give a good sense to this at first sight puzzling notion, a sense in which it is true. It is a fact that much erotic attachment, perhaps most of it, is not directed to an individual in the proper sense of the word – to the integral and irreplaceable existent that bears that person's name – but to a complex of qualities, answering to the lover's sense of beauty, which he locates for a time truly or falsely in that person.<sup>56</sup>

The crux of Platonic love for other persons, according to Vlastos, is this: "What we are to love in persons is the 'image' of the Idea in them. We are to love the persons so far, and only insofar, as they are good and beautiful. . . . [T]he individual, in the uniqueness

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56. *Platonic Studies*, 28.

and integrity of his or her individuality, will never be the object of our love.”<sup>57</sup>

Vlastos’s interpretation of Plato does not say that there are no individuals. There might be the individuals of images, which might be not real individuals. However, the argument here boils down to the fact that it is the qualities in the images of Beauty that are supposed to be loved: “So too in the theory of love the respective roles of Form and temporal individual are sustained: the individual cannot be as lovable as the Idea; the Idea, and it alone, is to be loved for its own sake; the individual only so far as in him and by him ideal perfection is copied fugitively in the flux.”<sup>58</sup>

Having said all these, it is also worth mentioning there is a deeper problem with respect to Lysias’s attempt to talk about love, because he conveys his speech in the form of writing. First, writing discourses makes people lazy since they do not want to memorize the discourses (275a). This is a hindrance to the internalization of the knowledge in the souls of human beings. But the biggest problem with writing is that writings are similar to paintings with respect to their silence. Once discourses are written down, they are open to hermeneutical enterprises and are ignorant of praises and calumnies from people who read them. But this is not the case with the discourses written in the *souls of human beings*. These ones are living discourses of people who have knowledge. Written discourses are just the image (εἶδωλον) of these kinds of discourses. The people who know truth would not write the knowledge in ink since

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57. Ibid., 31.

58. Ibid., 34. Later I will try to briefly suggest that Aristotle’s solution is more thorough because of his revision of Platonic metaphysics. Since Aristotle does not admit that there is the Platonic world of Forms, then the lovers (or, more exactly, the friends) can love one another in and of themselves. The idea of beauty and goodness is just an abstraction of the beauty and goodness in particular individuals.

they knew that written discourses could not teach truth adequately. They would write the discourses *for themselves* as a reminder of what they know. It is naïve to think that “words that have been written down can do more than remind those who already know what the writing is about” (275d). They should use the art of dialectic in the form of *speech* to plant the seed of discourses in the soul of the hearers (277c). That way, the discourses can be internalized and flourish in the character of those people and bring knowledge and happiness. Socrates is not rejecting the form of writing altogether. His point is that writings must always be accompanied by a live explanation by the author, and the explanation must be in the form of dialectic. It is useless to play only with written words without being able to defend them when other people are asking for clarifications. A person who can defend his writings and are willing to engage in dialectical conversations can decently be called a philosopher since he or she loves wisdom and wants to know the truth. Isocrates is an instance of a philosopher since a more divine impulse (ὄρμη θειοτέρω) has led him into the love of wisdom, as opposed to Lysias who is only a rhetorician who does not care about truth.<sup>59</sup>

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59. There is an ongoing debate of whether Isocrates in the *Phaedrus* is “the malignant rhetoric or the reformed rhetoric”. See Maureen Daly Goggin and Elenore Long, “A Tincture of Philosophy, A Tincture of Hope: The Portrayal of Isocrates in Plato’s *Phaedrus*,” 301-24. R. L. Howland holds the former position: “There are thus two general criticisms of Isocrates. First, that he does not teach rhetoric properly because he does not make ἐπιστήμη the essential basis of it (in fact he does not teach dialectic), and second, that rhetoric, the art of *writing* discourses, is of no serious value, because at best it is a παιδία and not a σπουδή” (“The Attack on Isocrates in the *Phaedrus*,” 158). Goggin and Long argue that the pejorative reading of Isocrates in the *Phaedrus* is based on a false dichotomy of philosophy/rhetoric. They tend to see that there is a spectrum in the *Phaedrus* between philosophy and rhetoric. They insist that there is a convergence of Plato’s and Isocrates’s ideas of rhetoric, hence “this intersection permits a view of Isocrates and Isocratean rhetoric as the tincture of hope for a reformed philosophical rhetoric” (ibid.: 302). However, “while Isocrates wanted to reform rhetoric for the very practical goal of the political and social revitalization of the Hellenic states, Plato wanted to reform rhetoric for spiritual and individual ends” (ibid.: 308). I will not pursue this issue more in depth. My

In this chapter we can conclude three things. First, as in the *Symposium*, ἔρως is something necessary to a virtuous life. Second, the *Phaedrus* gives a possible solution to the dilemma posed by Plato in the *Symposium* by way of showing that the non-rational elements in human beings are not necessarily bad. Ἐρως is a virtuous μανία and should be directed to particular individuals *en route* to the Beautiful. Along with the synthesis of philosophy and poetic writings, there is also a synthesis concerning the idea of ἔρως. However, the solution in the *Phaedrus* still leaves a problem, viz., how can the lovers *genuinely* love each other in a Platonic metaphysical scheme of ideas and their instantiation? The revision of this problem might be found in Aristotle's idea of love. Third, the relationship between ἔρως and φιλία in the *Phaedrus* is that the latter without the former is weak. It is possible to have a life with φιλία but without ἔρως, which is a life that is not totally virtuous. However, it seems that it is not possible to have ἔρως without φιλία in a virtuous life.

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generous interpretation of Isocrates is based on my own reading of the *Phaedrus*. It seems to me that Socrates praises Isocrates *genuinely* instead of ridiculing him.

## CHAPTER IV

### VIEWS OF ARISTOTLE'S IDEA OF ἜΡΩΣ AND ΦΙΛΙΑ

Up to this point, I have tried to show two main points in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*. First, Plato's *Symposium* poses a dilemma with respect to the objects of love. The dilemma compels us to choose between loving particular individuals and loving the Form of Beauty. I see the *Phaedrus* as one possible solution to the dilemma. The *Phaedrus* redefines ἔρως to be entirely virtuous and capable of loving particular individuals *en route* to the Beautiful. However, even though the *Phaedrus* enables us to love both particular individuals and the Form of Beauty without discarding either one of them, the problem still remains about whether the love for particular individuals is genuinely for the sake of them. Second, throughout the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*, both ἔρως and φιλία are indispensable for a virtuous life.

Now, I will begin discussing Aristotle's view of ἔρως and φιλία with the intention to compare it later with that of Plato's. My discussion will revolve around the two issues above, viz., about whether one can genuinely love particular individuals for the sake of themselves and whether ἔρως and φιλία are indispensable for a virtuous life. Before I give my own interpretation of these issues, I will start with the views of three contemporary Aristotle scholars: Martha Nussbaum, Juha Sihvola, and Gabriel Lear.

## 1. Martha Nussbaum

In *The Fragility of Goodness*, Nussbaum discusses Aristotle's concept of ἔρωσ and φιλία.<sup>60</sup> Personal love and friendship are human activities that necessarily need external goods. This kind of activity is in contrast with contemplation, which is a self-sufficient activity. Love and friendship require another loving person. They are *relations* and not virtuous states.<sup>61</sup> The state of excellence is present not primarily in the relations but in the characters of those who are involved. When the relations become non-existent, the excellence will remain in the characters. Nussbaum believes that the core of this excellence, which resides in the personality, is not invulnerable, but relatively more stable even though there is no relation. Love and friendship as relations are more vulnerable because they involve two parties that are two different elements in the world. They require mutual generosity, justice, and kindness from each party. But Nussbaum also points out another cause of the vulnerability of such relations, viz., luck. Perhaps what she means is that the relations would neither be present in the first place nor last long if there were no luck. Luck here seems to be connected to *meeting* the person that we are able to be friends with or be in love with. Nussbaum believes that even so, Aristotle rejects the view that life must be contemplative *and* solitary. To Aristotle, vulnerable relations such as personal and political friendship are necessary means to achieve the best human life and happiness.

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60. Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness*, 343-372.

61. But we might ask Nussbaum why love and friendship are just relations and not virtuous states. It seems to me that friendship, at least, is a virtuous state that incorporates certain virtuous characteristics between the parties involved.

Nussbaum does not want to translate φιλία into “friendship,” since the word embraces various relationships that cannot be classified as friendship, such as the love between a mother and a child. Moreover, the word sometimes implies a stronger intimacy that involves sexual passions. Nussbaum uses “love” instead of “friendship” with a reminder that “the emphasis of *philia* is less on intensely passionate longing than on disinterested benefit, sharing, and mutuality; less on madness than on a rare kind of balance and harmony.”<sup>62</sup> Nussbaum also makes a point that there is no passive/active distinction between friends who love one another. The relation can be symmetrical, even though it need not be that way.

What we need to notice in Nussbaum’s account is about her claim that in friendship “each partner loves the other for what the other most deeply is in him or herself (*kath’ hauto*), for those dispositions and those patterns of thought and feeling that are so intrinsic to his being himself that a change in them would raise questions of identity and persistence.”<sup>63</sup> The love here is primarily based on character and not just on pleasure and utility. At this point Nussbaum contrasts the Aristotelian account of love with the one in Plato’s *Symposium*. In the *Symposium*, Plato’s account of love, both personal and philosophical, involves the desire to possess and control and, accordingly, jealousy and fear of loss. Speculatively, Nussbaum sees that Aristotle reminds us that the separate elements in the world should love each other by letting one another move separately. Love is not the only motion in the world, but there are motions of the elements that are in love. By letting the elements move themselves, love

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62. Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness*, 354.

63. *Ibid.*, 356.

serves as a context to bring the richness of life since the elements can grow without being suffocated by each other's presence and imposition. Filinais

a relationship that expresses, in the structure of its desires, a love for the world of change and motion, for *orexis* itself, and therefore for the needy and non-self-sufficient elements of our condition. . . . *Philia*, loving the whole of another person for that person's own sake, loves humanity and mutability as well as excellence. Platonic *erōs* seeks wholeness; *philia* embraces the half.<sup>64</sup>

With respect to the idea of motion in the *Symposium*, Nussbaum writes on the net of Hephaestus: "Wrapped in each other's arms, there they lie, for the rest of their lives and on into death, welded into one, immobile."<sup>65</sup> I think Nussbaum is interpreting that passage poetically, since there is no discussion of motion at all in the *Symposium*. But this discussion of motion and friendship will be particularly interesting when we later discuss ἔρωϛ and motion in relation to the Unmoved Mover. If Nussbaum's interpretation of the net Hephaestus is something significant, we can compare that to the idea of motion in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Λ and *EN*, which suggests that human beings must always be in perpetual motion in the context of friendship.

According to Nussbaum, there are three differences between Aristotle's idea of love and Diotima's. First, Aristotle's love seeks particularly human virtues, such as justice and generosity, and not something divine. Second, a person loves another person's character because the character comprises the individual, and not because they are parts of universal qualities. Love is an effort to know the other party through and through. Aristotle's love believes in the effability and describability of the lovers. Third, a person sees the features of his relationship with the other person as something

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64. Ibid., 357.

65. Ibid., 176.

unrepeatable, such as shared activities and mutual pleasure. Nussbaum writes, “Aristotle stresses these shared elements, then, not in order to bypass the individuality in love, but in order to give a richer account of what that individuality comes to.”<sup>66</sup> In love, people learn from one another to be better. Notice here that Nussbaum is incorporating Aristotle’s metaphysical account of individuals in her explanation of Aristotle’s idea of love:

This reflective look at models of goodness enhances our understanding of our own character and aspirations, improving self-criticism and sharpening judgment. . . . [W]e must remind ourselves again of what Aristotelian ethical knowledge is and what sort of experience it requires. This knowledge, we have said, consists, above all, in the intuitive perception of complex particulars. Universals are never more than guides to and summaries of these concrete perceptions.<sup>67</sup>

The emphasis of knowing individualities is reminiscent of “the knowledge of persons exemplified in the speech of Alcibiades and praised in the *Phaedrus*.”<sup>68</sup>

I would like to comment on the second point of Nussbaum’s contention that a person loves another person’s character because the character comprises the individual, and not because they are parts of universal qualities. I do not think this is perfectly accurate. Aristotle says in *EN* book I that we should befriend people for the sake of the ultimate good, viz., happiness. Moreover, Aristotle stresses the fact that *Τελεία δ’ ἐστὶν ἡ τῶν ἀγαθῶν φιλία καὶ κατ’ ἀρετὴν ὁμοίων* (1156b7-8). Friends love one another because of their individuality but in so far as they are good and virtuous. I will briefly discuss this issue later after interpreting *EN* VIII-IX.

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66. *Ibid.*, 357.

67. *Ibid.*, 364.

68. *Ibid.*, 365.

Nussbaum does not explicitly talk about the relationship between ἔρωσ and φιλία. She is aware that Aristotle does not write a lot about ἔρωσ. Her guess is that Aristotle's rather sexist view of women keeps him from seeing the highest kind of φιλία happening between opposite sexes. But because Aristotle is heterosexual, he does not see the necessity of having sexual components in φιλία between males.

Nussbaum writes,

This avoidance [of ἔρωσ] is extremely odd, given the prominence of homosexuality in his culture and in the philosophical tradition of writing about human goodness. And this is not only an injustice to his own method. It is a failure in *philia* as well. For Aristotle's manifest love for Plato and his years of shared activity with him should have made him look to the life of his friend as a source of information concerning the good life. But if he had looked, he would have noticed the ethical importance in that life of the combination of sensuousness and 'mad' passion with respect, awe, and excellent philosophizing. And then, if he did not himself opt for this life through awareness of his difference in sexual inclination, he might at least have set it down among the appearances and given it its due as one human way of aiming at the good.<sup>69</sup>

Nussbaum admits, though, that in φιλία taking pleasure in the physical presence of the other is important.<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, Nussbaum says that even though Aristotelian love is not a mad infatuation, it does have a strong affective element.

One more thing worth discussing is the comparison between *EN* and Plato's *Phaedrus*. Nussbaum sees the similarity between the two works, viz., both see love's highest value when the object of love has similar characters and aspirations. The difference between the two is twofold. First, the difference is additive. Aristotle goes beyond the *Phaedrus* in emphasizing the importance of the intimacy of living together.<sup>71</sup> Second, the difference is subtractive. Aristotle does not see sexuality and

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69. Ibid., 371.

70. Ibid., 358.

71. Ibid., 369.

sexual attraction as significant in φιλία. He does not speak of the divine madness either that helps the lovers in the *Phaedrus* reach the true beauty. Nussbaum notes,

The specifically erotic pleasure and insight of Platonic lovers is mentioned only as a case of especially intense and exclusive *philia* (1171a11); it is not even clear that the reference is approving.<sup>72</sup>

## 2. Juha Sihvola

Sihvola derives a lot of his resources from the *Organon*. He understands that the cases about love and friendship in the *Organon* might not represent Aristotle's thoughts. Often those cases are merely hypothetical and serve solely as neat instances for logic cases. However, they might represent the common view of love and friendship in his time since in the *Rhetoric* Aristotle requires that a rhetorician should know about the popular beliefs in his day in order to be powerfully persuasive.

One passage that Sihvola quotes is from the *Prior Analytics* 2.22.68a40-b7:

If then every lover in virtue of his love would prefer A, i.e., that the beloved would be such as to grant him favors without, however, actually granting them (for which C stands) to the beloved's granting his favors (for which D stands) without being such as to grant them (for which B stands), it is clear that A, i.e., being of such a nature, is preferable to granting the favors. To receive affection in virtue of love is thus preferable to sexual intercourse. Love then is more related to affection than to intercourse. If it is most related to this, then this is its goal. Intercourse then either is not an end at all or is an end for the sake of receiving affection. The same goes for other appetites and arts, too.

From this passage, Sihvola concludes that there are two aspects in erotic love: one is directed to sexual desire and the other is directed to receiving friendly affection. The latter desire serves as the goal for erotic love. The dilemma, simply sketched, is about

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72. Ibid., 369.

how to resolve the tension between the madness of passion and the wish for virtuous life in erotic love.

Sihvola gives a brief biographical analysis of Aristotle's life, noting that Diogenes Laertius suggests that "Aristotle fell in love (*erasthēnai*) with Pythias and was so exceedingly delighted (*hyperchairōn*) by [Hermias'] consent to their marriage . . ." <sup>73</sup> From Diogenes' writings, Sihvola concludes that Aristotle has a strong affectionate love for Pythias. Later I will show that Aristotle rejects ἔρωϝ in marriage. However, If Sihvola's short biography of Aristotle is true, then I would speculate for two possibilities. First, Aristotle does have a strong erotic love for Pythias, but then later revises his account after his wife's death. Second, Diogenes is mistaken about Aristotle's relationship with Pythias. It is possible that Aristotle's affection is a strong *friendly* affection, but Diogenes misinterprets it as romantic love. This could happen because the manifestation of the affection is the same. Nevertheless, Aristotle might be well aware that his relationship with Pythias is a virtuous friendship rather than the romantic love commonly accepted in his time.

