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## Sifting the Commonplace: Topoi and the Grounds for Argument in Classical and Modern Rhetoric

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**SIFTING THE COMMONPLACE: *TOPOI* AND THE GROUNDS FOR  
ARGUMENT IN CLASSICAL AND MODERN RHETORIC**

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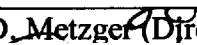
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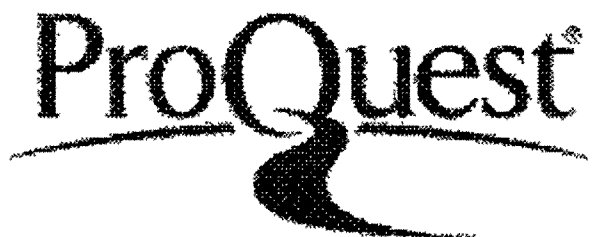


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## **ABSTRACT**

### **SIFTING THE COMMONPLACE: *TOPOI* AND THE GROUNDS FOR ARGUMENT IN CLASSICAL AND MODERN RHETORIC**

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Old Dominion University, 2012  
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This dissertation is a reminder that how we consider reasoning to work and its end is very much bound up with how we think about people, what they are, what they can be, and how they do and should live together. Part of the end of the human being is to understand, to understand the Good or God and thus understand herself and her relation to others and her obligation to others; this is something we see in Aristotle's somewhat-spiritual understanding of Ethics and the Human Being. Focusing on reasoning (and its connection to being) in general, instead of accenting the limitations and conditionings of the human capacity to know, is part of the means of securing the road for this end, which is especially important, as understanding, which is of and by being, is bound up with morality and moral development. Also, bound up with understanding and how human beings should convey it and build it up are rhetoric and dialectic, which are meant to get to the same end, Good or God, together.

It is a fundamental contention of this project that rhetoric and dialectic cannot or should not be separated, nor these separated from substance, for rhetoric and dialectic easily become instruments of abuse in isolation, as in, for example, a rigid formalism of the self or a rigid formalism of philosophy. I will focus on dialectical aspects of reasoning and understanding here. Situating Aristotle's discussion of how reasoning operates in a discussion prompted by Toulmin's *Uses of Argument*, this dissertation shows how



Aristotle attempts to avoid the lure of formalism by grounding reasoning and its evaluation in the real (which he understands as the connection among mind, world, and language).

For Angela

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due many for their part in completing this project. My wife Angela deserves the most thanks, for she has sacrificed the most and ever with the utmost patience. I also heartily thank Alan and Susan Cutshaw and Dave and Kathy Cunsolo for all their support and free babysitting. Thanks also to all of my friends and family for their support and perpetual inquiries into the progress of the project. I especially want to thank Lawrence Hatab and Timothy Bostic for their enjoyable conversation, thoughtful comments, and helpful suggestions. Finally, thanks to David Metzger for the sacrifice of his office hours and, while reading through these notes on Aristotle and other matters, his repeated attempts to understand someone who was often thinking about the world and people in very different ways than he does.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
INTRODUCTION .....	1
THEMES.....	6
OUTLINE OF PROJECT .....	13
A GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO DIALECTIC .....	16
CHAPTER 1: CLASS LOGIC.....	28
RUSSELL’S RHETORIC REGARDING LOGIC.....	44
RUSSELL RECAPITULATED.....	70
CHAPTER 2: MENDING, RENDERING, OR RENDING LOGIC?.....	83
NATURAL FORMAL LOGIC?.....	91
ETHOS AND MATERIAL MODES .....	106
AN ARISTOTELIAN RESPONSE.....	127
CHAPTER 3: TOULMIN’S FORMAL MATTERS .....	140
FORMAL CONCEALERS AND THE TERMINAL PROBLEMS OF FIELDS .....	141
PREMISES AND REASONING AND ISSUES OF AUTHORITY IN LOGIC .....	159
FINALLY FIELDS .....	182
CHAPTER 4: WHERE’S THE LOGIC?.....	199
AN ORGANIC VIEW OF REASONING: PREDICABLES, SUBSTANCE, AND THE <i>ORGANON</i> .....	205
THE <i>TOPOI</i> AND DEMONSTRATION .....	219
DIALECTIC: THE MIND, LANGUAGE, AND THE WORLD.....	243
CHAPTER 5: ETHICAL TOPICS .....	260
PROPERTY, ACCIDENT, REASONING, AND VIRTUE .....	264
HOW VIRTUES DEVELOP AND BECOME DURABLE IN PEOPLE.....	298
GOOD MAN IN POLITICS.....	327
CONCLUSION.....	354
WORKS CITED .....	372
APPENDICES	
APPENDIX A.....	390
APPENDIX B .....	392

Chapter	Page
APPENDIX C .....	398
APPENDIX D .....	399
APPENDIX E .....	401
APPENDIX F.....	406
VITA.....	408

## INTRODUCTION

This project, which was originally intended to cover the *topoi* in general (thus the broadly inclusive title), quickly became about the logical systems of Aristotle and Toulmin. For my purposes, mainly focusing and elaborating on these two systems turned out to be a better approach than surveying all of the commentators of *topoi* in ancient and modern literature. Though some of these commentators find a place here, many bring their own shades of understanding to the components of the subject, which would have over-burdened an already very long book.

This very long book turns out to be a quasi-Aristotelian commentary that re-emphasizes the importance of *topoi* for reasoning, including rhetorical reasoning, and philosophy in general, with a specific focus on their importance for understanding ethos in reasoning and arguing.<sup>1</sup> Along with this focus on the *topoi* for reasoning, comes a reemphasizing of the importance of *being* for reasoning, for properly understanding reason and for its end. I focus on showing how the dialectical *topoi* are grounded in, and expressive of, being and form “a link” between formal logic and substance. I also focus on dialectical *topoi* in particular because they are expressive of dialectic, and this project takes Aristotle to mean that dialectic is the basis of all deduction and good reasoning (see Chapter 4). Indeed, dialectic being over deduction is a way of explaining how different types of reasoning (enthymemes, demonstrations, dialectical syllogisms, and even inductions) are all connected to and reliant on form and being. Actually,

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<sup>1</sup> I say *quasi*-Aristotelian because this project is more of a thought-experiment in Aristotle. I am sometimes more concerned here with a certain *tenor* of Aristotle than with actually proving Aristotle believed so-and-so (thus the preponderance of “Aristotle *seems* to think” statements). Note also that this work is not primarily addressed to Aristotelian scholars, but to those rhetoric and composition teachers who have a little background in Aristotle and a general interest in understanding the world, reason, and logic, as well as in some of the ways their relationship, limits, and uses have suffered distortion recently.

formal logic and the really grounded dialectic that this project hopes to express need each other, and much of the first four chapters of this project can be seen as a defense of the Aristotelian understanding of the syllogism and dialectic, for defending either requires defending both. Describing this interrelation contributes to another aim here: showing Aristotle's understanding of how reasoning is connected to other aspects of human existence and purpose, as well as the significance of this relationship to ethically being in the world.

For some context, we can point out that at different points in history, the modern turn most recently, reason has been abused in distorted renderings of it, from being seen as a severely limited, even useless, capacity to a capacity that can understand everything or "everything worth knowing." It has also been vilified as an abuser, that part of the human which carries the "diseased" desire for universals. This dissertation aims at being a small assistance in ending the abuse of reason and not only exculpating reason but freeing it for its good, proper end and esteem regarding people and their endeavors.

Now, speaking broadly, reason finds one of its largest obstacles in a putatively real separation of knowing and being, often coming out of arguments that start from a very limited perspective and try to establish the human inability to know.<sup>2</sup> This separation causes many problems in determining what is reasonable, debunking what is only supposedly reasonable, and understanding whether anything is reasonable; it also raises obstacles to seeing how reason connects to other legitimate ways of knowing.

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<sup>2</sup> "Abandoning the investigation of being, modern philosophical research has instead concentrated upon human knowing. Rather than make use of the human capacity to know the truth, modern philosophy has preferred to accentuate the ways in which this capacity is limited and conditioned" (John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio* 5).

This separation has also had other significant moral consequences, for not only does one's view of reasoning and its connection (or lack thereof) to being affect how one views and values humans; one's view of the moral character of humans, what character is and can be, affects one's view of reasoning, its purpose and limits. This project seeks to help prevent people from taking erroneous positions on these points by focusing on the art of general reasoning or dialectic. Again, for reasoning to work well, one must see the proper relationship of formal logic, dialectical *topoi*, modes, and substance or essence, as well as predicating and the constructing of universals. Arguments over this make up most of the subject matter of this book, and such a relationship is important to express. A proper understanding of the relationship contributes to freeing the individual's use of reason to move forward in what it is meant to do, to understand the Good and to understand oneself and others in light of the Good. Reasoning's connection to being is a legitimation of the pursuit of understanding (of being).

These two points are interrelated, and one can see reasoning's connection to being by focusing on dialectic. Again, dialectic is over good forms of reasoning and over deduction (and really has as its end *the good*), and it is able to be in such a position because, as Aristotle describes it, it is grounded in the real, in what is, which significantly includes human beings and the human mind. This ontological grounding also makes dialectic reliable for finding and understanding *aetia*, important elements of understanding essence and syllogizing, for reasoning is all about what is and why. That is, reasoning is about essence and the essences of things, which hold of necessity or for the most part.



One can also see dialectic's tie to the real through its relationship to syllogisms. *Logic*, and this also where the term finds something of a kinship with *reasoning*, is something of a "thing" itself, made up of a formal component (the syllogism) and a material component (often simply represented in the dialectical *topoi*), and as with other things, these only seem abstractly separable. Yet some have tried to place a real division between syllogisms and dialectic, thus separating logic from substance, even though the dialectical *topoi* are in a sense the rules by which syllogisms work and are derived from the predicables, concepts based in being in general and which help us understand the order of existence. Of course, complaints follow naturally enough from the separation: e.g., that the syllogism has no connection to anything, that it is a worthless thing, or, to the other extreme, that only things that fit into some distorted idea of formal logic are worthy of discussion. We will see the connection of formal and material logic's import to evaluation, ethics, and interdisciplinary studies.