Aristotle sees ἀφροδιϝία or sexual appetite as something natural and an acceptable desire. When a person is no longer temperate, then one can abuse the appetite. However, sexual appetite is more complex than hunger or thirst because ἔρωϝ cannot be defined simply as sexual intercourse. Notice here that Sihvola uses the words ἀφροδιϝία and ἔρωϝ interchangeably. I will show later that the two are not the same. My reading of Aristotle is that ἀφροδιϝία refers more to sexual bodily pleasure,

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73. Sihvola, "Aristotle on Sex and Love," *The Sleep of Reason*, eds. Martha C. Nussbaum and Juha Sihvola, 205.

whereas ἔρωσ refers more to the state of *being in love*. However, Sihvola is right when he writes that “Aristotle remarks that love (*erōs*) cannot simply be defined as the appetite for intercourse (*epithumia sunousias*) since the one who is more intensely in love does not – necessarily – feel a more intense appetite for intercourse, although they should both have become more intense simultaneously.”<sup>74</sup> Sihvola, further agreeing with Nussbaum’s *De Motu Animalium*, writes that Aristotle divides desires into three kinds: rational (βούλησις), spirited (θυμός), and appetitive desire (ἐπιθυμία). The appetitive desires do not “listen” to reason at all, where the spirited ones are aimed for the beautiful and able to “understand” reason. Erotic love is not merely appetitive desire, but also spirited desire. Sihvola then sees the desire for sexual intercourse as appetitive desire, and the affection in erotic love as spirited desire. In Aristotle’s ethics, there is a “kind of expansive process in the development of erotic love. . . . [T]he desire for intercourse develops into a desire for receiving affection, which constitutes the proper goal and sense of an erotic relationship.”<sup>75</sup>

With respect to friendship, Sihvola agrees that erotic love is a kind of friendship, which is less valuable than perfect friendship. Sihvola believes that the best kind of friendship can emerge from erotic love when there is reciprocity in concern and respect between lovers.<sup>76</sup>

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74. Ibid., 210-1.

75. Ibid., 213.

76. Two last notes worth mentioning here are as follows. First, even though Aristotle does not mention it ἔρωσ in the context of marriage, he might have a place for it in that institution. Second, with respect to incest, Aristotle does not seem to see sexual intercourse between lovers as something dangerous, even though erotic love (with or without sexual intercourse) between partners who are too closely related is.

Sihvola admits that his work is still in progress. But his tentative conclusion now is that “Aristotle’s appreciation of erotic love is mainly positive, although he also points to several moral problems in sexual relationships.”<sup>77</sup> Sihvola insists that Aristotle’s account in *EN* is more similar to Socrates’s than to Lysias’s in the *Phaedrus*. I assume that Sihvola is talking about Socrates’s second speech. To support his claim, Sihvola finally uses his “trump card,” which he thinks as “one precious piece of supporting evidence.” That “precious” text is 1171a10-13, in which Aristotle writes that love is a kind of excess of friendship. The passion here, according to Sihvola, is not the detached Stoic ἔρωϝ, since Aristotelian ἔρωϝ “implies taking risks and accepting one’s vulnerability before the contingencies of the outside world to an extent which no Stoic would accept as rational.”<sup>78</sup>

I will show later that Sihvola’s positive interpretation of ἔρωϝ is questionable. In my reading, the notion of “excess” in *EN* VIII-IX with respect to ἔρωϝ is something negative. Accordingly, I disagree that Aristotle would endorse the existence of ἔρωϝ in marriage, since it is something bad. Marriage should be an instance of virtuous φιλία.

### 3. Gabriel Richardson Lear

Lear poses a problem on *middle-level ends* in Aristotle’s philosophy, viz., the problem on the “goods whose ends are in themselves and also beyond themselves, in *eudaimonia*.”<sup>79</sup> The problem is how these goods, such as friendships, can be *genuinely*

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77. Sihvola, 218.

78. *Ibid.*, 219.

79. Gabriel Richardson Lear, *Happy Lives and the Highest Good*, 9.

choiceworthy both for itself and for the sake of something else. Lear rejects the means/ends relationship between the human goods and εὐδαιμονία. She argues that the teleological relationship of approximation or imitation is central to Aristotle's cosmology and biology. In fact,

it is this relationship of imitation that Aristotle refers to in *Metaphysics* Λ when he makes the obscure remark that the heavenly spheres act for the sake of the Prime Mover as for an object of love. When we love something, in the sense relevant to the *Metaphysics* . . . we strive to approximate it insofar as that is possible for us.<sup>80</sup>

This love for the Unmoved Mover is apparently different from love in human relationships, especially from love in friendships. In friendships, there is no effort for the friends to become like one another. Friendship happens because the friends are already similar to one another.

In Lear's reading, Aristotle agrees with Plato's *Symposium* 206e2-207a4 that this principle of approximating the highest idea of the good is ubiquitous in the natural world. The first heavens emulate the Unmoved Mover in order to be like him. The Unmoved Mover is the goal "for the sake of which" the natural world moves forward.

Lear gives a note on this point:

There is another reason it makes sense to call this desire "love," for whereas an ordinary object of desire need only change one's life temporarily and superficially, acting on love (in Plato's account) involves a shift in one's whole life. The first heaven does not desire the Prime Mover for only a moment; if his love of the Prime Mover is to ensure the eternity of change, it must be everlasting. Love is the name of the desire to devote one's life to the object of desire. Perhaps this is what Elders (1972, 174 not. Ad 1072b3) has in mind when he says that, unlike an object of love, an object of desire need not be *actually* desired. This fact, he believes, explains Aristotle's preference for *erōmenon* instead of *orekton* at 1072b3.<sup>81</sup>

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80. Ibid., 72.

81. Ibid., 79, n.20.

Lear gives another textual support from  $\Theta$ .8 1050b28-9 for the relationship of approximation: “Imperishable things are imitated (*mimetai*) by those that are involved in change, e.g. earth and fire.” Also, from GC II.10 337a1-7:

That, too, is why all the other things – the things, I mean, which are reciprocally transformed in virtue of their qualities and their powers, e.g. the simple bodies – imitate (*mimētai*) circular motion. For when water is transformed into air, air into fire, and fire back into water, we say the coming-to-be has completed the circle, because it reverts again to the beginning. Hence it is by imitating (*mimoumenē*) circular motion that rectilinear motion too is continuous.

This is compatible with the *EN* in that the way of approximation is a genuine teleological relationship with respect to attaining the happy life. The moral virtues have intrinsic values even though they are also done for the sake of happiness. The moral virtues, more exactly, *imitate* the values of the contemplative life, which is εὐδαιμονία. Lear’s claim is that the choiceworthiness of the imitation is as valuable as the choiceworthiness of the paradigms. Lear’s suggested solution is metaphysical. Since Plato’s idea of imitation is just merely of appearance, then it is not possible to choose approximations for their own sakes. But since in Aristotelian metaphysics there is only this world and reality, then there is intrinsic worth in every degree of the realization of virtue towards an ideal state.

To support her interpretation, Lear points out the focal relationship of the idea of the good in *EN* I.6, viz., the *pros hen* relationship and relationship by analogy (κατ’ ἀναλογίαν). Lear argues that the relationship between practical wisdom and theoretical wisdom is a focal one, where the theoretical wisdom serves as the paradigm for practical wisdom. With respect to analogical relationship, Lear believes that contemplation to its end (grasping scientific truth) is analogous with practical wisdom

to its end (grasping ethical truth). Since the relationship is analogical, there is no hierarchy between contemplation and practical wisdom.

The paradigmatic relationship of virtues is also manifested in the discussion of friendship. The highest kind of friendship is the *paradigm* of lesser kinds of friendship: “Character friends are *malista* friends because they are paradigms of friendship by which the other varieties are measured and understood.”<sup>82</sup> Friendship, then, is teleological in the sense that it is aiming for something perfect in terms of rationality. The highest kind of friendship is the most virtuous because it is the most rational, which is compatible to the idea of human beings as μάλιστα νοῦς in *EN X*.

In the global view, “all plants, animals, and living heavenly bodies, in realizing their own natures, are striving to partake of the divine life by imitation.”<sup>83</sup> We need to be like the gods as much as possible:

Aristotle says that lives are happy only insofar as they participate (*koinônei*) in some kind of contemplation . . . . When a person exercises *phronêsis* while dealing with distinctly human concerns springing from our animal and political nature, he engages in something like (*homoiôma ti*) divine contemplative activity (1178b27). (Animals, on the other hand, do not have a share of [*metechein*; 1178b24] happiness because they do not participate [*koinônei*; 1178b28] in *theôria*.) Thus, in Aristotle’s account, the happy philosopher lives like a god not only by directly engaging in the divine activity but also and necessarily by pursuing an approximation of contemplation in his practical life. I suggest that in passages such as these in *NE X.7-8*, Aristotle is reiterating that the most happy person makes himself like a god *to the extent possible for a human being*.<sup>84</sup>

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82. *Ibid.*, 90.

83. *Ibid.*, 91.

84. *Ibid.*, 92.

There is also approximation in Plato's *Symposium*, but according to Lear it is "seriously incomplete" since it is not giving the images of the true beauty their worthiness.<sup>85</sup> The *Phaedrus* gives more generous view of the images of the Beauty:

Now although it is certainly true, in the *Symposium*, that the lover stops feeling erotic love for the initial beloved as he climb the ladder, I believe it is a mistake to think that, when he does, the lover considers his former beloved as a mere instrument. True, there is a shift in attitude, but what changes is that the lover no longer sees the beloved as the ultimate object of his mad desire and longing – there are other things, arising from his reproduction with the beloved, that captivate him more. There is no reason to think, though, that the lover does not continue to see the beloved as beautiful and continue to want to spend time with him. This fact is clearer in the *Phaedrus*, where Socrates says that after philosophical lovers enslave their sexual appetites, they turn their attention jointly to the lifelong pursuit of understanding (256a7-c1).

Lear sees that there is a shift from erotic love to friendship in the *Symposium*: after the physical lover gives birth, he turns his attentions to the offspring (209c4-6). The lover despises his false expectation that divine happiness will be reached in his union with the beloved. He understands that divine happiness will be attained only in the ascent to divine rationality. That is why he turns his beloved into a friend. Something similar occurs in Aristotle's idea of morally virtuous actions. In the Aristotelian metaphysical scheme, practical wisdom is seen as an approximation of theoretical wisdom. Later I will show that Aristotle rejects erotic love in human relationship altogether, hence probably solving Plato's concern that the lovers must become friends.

As a last note, even though in the Platonic metaphysical scheme it is not possible to love the particular individuals for their sake, still they are not merely tools to achieve the true beauty. They are loved in so far as they are approximations and

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85. Ibid., 217.

“will continue to be as intrinsically valuable as anything in the natural world, in the Platonic account, can be.”<sup>86</sup>

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86. Ibid., 219.

## CHAPTER V

## O DEAREST FRIEND, SHALT THOU MINE LOVER BE?:

”ΕΡΩΣ AND ΦΙΛΙΑ IN ARISTOTLE’S *NICOMACHEAN ETHICS*

*It is not lack of love but lack of friendship that makes unhappy marriages.*  
(Friedrich Nietzsche)<sup>87</sup>

In this chapter, I will give my own view on Aristotle’s idea of ἔρως and φιλία his *EN*.<sup>88</sup> Two main passages serve as a starting point to discuss this issue. First, in *EN* 1158a9-12, Aristotle writes:

No one can have complete friendship (φίλον κατὰ τὴν τελείαν φιλίαν) for many people, just as no one can have an erotic passion (ἔρῶν) for many at the same time; for [complete friendship, like erotic passion,]<sup>89</sup> is like an excess (ὑπερβολῆ), and an excess is naturally directed at a single individual. And just as it is difficult for many people to please the same person intensely at the same time, it is also difficult, presumably, for many to be good.

Later, Aristotle writes in 1171a8-13:

Presumably, then, it is good not to seek as many friends as possible, and good to have no more than enough for living together; indeed it even seems impossible to be an extremely close friend to many people. That is why it also seems impossible to be passionately in love (ἔρῶν) with many people, since passionate erotic love tends to be an excess of friendship (ὑπερβολὴ γὰρ τις εἶναι βούλεται φιλίας), and one has this for one person; hence also one has extremely close friendship for a few people.

Concerning the second passage, Sir Alexander Grant comments that “this is almost a *verbatim* repetition of *Eth.* VIII. vi. 2 [1158a9-12], which passage contains the germ of the present chapter.”<sup>90</sup> However, there is an important difference between the first and

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87. Quoted from Robert C. Solomon, *About Love: Reinventing Romance for Our Times*, 313.

88. All the quoted passages from *EN*, unless otherwise stated, are from Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., trans. with introduction, notes, and glossary by Terence Irwin. For the Greek text, I am using Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, The Loeb Classical Library XIX.

89. The insertion is made by Irwin.

90. *The Ethics of Aristotle*, 307.

the second passage above, which is not explicitly mentioned by Grant. In the first passage, Aristotle says that complete or perfect friendship, like erotic love, is like an excess. But in the second passage, Aristotle says that erotic love tends to be an excess of friendship.

How should we understand these passages, and how could we understand the relationship between friendship<sup>91</sup> and erotic love<sup>92</sup> in *EN*? In this chapter, I will answer these questions by using the following strategy. First, I will discuss the different meanings of the word “extreme” (ὑπερβολή) in *EN*, claiming that the word “extreme” can mean a noble perfection but can also mean a bad excess.<sup>93</sup> Second, I will explain how these two meanings relate to the idea of erotic love and friendship. I will argue that Aristotle uses the word “extreme” equivocally with respect to erotic love and friendship. Simply put, Aristotle sees erotic love as a bad kind of extreme, but complete friendship as a good one. Relatedly, I will also show (a) why erotic love is not a vice even though it is a bad excess (the reason is that erotic love is an excess of *friendship*, which is something pleasant and necessary in life) and (b) that erotic love is an excess of friendship because it is excessive in some features of friendship, viz., in

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91. It seems natural to interpret the phrase “to be a friend with perfect friendly feeling” as a perfect *state* between friends (cf. 1166b1). In general, the word φιλία does not line up well with any single sense of “love.” Aristotle’s φιλία could mean love between hosts and guests, an older person and a younger person, a husband and a wife, rulers and the ones they rule (1158b13ff.), etc. Throughout this thesis, I have been using the common translation for the word, viz., “friendship.” I have also translated φιλία into “genuine affection” and “friendly feeling.”

92. In 1158a9-12 Aristotle uses the verb ἐρᾶν (to be in love with) that means “to desire something passionately.” One important note here is that being in love with someone does not just mean wishing to have sexual relations with that person. There are other features that are present in a state of being in love besides wanting to experience a sexual bodily pleasure (ἀφροδισία), such as the desire to be together with the beloved (1167a6-7) and the wish to have a mutually beneficial relationship (1157a6-7).

93. Throughout this paper, the word ὑπερβολή will be translated either into “extreme” or “excess.” An excess is a bad kind of extreme.

feelings and actions. I will then show two implications of my interpretation with respect to friendship between men and women, and also friendship between men. I will argue that Aristotle sees complete friendship as the route to a perfectly virtuous life while romantic love must be avoided.<sup>94</sup>

To conclude the chapter, I will discuss a possible new dilemma that must be faced by Aristotle as a consequence of his rejection of ἔρωζ. In a nutshell the potential problem in Aristotle account is that he has to choose whether to have φιλία toward particular individuals or the good. My take on this issue is that Aristotle can get away with the problem since his metaphysical account does not admit that the good as having an ontological status apart from particular entities.

### 1. Of “Extreme”

Let us consider 1158a9-12 again. Irwin comments on the passage: “The supplement<sup>95</sup> assumes that the comparison with excess applies both to complete friendship and to erotic passion. Alternatively, one might take it as applying only to erotic passion; in that case, ‘for . . .’ would be a parenthesis.”<sup>96</sup> I tend to disagree with the claim that the word “excess” in the passage applies to perfect friendship because the excess is to be directed only at a single individual, which is a description for romantic love. Hence it is better not to see 1158a9-12 as claiming that complete

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94. My conclusion is almost in direct opposition to Sihvola’s remarks that “Aristotle’s appreciation of erotic love is mainly positive, although he points to several potential moral problems in sexual relationships” (“Aristotle on Sex and Love,” *The Sleep of Reason*, eds. Martha C. Nussbaum and Juha Sihvola, 218). It is important to note, though, that the account of ἔρωζ in *Metaphysics Λ* is positive. In 1072b3-4 Aristotle writes that the Unmoved Mover moves all things as being loved (ὡς ἐρώμενον).

95. “[complete friendship, like erotic passion.]”

96. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Terence Irwin, 278-9.

friendship is an extreme. However, based on the textual evidence in 1166b1, which I will discuss below, I concur that complete friendship is an extreme. With this qualification, we may say that *both* to be a friend with perfect friendly feeling *and* to be romantically in love with someone *are* extremes.

In general, the word “extreme” (ὑπερβολή) can indicate either a vice or something perfect or noble. Regarding “extreme” as a vice, which can be equated with “excess,” abundant textual evidence is readily available. Aristotle talks about excess and deficiency as vices, which are contrasted with virtue that consists in a mean (1106b15ff.): “By virtue I mean virtue of character; for this is about *feelings* and *actions* (περὶ πάθη καὶ πράξεις), and these admit of excess, deficiency, and an intermediate condition” [italics mine].<sup>97</sup> I will relate this finding later with the fact that friendship is also about feelings and actions.

One example of excess is prodigality, which is an excess in relation to wealth (1119b28). A prodigal person gives too much without getting anything and neither feels pleasure (ἡδεται) nor pain (λυπεῖται) in the right way (1121a8ff.). A wasteful person tends to give away things without considering whether she has enough resources or whether the resources are appropriate (e.g., the resources from *her* property, not others’). She also seems to feel pleasure in such excess. Other instances of excess as a vice include irascibility (with respect to anger), rashness (with respect to confidence), and vanity (with respect to honor). All these instances can be explained in terms of excess in both the feelings and actions of a person.

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97. See also 1108b18.

The word “excess” could also mean something noble or in the “superlative degree.” Two pieces of textual evidence can support this point. First, in 1166b1 Aristotle talks about an “extreme” degree of friendship (ἡ ὑπερβολὴ τῆς φιλίας) that resembles one’s friendship to oneself. This section is in accord with the interpretation that complete friendship is an extreme. This extremity is something good, which is indicated by the fact that Aristotle in that passage is talking about the excellent person who is of one mind with himself, and also because Aristotle contrasts that kind of relationship with the relationship of base people that is lacking these features (1166b5). Aristotle mentions early in book VIII that friendship is either a virtue or involves virtue. He never complains about a person’s being too good a friend. By contrast, he encourages one’s having the highest kind of friendship. The second place where “extreme” is understood as something noble is in 1145a23, where Aristotle discusses the possibility of the extreme of virtue by which human beings become gods (ἐξ ἀνθρώπων γίνονται θεοὶ δι’ ἀρετῆς ὑπερβολήν). Here Aristotle does not say that the gods have virtues. In fact, if there were gods, they would be blessed and happy only with respect to their activity of study<sup>98</sup> (1178b10ff.). Aristotle’s gods are not moral beings. But the point is still clear, viz., that the word “extreme” could mean something admirable. With this in mind, I will turn to the discussion about romantic love as an excess of friendship.

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98. This is Irwin’s translation of θεωρία.

## 2. Love as an Excess of Friendship

The question is how to comprehend the idea that love is an excess of friendship.<sup>99</sup> Unfortunately, it is a subject that has hardly been investigated in Aristotle scholarship. Most commentaries provide little guidance. For instance, one anonymous commentator writes of 1158a9-12:

It is not possible for a worthy person to be a friend to many in accord with complete love, just as it is not possible to love many erotically at the same time; for complete love is a kind of excess of love, and such a thing by nature occurs toward one person.<sup>100</sup>

Also, Michael of Ephesus writes,

For just as, [Aristotle] says, it is impossible to love many people passionately (for passionate love is an excess of friendship [or: of friendly love]), so too it is not possible intensely to love many people [as friends].<sup>101</sup>

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99. To help the discussion of love as an excess of friendship, one minor translational matter should be noted. Irwin translates 1171a12-3 with “passionate erotic love tends to be an excess of friendship” (ὑπερβολὴ γὰρ τις εἶναι βούλεται φιλίας). But the phrase “tends to be” could simply be rendered as “means.” Irwin himself does this in 1125b33: “For [if mildness is something to be praised,] being a mild person means being undisturbed, not led by feeling” (βούλεται γὰρ ὁ πρᾶος ἀτάραχος εἶναι καὶ μὴ ἄγεσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ πάθους). And Irwin translates 1160b28-9 as “since kingship is meant to be paternal rule” (πατρικὴ γὰρ ἀρχὴ βουλεύεται ἢ βασιλεία εἶναι). Other instances may also be found (e.g., in 1160b118-9; in 1132a21-2, Irwin translates βούλεται εἶναι with “intended to be”). There may be no specific reason, then, for Irwin, not to translate the phrase in 1171a as “love *means* an excess of friendship.” Translating the sentence as such will give us a stronger case to say that romantic love *is* an excess of friendship, rather than the weaker “love *tends to be* an excess of friendship.” I will proceed with the stronger translation.

Cf. Price, *Love and Friendship in Plato and Aristotle*, 241. Price writes, “In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle remarks that love ‘tends to be an excess of friendship’, and exclusively for that reason; this indicates that one cannot enjoy intense friendship with many (9.10.1171a10-13, cf. 8.5.1158a10-13). A tendency does not yield an identity (and friendship towards oneself, to which ‘an excess of friendship’ can be likened, 9.4.1166b1-2, is hardly a case of being in love); yet the connection suggests an affectionate side to friendship, and a benevolent side to love. Whatever may be said now and then about love itself, or the lover *qua* lover, there cannot be any incompatibility between love and even the best friendship.” Price does not give any justification for his translation. Contra Price, my interpretation will show that erotic love is incompatible with friendship.

100. Aspasius, Anonymous and Michael of Ephesus, *On Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics* 8 and 9, trans. David Konstan, 71.

101. *Ibid.*, 205.

The commentators here are more or less reciting Aristotle without more explanation.

The problem is how exactly to understand that love is an excess of friendship.

If we see complete friendship as an extreme in the second sense, i.e., as a superlative degree of *something*, which is the best and the noblest of that something, then the question would be “What is the lesser degree of complete friendship?” The answer is quite straightforward: it is the incomplete sorts of friendships, which are pleasure-based, utility-based friendships, or a mixture of those.

On the other hand, if we see erotic love also as an extreme in this sense, what is the lesser degree of it? A possible answer is: complete friendship is the lesser degree of erotic love. Here, erotic love can be seen as a kind of friendship in its “superlative degree.” To interpret erotic love in this way, complete friendship and erotic love are located in a continuum. On this interpretation, we can very roughly sketch Aristotle’s constellation of human relationships as given in Figure 1.

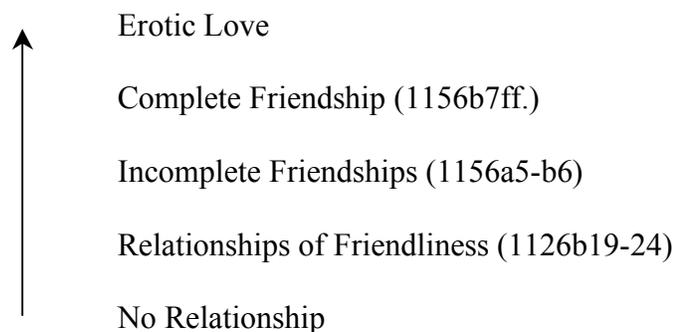


Figure 1: The Continuum of Human Relationships in *EN*

In this picture, complete friendship is an extreme because it is something noble and perfect in terms of friendship, but not in terms of human relationship. But erotic love is an extreme because it is noble and perfect in terms of human relationship. Because erotic love is the extreme *par excellence*, it can only be directed toward one person. Complete friendship is the second best extreme, hence it can be directed toward more than one person, but not to too many people.

Several commentators of Aristotle see erotic love as complete friendship in its superlative degree and nobility. For example, Stewart writes on 1158a9-12:

Perfect friendship is ‘an exalted state.’ In ix 10. 5, however, which resembles this passage closely, τὸ ἔρῶν is ὑπερβολὴ τις φιλίας.<sup>102</sup>

Stewart seems to interpret the word ὑπερβολή as an exalted state just as perfect friendship is an exalted state. On 1171a8-13, Stewart writes,

Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐνδέχεται . . . α. 13 ὀλίγους] ‘For it would appear that it is not even *possible* to be a great friend of many persons; and this for the same reason that (διόπερ – ‘eandem ob causam ob quam,’ Ramsauer) it is impossible to be in love with several persons; for, as love, which may be described as an excessive friendship, is for *one* person, so (δὴ α. 13) great friendship (τὸ σφόδρα φίλό εἶναι) is entertained towards a *few*.’ As the ὑπερβολὴ φιλίας limits itself to one, τὸ σφόδρα limits itself to a few.<sup>103</sup>

Here Stewart does not necessarily see excess as something bad, but only as something that limits the number of people one can be friends with. Another commentator,

Aspasius, writes on 1158a10-12:

[Aristotle] says it is not easy ‘to be a friend to many according to complete love, just as it is not [easy] to love many erotically’ (1158a10-12); for there is a certain excess in loving, and this is not easy in relation to many, for excesses are in relation to a few. One must speak [here] of excess in respect to what is fine.<sup>104</sup>

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102. J. A. Stewart, *Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle*, vol. 2, 294.

103. *Ibid.*, 397.

104. Aspasius, 29.

Aspasius is not very clear about whether erotic love is a kind of friendship. He is sure, though, that love as an excess is something fine. But the word “excess,” if it is not a vice, then it is something perfect or superlative. Then, Aspasius would probably agree that love is a kind of friendship, and accordingly, that complete friendship is an incomplete erotic love.

St. Thomas Aquinas does not discuss much about ἔρως in his commentary on the *EN*. His commentary on 1158a10-13 is as follows:

He shows first, by three reasons, that it is not possible for a person to be a friend of many people by perfect friendship built on the good of virtue. The first [2] is that, since this friendship is perfect and best, it has a likeness to excess in loving – if the extent of love be considered. But if we consider the notion of loving there cannot be an excess. It is not possible for virtue and a virtuous person to be loved excessively by another virtuous person who regulates his affections by reason. Superabundant love is not designed by nature for many but for one only. This is evident in sexual love according to which one man cannot at the same time love many women in an excessive manner. Therefore, the perfect friendship of the virtuous cannot extend to many persons.<sup>105</sup>

Here St. Thomas compares sexual love and perfect friendship in his discussion of the number of friends that one should have in a virtuous life. Sexual love is excessive because it can be directed only to one person. The excess here is concerned with the number of the objects of love. However, sexual love is *designed by nature* to be directed only to one person. It seems that St. Thomas does not see the excess in sexual love as something negative since it is natural.

Another place where Aristotle talks about the relationship between ἔρως and φιλία is in 1171a6-8. The commentary is as follows:

It is well for a man not to seek as many friends as possible but as many as are enough for living together, because it does not seem possible for a man to be friendly to great

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105. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. C. I. Litzinger, 495-6.

numbers. So, likewise, one man cannot love many women by an intense sexual love because perfect friendship consists in a kind of excess of love which can be felt for only one or a very few persons. For what is superlative always belong to the few, since achievement of the highest perfection cannot take place in most cases due to a multiplicity of defects and hindrances.<sup>106</sup>

St. Thomas here again does not see sexual love as something negative. He says that one man can only love one woman intensely. He relates what is superlative or excessive to the idea of achieving highest perfection.

These commentators most likely see love as a kind of friendship, but it is higher than complete virtue-friendship. This kind of interpretation might look natural to us now. After all, friendship does often lead to romantic love. Yet, interpreting Aristotle in this way is problematic because there is textual evidence for the view that erotic love is a kind of incomplete friendship. Erotic love is a kind of mixture of pleasure-friendship and utility-friendship, but it is different from the usual pleasure-friendship because there is no obvious equal reciprocity in it. Yet, it is a kind of friendship (1157a3ff.):

With these [incomplete friends] also, the friendships are most enduring whenever they get the same thing – pleasure, for instance – from each other, and, moreover, get it from the same source, as witty people do, in contrast to the erotic lover and the boy he loves.<sup>107</sup>

Aristotle seems to refer to a specific kind of erotic love here, viz., “pederasty”

(παῖδεραστία), which is a love relationship between an older man and a boy. It is not

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106. Ibid., 581.

107. The rest of the passage goes as follows: “For the erotic lover and his beloved do not take pleasure in the same things; the lover takes pleasure in seeing his beloved, but the beloved takes pleasure in being courted by his lover. When the beloved’s bloom is fading, sometimes the friendship fades too; for the lover no longer finds pleasure in seeing his beloved, and the lover no longer courts the beloved. Many, however, remain friends if they have similar characters and come to be fond of each other’s character from being accustomed to them. Those who exchange utility rather than pleasure in their erotic relations are friends to a lesser extent and less enduring friends.”

clear, though, whether Aristotle talks in that passage about the possibility of the transformation of this mixture utility/pleasure-friendship into a complete friendship. It looks as though the lovers can remain friends because they are fond of (στέρωξωσιν) each other's character, and not necessarily because their characters *are* virtuous. The point is clear here, that erotic love is a kind of incomplete friendship.

Aristotle also refers to erotic love as a kind of friendship that arises from contraries (1159b12-20). Most likely Aristotle takes this kind of friendship to be utility-friendship because it is a friendship between unequals. Aristotle states that sometimes lovers appear ridiculous because they expect equal reciprocity even though they know that the beloved would not be able to love them in the same way.<sup>108</sup> Unsurprisingly, this kind of love is an unstable friendship.

More evidence that erotic love is a kind of friendship is found in 1167a3-7, when Aristotle writes, "Goodwill, then, would seem to be a beginning of friendship, just as pleasure coming through sight is a beginning of erotic passion (ἔοικε δὲ ἀρχὴ φιλίας εἶναι, ὥσπερ τοῦ ἐρᾶν ἢ διὰ ὄψεως ἡδονή). For no one has erotic passion for another without previous pleasure in his appearance.<sup>109</sup> But still enjoyment of his appearance does not imply erotic passion for him; passion consists also in longing for

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108. "In erotic friendships, however, sometimes the lover charges that he loves the beloved deeply and is not loved in return; and in fact perhaps he has nothing lovable in him. The beloved, however, often charges that previously the lover was promising him everything, and now fulfills none of his promises. These sort of charges arise whenever the lover loves his beloved for pleasure while the beloved loves his lover for utility, and they do not both provide these. For if the friendship has these causes, it is dissolved whenever they do not get what they were friends for; for each was not fond of the other himself, but only of what the other had, which was unstable. That is why the friendships are also unstable. Friendship of character, however, is friendship in itself, and endures, as we have said." (1164a5ff.)

109. Also see 1171b28.

him in his absence and in an appetite for his presence.” Erotic love here is said to have a different principle from friendship. It is most likely that ἀρχή here means efficient cause, and not only a starting point. Other uses of ἀρχή as efficient cause in *EN* supports this interpretation.<sup>110</sup> Furthermore, Aristotle agrees that the cause of friendship is either good or pleasure (πᾶσα γὰρ φιλία δι’ ἀγαθόν ἐστίν ἢ δι’ ἡδονήν) (1156b19-20).<sup>111</sup> One more important note must be made regarding 1167a3ff. Aristotle argues that people cannot be friends without previous goodwill, even though goodwill does not necessarily imply friendship. Erotic love must consist of goodwill, if it is to be a kind of friendship. However, goodwill might appear after “pleasure coming through sight.”

To sum up, the above textual evidence suggests that erotic love is not a higher degree of friendship since (1) erotic love is a mixture of pleasure-friendship and utility-friendship, (2) erotic love is friendship between unequals, and (3) the cause of erotic love, which is pleasure, is also one of the causes of friendship. Hence there is a reason to avoid translating “extreme” for erotic love as something superlative in degree and nobility.

## 2.1 Erotic Love as a Bad Excess

Another alternative, then, is to understand erotic love as a negative extreme of friendship. One important note is that in *EN* Aristotle never categorizes erotic love as a

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110. See e.g., 1110a15, 1113b20, 1114a19, 1139a31.

111. This is one of the standard interpretations of δία with the accusative. See Hebert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, #1685.

vice. However, Aristotle has another category of badness besides the category of vices.

In 1148a28-b4, Aristotle talks about extremes that are not vices, but they are still bad and need to be avoided:

Some people are overcome by, or pursue, some of these naturally fine and good things to a degree that goes against reason; they take honor, or children, or parents (for instance) more seriously than is right. For though these are certainly good and people are praised for taking them seriously, still excess about them is also possible. It is excessive if one fights, as Niobe did [for her children], even with the gods, or if one regards his father as Satyrus, nicknamed the Fatherlover, did – for he seemed to be excessively silly about it. There is no vice here, for the reason we have given, since each of these things is naturally choiceworthy for itself, though excess about them is bad and to be avoided.