Now, one can see something of the interrelation of the two points above, especially as it regards the connection of reasoning and essence, in Aristotle's belief that the human mind and world are made for each other: existence is structured for understanding, and even the language by which we think is structured for understanding. The *topoi* are rules derived from concepts grounded in being, which language, the mind, and the world help set up and testify to. These *topoi* are representative of and influence how *philosophy*, the *mind*, and the *world* work together, as well as influence what formal logic is and can be. Here is one way to speak of the relationship of grammar, the real, and philosophy; grammar is an order and allows for ordering, and we cannot even make simple sentences, which can of course order

through a multivalent predication, without these real predicables. Moreover, the mind uses these rules for ordering and justice. They are universal rules for defining, stating what is.<sup>3</sup>

Before proceeding, it may help to illustrate the previous paragraphs in two related concrete, commonsense things we can acknowledge about humans: (1) they argue from what is or what they think is and (2) they are philosophizing-rhetorical beings. We see (1) in how we are usually impatient with people who do not believe what they are saying but argue like they do. Part of the explanation for this impatience, along with, for one, the just need of humans for moral principles that intertwine with their lives, is gathered from a belief found in Aristotle's work that what is and what we think something is are often not *completely* separable. People, because of how we come to knowledge and how we experience the world in similar ways (and how the real is there to be experienced in similar ways) and in how the mind seeks for essence, usually have something right about what we are talking about, especially if we are aiming for truth. That is, even our misunderstandings regarding an object are "reasonable," and thus the error can be clarified to be in accord with right reason. Indeed, as we shall see Aristotle argue, we can know many things with high reliability, even things that those

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<sup>3</sup> In the *Topics*, after giving the means by which an argument can be cleared up (i.e., nullified or won) or led off track, such as different uses of the same word in a single argument, Aristotle concludes Book I with a difficult sentence: "The means, then, whereby reasonings are *effected*, are these: the commonplace rules, for the observance of which the aforesaid means are useful, are as follows" (I.18, 108b.32, my emphasis). These commonplace rules seem logically prior to what is traditionally considered formal logic. The *Topics* does not simply temporally precede the *Analytics*, as we will see Allen argue, but induction or deduction cannot be validated without its *topoi*. The commonly held opinions of any culture are both acceptable and criticizable by these rules, though Aristotle is careful to leave out propositions and problems that no one would hold or that are obvious to everyone (I.1, 104a.5-6). As one might gather from *Topics* I.2 and Books I and II of the *Rhetoric*, this critique of cultural knowledge is viable on a few levels: dialectic (as well as what might be called dialectical or philosophical rhetoric) deals with using but also criticizing commonly held beliefs (whereas, say, a pragmatic rhetoric would just simply use them). These beliefs are often given to a culture by its "sciences," which not only cover such things as mathematics and physical sciences, but also ethics and psychology, as well as the first principle(s) of all these (if a culture has these defined). See Appendix E

like Russell say we cannot; essence, as it is united with mind, world, and language, allows at least for probable knowledge. And we can elaborate on (2) by saying that people, in their arguing, reasoning, and in other ways, are trying to both make sense of their existence and order their existence. Even if the only way they find to make sense of existence is to say it is senseless so that they no longer have to think about the end of ordering, this is what people do. Such activity points to a connection of being and good that we will see Aristotle's perspective on in Chapter 5.

Finally, we must point out again that the pursuit of understanding and right use of reason is also dependent on the right regarding of people, who have a very special relationship to being, and these claims about the connection of logic to essence point to the importance of the human for reasoning in several ways. Essence is not simply in the mind, and universals are not simply exuded by nature. Human essence or a notion of personhood is necessary for even reasoning about people, in general and in particular. It is also important that character be grounded in essence for reasoning about particular persons. We will see the difficulties Russell and Toulmin create on these points.

### *THEMES*

Now, after giving this condensed and intertwined prospectus of the project that tries to bring elements of reasoning back together and properly orient them, it may help to broadly categorize our aims and issues here into three themes. This project is largely a thematic work; that is, though the chapters are set up within the structure of a general logical progression, they are more concerned with addressing and developing closely intertwined themes in different contexts. The first three chapters may have a synoptic feel because of this. I will enumerate these themes and follow them with a brief

discussion of the significance of the project (see the Conclusion also), a large limitation, and an outline of the project. The last section of this introduction is a general introduction to issues related to dialectic. It is included for readers whose principal interest in Aristotle has been directed mainly to the study of his *Rhetoric*, and it will also help identify this study's particular use of the term *dialectic*.

### **Theme One: *Topoi*, Order, and Probable Reasoning**

We will look at how the *topoi* help us understand and reveal order, which can be talked of in terms of grammar, and then how they help achieve the ideal order in the realm of ethics, rhetoric, and politics for Aristotle. It is too great a task for this work to attack or defend all of Aristotle positions on ethics, what he believes the ultimate end(s) of things should look like and how he believes the ideal should be achieved. Suffice it to say that I do not hold with Aristotle on several points, and he has justly received rebuffs concerning them, many of the best reasoned ones coming from religious corners. Yet, for all these flaws, I believe the idea of an ultimate ordered end of things is not necessarily a bad one. Indeed, if the means and end are correctly articulated, it can be a great thing and necessarily harmonious and beautiful.

Somewhat to this end, the project focuses on describing how Aristotle may see the relationship of dialectic and formal logic, as well as the fundamental relationship of rhetoric and dialectic, in terms of *topoi*. The latter relationship, though not a major focus of this project, is significant to something rhetoric and dialectic should both be essential parts of—philosophical argument, especially philosophical argument as practiced by academics and anyone who argues or claims to argue from education and

experience.<sup>4</sup> This relationship, as well as the relationship of formal logic and dialectic, is significant for probable and thus ethical argumentation. Probable argument does not equate here to wise argument or wisdom, but being able to distinguish the probable from the possible, which the dialectical *topoi* and the predicables that make them up give grounds for doing, is an important part of becoming a *good* arguer.

It should be pointed out that we are talking of probability as connected with essence, and not as based simply in some statistical ratio. Both rhetorical and dialectical types of *topoi* are grounded in a real that can be mostly *known* (as the mind, language, and the real are all made for each other and need each other); in particular, we will focus on how the dialectical *topoi* and the predicables are grounded in substance. These dialectical *topoi* are important for how we reason and come to know, and much of the grounding of the rhetorical *topoi* comes in some way through the dialectical *topoi*. That some things can be known, a premise that is almost impossible to escape in arguments, has consequences for how we should argue.

### **Theme Two: Commonsense, Dialectic, and Interdisciplinarity**

That is, this project, again, argues for and from *Common Sense*. Both philosophy and rhetoric at their best rely on it and work with it. Dialectic, understood here as general logic or reasoning, is essentially tied to Common Sense—explaining a significant part of how we can rely on them and what we can get from them.<sup>5</sup> These two things tied together make something of a standard over all reasoning.

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<sup>4</sup> That is, I see philosophy here as something that everyone does, and a clear understanding of dialectic and rhetoric can be of use not only to academic arguments but also everyday ones. The same general logical rules apply everywhere, and they have to.

<sup>5</sup> This relationship of Common Sense and dialectic, as well as the danger of isolating logic in its own field, may be seen in John of Salisbury's admonition that dialectic is a skill that quickly becomes idle and unprofitable if investigated for itself or turned on itself (II.9), and one could find proof of this statement in the modern and postmodern explorations and explanations of dialectic.

Now, at the core of Common Sense is the principle that there are self-evident principles, principles that cannot properly be demonstrated but can be known (for the most part at the very least), whether of logical theory, natural theory, or moral theory. Logic and reasoning themselves need such indemonstrable premises to work, and we will see that a lot of problems regarding reasoning come from demanding demonstration of such first principles. Of course, any science or field is going to have indemonstrable principles as well, and dialectic is just as important to reasoning here, even if members of a given field deny Common Sense.<sup>6</sup> We will see how this common working of reasoning also allows dialectic to be a part of the basis for interdisciplinarity, while Toulmin's preclusion of aspects of dialectic ultimately prevents his system from becoming interdisciplinary.

### **Theme Three: Ethos and Ethotic Reasoning**

Finally, a theme running through the project is the usefulness of dialectic and rhetoric (via their real grounding expressed through the *topoi*) for the good life—the understanding of it and the pursuit of it. The reader will see that some of the talk of dialectic will touch upon this subject, as I have made some value claims and claims about the importance of the person, personhood, and other people for the proper functioning of material logic and hence logic. Also, I will discuss not only ethical or good and fair reasoning alluded to above, but also ethotic reasoning, how we judge the character of someone and how ethos is considered when surmising a situation.<sup>7</sup>

However, I am not a philosopher of ethics, and, again, this is not a justificatory work on

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<sup>6</sup> We will see that dialectic is in some sense necessarily prior as a foundation for the use of such indemonstrable principles of field, for these are often only indemonstrable *in* the field.

<sup>7</sup> Another project will argue how rhetorical *topoi* are important regarding the good life. These can be important signs, and expressions even, of community, though they can also be signs of a community's vices of thought or practice.

ethics, but I do hope I show something significant about how the nuts and bolts of dialectic show up in Aristotle's ethics and reasoning regarding ethos.

### **Significance**

The layperson and some professionals picking up popular books from the twentieth century on philosophy and argument, such as Toulmin's *Uses of Argument* or his philosophical opponent Russell's *A History of Western Philosophy*, will have a distorted idea of the place of logic and rhetoric in philosophy, as well as the place of philosophy in logic and rhetoric, and it is to the clarification of these distortions that this project is aimed. What is revealed and reiterated through these five chapters is the broad suitability of Aristotle's logic to the problems of knowing, arguing, and doing well in regards to issues Russell and Toulmin are trying to deal with.