These excesses are related to the pleasant things, which are either necessary or choiceworthy in their own right. The question is whether friendship is included among those things. There is a strong indication that it is because Aristotle says that it is most necessary for our life (1155a4). Furthermore, in 1166a23-6, Aristotle talks about a person's finding pleasure in spending time with himself. Friendship also brings pleasure to the parties involved when they spend time together. Also, if complete friendship includes pleasure and utility, then friendship must be pleasant.<sup>112</sup> It seems fit, then, to interpret erotic love as something bad because it is excessive, perhaps in some features of friendship, such as feelings.<sup>113</sup>

One might object to this interpretation by pointing out a place where Aristotle says that virtues do not admit excess. In 1107a25, Aristotle writes,

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112. "This sort of friendship, then, is complete both in time and in other ways. In every way each friend gets the same things and similar things from each, and this is what must be true of friends. Friendship for pleasure bears some resemblance to this complete sort, since good people are also pleasant to each other. And friendship for utility also resembles it, since good people are also useful to each other." (1156b33-1157a3)

113. On this interpretation, the features of friendship (e.g., having a certain kind of feeling) must be seen as pleasant and necessary in life as well.

On the contrary, just as there is no excess or deficiency of temperance or of bravery (since the intermediate is a sort of extreme [ἄκρον]), so also there is no mean of these vicious actions either, but whatever way anyone does them, he is in error. For in general there is no mean of excess or of deficiency, and no excess or deficiency of a mean.

This passage suggests that, in general, whatever is virtuous cannot be a vice because it is an intermediate. Aristotle's remark that the intermediate is a sort of extreme perhaps means that the intermediate is something perfect. Because friendship is a virtue or involves a virtue, then it cannot turn into a vice because it is a mean. Consequently, complete friendship cannot turn into erotic love if the latter is a vice. But I have shown that erotic love is not a vice, even though it is something bad. The next task would be to establish the claim that erotic love is something bad for Aristotle and what makes it bad.

One striking passage that indicates that erotic love is bad is in 1116a12-3, where Aristotle writes that “dying to avoid poverty or erotic passion or something painful is proper to a coward, not to a brave person.” Aristotle puts erotic passion (ἔρωτα) among poverty and painful things. St. Thomas Aquinas comments on this passage, saying that the passion is about things that one cannot possess; hence it is painful.<sup>114</sup> This is reminiscent of the talk of love in Plato's *Symposium* that love is a desire for something we do not have.<sup>115</sup> Even though it is a cowardly act to avoid erotic passion to the point of preferring death, it would still be appropriate to avoid erotic passion to the degree that is comparable to avoiding poverty. If we are to compare this with friendship, then friendship must be something that is free from the desire to

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114. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, #557-8.

115. See a wonderful discussion on this issue in Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness*, 356-7.

possess the friend. Friendship is primarily for the sake of the friend himself and is free from the fear of loss or failing to possess something.

Aristotle probably takes erotic love as something bad because it is related more to feeling<sup>116</sup> than character. In *Eudemian Ethics* 1229a20, Aristotle mentions that love is a most irrational feeling (παθός ἀλόγιστον). In the beginning of *EN VIII*, Aristotle asks us to “examine the puzzles that concern human [nature], and bear on characters (τὰ ἦθη) and feelings (τὰ πάθη)” (1155b9-10). The highest kind of friendship is based on character, which is something good and noble. However, later Aristotle speaks unsympathetically about the young and their feelings.<sup>117</sup>

There is a strong connection between erotic passion, pleasure, and the young. Erotic love begins with pleasure, and pleasure-based friendships are the most common among the young, in contrast with utility-based friendships that are more common among older people (1158a20-2). In complete friendships, however, the pleasure involved is not only pleasure without qualification, but also pleasure for each other (1156b14-5). The mutual sharing must be based on goodness and character, not only

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116. “By feelings I mean appetite, anger, fear, confidence, envy, joy, love, hate, longing, jealousy, pity, and in general whatever implies pleasure or pain. By capacities I mean what we have when we are said to be capable of these feelings – capable of being angry, for instance, or of being afraid or of feeling pity. By states I mean what we have when we are well or badly off in relation to feelings. If, for instance, our feeling is too intense or slack, we are badly off in relation to anger, but if it is intermediate, we are well off” (1105b20-8).

117. For example, in 1156a31-1156b6 Aristotle writes: “The cause of friendship between young people seems to be pleasure. For their lives are guided by their feelings, and they pursue above all what is pleasant for themselves and what is at hand. But as they grow up [what they find] pleasant changes too. Hence they are quick to become friends, and quick to stop; for their friendship shifts with [what they find] pleasant, and the change in such pleasure is quick. Young people are prone to erotic passion (καὶ ἐρωτικοὶ δ’ οἱ νέοι), since this mostly accords with feelings (κατὰ πάθος), and is caused by pleasure; that is why they love and quickly stop, often changing in a single day. . . . These people wish to spend their days together and to live together; for this is how they gain [the good things] corresponding to their friendship.”

based on pleasure. Hence in complete friendships, there is a balance between self-interest and caring for others. But in complete friendships there is also a possibility of temporal asymmetry in reciprocity (1157a15-19):

Now it is possible for bad people as well [as good] to be friends to each other for pleasure or utility, for decent people to be friends to base people, and for someone with neither character to be a friend to someone with any character. Clearly, however, only good people can be friends to each other because of the other person himself; for bad people find no enjoyment in one another if they get no benefit.

This passage is compatible with the fact that true friends wish good for the sake of their friends, and not only wishing to have pleasure in reciprocity. Furthermore, Aristotle also relates erotic passion to feelings, indicating that the instability of feelings is partly responsible for the instability of friendship among the young.<sup>118</sup>

It should be noted that Aristotle does not altogether dismiss feelings in moral life. He thinks that virtue must involve both feelings and actions (1109b30). Also, there are means in feelings and about feelings (1108a32-3). Sherman reminds us that Aristotelian emotions “have firm cognitive foundations and rest on appraisals.”<sup>119</sup> We can cultivate a good habit of feeling the right way about certain things. Feelings can “hear” reason and be made compatible with practical wisdom. But, as Sherman notes, feelings (πάθη) in *EN* are something passive (1106a6), i.e., happen by being acted upon, in contrast with ποιεῖν (to make and/or to do). This passivity does not imply total

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118. Two more passages regarding the young and their feelings are as follows: “This is why a youth is not a suitable student of political science; for he lacks experience of the actions in life, which are the subject and premises of our arguments. Moreover, since he tends to follow his feelings, his study will be futile and useless; for the end [of political science] is action, not knowledge.” (1095a2-6); “For we think it right for young people to be prone to shame, since they live by their feelings, and hence often go astray, but are restrained by shame; and hence we praise young people who are prone to shame.” (1128b17-20) We can see from these passages that feelings often become hindrances for achieving a virtuous life because they often make people disobey the right reason.

119. Nancy Sherman, “The Role of Emotions in Aristotelian Virtue,” *Aristotle: Critical Assessments*, vol. III, 314.

involuntariness, because in a sense feelings correspond to reason. However, it is not clear how feelings and choice are related in Aristotle's *EN*. For the purpose of this chapter, the important point is to see that Aristotle more often sees feelings as something beyond control of choice or reason.<sup>120</sup> Once again, feelings are not bad in themselves. Only excessive feelings, i.e., the ones not based on reason and proper habituation, need to be avoided. The good life is guided by rationality, not by feelings, even though feelings are an integral part of a virtuous life (1104b13-16). Friendship, especially, requires a "feeling" that is not had by mere friendliness (1126b19-24).

Now, related to seeing love as an excess of feelings, we can try to interpret Aristotle's argument about the number of friends we ideally should have. Based on 1158a9-12 and 1171a8-13, we can only have a few good friends because (1) it is difficult to be a good person (and complete friendship can only happen between good people) and (2) it is difficult to know whether a person is good or not; it is time consuming (also see 1156b25ff.). These points are analogous to romantic love: we can only have one lover because it is difficult for many people to please the same person intensely at the same time. This means that it is difficult to be passionately in love with many people. It seems that Aristotle is also saying that the *recipient* of romantic love

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120. This especially applies to *weak* people. Here are some textual evidences for this point: "The incontinent person knows that his actions are base, but does them because of his feelings, whereas the continent person knows that his appetites are base, but because of reason does not follow them." (1145b10); "For the weak person deliberates, but his feeling makes him abandon the result of his deliberation; but the impetuous person is led on by his feelings because he has not deliberated." (1150b20); "That is why he most of all is a self-lover, but a different kind from the self-lover who is reproached. He differs from him as much as the life guided by reason differs from the life guided by feelings, and as much as the desire for what is fine differs from the desire for what seems advantageous." (1169a5); "For someone who lives in accord with his feelings would not even listen to an argument turning him away, or comprehend it [if he did listen]; and in that state how could he be persuaded to change?" (1179b25).

cannot easily find pleasure from many people, but only from the person he or she loves.<sup>121</sup> If this is an acceptable interpretation, then this decision to receive love only from one person is also guided by feelings, not by reason. Since in *EN* romantic love, pleasure, and feelings are tightly related, then the phrase “to be passionately in love with many” could simply mean “to be pleased by many intensely.” Hence love is an excess of friendship in a bad way because it is placing too much emphasis on pleasure and feelings, instead of goodness and character. Indeed, the passage is not clear about how excessive feelings must be in order to be categorized as bad. Aristotle writes (1109b20),

Still, we are not blamed if we deviate a little in excess or deficiency from doing well, but only if we deviate a long way, since then we are easily noticed. But how great and how serious a deviation receives blame is not easy to define in an account; for nothing else perceptible is easily defined either.

This ignorance will not be a problem since the main aim of this paper is to explain the relationship between friendship and romantic love.

At 1157b28-9, we find additional support that love is more related to feeling. For Aristotle, “loving would seem to be a feeling, but friendship a state (ἔοικε δ’ ἡ μὲν φίλησις πάθει, ἡ δὲ φιλία ἔξει).” One might object that the use of φίλησις here (from the same root as φιλία) only indicates the act of caring a friend, but not necessarily romantic love. My response is that the verb for φιλία is also used for romantic love, for example, in 1164a3-4:

In erotic friendships, however, sometimes the lover charges that he loves the beloved deeply and is not loved in return (ἐν δὲ τῇ ἐρωτικῇ ἐνίοτε μὲν ὁ ἐραστὴς ἐγκαλεῖ ὅτι ὑπερφιλῶν οὐκ ἀντιφιλεῖται).

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121. Notice that Irwin translates τῷ αὐτῷ in 1158a9-12 with “the same person.”

And also in 1159b15:

That is why an erotic lover also sometimes appears ridiculous, when he expects to be loved in the same way as he loves (διὸ φαίνονται καὶ οἱ ἐρασταὶ γελοῖοι ἐνίοτε, ἀξιοῦντες φιλεῖσθαι ὡς φιλοῦσιν).

Because loving is more about feeling, the excess of feeling in romantic love could take a form of excessive loving without reciprocity, similar to the love of inanimate things. Sherman writes that “Cupid’s arrow sometimes strays to those whom we know cannot requite our love, attachment sometimes becomes a bit too possessive.”<sup>122</sup> Romantic love sometimes tends to be irrational because it is an obsessive loving, and probably directed toward a wrong person. This is not to deny that erotic love can ever be reciprocal. But even if it is reciprocal, it is not virtuous because the reciprocity is based more on feelings than on virtue. Recall that in 1157a15-9 Aristotle claims that virtue-friendship is nobler than pleasure-friendship because the former can admit non-reciprocity in pleasure. My point here is that neither reciprocity nor non-reciprocity in itself serves as the indication of erotic love. But if the reciprocity or non-reciprocity is based merely on feelings, this indicates a form of erotic love. Friendship consists in loving based on goodness, not only on feeling. I have shown that erotic love is something bad for Aristotle and that it is bad because it is an excess of feeling. But an excess of *feeling* is not the same as the excess of friendship. I will proceed now to discuss in what way romantic love is an excess of friendship.

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122. Sherman, 333.

## 2.2. Erotic Love and the Features of Friendship

One way to understand the claim that erotic love is an excess of friendship is by seeing erotic love as the result of taking to extremes some components or features of friendship. This is how Pakaluk also interprets the phrase:

It is correct to say that romantic love involves taking many of the features of friendship to an extreme degree; but in cases where X involves taking Y to an extreme, X is to be accounted for in terms of Y (it is an ‘extreme of Y’); so romantic love needs to be accounted for in terms of friendship; friendship, then, has to be the sort of thing that *can* account for it; but then it has to be something that, of its nature, is directed at a few, not at many. If it were naturally directed at many, there would be no sense in saying that an exaggeration of it is directed at one.<sup>123</sup>

Friendship consists of both feelings and actions. If we agree that erotic love is an excess of feelings, maybe there is also an excess in some actions that characterize friendship. The features of friendship can be found in 1166a1ff.: (1) a friend wishes and does good or apparent good to his friend for the friend’s own sake, (2) a friend wishes his friend to be and to live for the friend’s own sake, (3) a friend spends his time with his friends, (4) a friend makes the same choices, and (5) a friend shares his friend’s distress and enjoyment. It is not clear which of these characteristics are excessive in erotic love. Perhaps we can exclude (1) and (2) since in an erotic relationship, the lover loves not for the sake of the beloved, but for the sake of herself or himself. For (3)-(5), we probably can say that these features are the same for erotic love, except that in erotic love they are done based on excessive feelings. For example, lovers can make the same choices, but actually the choices may not be the good and

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123. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics Books VIII and IX*, Clarendon Aristotle Series, trans. with a commentary by Michael Pakaluk, 220.

rational choices. Also, lovers can spend time together, but maybe they spend so much time together that they neglect other important things in life.

Now we already have a good element for understanding romantic love as an excess of friendship. Romantic love is an excess of friendship in a bad way, but it is not a vice. It is an excess of friendship because it is an excess of some features of friendship, primarily an excess of feelings. This excess of feelings may manifest itself in an excess of the five features of friendship in 1166a1ff. Take, for example, the feature of “living together” as the most characteristic of friendship (1171a1). Living together by itself is neutral. Bad people could also live together even though it will not be beneficial for them (1166b5ff.). If living together is merely based on feelings, then it might be unhealthy for the parties involved since they may be too attached to one another. This explains my point earlier that there can be reciprocity in erotic love, but it is not a virtuous reciprocity.

Sir Alexander Grant suggests one interesting interpretation of friendship as an excess of feeling. He writes on 1158a9-12:

Πολλοῖς εἶναι] ‘It is not possible to be a friend to many men on the footing of the perfect kind of friendship, just as one cannot be in love with many at the same time. For (the perfect friendship) is a sort of excess of feeling, which naturally arises towards one person alone; again, it is not easy for many persons to be intensely pleasing to the same individual, and perhaps not easy that many should be good.’ ὑπερβολή here would nearly be represented by the French word *abandon*; it implies the throwing away of limits and restraints, a giving up of one’s whole self.<sup>124</sup>

I disagree with Grant’s claim that perfect friendship is an excess of feeling because there is no textual support for this claim. It seems that Grant is conflating erotic love with perfect friendship. However, his description of ὑπερβολή as some kind of a

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124. Grant, 262.

throwing away of limits and restraints fits well with my interpretation of erotic love as an excess of feeling.

Eterovich gives another view on friendship as an excess. He comments on 1171a8-13 as follows:

Friendship consists in an excess of love which can be felt for only one or for very few. One cannot intensely love many people and cultivate truly intimate relations with them. The very nature of the perfect friendship in which love is the highest and the most intense, precludes the dividing of that love among many. This is a human condition, a limitation of human love, a reality that cannot be ignored. After all, whatever the highest achievement is, it must be rare. Therefore, an intimate virtuous friendship is possible only with few people.<sup>125</sup>

Eterovich seems to be using “love” not as a romantic love, but love in a virtuous and good sense. If that is so, this is in accord with my interpretation. Complete friendship is an extreme degree of the good kind of caring, i.e., caring primarily based on character and goodness, and not on feelings. Complete friendship is also a *state* of intermediates that is guided by right decision (1157b30). It is friendship *par excellence* because it is not a coincidental friendship that can end when pleasure and utility disappear (also see 1158b5). Character “guarantees” that reciprocal pleasure and utility will remain in a complete friendship (1156b10ff.).

Having said that, if one agreed that the word “extreme” in 1158a9-12 applies also to complete friendship, then the word needs to be understood equivocally: perfect friendship is an excess in a good way, but romantic love is an excess in a bad way. This equivocation is not a problem because Aristotle’s point there is not about the badness or the goodness of the excess, but about the excess *qua* something extreme.

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125. Francis H. Eterovich, *Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics: Commentary and Analysis*, 227.

### 3. Three Implications

Now, if Aristotle rejects ἔρωξ in human relationships, what about its “good” functions as mentioned in the *Phaedrus*? To refresh our memory, the three positive functions of non-rational elements in the *Phaedrus* as summarized by Nussbaum are as follows: First, the non-intellectual elements are required to motivate our intellect to go in a certain direction. Second, the non-intellectual elements have the non-cognitive task of giving *information* about where goodness and beauty are. Third, the non-rational elements have intrinsic values of goodness and beauty, and not just an instrumental value. To respond to this question, I will show that φιλία is enough since it incorporates feelings as well, which are non-rational elements. A further discussion of non-rational elements in Aristotle’s philosophy can be found in *De Motu Animalium*,<sup>126</sup> which I will not discuss here.