As for other contributions, I will mention two here that the project provides, which if they are not unqualifiedly new, are at least significant reminders and elaborations: (1) this project gives a detailed description of many of the differences between Toulmin and Aristotle, which I hope is enough to make teachers and textbook writers hesitate before lumping these two authors together in method and aim. This distinction is an important one to make regarding a current buzzword in the field, *interdisciplinarity*. Toulmin and Aristotle would take us down very different paths to very different conceptions of such an end. (2) This project reiterates much of the basis of the tried and true methodology and basis for interdisciplinarity—dialectic. Viewing dialectic as expressed here conduces much more to such an end than the alternatives of placing logic in a field, making it into its own field, or throwing out logic altogether.

Interdisciplinarity, connected as it is to dialectic, is seen here as a value that the composition teacher has the primary responsibility of being the rhetor for.

Indeed, I believe this project's discussion of the matter of fields and Toulmin logic will be a very helpful aspect of this project to the compositionist. For years, composition teachers have stressed critical thinking but have basically divorced it from an end and a system of coherent criteria in light of this end. More specifically, we have separated critical thinking from a study of whole logic. We either try to teach dead formal logic or sloppy material logic. Of course, many have simply given up on teaching formal logic because they see it as useless or they teach the Toulmin model as a way to make probable or good arguments but do not tie it to a theory of probability, as Toulmin himself tries to do. Others seem simply to rely on a Toulminian idea of field-dependency for constructing argument, which seems conducive to letting a student think that all she needs to do for an argument is to attach an authority to the point she is trying to make, often without much thought for who the proper authority is and why. The lack of a theory of general reasoning seems to set us up for such an end, an end that seems counter to the acquisition and application of knowledge in the Liberal Arts sense.

Finally, I had hoped to cover the main points of the project from both properly logical and rhetorical aspects of argumentation, but I have found that the dialectical subject matter, which is very important for the foundation of this project, has itself taken over the dissertation portion of this project. It became pertinent in the first three chapters to discuss at length some of the errors that can occur in logical systems that have misshapen concepts of dialectic or have tossed it out altogether. While I will be making arguments for the significance of some points to rhetorical theory throughout,



substantial work on the rhetorical *topoi* through a dialectically-focused reading of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* must wait.<sup>8</sup>

This second part will attempt to show the importance of dialectic and the philosophical notions behind it to Aristotle's idea of rhetoric, as well as how *topoi*, especially dialectical *topoi*, are key considerations in Aristotle's composition of the *Rhetoric*. It will also compare Aristotle's rhetorical *topoi* to Toulmin's *field* in order to reveal the problematic consequences of having fields try to occupy two roles, dialectical and rhetorical *topoi*. A main goal of the project as a whole will be to show the importance of a system or philosophy that has rhetorical and dialectical *topoi* "respect each other." We will ultimately see that rhetoric is always in the vicinity of dialectic (and this project emphasizes that it really cannot help this), and the better views of rhetoric and dialectic recognize and embrace this connection to each other. This topical respect is not only important for the parts of living that are concerned with logic and rhetoric, but eventually for respecting the poetic part and the part(s) of a person that responds to metaphysical or supernatural urges, as well as the parts concerned with the ethical viewing and treatment of others.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> It will also be more appropriate to there discuss sophistic views of dialectic or views that see the world as a dialectic totality (which often have quite a bit of sophistry in them), as rhetoric is more overtly than dialectic tied up with moral impulses or drives towards the good, which these systems often treat foolishly (though this is not to say dialectic does not or should not have a strong connection to the good).

<sup>9</sup> Note that though this project will be making much use of *being* and related terms, I gratefully acknowledge that dialectic does not capture all that being is. Also, in both parts of the project, I will seek to deal with some issues of ethical arguing, knowing, and teaching, but there are more applications to be developed that reveal the importance of a sound dialectical theory to big issues in the field of rhetoric, such as the Rhetoric of X, how the field views itself as sheriff (or at least neighborhood watchmen) of the public sphere, and how the field itself tries to "sell itself" to the rest of Academe. It seems the defining of the field of rhetoric especially requires a description of *topoi*, but only a few modern rhetoricians, most notably Burke, Perelman, and Olbrechts-Tyteca, have given much thought to the matter, yet most undermine the role of dialectical *topoi* in coming to say what rhetoric is and how it works, resulting in dialectically barren views of rhetoric (despite frequent use of the term *dialectic*). In a word: I hope to eventually show the importance of recalibrating rhetoric through the full notion of *topoi*. One goal of this project is to show one sense of how philosophy, dialectic, and rhetoric all need each other to really exist.

## OUTLINE OF PROJECT

The general outline is sort of dialectical itself. I begin by focusing on Russell, someone who tried to denounce dialectic completely and then move on to Toulmin who perhaps intuitively has a lack of material logic, or grounded/substantial dialectic, on the part of scholars like Russell, but goes so far in the opposite direction from them that grounded dialectic is again missed. I then give Aristotle's view of dialectic and its ontological foundation, followed by a chapter on how these show up for him in ethotic reasoning.

Again, the project focuses on Aristotelian reasoning, so the reader can look at Chapters 1 through 3 as preparation for a discussion of Aristotle's logical concepts and a demonstration of their importance. Another purpose of these chapters is to remove some popular distortions of logic and its role in philosophy supplied by Aristotle's modern day opponents, which affect the relationships of logic, philosophy, and rhetoric. The main focus will be on Toulmin, whose colleague Peter Alexander referred to Toulmin's *The Uses of Argument* as anti-logical (qtd. in Olson 217). Yet Toulmin is not so much anti-logical as he is anti-dialectical—removing why logic works without removing logic itself. Thus a comparison of Toulmin and Aristotle will be instructive for showing a better notion of logic.

Chapter 1 deals mainly with Russell's abstraction of logic and his rendering of it as philosophy. The chapter opens with an account of the status of the syllogism in modern composition classrooms and a brief discussion of what is at stake in choosing between it and the Toulmin model, as well as a discussion of some of the attacks that have been made on the syllogism. I then move into Russell's attack on the Aristotelian

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This boundness is imitated, implied, assumed, or even somewhat exists, in corrupted systems or apparently isolated instances of these "modes" of being in the world and dealing with it.

sylllogism. Again, the syllogism and dialectic are bound together, and we will see in the first few chapters the problems caused by trying to do away with one or the other. We will see in this chapter how important the notion of substance or essence is to reasoning in general and to ethical reasoning, as well as how substance and language must be in right relationship for these, a theme that will be picked up in Chapter 4.

Chapters 2 and 3 are concerned with Toulmin's overzealous rebuttal to the analytic ideal of modern logic (as Russell is used to represent in Chapter 1) and the early Toulmin's suppression of a viable material logic (the early Toulmin being the one most taught today in composition classrooms). In a sense, Toulmin describes a material logic, or material logics, that are not sufficiently formal. Thus we will see that Toulmin, though helpful on some issues, ultimately causes problems for the evaluation of arguments. In his attempt to replace the syllogism, he throws out a lot of the basis for clear thinking and judgment among the disciplines, and in them, that dialectic, bound as it is with formal logic, and formal logic itself provide. We will also see that Toulmin is right to emphasize ethos as a corrective, for Russell tries to get rid of all essence, thus making the world unreliable and precluding any binding notion of ethics (which is emphasized by his preclusion of ethos). Yet Toulmin's method for doing this is problematic, as it diminishes the importance of a broad material and formal logic.

Specifically, in Chapter 2, we will see that Toulmin's idea of force is not an adequate replacement for the logical modes, which have important criteria of general application, making modal arguments evaluable in like manner, regardless of field. We will also see here some discrepancies in Toulmin thinking on how ethos can be and is used in arguments. In Chapter 3, we will see how his focus on field-dependency,

complicated by the vague use of terms in his system and his basic rejection of how modes work, eventually nullifies the middle ground he wants to establish between objectivity and subjectivity, leaving him in subjectivism. We will also see more difficulties caused by how ethos, especially in the sense of authority, is wrapped up with what some people think are Toulmin's formal elements.

Chapter 4 will describe the relationship between dialectic and logic, as well as their ontological foundations, for Aristotle. I will be making many claims about substance, essence, universals, premises, dialectic, and demonstration throughout Chapters 1, 2, and 3, but I place frequent signposts to Chapter 4 where these things and their connections are more fully explained. That is, this chapter tries to pull together many of the Aristotelian claims that come earlier by starting over and working from the ground up. One may even find the project easier to follow by starting there and then reading through in the regular order. Now, the relationship of dialectic and logic, as well as their foundations, are very important for ethical argumentation, for making probable arguments and distinguishing probable from possible arguments. In this light, we will see how the dialectical *topoi* themselves are in the real, in language, and in the mind for Aristotle. To better understand the ontological foundations of the dialectical *topoi* and their place in logic and reasoning, I will examine the relationship of the *Topics* to the other parts of the ancient commentator-combined *Organon*, as well as how the *aetia* fit in here.

Finally, Chapter 5 will return to ethos and ethotic reasoning. It will take a look at one way Aristotle thinks of ethos and how it can make for probable reasoning, hampered as it may be by his notion, or lack thereof, of personhood. Part of this

description will involve seeing several ways *properties* show up in ethotic reasoning for Aristotle, as well as some of the ways Aristotle sees the importance of reasoning being tied to morality, the Good. We will ultimately see how Aristotle provides an understanding of reasoning and virtue that prevents the erasure of the person by the rhetorical situation (as many understand it to do). Indeed, we will see that the good person for Aristotle works to adjust the rhetorical situation to the Good in a good way, as we see in his thoughts on the good man in politics.

#### *A GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO DIALECTIC*

Again, this project deals chiefly with dialectic, the much abused and misrepresented, wrongly subordinated and wrongly glorified, ‘universal science’ and, as we shall see, an essential part of the basis for interdisciplinarity. Again, the chapters here will mainly focus on its connection to formal logic, the real world, the reasoning of particular fields, along with parts of ethics and rhetoric. I now turn to providing some context for the project’s use of *dialectic* by briefly discussing what dialectic does, why some are concerned about it, and what it is concerned with, as well as the ethical significance of these matters. I end by giving a preview of the importance of logic having a proper place in human understanding and being for Aristotle.

More simply put than John of Salisbury’s skill of dividing, inferring, analyzing, and categorizing, dialectic in general is both the art of arriving at something and nothing through discourse (II.5). It does not start at nothing to arrive at something, nor does it have the least intention of misleading. That is sophistry. Dialectic always has something before it to test, to see if what is claimed about it represents the actual or not. Often an entire process of dialectic regarding an object results in clearing away

misconceptions of an object, about its purpose, origins, or qualities, as a result, say, of its similarities to other objects, in order to arrive at a true rendering of the object. This is one of the fundamental moves of Truth finding and using, and its variants have been called everything from Transcendence to ‘taking out the *x* and sneaking it in again through the back door.’ Dialectic can also help with clearly establishing a relationship of one object to another in light of a value, though doing this move and the previous one at once can cause problems, especially as many essences have value in themselves and are also intended to be actualized in light of a value.<sup>10</sup>

### **Dialectic and Truth**

Ironically, many of the problems with dialectic come from not knowing what dialectic itself is, where its limits are and how it properly relates to such things as rhetoric, demonstration, and sophistic, as well as particular fields of study. Indeed, there seems *a* dialectic for every philosophy and every type of philosophy: people talk of Hegel’s Dialectic, or of the formalized dialectic of a particular science, or even of dialectic stripped of any connotation of logic, applying *dialectical* to dialogue or anything that involves a metaphorical back-and-forth motion. Thus people find difficulties in understanding the value of dialectic, especially in light of its relationship to other things.

When discussing the uses or purposes of dialectic, many are most concerned about the connection of dialectic and truth, how dialectic finds truth or the real and thus dialectic’s involvement with the ‘obligation of truth.’ Now, most people intuit a connection between the *is* and the *ought*, though many misunderstand the relationship

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<sup>10</sup> A conflation of such uses and ends may occur in sophistic views of dialectic and may also come to play in god-terms, and this conflation, which can be analyzed at the level of predicables (see below) and often involves accident and property, can often be an unseen catalyst of controversy.

of truth and force. Thus many, perhaps in an attempt to keep ‘power from anyone or anything,’ assuming all are bad or that a chance of abuse occurring is intolerable, or perhaps out of fear of being obligated to become better people, have attempted to deny the existence of truth or dilute ontology. For the same reasons, many are wary of dialectic, as used by the individual or institution, for they intuit that definition, which is what dialectic is concerned with, is powerful because the truth is powerful. Hence many try to argue, in an ironic attempt at control, that there is no truth in order that they may preclude manipulation of what they see as a hollow term of power that can be manipulated to put obligations on others. In addition to or in place of these reasons, some simply believe everyone is selfishly motivated, and thus their reasoning cannot be trusted to get to a true good (or they try to abstract a Kantian reason to argue the latter). Thus these people prohibit truth in an attempt to preclude a “bad” use of the force of truth or truth itself, if they do not see truth itself as dangerous and bad.<sup>11</sup> The problems with such reasoning and methods are too many to discuss here. I will deal with some aspects of the motivation problem in Chapter 5, namely aspects of the relationship of reason and virtue. We will see the importance of the connection of these for Aristotle, as well as the real connection of the good person to virtue, in response to such issues.

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<sup>11</sup> Another way of cordoning off truth is by conflating dialectic, rhetoric, and sophistic. Now, dialectic, especially because of its work in truth finding, is an important part of conviction and persuasion, and this project is concerned with how Aristotle might respond to a general category of subjectivists/relativists who make a poor distinction between the two. That is, Aristotle may help us understand how some do not know how to take critiques at a foundational level and often respond by becoming little Descartes, even trying to throw out reason all together. (Indeed, it seems one can speak of reason to a large portion of Academe and lose one’s voice.) This Cartesian-Subjectivist dynamism is both the allure and destructive power of sophism, or is at least what sophism often finds itself paired with; one can show a relativist side and assert that one’s arguments from possibility are just as forceful as any other mode of argument, and when backed into a corner, one can show the Cartesian face and allow only the absolute to be what is probable or even worth considering. Of course, the odds are apparently in the person’s favor here, except that they also prevent her from heeding a call to be better. One point of this project is to emphasize the harm of the excluded middle of probability here and what unethical effects it has on arguing, so that we can see the importance of rhetoric being recalibrated to probability. (Also may be seen here the harm of separating reason and logic from a universal good, allowing dialectic to be used for selfish ends.)

That is, we are pointed again at seeing how one's understandings of reasoning and character reflect on each other.

Now, others realize that dialectic is a dangerous thing if used in isolation (not only isolated from others and other lines of thought but also from judgment and moral guidelines), but they also realize that dialectic can be used for good ends, that reason is very important in understanding good ends and often in achieving them. Indeed, to work properly, dialectic must be subordinated to a higher end of reasoning, a good or the Good, making something like a "prudential-dialectic" or "virtuous-dialectic" or even "Holy-Dialectic," and its purpose is to work in light of this good end or with it to help make things better. Dialectic relies on and helps reveal the nature of things, and can be of help in motivating or pulling things up to what they ought to be; thus dialectic and rhetoric, especially in their virtuous forms, should go hand-in-hand. Something of the relationship of virtue and dialectic for Aristotle will be discussed occasionally throughout and elaborated in Chapter 5, but a full discussion of the Good that dialectic should be subordinated to, and how, is outside the scope of this project.

Again, I will in this project address other cognitive moves or skills that dialectic must be partnered with, though some of these could obscure its identity, namely rhetoric and demonstration. These three arts are hard to distinguish even in the abstract, much less at the points where they intersect in argumentation and proving (or even in casual conversation), as when trying to label distinctions between dialectical syllogisms and demonstrative syllogisms, between formal logic and informal logic, or in describing the logic of emotion in rhetoric. To help in this work of distinguishing and describing these various modes of thought, their interrelationships and the expectations



put upon them by participants in argumentation and conversation, this project offers a concurring voice in that old, repressed but viable narrative that places the *topoi*, the dialectical *topoi* in particular and thus dialectic, in the center of liberal arts and sciences learning, prompting us to look at the whole academic enterprise in the light of true philosophy.<sup>12</sup> I will focus on describing what Aristotle's logic is and how it is reliant on his notion of dialectic, as well as see how this combined logic appears in various types of reasoning.<sup>13</sup> One must have a clear notion of dialectic to have a clear understanding of logic, and one really cannot have logic without dialectic.<sup>14</sup> I focus on Aristotle's full view of logic in the hope of re-presenting to a broader audience the importance of a "grounding in grounded logic." Reality has an "influence" on what logic is and how it is and should be used; ontology is imperative for a reliable use of logic.

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<sup>12</sup> The welcome of spatial metaphors or metaphors in general in talking about *topoi* in general hints perhaps at how the rest of the humanities would be well-disposed to this revision. And one could move on to talk of topographies of truth, ones for individuals, for cultures, for all—landscapes filled with arguments from definition, from feeling/spirit/gut, from authority (what other people or one's culture says it is), etc., the overlaps among these creating gradations and perhaps even new formations themselves. One might look at Chapter 4 of *The Philosophy of Science* in such a way, where Toulmin uses the metaphor of a map to describe how the physical sciences work, though much of what he says can be seen as an attempt to deal with how philosophy works, how we try to map out the relationship of different truths and deduce from these relationships and refine our alignment of principles or understanding of them, as well as how inductions can change are generalizations (95-103).

<sup>13</sup> I emphasize that the goal of this project is not to fill a Burkean, motive-driven, god-term slot with a concept of dialectical *topoi* that can be traced through the nearest and farthest reaches of what may be called "rhetorical" or "demonstrative." I do not wish to fix the reader with an unearthly glance, hold him hard by the arm and proclaim that the *topoi* are all around. Although the *topoi* are foundational to thought, they do not alone make up the foundation. The merits and benefits of describing the tools of the disciplines (rhetoric, dialectic, and demonstration) in terms of *topoi* are many, not only for relationships among the disciplines and debating conversants but also for the relationship of Academia and academics to the public sphere. But, again, in stressing the importance of *topoi* to logic in particular and these as foundational in a way for rhetorical ones, one must be careful not to defer to them too much, to set dialectic as the independent goddess of human communication and thought, for this manner of thinking entails ethical problems of its own. How these problems are to be resolved will, in part, also call for a description of the ethical function of rhetorical *topoi* in argumentation, which is beyond the scope of this project.

<sup>14</sup> As we will see in the first three chapters, many such treatments of logic that ignore dialectic either end by overvaluing logic, undervaluing it, throwing it out as wholly unreliable, or even by mystifying it. (The latter especially happens with those that retain some notion of dialectic but have misappropriated, reshaped, or re-purposed it, but dealing with these more overtly sophistical ideas of dialectic are beyond the scope of this dissertation.)

## **The Pieces of Dialectic**

I will return to a fuller explanation of grounded dialectic in Chapter 4, but a general introduction seems pertinent here for understanding how Aristotle disagrees with Russell and Toulmin. Aristotle works with several important concepts, known as predicables (*genus*, *species*, *property*, and *accident*), at the heart of logic and defining, tying being and knowing together, to aid in the rendering of the internal and external limits of logic. As we will see, the first two are “substantial” and are grounded in “substance,” (that which connects the mind and the real), the third is often proximately so (which, as we shall see, is perhaps why John of Salisbury talks of property in terms of probability), and the fourth is what it is in contradistinction to substance but needs it to exist in several senses. These predicables have a great deal to do with how Aristotle believes dialectic or material logic to work, especially dialectical *topoi*, which are representative of and influence how philosophy, the mind, and the world work together, as well as what formal logic is and can be.