The second question I want to address is this: If romantic love is something bad, is friendship between men and women also something bad? I think that it is not. For Aristotle, friendship between men and women is natural and even virtuous (1161a25ff.). Friendship between men and women, then, is not something excessive and is not always romantic or erotic. This kind of friendship is more about fulfilling different roles in a household for childbearing and other benefits of life (1162a20ff.).

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126. See Nussbaum’s commentary on *De Motu Animalium* 701a22: βούλησις δὲ καὶ θυμὸς καὶ ἐπιθυμία πάντα ὄρεξις. Aristotle here gives a threefold-division of ὄρεξις. “The distinction made most of by Aristotle is a distinction among the objects of these desires. βούλησις has as its object the good, or the end . . . ἐπιθυμία, on the other hand, is said to belong to all creatures with αἴσθησις, whether or not they move, just because they feel pleasure and pain . . . βούλησις is desire for a rationally conceived goal, and, derivatively, for constituents of it and means to it, seen as such. . . . The place of θυμὸς in Aristotle’s account is more difficult to explain. It seems to be equivalent to spiritedness or anger . . . Its object would seem to be revenge, or, more generally, harming one’s enemies” (*Aristotle’s De Motu Animalium: Text with Translation, Commentary, and Interpretive Essays*, 335-6).

Because of Aristotle's sexism, though, it is not possible that friendship between men and women reach the highest kind of virtue-friendship. It is friendship between unequals because of Aristotle's view that women's reason is without authority (*Pol.* 1260a13), while the highest kind of friendship must be between perfect equals because a friend is one's alter ego (1170b5ff.).

The third implication of my interpretation is that romantic love in *EN* could happen between an older man and a younger man, or only between the young. For the former, romantic love is a mixture friendship because the older man gets pleasure from the younger man and the younger man gets utility from the older man. This friendship usually happens in the context of pederasty. The case of Alcibiades's jealousy toward Socrates and Agathon in Plato's *Symposium* is sufficient to show how a romantic relationship is an excess of feeling. Aristotle's idea of educational pederasty, if he supports it, then could involve a sexual relationship (τά Ἀφροδίσια, cf. 1154a18), but it is not something romantic and should not be based just on feelings. The role of physical sexual relation in complete friendship is worth investigating. Maybe a physical sexual relationship without an excess of feelings could strengthen the friendship. The romantic love between the young is more likely a pleasure-based friendship with an excess of feelings. There might be cases where we have two young men who are equal and develop a virtue-friendship. According to Aristotle's account of friendship, there might be a sexual relationship between them as well, but it would not be something excessive of feelings.

My interpretation fits well with the end of book IX, where Aristotle compares erotic love with friendship. Aristotle sees the latter as much superior to the former. In Aristotle's words,

Whatever someone [regards as] his being, or the end for which he chooses to be alive, that is the activity he wishes to pursue in his friend's company. Hence some friends drink together, others play dice, while others do gymnastics and go hunting, or do philosophy. They spend their days together on whichever pursuit in life they like most; for since they want to live with their friends, they share the actions in which they find their common life. . . . Friendship of decent people is decent, and increases the more often they meet. And they seem to become still better from their activities and their mutual correction. For each molds the other in what they approve of, so that '[you will learn] what is noble from noble people'. (1172a5ff.)

Friends can, and perhaps should, together engage in philosophy without having an erotic relationship. Aristotle's answer to the title of this paper, then, is negative: "Be thou mine friend only, I pray!"

#### 4. A New Dilemma?

Since Aristotle rejects ἔρωϝ in human relationships, then there would be no dilemma anymore with respect to its objects. The remaining questions we need to answer now would be: (1) Are there any other objects for ἔρωϝ in Aristotle's philosophy?; (2) What about the objects of φιλῖα? It seems that Aristotle runs into the same problem about the objects of φιλῖα: either particular individuals or wisdom.<sup>127</sup> I will answer the first question later in the discussion of *Metaphysics* Λ. The answer will be that must be directed to God or the Unmoved Mover.

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127. I will equate the φιλῖα for "wisdom" (philosophy) with the φιλῖα for the good. In Plato's *Symposium*, Diotima equates the gazing of the sea of beauty with the love of wisdom (210d).

Now, let me try to briefly address the second question. As an initial note, I believe the solution of this issue is ultimately metaphysical. However, I will not discuss Aristotle's revision of Plato's ontology of the Forms since it is beyond the scope of my paper. What I am going to do is to circumscribe the issue and suggest some pointers for the solution. Let us begin with Vlastos's critique of Aristotle:

Aristotle's conception of "perfect *φιλία*" does not repudiate – does not even notice – what I have called above "the cardinal flaw" in Platonic love. His intuition takes him as far as seeing that (a) *disinterested affection for the person* we love – the active desire to promote that person's good "for that person's sake, not for ours" must be built into love at its best, but not as far as sorting this out from (b) *appreciation of the excellences instantiated by that person*; (b), of course, need not be disinterested and *could* be egoistic. The limits of Aristotle's understanding of love show up in his failure to notice the ambiguity in "loving a person for himself" (*φιλεῖν τινὰ δι' ἐκεῖνον* – a phrase which may be used to express either (a) or (b): thus in *Rhet.* 1361B37 and 1381A5-6 *δι' ἐκεῖνον* is used to express exactly the same thing which is conveyed by *ἐκεῖνου ἕνεκα* in 1380B36. But there are passages in which it is clearly used to express *only* (b): so, e.g., in *N.E.* 1157B3 οἱ δ' ἀγαθοὶ δι' αὐτοὺς φίλοι· ἢ γὰρ ἀγαθοί: here "A and B are good men and A loves B for B's self" implies "A loves B because B is a good man and in so far as he is a good man."<sup>128</sup>

Vlastos's charge against Aristotle is that Aristotle fails to recognize that there is an ambiguity with respect to the phrase "loving for a person's sake." It can either mean loving for the interest of the person without regard to our interest *or* loving the qualities of that person as the final end. The first disjunct is unproblematic. But Vlastos points out that sometimes Aristotle only means the phrase in the sense expressed by the second disjunct, which is problematic.

Perhaps Vlastos sees the second disjunct to be problematic because the particular individuals are not the objects of friendly love, which makes it impersonal. Whiting agrees with Vlastos that "Aristotle did not distinguish disinterested affection

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128. Vlastos, *Platonic Studies*, 33, n.100.

for a person from the appreciation of her excellences.”<sup>129</sup> However, she thinks that it is not a flaw at all, since “[Aristotle] took the appreciation of her excellences as such (and not as instruments for one’s own benefit) to constitute disinterested affection for her.”<sup>130</sup> To understand Whiting’s remark, I suggest the following reasoning. First, since a friend is another self, then if a person loves herself for her own sake, she will do the same for a few other people. Second, when Aristotle talks about the friendship of a person with himself, he writes (1166a13-17):

Now each of these is true of the good man’s relation to himself (and of all other men in so far as they think themselves good; excellence and the good man seem, as has been said, to be the measure of every class of things). For his opinions are harmonious, and he desires the same things with all his soul; and therefore he wishes for himself what is good and what seems so, and does it (for he does it for the sake of the intellectual element (διανοητικοῦ) in him, which is thought to be the man himself).

Aristotle has a strong claim that when one is loving himself based on the good, which entails the excellences, one is doing it for his own sake. Aristotle seems to claim that a good person must do something good for the sake of his “thinking part” or “mind,” which is his real self (1166a23).<sup>131</sup> Third, we can extend this principle to another person: when we love other people for their excellences, we are doing it for their “intellectual element,” which is the “real” them or their individuality. Stewart gives a comment on this passage:

Τὸ νοοῦν or τὸ διανοητικόν is the whole nature of man *quâ* conscious for itself of the harmonious action of all its parts. . . . The ‘personality,’ or self-identity, of man is not given in any separate impression of sense or feeling, or separate outgoing of desire; it exists only so far as impressions are related to one another, and desires are regulated.

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129. Jennifer E. Whiting, “Impersonal Friends,” *Monist* 74 (1991).

130. *Ibid.*

131. The question of whether there are “real” individuals in Plato and Aristotle’s philosophy is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Reason (τὸ νοοῦν – τὸ διανοητικόν), as the source of all relations and rules, in the sphere of conduct as well as in that of science, is therefore the true man.<sup>132</sup>

This way, when we love other people for their excellences, we love them for their own individuality and not for ours. In other words, it is a disinterested affection that we express to them based on their qualities. Moreover, Whiting reminds us that when we love ourselves, what we love is not always our individuality or uniqueness, but rather our excellences: we love ourselves in so far as we are good. A person seems to be irrational to love herself without any justification. The “problem” as stated by Vlastos seems to be perennial in so far as we are human beings who are acting for the sake of the good.

Early in the *EN*, Aristotle writes that Πρᾶξις τε καὶ προαίρεσις, ἀγαθοῦ τινὸς ἐφίεσθαι δοκεῖ (1094a1-2). But then Aristotle presses the issue until the discussion of “the good” reaches an ultimate end, which is desired for its own sake – “in and of itself.” Now, Aristotle clearly does not like the notion of a Platonic Form of the “good” (1096a10-14). His notion of “the good” is tailored in accordance with the categories of being, e.g., the good of the category of substance is God or mind, of quality is virtue, of quantity is what is temperate. For Aristotle, the ultimate end of action is happiness (ἡ εὐδαιμονία), since it is always chosen for the sake of itself. Happiness itself is rational activity of the soul in accordance with virtue. This is not the case with honour, courage, pleasure, and other excellences. With these latter excellences, we choose them both for the sake of themselves *qua* what they are and for the sake of happiness.

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132. Stewart, 357.

What can we make of this pursuit of the “complete end” with respect to our discussion of φιλία? Aristotle clearly claims that φιλία is one of the necessary external goods in a virtuous life.<sup>133</sup> Φιλία consists of feelings and actions. We may also say that φιλία is a rational activity of the soul in accordance with virtue. The difference between εὐδαιμονία and φιλία is that the former is something perfect (τέλειος) and self-sufficient (αὐτάρκης), whereas φιλία is always seen as an indispensable element in a complete life. At any rate, manifesting φιλία is itself partially manifesting εὐδαιμονία, since happiness is activity.

I have said earlier that Aristotle sees the good with respect to substance as “God or mind.” But the idea of “substance” is the idea of what a thing really is, as I will show later in the discussion of the Unmoved Mover. Human beings must strive for happiness, which means that they must strive to be what they are in their essence. Happiness or the ultimate good is not something ontologically more real, more to be pursued than human beings. To be human (ἄνθρωπέομαι) is to act rationally and virtuously in every aspect of one’s being, including in manifesting φιλία. Φιλία is a partial manifestation of εὐδαιμονία in the sense that both are activities, but the latter can be seen only as activity *qua* activity, whereas the former can be seen as both activity *qua* activity and activity *qua* friendship. I will leave this problem about the relationship between φιλία as practical wisdom and εὐδαιμονία as theoretical wisdom (contemplation) here.

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133. I will not pursue the discussion of the issue of “two lives” here.

What I hope to have shown is that it is true that in Aristotle's theory of friendship, friends are always loved for the sake of himself *and* because of the excellences in them. But loving excellences in people means loving the whole person themselves. Furthermore, the excellences are a part of the goods that human beings must always achieve, which will culminate in happiness as the ultimate end. Our love for ourselves is always directed toward happiness as well, which in turn will bring us as human beings to love ourselves and one another again. Plato cannot say the same thing since his metaphysics requires a lover to always aim for the Form of the Good without allowing the lover to go back to the beloved or to himself once he has reached the true beauty. It is time now to discuss the ultimate good for the category of substance, viz., God or mind.

**CHAPTER VI**  
**ON BEING LOVED:**  
**MOTION AND THE UNMOVED MOVER**  
**IN ARISTOTLE'S *METAPHYSICS* Λ**

*Ai omo wan  
Hito wo omouwa  
Odera no  
Gaki no shirie ni  
Nukazuku gotoshi*

(To love somebody  
Who doesn't love you  
Is like going to a temple  
And worshiping the behind  
Of a wooden statue  
Of a hungry devil.)<sup>134</sup>

I have tried to show that with respect to human relationships, Aristotle sees ἔρωϝ as something bad that must be avoided. The virtuous life must include of φιλία, which is perfectly rational. However, Aristotle does not exclude ἔρωϝ altogether in a virtuous life. He has a positive view of ἔρωϝ in *Metaphysics* Λ. This chapter is principally an attempt to interpret what Aristotle means when he writes in 1072b3-4 that the Unmoved Mover moves all things as being loved (ὡϝ ἐρώμενον). Even though the idea of ἔρωϝ is not much discussed by Aristotle in the *Metaphysics*, nevertheless it appears in Aristotle's explanation of motion and the Unmoved Mover, which are two of the most important subjects in Aristotle's philosophy. Interesting as it is, this topic is also complicated because, by itself, the sentence in Λ7 is very hard to understand. To

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<sup>134</sup>. A poem by Lady Yakamochi, quoted in Solomon, *About Love: Reinventing Romance for Our Times*, 259-60.

interpret what Aristotle means, we need to discuss other issues, such as the nature of the Unmoved Mover and the nature of motion. After discussing these subjects, I hope to construct an acceptable interpretation of how the Unmoved Mover moves all things as being loved.

In this chapter, I will defend three claims. (1) Motion is a process instead of an actuality of a certain degree of potentiality.<sup>135</sup> (2) The Unmoved Mover is both a principle and a substance. It is possible to interpret a principle *as* a substance. Moreover, substance is a category of entity. (3) The best interpretation of the phrase ὡς ἐρώμενον is that the Unmoved Mover moves all things by letting them follow their own nature. The idea of motion and love in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Λ is different from the one in Plato's *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*. In Plato's works, ἔρωσ in the immortal souls is directed toward the Platonic Forms, whereas in Aristotle's writings, ἔρωσ is directed toward the first principle of actuality. In Plato's philosophy, once the souls are able to gaze the Form of Beauty, they will abandon the images of that Beauty, including themselves. In Aristotle's philosophy, when the souls are loving God, they return to themselves and manifest the perfect life that consists of φιλία.

Let us now proceed to discuss some background issues before we discuss these three subjects.

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135. I am not denying Aristotle's description of motion as the *actualisation* of potentiality in the *Physics*. I am arguing against Kosman's interpretation of motion as the *actuality* of a certain degree of potentiality.

## 1. Some Background Notes

In *Metaphysics A*, Aristotle discusses Anaxagoras' view that all things are eternal, and generated and destroyed only by aggregation and segregation (984a12-6). Aristotle is unsatisfied with this view because it does not provide an explanation of the beginning of movement. This concern reappears in *Metaphysics A* when Aristotle talks about Plato's and Leucippus' notions of eternal movement. He writes, "But why and what this movement is they do not say, nor, if the world moves in this way or that, do they tell us the cause of its doing so" (1071b32-35). In *Metaphysics A*, Aristotle mentions Hesiod's and Parmenides' idea of love (ἔρως) or desire (ἐπιθυμία) as one causal explanation of the motion and combination of things in the universe (984b24). He moves on to discuss Empedocles' theory of love (φιλία)<sup>136</sup> and strife as an attempt to explain the first principles of the universe. However, Aristotle finds that Empedocles' account of love and strife as first principles of the universe is questionable because it confuses efficient and final cause.<sup>137</sup> Still, these thinkers very well might have inspired Aristotle to relate the efficient cause of the universe to the concept of love.

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136. It seems that in Empedocles' theory of love and strife, ἔρως and φιλία are used interchangeably.

137. See Harold Cherniss, *Aristotle's Criticism of Presocratic Philosophy*, 222-3. "Some notion of an efficient cause might be attributed to Hesiod and Parmenides, for they both give an important place to Love in their cosmogonies as if they saw the need of a principle which sets in motion and combines things. This suggestion is meant only to serve as an introduction to Empedocles' treatment of causality, for he made 'Love' an efficient cause but, since there is evil and disorder as well as good and order in the world, he introduced as a separate cause of the former a second force called 'Strife.' This Aristotle insists must be the real meaning of Empedocles although his inadequate expression may mislead readers; consequently in a sense Empedocles was the first to make Good and Evil first principles, since the cause of all goods is the Good itself. Here, then, as in the case of Anaxagoras, Aristotle finds a confusion between efficient and final cause."

In *Metaphysics* B, Aristotle formulates some *aporiai* concerning movement.

The first one is in the beginning of the book when Aristotle asks “whether the principles are universal or like individual things, and whether they exist potentially or actually; further, whether they are potential or actual in any other sense than in reference to movement” (996a9ff.). The answer to this question can be found in Θ when Aristotle speaks about potentiality and actuality extending further than the sphere of motion (1046a1). Another *aporia* is mentioned in 999b3ff.:

Further, nothing will be eternal or unmovable; for all perceptible things perish and are in movement. But if there is nothing eternal, neither can there be a process of coming to be; for that which comes to be, and that from which it comes to be, must be something, and the ultimate term in this series cannot have come to be, since the series has a limit and nothing can come to be out of that which is not. – Further, if generation and movement exist there must also be a limit; for no movement is infinite, but every movement has an end, and that which is incapable of completing its coming to be must be as soon as it has come to be.

This *aporia* is concerned with the beginning of motion and the need for something eternal without which movement is impossible. I believe Aristotle partially answers this *aporia* in Λ where he talks about the Unmoved Mover as the explanation of motion.<sup>138</sup> Interestingly, love is not connected with movement in B. The only place that might be related to our discussion is in 1000b10ff. when Aristotle talks about Empedocles and why ἡ φιλότις is not specially the cause of existence. The first principles must deal with the source of motion in order to be an explanation for beings

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138. In *Met.* Γ 1012b22ff., Aristotle writes, “Evidently those who say all things are at rest are not right, nor are those who say all things are in movement. For if all things are at rest, the same statements will always be true and the same always false, - but they obviously are not; for he who makes a statement himself at one time was not and again will not be. And if all things are in motion, nothing will be true; everything therefore will be false. But it has been shown that this is impossible. Again, it must be that which is that changes; for change is from something to something. But again it is not the case that all things are at rest or in motion *sometimes*, and nothing *for ever*; for there is something which always moves the things that are in motion, and the first mover must itself be unmoved.” I am using *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, 2 vols., ed. Jonathan Barnes.

*qua* being, which move and change in their life career: “And we know about becomings and actions and about every change when we know the *source of the movement*; and this is other than and opposed to the end” (996b22ff.). We are now ready to discuss the concept of movement in Aristotle’s philosophy and we will begin the discussion from the *Physics*.

## 2. The Nature of Motion

Motion is “the actuality of what potentially is, as such (ἡ τοῦ δυνάμει ὄντος ἐντελέχεια, ἢ τοιοῦτον).”<sup>139</sup> According to Ross, “if there is something which is actually *x* and potentially *y*, motion is the making actual of its *y*-ness.”<sup>140</sup> Following Aristotle in *Physics*, Ross illustrates this principle using the process of building, saying that motion is the bringing over of materials that are buildable into a house, i.e., into the state of being a house. The buildable is actualized only in the process of building, and not before or after the building. Movement or motion, then, occurs only in the process of the building because the potentiality of the buildable is still *being* actualized. Movement itself is a kind of actualization, but “one which implies its own incompleteness and the continued presence of potentiality.”<sup>141</sup> Ross contrasts movement with activity (ἐνέργεια<sup>142</sup>) by saying that “in each moment of activity,

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139. *Physics* 201a11.

140. Ross, *Aristotle*, 81.

141. *Ibid.*, 82.

142. Aristotle uses two words for actuality: ἐνέργεια and ἐντελέχεια. For a lengthy discussion of these two words, see George A. Blair, “The Meaning of ‘Energieia’ and ‘Entelecheia’ in Aristotle:” 101-117. Kosman is mostly concerned with whether these are equivalent.

potentiality is completely cancelled and transformed into actuality.”<sup>143</sup> Incompleteness is the character of motion as opposed to the completeness of activity.

Kosman, however, questions whether ἐντελέχεια must be understood as a process or a product.<sup>144</sup> We have seen above that Ross sees this term as a process of actualization as opposed to ἐνέργεια as actuality. Kosman points out that defining motion as a process of actualization is problematic exactly because the ontological status of *a process of actualizing a potentiality* is unclear. Furthermore, referring to *Physics* III, motion indeed may be described as the actualizing of a potentiality, but it would be wrong to define it in that way because ἐντελέχεια obviously signifies a state of completeness or perfection in Aristotle’s writings.<sup>145</sup>

The most serious problem to see ἐντελέχεια as a *process* of actualization is that this account leaves the phrase ἢ τοιοῦτον mysterious. The actualization of a being *qua* anything at all would be some sort of motion. There is no point then to include the phrase in the definition. But Aristotle seems to take the phrase as a crucial part of the definition. Moreover, if we take the phrase seriously, we will not have the intended definition. The reason is that the actualization of, say, some bricks and stones *qua* potentially a house would not be the process of building but the process of the bricks and stones *becoming* (the bricks and stones as) potentially a house. The problem is that there is no process for bricks and stones to become potentially a house. Even if there is

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143. Ross, 82.

144. Aryeh Kosman, “Aristotle’s Definition of Motion,” *Aristotle: Critical Assessments*, vol. II, ed. Lloyd P. Gerson, 35.

145. Ross himself in his commentary to 1074a30 writes that “ἐντελέχεια means the resulting actuality or perfection” (*Aristotle’s Metaphysics: A Revised Text with Introduction and Commentary*).

such a process, we still have not arrived at the definition that Aristotle means, i.e., the process for bricks and stones as the buildable become a house as the built.

Kosman, then, concludes that we need to take ἐντελέχεια as actuality rather than actualization. He understands Aristotle's definition of motion as "the actuality of something which is potentially, but not *qua* what that something is actually at the moment, but *qua* what it is potentially."<sup>146</sup> Aristotle's definition is seen as involving *actuality* of a potentiality, as opposed to *actualization* of a potentiality. Kosman interprets the phrase "as such" in the definition of motion in the beginning of *Physics* III as an explanatory remark for the actuality of a potentiality, such as the actuality of bronze *qua* potentially a statue. Besides having to recognize that there is actuality in potentiality, the definition of motion must also recognize potentiality as potentiality to *be*, e.g., the potentiality of bronze to be a statue, not to become being made into a statue. This is mandatory because Aristotle defines motion as the actuality of the potential *qua* potential. For bronze as the potential, the actuality is, for example, a statue, and not bronze-being-made-into-a-statue. The problem here is that motion is defined as a product and not a process. That is why the definition somehow must yield motion and not its result, e.g., the act of making a statue and not the statue as the product.

In order to satisfy the above requirements for an adequate definition of motion, Kosman differentiates levels of actuality and potentiality based on *De Anima*. He illustrates what he means by actuality in a potentiality in this way:

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146. Kosman, 37.

Actually<sub>1</sub> speaking Greek is then the deprivative actuality of the potentiality to potentially speak Greek, or the constitutive actuality of potentially<sub>(2)</sub> speaking Greek. We might say, to distinguish it from actually<sub>2</sub> speaking Greek, that it is the actuality of the potentiality to speak Greek *qua* potentiality.<sup>147</sup>

The deprivative actuality is an actuality that is obtained by depriving what is potential, whereas the constitutive actuality is obtained by developing what is potential. The potentiality in Aristotle's definition of motion is similar to actually<sub>1</sub> (first grade actuality) speaking Greek,<sup>148</sup> i.e., the state where a person is really able to speak Greek but he or she is not using it, e.g., because he or she is sleeping. Motion itself is the manifestation (constitutive actuality) of that potentiality, which will cease once actuality<sub>2</sub> is obtained. In Kosman's words, "Motion, then, is the functioning, the full manifesting of a potentiality *qua* potentiality, or more precisely, the functioning of a being which is potential as that potential being."<sup>149</sup> In the case of building a house, the bricks and stones are having their full manifestation of potentiality as the buildable in the process of building. Kosman gives an analogy that might help us see this more clearly:

as the exercise of a disposition is to that disposition, for example, actually<sub>2</sub> speaking Greek to actually<sub>1</sub> speaking Greek, so is motion to potentiality, e.g., the motion in (by) which bricks and stones are built into a house to the potentiality for being a house which those bricks and stones have when they are not being built, and so is the movable in motion to the movable at rest.<sup>150</sup>

Here Kosman has succeeded in reconciling the idea that motion is actuality, but yields a process as well.

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147. Ibid., 45.

148. See *De Anima* 412a16-b10.

149. Kosman, 48.

150. Ibid., 47.

Because the end of movement is having moved, movement is devoted to finally ceasing. Kosman contrasts movement with ἐνέργεια whose end is ἐνέργειν, which is the acting itself. Motion is a kind of ἐνέργεια, but it is incomplete because it is a constitutive actuality of a potentiality that is directed to an end outside itself. One may ask what kind of ἐνέργεια it is that is complete, remembering that ἐνέργεια is a kind of transition from a disposition to act to actually doing the act, similar to motion as a transition from potentiality to actuality. The answer is that it is the ἐνέργεια that is always eternal because “its full actuality and realization are present in every instance of its occurrence.”<sup>151</sup> It has an end that is in itself, viz., the energization (or the exercising) of a disposition to act. Kosman then relates the discussion of ἐνέργεια to God because God is not in motion, but always in actuality. We will return to this later when we discuss the nature of the Unmoved Mover.

We will now discuss a criticism of Kosman’s account of movement presented by Daniel Graham.<sup>152</sup> Graham insists that Kosman’s differentiation of levels of actuality and potentiality is not necessary to understand Aristotle’s notion of motion. Graham shows that there is a simple common structure given by Aristotle to explain the actuality of something in the form of “The actuality of the V-able is V-ing.”<sup>153</sup> He cites several passages from the *Physics* to show that this is the case, such as: (1) The actuality of the alterable *qua* alterable is alteration (201a11ff.); (2) The actuality of that

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151. Ibid., 50.

152. “Aristotle’s Definition of Motion,” *Aristotle: Critical Assessments*, vol. II, 55-64.

153. Ibid., 58.

which can increase and diminish is increasing and diminishing (a12ff.); and (3) The actuality of the generable and perishable is generation and perishing (a14ff.).

The difference between the views of Graham and Kosman is that the former sees Aristotle's definition of motion in terms of the actuality of the V-able *qua* V-able, whereas the latter sees it in terms of the actuality of M *qua* V-able, where M refers to a variable ranging over matter terms. Kosman expresses some instances of his take on the definition, such as "bronze *qua* potentially a statue" and "the actuality of bricks and stones *qua* potentially something else." Graham sees a problem with this interpretation because, for example, there is no essential relationship between being bronze and being potentially a statue. The *definiens*, however, must be essentially related to motion. The definition of motion as the actuality of X *qua* Y, where there is no essential connection between X and Y, is not an adequate one. Furthermore, Graham argues that including matter in the definition is not correct because matter cannot be transformed into a motion. For example, it is not true to say that building is an actuality of bricks *qua* bricks because bricks cannot be transformed into a motion. It is more proper to say that building is an actuality of the buildable *qua* buildable, where "buildable" does not convey any matter terms. "Buildable" is better understood as a *dispositional state* that can be actualized as a motion. Motion is an incomplete actuality not by contrast with a complete actuality, but simply because potentiality is essentially incomplete. Motion is by definition an incomplete actuality because it is an actuality of a potentiality that is

essentially incomplete. Graham interprets Aristotle's idea of motion simply as “a process lying between the beginning and end states of a change.”<sup>154</sup>

To bolster his claim that motion is a process, Graham gives a linguistic argument concerning the words ὄντος and κίνησις. The argument goes like this:

Greek morpho-syntax makes a strong distinction between on-going activities and complete events. The distinction is embodied in the contrast between the 'present' and the aorist verbal systems. The two systems are descendants of Proto-Indo-European aspectual systems, the features of which they largely retain, although in classical Greek they provide the vehicle for tense distinctions – but only in the ongoing processes, the aorist complete events. Verbal adjectives in -τός ('-able') are constructed from the present stem; hence they correlate immediately with present-stem verb forms, but not with aorist stem verb forms. Consequently, there is no ambiguity in the Greek definition. The actuality corresponding to an adjective denoting potentiality is a verb denoting the ongoing actuality of a process. Moreover, the abstract noun in -σις, e.g., οἰκοδόμησις, is also built on the present stem, and Aristotle pointedly compares the abstract noun with a predication of the present-tensed verb (201a17f). In Greek there is simply no temptation to understand the potentiality expressed by the verbal adjective as being correlated with a completed action.<sup>155</sup>

I agree with Graham's interpretation of motion as an actuality of a process lying between the beginning and end states of a change.<sup>156</sup> It is not necessary to ask what kind of a thing such a process *is* because it is not an issue for Aristotle. Aristotle seems to just assume that such a process occurs without further explanation. I interpret the change as not exclusively referring to organism, but also to inanimate things. This very well might fit with all types of change listed in Λ2, viz., the quality, quantity, locomotion, and genetic changes.<sup>157</sup> This interpretation is supported by the fact that τοῦ

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154. Ibid., 61.

155. Ibid.

156. Though I cannot develop the question here, we may well ask whether the translation of ἐντελέχεια as actuality is adequate.

157. Ross also sees these four types of change as four types of movement. See *Aristotle's Metaphysics*, cxxviii.

δυνάμει ὄντος can be understood as “of the thing existing as *possibility*.”<sup>158</sup>

Furthermore, in *Physics* VIII.4, Aristotle talks about natural and unnatural motions of both animate and inanimate things.<sup>159</sup> Motion is then really a kind of activity.

Having established this understanding of motion, we need to notice that Aristotle sees movement as belonging to the domain of physics (1069b1). Book Λ is an attempt to account for the source of movement by discussing the Unmoved Mover, a subject to which we now turn.

### 3. The Nature of the Unmoved Mover

The first question we need to ask is why then the Unmoved Mover is needed in Aristotle’s philosophical scheme. Aristotle begins his discussion in Λ by stating that substance is the object of his inquiry. There are three kinds of substance mentioned in Λ1: eternal sensible substance, perishable sensible substance, and eternal unmovable substance (1069a30-1069b1). The eternal sensible substances are the celestial bodies that will not be discussed until the beginning of Λ7. There Aristotle mentions that “there is, then, something which is always moved with an unceasing motion, which is motion in a circle; and this is plain not in theory only but in fact. Therefore the first heavens must be eternal” (1072a20-25). The perishable sensible substances are terrestrial creatures such as plants and animals. These two kinds of substance belong to

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158. There should be a further discussion whether what is potential and what is possible is the same for Aristotle.

159. See Sheldon M. Cohen, “Aristotle on Elemental Motion,” *Aristotle: Critical Assessments*, vol. II, 65-74. Cohen interestingly discuss about accidental natural motion, which is not the actualization of an intrinsic disposition towards movement.

the domain of physics because they imply movement. The third kind of substance belongs to another science because it is unmovable. In  $\Lambda 6$ , Aristotle gives an argument for the necessity of the third kind of substance to exist. The first two substances will not be understood fully unless there is another kind of substance that addresses the need for a source of the movement.

The argument given by Aristotle in *Metaphysics*  $\Lambda 6$  is intended to prove that there must be an eternal unmovable substance. Aristotle seems to be giving several steps of argument, beginning with this:

For substances are the first of existing things, and if they are all destructible, all things are destructible. But it is impossible that movement should either come into being or cease to be; for it must always have existed. Nor can time come into being or cease to be; for there could not be a before and an after if time did not exist.<sup>160</sup>

There are two reasons for the existence of an eternal substance here. The first reason is related to motion:

- (1) The eternal substance exists because otherwise all things are destructible.
- (2) If motion is eternal, then it is not true that all things are destructible.
- (3) Motion is eternal.

From (2) and (3), we get:

- (4) It is not true that all things are destructible.

Premise (4) is the denial of the second disjunct of (1), which results in:

- (5) The eternal substance exists.

Premise (1) could be changed by material implication into: (1a) If it is not true that the eternal substance exists, then all things are destructible. One might object that

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<sup>160</sup>. *Metaphysics* 1071b5-10.

(1) is a false disjunct. For example, Berti argues that it is not correct to say that there must be an eternal substance in order to prevent all things from being destructible. There can be only perpetual in generating and corrupting substances affecting one another.<sup>161</sup> Nor is the existence of an eternal substance required in an eternal time because there can be many non-continuous, but only contiguous (ἐχόμενα) things, i.e., things that are in succession and touching one another.<sup>162</sup> Yet Aristotle in *On Generation and Corruption* II.9-11 thinks that if everything is perishable, then at some time in the past no thing would have existed. In those passages, Aristotle speaks about eternal things that *are* of necessity, so that it is impossible for them *not to be*. It is necessary that the eternal imperishable things *are* because motion is eternal, which entails that there must be continuous coming-to-be of things. Motion itself is prior to the coming-to-be of things. But if motion is eternal, then the substance that causes motion must be eternal as well. Therefore, the existence of an eternal substance is indispensable if there is to be the coming-to-be of things. This substance is identified by Aristotle as God:<sup>163</sup>

Now being . . . is better than not-being; but not all things can possess being, since they are too far removed from the principle. God therefore adopted the remaining alternative, and fulfilled the perfection of the universe by making coming-to-be uninterrupted; for the greatest possible coherence would thus be secured to existence, because that coming-to-be should itself come-to-be perpetually is the closest approximation to eternal being.<sup>164</sup>

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161. Enrico Berti, “The Unmoved mover(s) as efficient cause(s) in *Metaphysics* Λ6,” *Aristotle’s Metaphysics* Lambda: *Symposium Aristotelicum*, eds. Michael Frede and David Charles, 183.