For example, these concepts are necessary for deduction: because we have definitions and explanations of such predicables as genus and species, the primary elements of definition itself (which are often just intuited as holding in place), we can derive such a dialectical maxim or *topoi* as “what is predicated of the genus is predicated of the species.” This maxim allows us to validly deduce, and these *topoi* and predicables can help us to tell whether deductions are true or not.

## **Definition, Dialectic, Essence, and Ethics**

We will also see the importance to ethical argumentation of such concepts and structures, indeed, the very importance of essence itself, as these predicables often help

to reveal an essence. That is, it seems the primary purpose of the *topoi* is to render what is, whether of reality or abstract concepts, which is why Aristotle asserts that all arguments have to deal with definition, the statement of the essence, or its parts and why he attaches these to the categories in *Topics* I.8-9. This even applies to causal relationships, as we shall see.

Before returning again to is/ought issues that I am pointing to here, I should again note that terms such as essence, *ousia*, and substance will come up repeatedly in this project. I am aware that such talk is anathema in many academic circles, but this is a work on argumentation, and to talk of argumentation without acknowledging that people argue over what things are and should be and the essentially related issues of how they should be treated, would not only be a misrepresentation of argumentation but also of human beings. For example, many people, including academics, take it as a foregone conclusion that everyone should take a “Green” approach to life, which not only assumes a way the world is and should be treated but also a way that human beings are and should act and what can and should be done to make them to act. Such principles need to be well-founded in wisdom and revealed if the discourse of “Justice” that will be inevitably created and applied in such cases is not to be tyrannical.

This definitional aspect of human being, or one could argue that it is the main part, is often referred to dryly and restrictively as dealing with the relationship of the *is* and the *ought*, but could also be thought of as the relationship between the *caring for* and the *cared for*. I switch the alternates in order for it is often overlooked that many discuss the *is/ought* issue with the *is* always coming first and as separate from *ought* in

mode, but the *ought* also can be real and prior.<sup>15</sup> For example, in the green case, where the practical principle is often that humanity must be preserved, what can this principle be demonstrated from? At some point, for a thing to be what it is or for a value to be obligatory, there must be foundational principles regarding these in place, and the rest of reasoning uses these in the processes of verification and validation.<sup>16</sup> Lewis makes the point against total relativism succinctly:

An open mind, in questions that are not ultimate, is useful. But an open mind about the ultimate foundations either of Theoretical or of Practical Reason is idiocy. If a man's mind is open on these things, let his mouth at least be shut. He can say nothing to the purpose. (*Abolition of Man* 48)

Again, many, who have misunderstanding about the nature of dialectic and what is connected to, try to make the view that Lewis is denouncing here into an *a priori* rule others must submit to before engaging in discussions. The ultimate ethical concern for

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<sup>15</sup> This seems to be the thought of Lewis in his work of showing the failings of those who try to create new moral and value systems separate from the perennial metaphysical natural law or Tao:

The truth finally becomes apparent that neither in any operation with factual propositions nor in any appeal to instinct can the Innovator find the basis for a system of values. None of the principles he requires [such as 'Do as you would be done by' or 'Humanity is to be preserved'] can be found there: but they are to be found somewhere else [the *Tao*]. [...] Unless you accept these without question as being to the world of action what axioms are to the world of theory, you can have no practical principles whatsoever. You cannot reach them as conclusions: they are premises. You may, since they can give no 'reason' for themselves of a kind to silence Gaius and Titius, regard them as sentiments: but then you must give up contrasting 'real; or 'rational' value with sentimental value. All value will be sentimental; and you must confess (on pain of abandoning every value) that all sentiment is not merely subjective. You may, on the other hand, regard them as rational—nay as rationality itself—as things so obviously reasonable that they neither demand nor admit proof. But then you must allow that Reason can be practical, that an *ought* must not be dismissed because it cannot produce some is as its credential. If nothing is self-evident, nothing can be proved. Similarly if nothing is obligatory for its own sake, nothing is obligatory at all. (*Abolition of Man* 39-40)

<sup>16</sup> From at least a secularist point of view it is hard to see how this principle of preservation can be demonstrated, but other traditions at least have a principle(s) for guiding the correct means of this preservation, if not also a principle behind the preservation principle too; in some it may be the same principle. Whether this principle is an *is* or an *ought* or both may differ depending on the tradition, but I believe Lewis's thought holds an important sense of the meaning of authority to and in the world.

this complete project on dialectic and rhetoric is creating/defending a legitimate space for arguing and evaluating argument, which must respect the existence. This is a space that has been denied in other treatments of dialectic, and if ever there was a place to metaphorically extend the term *topoi*, as has been done often, this is it. We will see later how Toulmin uses the spatial term *field* as part of his attempt to accomplish the same thing, and we will see how important the right notions of both dialectical and rhetorical *topoi* are to creating an atmosphere of ethical argumentation, though they are not the only things needed. Of course, what I will be talking about here has ramifications for other ethical concerns that I will not be able to completely address: “good” argument in the sense of solid ones, ones consistent with first principles, or arguing in a way that discloses integrity of character, as well as the problem of poor judgment. The stability the *topoi* allow through the structure they provide contributes to allowing solid arguments, integrity of character, and clarity.

### **The Proper Placement of Logic**

One can find some of what I am talking about here in Weaver. Weaver realizes that to have a good notion of the Good one has to realize that the world and mind work and exist in terms of essences, even if these show up in terms of tendencies, and thus both have a somewhat knowable structure. Dialectic, which is concerned with definitions and thus essences, is a way of separating and ordering reality, helping to reveal the structure and essences, and is an assurance itself that the world has order (“To Write” 235), and, again, dialectic’s existence and validity depends on these.

This order of the world, mind, and logic is met in the grammar of predicables. Again, definition and logic are connected and reliant on each other in a number of

ways, and one could say definition is a common part of ethics (including the ethic of knowledge, which is why Aristotle tries to remove sophistic *topoi* from this ground) and epistemology and ontology.<sup>17</sup> As Weaver points out, the *teaching* of naming/defining needs ontological referents and good intent (derived or guaranteed eventually, one might add, from metaphysics) to produce *vere loqui* (230).<sup>18</sup> Ethical, dialectical rhetoric needs ontology.

It has often been the case, unfortunately, that when people try to show how logic works or does not work, e.g. that it can be the highest abstracted ideal for a philosophy and its rhetoric or that it has not much relevancy or not enough validity to be applicable to the issues that afflict human beings and their societies, they omit from consideration one or most of these concepts, like the predicables and their significance. That is, they do not come to terms with serious ontological and epistemological objections and their ethical ramifications, nor the significant universalizing faculties and tendencies of the mind, or even what might be called the universalizing tendencies of the world. They omit being from consideration in how reason can know and focus

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<sup>17</sup> Aristotle seems to connect defining to the intellectual virtues when he describes it as a form of contemplation (and the intellectual virtues seem to subsume the moral ones in the *Ethics*) (*Topics* VI.3).

<sup>18</sup> Of course, the relationships among things and their parts can be misrepresented by others and by the self, and Aristotle and others take precautions against this. Many have pointed out the dangers of the misuse of dialectic, such as the one-sided dialectic of Weaver's "evil" rhetorician (or evil lover of the *Phaedrus*), which Aristotle would place under sophistic and the pragma-dialecticians might call 'browbeating,' a fallacy of the argument from authority (*Ethics of Rhetoric* 11-17; Tindale 59-60). This abuse, when transferred to the public sphere, seems to be Weaver's notion of the corruption or concretization of form in *Visions of Order*. Now, the evil rhetorician has a number of methods for getting his way, such as the preclusion of certain areas of inquiry (as Porter charges the anti-foundationalists with preclusion of inquiry into certain areas of philosophy and anti-foundationalist theory itself, through, I might add, the privileging of the argument from circumstance) or the use of one's personal dialectic against one, as Augustine sees evil spirits doing (Porter 50, *OCD* II.24). For Weaver, such ethical concerns are met in the presence of the good rhetorician (in the desiring to do good for the other, leading him/her to the Good) on the foundation of authority (who seems to have gained this authority by being a good rhetorician and dialectician, sort of like Aristotle's ethical person). She also aides in understanding the mainly set dialectical relationships of the world: "To assume that we can readily correct existence by dialectical extrapolation is a form of presumption, not to say madness. [...] God forever dialecticizes, but it is up to human beings to rhetoricize [i.e., to lead to the good that already exists]" ("Cultural Role of Rhetoric" 351).

instead on accenting the limits and conditioning of the human capacity for knowing (John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio* 5). For example, for Aristotle logic requires such categorical concepts as genus and species, which seem to come as much from the world and even language as from the mind: e.g., to deduce that Socrates is mortal, one must place him in the “category” of man. Of course, where some people can get into trouble is by noticing only part of this and then consequently trying to place all of logic, say, in the mind or language (because of a belief, say, of how it structures the mind).<sup>19</sup>

As we will see in subsequent chapters, such a placing of logic too much in language, mind, or reality creates serious hindrances to several ways that human beings know and even precludes ethical applications of logic. But this is what many modern rhetoricians and philosophers have done. Granted, the task of uniting dialectic to formal logic and the rest mentioned is quite difficult, but it is important. Even Aristotle admits the difficulty in finding a principle behind all the predicables, which would seem necessary to establish their place in logic or how the mind works, etc. (*Topics* 102b.35-9). The difficulty may come from this principle being in perennial reflection amid the real world, discourse, and the mind, thus being in something of an eternally shared origin. This notion somewhat aligns with the focus of *Aristotle: Desire to Understand*, Aristotle’s belief that the human mind and the universe are made for each other, which has foundationally inspired this project (Lear 209-263). Much of this fitting occurs through language, which puts ethical restraints on language use, some based more in grammar, some more in philosophical foundations, and some more in the world.

Yet the ethical importance of this grounding of reasoning extends beyond language use. For placing reasoning and being too much in one of these places puts

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<sup>19</sup> See the Perelman example in Chapter 4.

human existence too much in one of these places. Such placements are ultimately a way of erasing the person, and we will see throughout how Aristotle's views of reasoning and virtue prevent such erasure, part of the explanation here being not only proper placement but proper placement in light of the Good (see Chapter 5 in particular). Of course, other aspects of human being and living in the world and knowing, such as *aetia* and the emotions, also need to be considered, all of which are important for rhetorical being, for going after the Good. And all such considerations should be at the center of teaching writing, as seen in Weaver's stress on writing/persuasion not just being relegated to logic and his stress on emotional balance (or one could even say emotion used to the right end and in the right way) in arguing: "To write well, one must be alive at every point of one's being, with the result that composition, more than any other subject, is a training of the whole [person]" (*Composition* xiii).



## CHAPTER 1

### CLASS LOGIC

As remarked in the Introduction and will be elaborated on throughout the project, dialectic is over all deduction and proper reasoning. Because of this, the divisions of logic, including the enthymeme, have reliance on the form of the syllogism in common. Perhaps this is why one finds in the logic sections of so many composition textbooks an attempt to deal mainly and simply with the syllogism (along with some arbitrarily selected “logical fallacies”) or something they think is identical to it, such as the Toulmin model. After all, if one is trying to give an “intro to logic,” it is a good idea to start with something that is common to all uses of logic. But this is no place to stop if there is any value of logic to critical thinking.

This is the reason for all the fuss about *topoi*, essence, and rules in this project: the syllogism simply cannot bear the whole weight of logic.<sup>20</sup> To try to use the syllogism as a complete description of logic is tantamount to concealed inflation. For we can keep telling students that syllogisms are important, and they may even treat the syllogism as real currency in the classroom for a while, but sooner or later they will not be able to find any real uses for it if they are not given a foundation for it. What makes the abandonment of formal logic more lamentable is that its foundation, its connection to material logic, is what attaches logic to all other subjects, which many do not have a chance to use.

It is not surprising, then, that those who attack the syllogism, such as Russell and Toulmin, do so by trying to show its uselessness, which is easy to do if we do not look at the material aspects of logic. This is the approach that was taken in the late 80s

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<sup>20</sup> How these things support the syllogism is a direct focus of Chapter 4.

and early 90s in composition studies by such scholars as Stygall and Fulkerson. At that point, Toulmin had become thoroughly incorporated into textbooks and journal articles as a model to be placed beside or instead of “classical” or “technical” logic, which primed the field for a refutative discourse against logic that still holds today for the most part.<sup>21</sup>

Now, I will focus in the next few chapters on Russell and Toulmin’s critiques of the syllogism, because (1) Russell’s anti-Aristotelian context is important for understanding Toulmin’s project, and (2) beyond the implicit influence both have had on several academic disciplines as a result of being popular for so long, they still hold a seat of reverence in many fields today; for example, in 2005 two respected journals, *Mind* and *Argumentation*, had issues dedicated to Russell and Toulmin respectively.<sup>22</sup> (3) Most importantly, these two scholars illustrate the problems of triangulating logic and knowledge too far or not far enough in the direction of the mind, language, and nature. Russell also illustrates how the role of logic in epistemology and truth can be overly touted (and can prompt rebellion from the ‘absolute standard’ in Toulmin’s

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<sup>21</sup> Readers interested in the history of the uses of Toulmin in composition studies are referred to Fulkerson’s “The Toulmin Model of Argument and the Teaching of Composition,” Joseph Bizup’s “The Uses of Toulmin in Composition Studies,” and Patrick James Clauss’s dissertation, which is also a nice reference for Toulmin’s history in Speech and Rhetoric studies and for the historical and philosophical context of *The Uses of Argument*.

<sup>22</sup> Loui’s article in *Argumentation* is largely taken up with showing how popular Toulmin is in a variety of fields and how his popularity is even on the rise. Loui goes on to argue whether Toulmin warrants this attention by taking the approach of an intellectual historian:

Especially in today’s intellectual din, where the fast pace of technology and science and the rise of new disciplines can make it hard to hear traditional voices, where scholars are under pressure to produce short-term and conventionally valuable thoughts, there is merit in what the intellectual historian does. (259)

This approach is ironic given that Toulmin’s project results in undermining the privileging of intellectual history. Loui’s thinking does not seem to mix too well with Toulmin’s views in *Uses* or his later works, such as *Cosmopolis*, where the short-term and conventionally valuable arguments and thoughts are what he is advocating in his privileging of context in reasoning.

case).<sup>23</sup> The latter two-thirds of this chapter will mainly focus on Russell's critique of the Aristotelian syllogism in order to set up the discussion of Toulmin's method in Chapters 2 and 3. First, we will get some perspective on Toulmin's approach and then elaborate on our purpose with Toulmin here by taking a broader view of the treatment of the syllogism.

### **A Note on Toulmin's Method for his Method**

We should note first that Toulmin is the consummate pragmatist when it comes to logic; most of his arguments are against theory and for pragmatism, as we shall see. This is why I will be taking an in-depth look at Russell first to set up the Toulmin discussion, for Toulmin does not give much in the way of theoretical argumentation and it is important to try to see where he is coming from and what he is responding to. Indeed, in one sense, this project is a response, with consequences for the classroom, to Toulmin's project, which reacts a bit too severely to the rationalist projects of Russell and others.

Now, Toulmin seems to feel he really does not have to take on logical theorists head-on or even use their terms. He undermines the syllogism, which modern formal logic felt it had made advancements on but still looked to in many ways (which they still may have to begrudgingly admit), on philosophical grounds, or metalogical grounds, as Keith and Beard might put it (40). These authors argue that it is unfair to treat Toulmin as the enemy of logic since he does not take on contemporary theories of logic but simply attacks the syllogism (23). However, Castaneda censures Toulmin for

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<sup>23</sup> As illustrations of both faults, one could take Russell's attempt to reduce valid predication to his formal logic and what is immediately perceived (as external authority is built into his formal logic) in "On Denoting" or his attempt to correct or avoid the predication that comes from Commonsense with abstract logic in "On the Relations of Universals and Particulars."

only doing this and ignoring modern logic that could come to the syllogism's defense (281). Actually, Toulmin's attack on the syllogism through philosophical assumption is a strategic strike on logic that attempts to preclude any rebuttal from the intricate theories of formal logics. In this light, the unfortunate ignoring of Toulmin's thought, except for the supposed formal scheme of arguments offered in Essay III of *Uses*, merits repeating, for ultimately Toulmin's is an important endeavor back into what some call material logic(s), which includes areas of subject logics and dialectic, that modern logic had abandoned.<sup>24</sup>

Again, material logic not only helps to explain the relationship between logic and rhetoric but between logic and everything. I will focus on Aristotle's understanding of this in Chapter 4. Toulmin, though without knowledge that he is doing it, tries to consider many things that Aristotle does when the latter is laying out his view of dialectic, such as considering what the opponent will accept and how inferences are made. Toulmin even seems to be more explicit in describing how a proposition can be weakened, not just destroyed, as Aristotle is mainly concerned with (though it may be the latter's view of probability that has him using such a term). Yet Toulmin simply does not do the same project as well as Aristotle. That he claims Aristotle as his philosophical exemplar in later works does not help, for there Toulmin the pragmatist still stresses the contextualist aspect of Aristotle and hardly mentions the formal.

Finally, Aristotle and Toulmin do have an important similarity in that both seem to realize the important connection of material logic to ethical arguing, though neither talks of it in quite these terms. Where Toulmin is definitely pointing in this direction,

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<sup>24</sup> Indeed, this limited focus on Essay III has been the case since the beginning (Scott 132). Yet Toulmin tells Olson that *Uses* was mainly concerned with an argument in epistemology: "I wasn't clear that I was writing a book with a model in it" (Olson 199).

Aristotle seems to assume it, setting his dialectical *topoi* and rules as ways to keep arguers straight and as a way to argue over character correctly (see Chapter 5). Yet it is Richard M. Weaver who seems the most articulate and eloquent modern proponent of the connection to ethics, broadly sharing a humanistic focus with Toulmin and even Aristotle, though all three have some ethical complications in their systems, some of Toulmin's and Aristotle's in particular stemming from their views of logic. Weaver, however, was able to pull out somewhat of the Aristotelian dialectical tailspin and, significantly, come to a new appreciation of rhetoric in the process. I believe part of this appreciation was a result of his understanding of full logic, including dialectic and grammar, its rights limits and relationship to other things, like ethics.<sup>25</sup>

### **The Syllogism**

Yet, as we shall see, formal logic in many places has suffered separation from grammar and dialectic, which are reasons why the syllogism appears useless to many and why there is so much trouble in finding standards for evaluating arguments. Now, the Twentieth Century was not the first time scholars asserted the limited usefulness of the syllogism in teaching argumentation and writing. One can find discussions, attacks and defenses, of the syllogism's limited utility in a wide range of sources and times—from John of Salisbury (1.9-10) to the Common Sense Realists. It is likely not coincidental that the naysayers in both time periods had lost focus on the dialectical *topoi*. In contrast, in the 1940's one finds composition instructors at the University of Chicago arguing how the syllogism is only “the frame of an argument” and trying to refocus the field on invention through the topics (Bilsky and Weaver et al 237). Yet,

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<sup>25</sup> See Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 for a little on some of the ethical problems with Aristotle's view of dialectic, while a discussion of Weaver's system will have to wait for another project.

overall, logic and argumentation did not fare well in composition studies from the middle of the twentieth century onward.