162. *Physics* 227a10.

163. It seems that Aristotle is treating θεός as if it were a proper name.

164. *On Generation and Corruption*, 336b27-337a1.

The second reason for the existence of an eternal substance is related to time. Premise (3), which says that motion is eternal, is proven by the fact that time is eternal. Time is eternal because there could not be a before and an after where time does not exist. In the *Physics*, time is differentiated from motion because motion has a particular spatial location whereas time does not and because motion could be fast or slow whereas time could not (218b21-219a10). However, time does not exist without change or movement. Aristotle thinks that if the state of our minds does not change at all, or if we have not noticed its changing, then we do not think that time has elapsed. David Bostock holds that Aristotle's argument is inadequate because "time may pass without our noticing it (as when we are asleep), and there is no obvious reason to think that during all that time there has been movement, even if we grant that when we do notice the passing of time that is because we notice some movement."<sup>165</sup> Bostock argues further that it is possible that even if there is no change, time still elapses. Aristotle's argument that time is something that belongs to movement, i.e., an attribute of movement, is weak. Yet if time is indeed an attribute of movement, and if time is eternal, then movement must also be eternal.

Now we need to discuss premise (2). Behind this premise, there are some arguments from *De Caelo* I.12 concerning the necessity of the existence of such eternal being. Aristotle believes that anything that always exists is absolutely imperishable, i.e., that what always *is* cannot not be. In the formal mode, this claim could be stated as "if it is always the case that *p*, then it is necessary that *p*." Waterlow argues that the

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165. David Bostock, "Aristotle's Account of Time," *Aristotle: Critical Assessments*, vol. II, 145.

proposition is synthetic instead of analytic. This means that the movement from the antecedent to the consequent is supported by some other assumptions. One of the assumptions is that “in *De Caelo* I.12 Aristotle operates from a conception of possibility as temporalized and relative to the actual.”<sup>166</sup> It seems that Aristotle is referring only to the things that always *are* throughout an infinite time that is depicted as one single time. Now we could see that the Unmoved Mover is necessarily eternal if there has to be eternal continuous movement. In this context, it is necessary that the Unmoved Mover exists, which implies that it is imperishable. This conclusion is compatible with premise (2) that it is not true that all things are destructible.

The aforementioned argument supports the claim that there must be an eternal substance. But this argument is speaking more about the indestructibility of the substance, which is a consequence of the eternity of the substance. It is obvious that the eternity of the substance does not necessarily entail that the substance is unmovable since Aristotle allows that there are eternal *movable* substances such as the first heavens. But Aristotle clearly relates the eternity of the substance to its unmovability in the next argument, that this eternal substance must be unmovable because otherwise no movement is possible.

Let us now move on to Aristotle’s arguments for an *unmovable* substance. In 1071b124, Aristotle writes,

But if there is something which is capable of moving things or acting on them, but is not actually doing so, there will not be movement; for that which has a capacity need not exercise it.

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166. Sarah Waterlow, *Passage and Possibility*, 49.

Here Aristotle argues for a moving substance, and this apparently alludes to the argument treated in *Physics* VIII.4-5 even though Aristotle on this occasion does not speak about the impossibility of the infinite regress of the movers to argue for the Unmoved Mover. In *Physics*, Aristotle argues that every movement is moved by another thing because the actuality that moves must be a different thing from the potentiality that is moved. A thing cannot be the potentiality and the actuality at the same time or it will yield contradiction (257b2ff.). In  $\Lambda$  1071b12ff., the eternal moving substance must be always moving because otherwise no movement is possible and there will be no explanation for eternal movement. Moreover, the eternal substance must be actuality because it is the one that moves all potentiality. Consequently, compatible with the definition of motion as the actualization of what is potential, the eternal substance is unmovable because it is pure actuality.

Another description of the eternal substance mentioned in this section is that it is immaterial. The argument is that because the eternal substance is eternal, therefore it must be without matter because matter implies change (1069b13ff.). Here an obvious problem arises, viz., how could an immaterial substance move material things. We will save this discussion for later. Now, let us first look at how Randall interprets the nature of the Unmoved Mover.

To Randall, the Unmoved Mover is the “reason why,” the *διότι*, the *ἀρχή* of motion.<sup>167</sup> Motion has no efficient cause. The Unmoved Mover is neither the creator nor originator of motion. Rather, it is a principle of intelligibility or a logical

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167. John Herman Randall, Jr., *Aristotle*, 133-44.

explanation of motion. It is neither a physical cause nor a force, but a natural law. Randall contends that  $\Lambda$  “has no real place in Aristotle’s metaphysics, taken as his mature First Philosophy.”<sup>168</sup> Randall seems to be very skeptical about the existence of the Unmoved Mover as an independent immaterial οὐσίᾱ. He thinks that Aristotle is committing a fallacy of hypostatizing an ideal, i.e., “the fallacy of taking an intelligible structure distinguished in experience, and feeling so intensely toward it as a human ideal, that he makes it into an independent, self-existing *ousia* or substance.”<sup>169</sup> Randall thinks that Aristotle was perhaps still a Platonist when he wrote  $\Lambda$ . The same goes with his interpretation on *De Anima*’s “Active Intellect,” which he sees as a mythical element in Aristotle’s philosophy.

Randall’s interpretation is quite radical, since it supposes that  $\Lambda$  is not a coherent part of Aristotle’s metaphysical corpus. It is tempting just to dismiss  $\Lambda$  as an independent mythical treatise, but there is another route to maintain that the account of the Unmoved Mover is indeed an independent immaterial οὐσίᾱ. One interpretation is offered by Kosman.<sup>170</sup>

Kosman sees the mode of divine being as a formal principle of the substance-being in general. He tries to explain why Aristotle only offers an ontology of substance rather than a general ontology like that discussed in the *Categories*. He sees that Aristotle’s theory of οὐσίᾱ as an explanation of his general theory of being, “his

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168. Ibid., 136.

169. Ibid., 140.

170. Aryeh Kosman, “Divine Being and Divine Thinking in *Metaphysics* Lambda:” 165-188.

ousiology for the sake of his ontology.”<sup>171</sup> Unlike Randall, Kosman sees  $\Lambda$  as a general enterprise of the *Metaphysics* as a whole. Kosman understands the relationship between substance-being and being in general, the relationship made possible by the  $\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma \ \acute{\epsilon}\nu$  structure of being (Z4), as analogous to the relationship between the Unmoved Mover and substance itself. The divine substance, according to Kosman, is an explanation not primarily of the existence of the world, but as an  $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\acute{\eta}$  of substance-being, and then transitively as an explanation for being in general (being *qua* being). In Kosman’s words,

The divine substance is there [in Lambda] identified by Aristotle as the  $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\acute{\eta} \dots \acute{\eta}\varsigma \ \acute{\eta}$  οὐσία ἐνέργεια – the principle whose οὐσία is ἐνέργεια, whose essential being is that very activity of its nature which in Book Theta Aristotle has discovered for us to be the principle of an entity’s οὐσία. When I specify the οὐσία of any natural entity, I do so in terms of the specific mode of activity involved in the acting out of that entity’s substantial nature.<sup>172</sup>

Kosman is arguing that because the essence of the divine substance is actuality, then the divine substance is explanatory for substance-being with respect to the fact that we understand a substance-being in terms of actuality. For example, we understand the substance of human beings in terms of their actuality, viz., the living characteristic of human beings such as eating, walking, drinking, etc.

Substance-being, in turn, is explanatory for being in general. Kosman writes, “οὐσία is not a category of entity, but a category of being, and its primacy in Aristotle’s ontology as well as its explanatory power derive from this fact.”<sup>173</sup> Kosman

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171. Ibid.: 167.

172. Ibid.: 176-7.

173. Ibid.: 176.

uses the argument from Z1 to show that understanding οὐσία will allow us to understand other modes of being:

We think we know each thing most fully, when we know what it is, e.g. what man is or what fire is, rather than when we know its quality, its quantity, or where it is; since we know each of these things also, only when we know *what* the quantity or the quality *is*. (1027a36ff.)

This quotation indicates that the relationship between substance and other modes of being is not one in which the instances of predicate-being are dependent for their being on certain subjects, but rather one in which the modes of being exhibited in the things that have subject characteristics (and are most suited to be subjects) are explained. The fact that οὐσία has two aspects, viz., determinacy and determinability, makes it a paradigm of a subject. Determinacy is the fact that a substance is what it is and has an essence, an unqualified τόδε τι, a determinate *this*. Determinability is the fact that a substance more than any other being is capable of being further determined. The priority of understanding οὐσία as a way to understand other modes of being is also obvious from Z4 1030a18ff. where Aristotle speaks about the homonymy of “what a thing is.” Aristotle believes that the “what” belongs simply (ἀπλῶς) to substance, but in a limited sense to the other categories. Therefore, understanding substance as the paradigm τί ἐστὶ of being is the way to explain the derivative “what” of other categories.

We need to make an additional note on Kosman’s claim that οὐσία is not a category of entity. The claim is discussed by virtue of the fact that numerical identity does not entail equivalence of being. For example, even if a white human being is a

human being, it is not true to say that their εἶναι is the same, i.e., the being of a white human being (τὸ λευκῶ ἀνθρώπῳ εἶναι) is not the same as the being of a human being (τὸ ἀνθρώπῳ εἶναι). Kosman's argument is that if we see οὐσία as a category of entity rather than a category of being, then we will conjecture that an individual white human being is an οὐσία. Kosman thinks that it is a misreading of Aristotle's project in the *Metaphysics*.

Kosman's interpretation is very enlightening, yet his contention that οὐσία is not a category of entity might be problematic. Shields writes a response to Kosman, insisting that it is precisely because οὐσία is a category of entity, and not merely a mode of being, that it underpins the existence of all ὄντα.<sup>174</sup> Shields insists that if Socrates is white and a substance, then it will be true to say that a white thing (τὸ λευκόν) is an οὐσία. Shields remarks,

If some feature of Aristotle's ontology had the consequence that  $x$  could be numerically identical with  $y$  without sharing all of  $y$ 's properties, then there would be something seriously wrong with his ontology.<sup>175</sup>

The fact that Aristotle sees τὸ φ<sub>dative</sub> εἶναι and τὸ ψ<sub>dative</sub> εἶναι as distinct, along with the coincidence that the same thing is both φ and ψ, implies that one and the same entity can fall under different sortals. This means that being a white man will not fall under the substance sortal, while being a man will. However, a white man is still an οὐσία for the reason that a white man W is identical with the man W.

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174. Christopher Shields, "Commentary on Kosman's 'Divine Being and Divine Thinking in *Metaphysics Lambda*:" 189-201.

175. *Ibid.*: 193.

Shields believes that the discussion of the principle of non-contradiction (PNC) in  $\Gamma$  confirms that all beings “have a property beyond satisfying the PNC, viz., the relational property of depending for their existence on the existence of οὐσία.”<sup>176</sup> In discussing PNC, Aristotle emphasizes the need for a substance being a subject for its attributes. The fact that there are many separate subjects indicates that these subjects are separate entities, which implies that substance is a category of entity. Shields thinks that we could still appreciate the importance of  $\Lambda$  and the Unmoved Mover without giving up the notion that οὐσία is a category of entity.

Based on the above discussions, we can conclude that the Unmoved Mover is not only a principle of intelligibility, but also an immaterial οὐσία, a *thing*, an entity, and the fullest actuality itself, which serves as the ultimate explanation for motion. We are now ready to discuss how such an Unmoved Mover moves all things *as being loved*.

#### 4. On Being Loved

At the outset, it must be admitted that an interpretation of the phrase in 1072b3-4 is likely to be speculative for two reasons: (1) there are many interpretations of the nature of the Unmoved Mover and the nature of motion, and (2) the rest of the *Metaphysics* does not talk at all about what “being loved” means. However, we can try to construct an interpretation that is supported by adequate arguments. I am aware, though, that there will not be one single interpretation that can satisfy all people.

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176. Ibid.: 199.

We can start off by discussing a comment made by Leo Elders on this passage.

Elders writes,

In a26 Aristotle interrupted his argument for an unmoved Mover, to speak about the way in which the object of desire moves. He now returns to this First Mover and says that it moves by being desired. The ὡς probably serves the purpose of qualifying the unusual ἐρώμενον (ἐρᾶν applies to human love). Aristotle could not use the term ὀρεκτόν, for an object of desire is not always *actually* desired [footnote: 'To desire' does not always have the pregnant sense of ἐρᾶν, and thus, in the English translation, *as* need not be added.]. It would seem that only things which have mind can experience this desire and that Aristotle is thinking here of the celestial bodies.<sup>177</sup>

It is not totally clear why Elders says that Aristotle could not use the term ὀρεκτόν. In 1072a26 Aristotle writes "κινεῖ δε ὧδε τὸ ὀρεκτὸν καὶ τὸ νοητὸν οὐ κινούμενα," which is seen as analogous to the Unmoved Mover, viz., like the object of desire and of thought, the Unmoved Mover moves without being moved. It seems that Elders is arguing that because the Unmoved Mover is being loved continually, then he is not an object of desire, but of love.

Elders gives a footnote about the English translation that could drop "as" because "to desire" does not always have the pregnant sense of ἐρᾶν. Maybe he is saying that ἐρᾶν implies an act of love that is *always* and *actually*. Hence "as" could be dropped from the sentence because the Unmoved Mover is ever loved by all things and "as" is an unnecessary word.

Elders points out that the Unmoved Mover moves the celestial bodies by being loved. Now we encounter the crux of the matter here. First, we have concluded that motion in Aristotle is mainly a realization of what is possible, i.e., a process of actualizing what is potential. If the Unmoved Mover moves the celestial bodies, then

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177. Leo Elders, *Aristotle's Theology*, 174.

the Unmoved Mover actualizes what is potential in them. We have seen above that a substance is best described as its actuality, i.e., its unique activity as that kind of substance. Aristotle describes the unique activity of the celestial bodies as eternally and spatially moving in a circle (1072a20-5), e.g., the rotation of the stars around the earth. It is still an open question how the Unmoved Mover causes the rotation of material things.

Second, the picture is complicated by the fact that Aristotle mentions about fifty-five spheres that move the planets (1074a1-15). It seems that the Unmoved Mover first moves these spheres or “intelligences” and then *transitively* moves the planets. How the Unmoved Mover moves the spheres is also still a question, but we may presume that it moves them *as being loved* as well. We understand that the spheres move the planets by serving as an end: “they will cause change as being an end of movement” (1074a23-5). But it is still a problem whether the Unmoved Mover serves as an efficient cause, a formal cause, or a final cause of all movements. Ross writes,

There has been much controversy over the question whether God is for Aristotle only the final cause, or the efficient as well, of change. There can be no doubt about the answer. ‘Efficient cause’ is simply the translation of Aristotle ἀρχὴ τῆς κινήσεως, and God is certainly this. The truth is that the opposition of οὐ ἔνεκα to ἀρχὴ κινήσεως is not a well-chosen one. The οὐ ἔνεκα is one kind of ἀρχὴ κινήσεως.<sup>178</sup>

Ross’ solution is to redefine what “efficient cause” means given the fact that the phrase is a loose translation of ἀρχὴ τῆς κινήσεως. The Unmoved Mover is both the final and the efficient cause for all movements, i.e., it serves as an efficient cause by being a

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178. Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, cxxxiv.

final cause. However, the Unmoved Mover is not an end existing as a future ideal. It exists eternally and is perpetually moving things.

Third, the Unmoved Mover is immaterial. It is not possible to see ὡς ἐρώμενον as the physical force of the Unmoved Mover's to move what is material. One might object by saying that perhaps the Unmoved Mover is like a magnetic force. However, Aristotle never talks about it in such a way. It is not possible either for the Unmoved Mover to exercise a mental force to other things because it only thinks of itself. This fact supports my suggested interpretation of ὡς ἐρώμενον that the Unmoved Mover *moves* all things that are in fact actualizing their own natural potentials.

Fourth, there is a discussion in Ross about whether the celestial bodies are living things. The idea is that because the celestial bodies *can* love the Unmoved Mover, then they must have some kind of a soul to love. This is similar to a Platonic argument about why the celestial bodies move.<sup>179</sup> One alternative is to see that a soul resides within them just as the soul of human beings moves human bodies. Ross takes some insights from *De Caelo* 285a29, 292a20, b1 that they are living beings. He suggests that life and soul must be seriously ascribed to them. Hence he thinks that “desire” and “love” in Λ are not merely used in a metaphorical sense. But it is difficult to interpret these terms in a literal sense because it is clear that the only things that have soul in Aristotle's physics are organisms.

Fifth, Kosman has an interesting suggestion that the Unmoved Mover serves as the paradigm of being, in the sense that it is pure actuality and activity (ἐνέργεια).

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179. *Laws* 899.