However, the rise of Toulmin's method putatively changed the fate of logic and argumentation, a subject so paradoxically taxing and menial to teach. Here was provided a way for many more teachers to consider argument and logic, though often in subordination to other pedagogical values, such as process. Thus, ironically, the effect of raising the Toulminian banner to give logic and argument a place again in composition studies was to subordinate logic to another field, something which Toulmin argues against early on in *Uses*. As Toulmin rightly saw, the subordination of logic to a specific field isolates reasonable sources for argument and reasonable ways of arguing.

This treatment of Toulmin logic is emblematic of the treatment "logic" in general receives today. One would hope that finding whether it is possible for Toulmin's logic or logic in general not to be subordinated to another field, is a question that can be answered in part by testing the Toulmin model. Unfortunately, the Toulmin method, especially in the way it is taught in most composition courses, allows many to *essentially* avoid a perennial problem—the defining of the relationship of formal logic to content.

This issue and its consequences are what we will focus on in the first four chapters. That is, to show how Toulmin came to a problematic conclusion on the relationship of formal logic and material logic and thus the relationship of logic to everything else, we will compare Toulmin's and Aristotle's attempts to articulate the multi-tiered relationship of logic to content. Some in argumentation studies reveal the

incompleteness and muddle of logical concepts in Toulmin that allow his conclusion, but some miss it completely. Regarding the latter, for example, Stygall advocates teaching simply the Toulmin method as a way of inventing and having students come to a more relativist and “thus” ethical mindset for evaluating arguments, which is interesting in itself since Toulmin tries to avoid relativism (383). Regarding the incomplete concepts and their blurriness, several composition scholars with backgrounds in classical argumentation tried to supplement Toulmin. These scholars, though often looking to Toulmin for the formal aspect of argument, returned to stasis theory and even the topics for teaching invention and relevancy of argument, pointing to a missing or obscured component of formal-material logic.<sup>26</sup> But as Fulkerson, who later came to devalue Toulmin’s method, notes, only two composition textbooks, Beale’s and Fahnestock and Secor’s, were based on stasis theory by that time in the late 80’s (“Technical Logic, Comp-Logic, and the Teaching of Writing” 333).

With the preceding in mind, the next four chapters can be seen as a defense of the Aristotelian syllogism and its ground of dialectic, proceeding on the assumption that the best defense of a thing is based on what a thing is and why it is the way it is.<sup>27</sup> We will also see in later chapters how grounded logic is the best approach to interdisciplinarity; there are key issues of the relationship between logic and reality that the relativist approach to teaching argument overlooks. Again, my purpose here generally is to reiterate the philosophy of logic that makes logic the tool and partner of

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<sup>26</sup> See, for example, Fahnestock and Secor (*A Rhetoric of Argument: Text and Reader*, “Grounds for Argument: Stasis Theory and the Topoi,” “Teaching Argument: A Theory of Types,” “Toward a Modern Version of Stasis Theory,” and “The Stases in Scientific and Literary Argument”), Freeman (“Systematizing Toulmin’s Warrants: An Epistemic Approach”), and Fulkerson (“Logic and Teacher of English?”).

<sup>27</sup> As we will see Chapter 4, syllogisms start at what something is.

philosophy and which is itself necessary to any ethical notion of rhetoric. This grounding of logic has been relatively ignored in the twentieth century with the exception of a few classicists who have been relatively ignored themselves by pedagogues. Even if we see logic as just a tool, we have to realize any tool is going to appear worthless if its proper end, its proper form, or its proper subject matter is not known.

It will become quickly obvious that I am among the least qualified to take up this defense. But it has become even obvious to me that, compared to the other issues that have been dealt with over the last 50 years in the field of Rhetoric, there has been a gaping hole concerning the relationship between syllogism and topics and the consequences from this relationship. This is quite disturbing given the amount of scholarship devoted to the relationship between rhetoric and knowledge. Indeed, Rhetoricians have so formalized their content without respect for logical-dialectical foundations that it is hard to say whether they or the modern logicians are more worthy of a Laputian title.

#### State of the Syllogism

One can also recognize the value of this investigation by expanding the narrative of the treatment of the syllogism I began with. Ideas, even whole philosophies, have a tendency to vaporize under their signs in the care of inattentive humans. Some resemblance of the idea or the philosophy can exist under this sign for a long time, but eventually the notion wears thin and is discarded or sentimentally shelved. This severance of sign from idea is what has happened to logic.<sup>28</sup> In the

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<sup>28</sup> One can note the similarity to the process that many rhetorical god-terms go through (*Ethics of Rhetoric* 227), often ironically being the more broadly effective at the moment they take a step toward



Composition Classroom especially, a vague concept now exists only under the sign of the syllogism.

The great irony is that only logic, dialectic specifically, can save logic from this predicament. And *predicament* is the right word to use, for predication is at the heart of logic, as Russell rightly saw, yet one rarely finds predication mentioned when logic is being taught in the composition classroom. Indeed, grammar and logic have a strong bearing on one another, as we will see especially in Chapter 4, as well as other aspects of discourse. Yet grammar is loathsome to learn in the composition classroom and loathsome to teach for many, and this at a level where the importance of grammar is capable of being understood.

To be truly understood, grammar cannot be taught as a list of arbitrary and isolated rules or list of facts, which is what students have been conditioned to want from the classroom. It must be taught with *whats* and *whys*, here reaching down into the core of philosophy for Aristotle. Grammar is order and allows for ordering and the reflection of order, and order cannot be seen in a list of facts or rules without universals and a universal (in a broader sense) to tie them all together. Just the slightest reflection will show that the person who makes a statement is either ordering her world or reflecting or expressing order. It is at least an attempt to really manage the world. And how can one really know what one is doing, the ethics of speaking and writing, if one does not have grammar, if one does not understand the profundity of predication?

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detachment from what they really represent, toward possible death (forbial abstraction, as in Toulmin's use of *force*, may be a way of talking about the same thing). E.g., many people still throw around *logical* or *illogical* as terms of force without knowing what they mean, though some have taken the next step in trying to negate the value of reason in general.

Indeed, the root of these *predica*- words illustrate the difficulty Plato and many other have had in distinguishing dialectic from rhetoric and also why the union of these two “faculties” is so important. The root is *praedicare*, to proclaim or preach, and the connotations of these English terms (except those that render these inherently bad things to do) are aptly applied, as can be gleaned from my statement about grammar’s connection to order; there is a great responsibility in predicating. One can even see in the ancient meaning of *predicate* itself the importance of grammar to philosophy and rhetoric, as well as why some might argue that where there is meaning, as in a complete thought expressed in an independent clause, there is an attempt at persuasion. One sees something similar in the root of the words Aristotle, who places such a close link between subject and substance, uses to describe these logical-grammatical-rhetorical-ethical processes: *kategoria*—to accuse, speak against, or, eventually, simply to assert in public or before the agora (*Online Etymology Dictionary*).<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the essential connection of grammar and the world for Aristotle, is one way of explaining how virtue is expressed through ordering, for order has much to do with justice and contemplation for Aristotle (which, as we will see, is one reason why Aristotle would find Russell’s denial of essence so problematic).

The issues of predication will be touched on throughout the project and at length in Chapter 4 and 5, but the point that needs to be made here is that any time we make an assertion that makes linguistic sense, we have made a moral and logical act in conjunction with whatever rhetorical significance it has. Toulmin seems to pick up on this inherent ethicality of grammar somewhat through being so influenced by the

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<sup>29</sup> One can also read the *Gorgias* metaphorically as a discussion of the ethical considerations and ramifications of the relationship of dialectic and predication in the public sphere.

linguist Austin.<sup>30</sup> Really, one of the first grammar lessons children learn is the necessity of a subject and predicate to make sense; that is, they learn how to proclaim made sense. And we are surely in a predicament if we do not know how we proclaim.

Now, even with this lack of knowledge of grammatical significance, the danger is not that the syllogism will totally disappear, but, again, there is a great danger in forgetting the buried foundation of the syllogism, the same foundation for much of our reasoning. Thus there is cause for concern when one gets the sense from teachers of composition that they feel the teaching of syllogisms is perfunctory when it comes to the argumentation section of the course. Not surprisingly, *logic* or *dialectic* can scarcely be found in the program for the most recent Conferences on College Composition and Communication. Do teachers feel like this because teaching the syllogism is hard? This does not seem to be the case. Fulkerson concludes from the absence of chapters concerning logic in books intended to help teachers teach composition in rhetoric that a “knowledge of logic and its relationship to composition is apparently not regarded as significant for composition teachers,” while he might as easily have concluded that the subject matter is conceived of as mainly so easy that it does not warrant much discussion and, at the point of complexity, useless (“Logic and Teachers of English” 198).

For example, in many classrooms, if students are just made to attend to the layout of the syllogism, they might question the reason for even bringing it up in class.

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<sup>30</sup> Yet other Toulmin commentators may not see this. Freeman, for example, tries to correct Toulmin’s thought on field-dependency and warrants, but may not give the ethical enough emphasis in his distinguishing of different belief-generating mechanisms and ways to judge the relevancy of different warrants, for he seems to see the intuition of immediate apprehension as the primary mode of intuition (“Systematizing Toulmin’s Warrant’s” 336). But it is hard to even separate this ethical notion from the empirical learning of natural kinds, many of which are received from the people who raised us.

Deduction is how we all think anyways, and what good does it do to show an “artificial” layout for the simplest of proofs? (Of course Socrates is mortal!) On the level of arrangement, this method of thought and argument are commonsensical, and the students (and perhaps many teachers) metacognize about the syllogism as much as people normally metacognize about commonsense issues. How can the syllogism be seen to have value when it is so general and of unlimited proliferation? Even Fulkerson, a student of logic, testifies that—although he was successful in teaching the theory of the syllogism—it did not show up in the student papers.<sup>31</sup> It is hard in such light to see value on the face of the syllogism and hence to bother giving much regard to it.