Since all things have a potentiality yet to be actualized, then all things “passionately yearn” to reach actuality. In other words, there is no end outside of the things themselves. Their ends are their own nature. Kosman makes use of some insights from *De Anima* and the notion of a threptic soul to bolster the claim that the Unmoved Mover is an explanation of the generation and decay of animals. The threptic soul has two related functions, viz., nutrition and reproduction:

The acts in which [the threptic soul] manifests itself are reproduction and the use of food, because for any living thing that has reached its normal development and which is unmutilated, and whose mode of generation is not spontaneous, the most natural act is the production of another like itself, an animal producing an animal, a plant a plant, in order that, as far as its nature allows, it may partake in the eternal and divine.<sup>180</sup>

The above quotation suggests that the partaking in the divine life simply is living a natural life according to one’s nature. That which is natural partakes in the principle of generation and decay, i.e., the Unmoved Mover, in their life career.

The question is now whether it is possible to interpret a principle as an οὐσία, which is an entity. In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle very often speaks about principles and causes. In the Greek, καί can very well be translated as “that is.” Most likely, Aristotle sees principles and causes as the same things. In A, Aristotle mentions that “God is thought to be among the causes of all things and to be a first principle” (983a8-9). This is not Aristotle’s view, but a view held by thinkers before him. Yet Aristotle himself takes God as the first principle of the universe: “On such a principle, then, depend the heavens and the world of nature” (1072b13-15). The principle is the principle of

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180. *On the Soul* II.4.415a26ff.

actuality that attracts emulation for other things. The state of actuality is seen as the state of pleasure that all things are supposed to achieve:

God *is* in a better state. And life also belongs to God; for the actuality of thought is life, and God is that actuality; and God's essential actuality is life most good and eternal. We say therefore that God is a living being, eternal, most good, so that life and duration continuous and eternal belong to God; for this *is* God. (1072b25-30)

There is an indication that a principle (ἀρχή) *is* a substance (οὐσία) in 1070b22-25:

“and that which moves a thing or makes it rest is a principle and a substance.” Another possible proof text that substance could be a principle is from 1071a16-25:

The primary principles of all things are the actual primary ‘this’ and another thing which exists potentially. The universal causes, then, of which we spoke do not *exist*. For the *individual* is the source of the individuals. For while man is the cause of man universally, there is *no* universal man; but Peleus is the cause of Achilles, and your father of you, and this particular *b* of this particular *ba*, though *b* in general is the cause of *ba* taken without qualification.

This passage seems to exclude universals as the causes of things. Aristotle insists that only particulars could be causes of other particulars, never universals. From H1 we could conjecture that Peleus is a substance since all natural bodies are substances. Aristotle says that Peleus is the principle or cause of Achilles. But we need to ask whether it is Peleus as a compound of form and matter or Peleus' form that really is the cause of Achilles. Aristotle writes that the primary causes of particulars are twofold, viz., a “this” that is first in actuality as the efficient cause and another thing that exists potentially as the material cause. The “this” could refer both to Peleus as a compound of form and matter, which is the external cause of man (a father), and to Peleus' form that is somehow “transferred” to Achilles. Both a compound and a form are *kinds* of

substance.<sup>181</sup> In  $\Lambda$ , however, Aristotle argues that form in the sense of a universal cannot be the cause of particulars. Perhaps, in this context, it is better to see that Peleus as a compound of form and matter *and* Peleus' *particular* form are the efficient causes of Achilles. At any rate, it is possible to see an efficient cause or a principle as a substance. If God is the ultimate cause of movements, it is possible then to see him as both a principle and a substance, i.e., a *thing*. Based on our discussion of Shields' view, we could add that substance is a category of entity, not only a way of being. However, God cannot be a compound because he is immaterial. This might create a problem since God needs to be interpreted as some kind of a form to other things that are moved by him, which function as some kind of matter. But Aristotle never really explains the relationship between God and other things in this way. Moreover, matter is unconscious so that there cannot be a relationship of "love" between it and God as its form. I will leave this issue as an *aporia* now.

Back to the phrase ὡς ἐρώμενον, we might be able to connect it to *EN*. One passage that may be relevant is in 1175a10-20 where Aristotle writes,

Why does everyone desire pleasure? We might think it is because everyone also aims at being alive. Living is a type of activity, and each of us is active toward the objects he likes most and in the ways he likes most.

Pleasure itself is a state of soul obtained in a continuous life of contemplation, i.e., the life of study. In 1177b1ff. Aristotle speaks about study that is *liked* because of itself alone. Human beings have a divine element in them and this element is related to continuous study. God himself always enjoys one simple pleasure without change. We

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181. *Metaphysics* 1070a11.

could construct an interpretation of God in *EN* that is more or less similar to what we have in  $\Lambda$ . It seems obvious to me that in both *EN* and  $\Lambda$ , God is pure activity and actuality. The state of full actuality is being yearned for by all things according to their own nature.<sup>182</sup> In this sense, God moves all things *as being loved*.

### 5. Aristotle's Revision of Platonic ἔρωϑ

It is time to compare the account of love and motion in *Metaphysics*  $\Lambda$  with the one in Plato's *Symposium* and *Phaedrus* to see Aristotle's revision of Platonic ἔρωϑ. In the *Symposium*, ἔρωϑ is either directed toward the particular individuals or the Forms. There is no mention of motion in the *Symposium*. The *Phaedrus* gives a more explicit account of motion than the *Symposium* with its analysis of immortal souls as self-moving entities. They are the ἀρχαί or the original sources of motion (245c9). They are driven by ἔρωϑ, which is a desire to have something, to "fly" to the Forms. Blyth's analysis of the soul's self-motion is helpful here:

I infer that soul's self-motion in *Phdr.* is portrayed as taking three forms: (a) self-alteration, consisting in the arising of forms in a soul as subject, which becomes identified in belief with them (i.e., serial embodiment) . . . ; (b) that activity, let us call it generative, whereby divine soul, while not self-identified with body, maintains and orders the cosmos . . . ; and (c) cognitive rotation . . . . It seems clear that (a) is a deviation from the combination of (b) and (c), resulting from the corruption of *erōs*.<sup>183</sup>

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182. Erich Frank writes, "This God, then, although He dwells in the ether and is superior to the change of the terrestrial world, and in that respect is transcendent, yet is finally immanent in nature as its true substance" ("The Fundamental Opposition of Plato and Aristotle:" 180). With respect to the difference between Plato's and Aristotle's conception of νοῦϑ, Frank writes, "The νοῦϑ, then, is for Plato not the highest being, but beyond it stands, as cause of every being and all truth, the idea of the *agathon* which "illuminates" the νοῦϑ in its turn, thereby creating its power (δύναμιϑ) of thinking and understanding; for Aristotle, on the contrary, the νοῦϑ is the δύναμιϑ or "the idea of the ideas" (*De Anima* 432 a 2; 429 a 15)," *ibid.*: 179.

183. Dougal Blyth, "The Ever-Moving Soul in Plato's *Phaedrus*:" 193.

According to Blyth, ἔρωϑ is the force of the self-motion since self-motion is teleological. That means, there is no external cause for the motion, yet it is directed toward some ends. In the Platonic metaphysical scheme, these ends (the Forms) are ontologically separate from the souls and seem to be directing the eyes of the souls in such a way that the souls will eventually forget about themselves while gazing the beauty of the Forms.<sup>184</sup> This is even true with respect to the case (a), in which the souls of the lovers are corrupted by sexual intercourse.

The difference between Plato's and Aristotle's eternal moving entities is that for the latter, it is the heavenly bodies that are primarily moving eternally, whereas for the former, it is the "invisible principle within them and all other living bodies."<sup>185</sup> But the more fundamental difference between the two is that Aristotle believes in the idea of the Unmoved Mover, whereas Plato does not. Aristotle's idea of a single principle of movement appears in *De Caelo* I.10:

if the movement is to be continuous, what initiates it must be single, unmoved, ungenerated, and incapable of alteration; and if the circular movements are more than one, they must all of them, in spite of their plurality, be in some way subordinated to a single principle. (337a19-21).

In the Aristotelian metaphysical scheme, organisms have the principle of motion in themselves, as obvious in the *Physics*. However, Aristotle gives an explanation of motion in terms of potentiality and actuality. The fact that organisms are still changing or moving requires an actuality that makes the change possible in the first place. The same requirement is imposed upon anything that is still moving, even eternal entities.

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184. The *Phaedo* (74d-75b) and *Timaeus* (29a-32b) would further suggest that the order of change and diversification is governed by (erotic) striving to constitute an image of the forms" (ibid.: 211).

185. Ibid.: 195.

The fact that they are moving requires a prior actuality that makes the movement possible. Furthermore, a single principle of all movement is required because conceptually speaking, it is one pure actuality that can serve as the first explanation of all movement, whether it is eternal or not. Aristotle seems to be adding to Plato this notion of pure actuality to bring a more complete explanation of reality.

Another important difference between Plato's and Aristotle's philosophies is that in the *Phaedrus*, the souls move toward the Forms because of love, whereas in the *Metaphysics* Λ, the souls move toward their own perfection by loving the Unmoved Mover, which is a separate entity. I said earlier that the souls in the *Phaedrus* will eventually disregard themselves for the sake of the Forms. In Aristotle's philosophy, ἔρωσ brings the souls to God, but then brings them back to themselves. But the paradox is that the perfection for human beings is nothing other than an acceptance for their imperfection and interdependency with their fellow human beings. Nussbaum has mentioned that φιλία embraces the half, whereas Platonic ἔρωσ is craving for wholeness and perfection. In my reading, Aristotelian ἔρωσ in *Metaphysics* Λ is also a craving for wholeness and perfection, but in a paradoxical way. This metaphysical paradox makes φιλία the center of Aristotle's ethics: the ἔρωσ for God is *manifested* in human beings' φιλία for both particular individuals and wisdom. As a note, there is no specific account of φιλία in *Metaphysics* Λ except at places where Aristotle talks about Empedocles' theory of love and strife (e.g., 985a3-6, 996a8).

I have brought up three issues in this chapter. First, I have discussed the nature of motion in Aristotle's philosophy. Motion is the actuality of what is potential. It is the

actuality of a *process*, which consists in a transformation from potentiality to actuality. Second, I have tried to show that the Unmoved Mover is both a principle and a substance, which is a category of entity. Third, the best interpretation of the phrase ὡς ἐρώμενον is that it *moves* all things by letting them follow their own nature.

Aristotle, indeed, does not speak much about love in his *Metaphysics*, yet he uses the language of love to explain reality. Maybe he is still influenced by a concept in Empedocles that love is what unites the many.<sup>186</sup> Perhaps he is influenced by the speech of Eryximachus in Plato's *Symposium* that love is some kind of a harmony.<sup>187</sup> These are all speculations. At any rate, Aristotle needs a unifier for his ontology and cosmology. Love seems to be the best candidate for that task. As a last comment, if there is a love story between the Unmoved Mover and all things that are moved by him, then it is a tragic one. Unfortunately, the Unmoved Mover only loves himself. Fortunately, all things are not weary of loving him. Life goes on.

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186. *Physics* 250b27-28. Cf. Lear, 78, n.2: "Usually for Aristotle *erôs* refers specifically to sexual relationships (except for *Rhet.* 1391a5, where wealth is an object of *erôs* for the money lover) and does not seem to bear any similarity to attraction to a cosmic first principle! On the other hand, Aristotle often brings up Empedocles' view that Love is among the *archai*. Perhaps Aristotle has this in mind when he describes the Prime Mover as an object of love. After all, he has just mentioned Empedocles with some approval in *A.6* 1072a4-6. If so, however, Aristotle must be modifying Empedocles' view: (Empedocles thought that Love itself is the first principle of motion, while Aristotle says that the Prime Mover is effective by being loved and (2) Aristotle complains that Love as Empedocles understands it is too vague to explain particular movements (*GC* II.6 333b12ff)."

187. *Symposium* 188a.

## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUSION

What is Aristotle's revision of Platonic ἔρως and φιλία? Below are summaries of the main points I have tried to show in my thesis.

#### 1. On ἔρως

Plato's *Symposium* gives a dilemma with respect to the objects of ἔρως, viz., between loving particular individuals and loving the Form of Beauty. The disjunction is mutually exclusive. The problem with loving particular individuals is that it is temporary and full of negative emotions. The advantage with loving particular individuals is that it is human. The problem with loving the Form of Beauty is that it does not allow one to take the first step of the *scala amoris* at all. Also, it is too divine a love. The advantage with loving the Form of Beauty is that it is eternal and perfectly rational.

Plato's *Phaedrus* can be seen as a possible solution to the dilemma. In the *Phaedrus*, ἔρως is redefined to be something perfectly virtuous. One can love particular individuals *en route* to the Beautiful. Even though there is no mutually exclusive disjunction anymore, the problem remains about whether one can love particular individuals genuinely for their sake. This is an important issue to deal with because, intuitively, true love should be non-egoistic.

Aristotle's *EN* sees ἔρωσ primarily in terms of human relationships. The objects of ἔρωσ in *EN* are particular individuals. However, this kind of ἔρωσ must be avoided. Aristotle escapes the horns of the dilemma given in Plato's *Symposium* by rejecting to approve ἔρωσ at all with respect to loving particular individuals.

Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Λ mentions God as the object of ἔρωσ. However, since loving God means loving own's own nature, human beings must strive for φιλία in their relationships with one another.

## 2. On φιλία

Plato's *Symposium* seems to have an implicit dilemma with respect to the objects of φιλία. Sometimes is φιλία used for inanimate objects, such as horses and wine. At other times, φιλία is directed toward particular individuals in the context of human friendships. In the case of Aristophanes and Socrates, φιλία is identical with ἔρωσ; hence the same dilemma is also present here with the objects of φιλία.

Plato's *Phaedrus* gives a possible solution to the dilemma in the *Symposium* with respect to the objects of φιλία. Φιλινᾶ is directed both to particular individuals *for the sake of attaining true beauty and wisdom*.

Aristotle's *EN* has to deal with whether it is possible to genuinely love a friend for her sake when one has to love also for the sake of the good. The solution to this problem is both ethical and metaphysical. First, the ethical solution hinges upon Aristotle's notion of a friend as another self. When a person loves someone for the sake of the good, the good will bring her back into loving the individual *qua* the individual

as she loves herself *qua* individual. Furthermore, Aristotle requires that someone loves herself *in so far she is good*. That means, loving one's own self is also about *excellences* and not only about loving one's own individuality. Second, the metaphysical solution is that the excellences or the good are not something ontologically independent of human beings. The fact that the ultimate good is one's own perfected nature brings human beings back to themselves in the enterprise of friendship, which consequently will make them love their fellow human beings for their excellences *and* their individuality.

Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Λ mentions the Unmoved Mover the object of φιλία, but not human particular individuals. Aristotle also discusses Empedocles' account of love (φιλία) and strife, and also wisdom as the object of φιλία (philosophy).

### 3. On the Relationship Between ἔρως and φιλία

Plato's *Symposium* has three views on the relationship between ἔρως and φιλία. The first is Phaedrus' position that ἔρως is an elevator of φιλία. The second is Pausanias-Eryximachus-Agathon's position that ἔρως is the originator of φιλία. The third is Aristophanes-Socrates-Diotima's position that ἔρως *is* φιλία (for Aristophanes, the objects of Love are particular individuals, whereas for Socrates-Diotima the objects of Love is the beautiful). The *Symposium* sees both ἔρως and φιλία to be indispensable in a virtuous life.

Plato's *Phaedrus* has two views concerning the relationship between ἔρως and φιλία. The first is that ἔρως is the counterpart of φιλία, both of which are directed

toward particular individuals. The origins of the two might be different. It is possible to have a life with *φιλία* but without *ἔρω*, which is a life that is not totally virtuous.

However, it seems that it is not possible to have *ἔρω* without *φιλία* in a virtuous life.

The second view is *ἔρω* is *φιλία* with respect to wisdom (philosophy).

Aristotle's *EN* sees *ἔρω* as the bad excess of *φιλία*, which must be avoided in a virtuous life in the context of human relationships.

Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Λ sees *ἔρω* in a positive way with respect to loving God. Aristotle is silent about the relationship between *ἔρω* and *φιλία*.

#### 4. The Unanswered Question

It must be said that I have not adequately dealt with the issue of whether Aristotle succeeds in answering whether one can genuinely love another person for that person's own sake, while simultaneously she has to love that person for the sake of the good. But it was not my intention to solve this issue; only to circumscribe it. My suggestion was that even in Aristotle's metaphysical scheme, human beings love one another for the *excellences* in them, and not just for their individuality. This is notably similar to the Platonic account that human beings love one another because of the *qualities* in them. The difference between them seems to be ultimately metaphysical. The relationship between Aristotle's metaphysics and ethics needs deeper research, and is beyond the scope of this current project.

As a concluding remark, I would say that Aristotle's theory of *ἔρω* and *φιλία* is more human than Plato's, since it reminds human beings of their imperfection and

interdependency with each other. It is by “embracing the half,” viz., themselves and other people, that they move toward the ideal happy life.

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