Further, the syllogism, with its compact and seemingly trite nature, does not seem capable of being the robust representation many want for argumentation, which needs so many words to be effective. If arrangement and a profusion of words are really of the utmost importance in arguing, then we are better off with a method such as Toulmin’s, which seemingly can contain the whole of an argument in one scheme without having to attend to difficult notions of logical theory (but see Chapter 3).

This type of thinking is typical of the misunderstandings the syllogism faces today in trying to keep its merit, and I can give a brief introduction and response to some of more problems here, while further elaboration will occur throughout the project. First, the forms of the figures Aristotle gives, especially the primary, ‘Every A is a B, Every B is a C, therefore Every A is a C,’ are an important part of evaluating arguments, as we will see in Chapter 3. Yet this form may also lead one to believe that

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<sup>31</sup> Linking himself to E.D. Hirsch in the belief that teaching logic does not help students write, Fulkerson writes, “People do not write syllogisms, and on the rare occasions when they write something vaguely like a syllogism, the complex rules about distribution of terms and validity simply don’t apply” (“Logic and Teachers of English” 199). But one could argue that these rules do apply when one focuses on the significant terms of the argument.

some premises in this figure, even if they are true, do not really produce anything, failing to even live up to Aristotle's own definition of a deduction (I.1, 24b.19-20). Regarding the first figure, this belief seems to result from ignoring the topical base of syllogisms; these premises are drawing on something not shown in the syllogism to prove a new statement:

Whenever three terms are so related to one another that the last is in the middle as in a whole, and the middle is either in, or not in, the first as a whole, the extremes must be related by a perfect deduction. I call that term middle which both is itself in another and contains another in itself: in position this also comes in the middle. By extremes I mean both that term which is itself in another and that in which another is contained. (*Pr. An.* I.4, 25b.33-7).

Aristotle later clarifies his use of *extremes*: "I call that term the major in which the middle is contained and that term the minor which comes under the middle" (26a.22).

We will return to the production issue below. Here we will emphasize that this language is meant to reflect the structure of the predicables, more specifically, how they are used in definition, that which reflects a thing's essence. It is definition and every essential thing that can be derived from definitions, i.e. properties, that make all the modes of the syllogism possible, and definitions themselves are possible by the rules of predicables.<sup>32</sup>

A related problem facing the syllogism is mistaking how syllogisms work, which can distort what one thinks the syllogism is and how it can be used. The

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<sup>32</sup> See Chapter 5 and Appendix A for more on the properties and Chapter Four for more on how *topoi* allow for syllogizing.

following is an incomplete list of such misunderstandings: (1) one can simply believe that an argument made out of homonyms is a syllogism. (2) One can forget how the middle works in syllogisms according to the rules of predicables. For example, *The Bedford Reader* gives the example of the following “untrustworthy syllogism” from Scipio Chiaramonti: ‘Animals, which move, have limbs and muscles. The earth has no limbs and muscles. Hence the earth does not move’ (523). The authors explain the flaw as the assumption that “all things need limbs and muscles to move—ignoring raindrops, rivers, and many other moving things.” While this division of moving things is correct, it fails to show the immediate bearing on the syllogism. The theory-based way to refute this syllogism is to show it as not even formally valid, for there is no connection among the terms in the premises. The major and minor premises only repeat a relative property—‘limbs and muscles’: the middle is excluded, and there is also an attempt to deduce from accident, the non-essential, which Aristotle rightly says is impossible.<sup>33</sup> Further, we needed the laws of predicables even to get to this essential notion of animals, to state it, and to even have the hope of deducing from the genus (see the discussion of induction below).

(3) One can go beyond the formality of the syllogism (which is really to step outside of formal logic itself) but still talk in terms of the syllogism. That is, one can try

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<sup>33</sup> Of course, another thing that misleads here is the double predication through the use of the parenthetical statement, which can be a grammatical way of arguing from circumstance. This becomes clear if we unpack all the statements.

Animals move.

Animals have limbs and muscles.

The earth has no limbs and muscles.

Hence the earth does not move.

The excluded middle between the first two “premises” is more obvious upon having done this too. This is another logical aspect of grammar, which actually shades into the rhetorical aspects of grammar, such as obfuscating and question begging, and ultimately points to ethical notions on how both rhetoric and grammar should be used. See, for example, “The Rhetorical Aspects of Grammatical Categories” in *The Ethics of Rhetoric*.

to stretch the formal syllogism to contain more than it is meant to, as Toulmin and Russell try to assert inappropriate truth functions of the syllogism. They equate logic with truth finding and thus easily show that the syllogism, that bogey of formal logic, cannot handle the inductions, perceptions, or authority that make the premises true (and thus has no practical usefulness).

Russell strongly emphasizes that the check on the induction of the universal premise of the syllogism begins with seeing whether the subject exists at all. Thus where Toulmin, in trying to hash out his idea of the relationship between formal logic and truth, says we need to check to see whether all of Jack's sister have red hair to be able to conclude that Anne, Jack's sister, has red hair, Russell would seem to have to check to see if there is such a thing as *sister*, since he throws out the idea of essence and the *Categories* without much more argument than name calling (Toulmin 124, Russell 164-5, 200-1).<sup>34</sup> By assuming all verification into the formal syllogism, both become skeptical of the premise's ability to produce knowledge in a deduction (Russell 199; Toulmin 125). Russell proclaims deduction produces no new knowledge, and the same could be drawn from Toulmin, though he does not want to say it of "substantial" arguments, for he directly opposes these to "analytic" ones, or even "deductive" (Russell 199, Toulmin 125). Further, Russell does not believe that universal premises, the *sine qua non* of deducing, give us any knowledge; they just verbally mean something and can at most lead to a probability if it goes through a verification process of induction (though he treats probability as something to sneeze at, especially

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<sup>34</sup> Of course, Aristotle is aware of the issues Toulmin and Russell are implying; cf. *Post. An.* I.1, 71a.12-17; *Cat.* 10.13b, 1-35. This issue will also come up below.

regarding certain subject matter): universal statements “tell us nothing about the world except how words are used” (198).

We will deal with all of these issues below, but I should note here that some in composition studies, such as Stygall, an advocate of the Toulmin method on the moral level, do not seem to notice this relation of induction to deduction (see below) or even dialectic to deduction (see Chapter 4) that they are stepping over here. For Stygall, classical deduction “*presumes* an acceptance of a single, objective truth, precluding much discussion about how that major premise came to be viewed as truth” (378 my emphasis). Castaneda spots this misrepresentation of traditional logic early on in Toulmin: “No logician has ever denied that we have to support our major premises, independently of the syllogism in question” (284).

Apparently, some see that syllogism regarding Socrates, or the first figure in abstract, and think that these are all there is to formal logic. Ironically, a similar complaint to Stygall’s is made against Toulmin, which many scholars, such as Voss, Gross, and P. Christopher Smith, try to defend against in different ways, as we shall see. The most important rendering of this complaint against Toulmin is that each argument itself is isolated, which is more severe than just a syllogism being isolated, since syllogisms are often readily perceived as part of an argument and since the identities and relationships between warrants, backings, data and claims and their relationships to everything else are unclear by the nature of these concepts. Indeed, we might find that Toulmin’s isolation of arguments and its relationship to the valuing of field-dependency that sets off arguments from other discourses may be conducive to



controversy, as a modern day example of Ciceronian *topoi*.<sup>35</sup> This is unfortunately ironic given that Toulmin found himself in a tradition that was trying to clarify how language worked to avoid controversy.<sup>36</sup>

#### *RUSSELL'S RHETORIC REGARDING LOGIC*

Hopefully, the frustration of any discursive deduction by the rejection just noted of the universal premise is apparent, but we can deal relatively briefly here with Russell's ideas about how syllogisms fail and allow these answers to find elaboration when we come to discuss Toulmin's objections. My jumping off point for discussing Russell is his chapter on Aristotle's logic in *A History of Western Philosophy*; which will make the discussion of Russell more manageable, as it can be assumed that most of the critiques he brings against Aristotle he believes to have fixed or avoided in his formal logic, which is a bit unwieldy.<sup>37</sup> One sees quite clearly Russell's disdain for Aristotelian logic here, in the begrudged affirmations that the issue of the efficiency of Aristotelian logic is still embattled and that this logic was the strongest influence in the field of logic for over two thousand years (160). And one then sees this disdain in his devotion of less than seven pages to discussing Aristotelian logic, with its apparently shallow notions of the "syllogism" and "substance" (195).

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<sup>35</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>36</sup> This is a contention of Clauss's *Dissertation*. However, many scholars in the fields of rhetoric and composition, such as Scott, Brummett, Stygall, and Crowley see a very different tendency in the nature of language itself. They use an explanation like Stygall's and several other explanations to argue that universal premises are morally dangerous if not evil, even leading to totalitarianism. Burke even sees language itself as pushing to create absolute ideas and ways to unethically hold people to them or eventually "transform" the principle that they represent by killing them. We will discuss some of the virtuous ends for language for Aristotle in Chapters 4 and 5.

<sup>37</sup> No doubt, many find Russell's work elegant, but it seems a system that only values logic and just in the abstract, which we will see is repellant for a number of reasons, not the least of which it undermines beauty which logic is a part of.

These latter notions are actually important for understanding how universals are created and work in logic, but by way of preview we can say that Russell has quite different beliefs about universal statements and thus syllogisms, which gives one insight into his entire “logic.” First, he does not believe a true universal statement can be made. Now this is, of course, debatable: in the example above, “Jack’s sisters” is a class, a universal, and so a true universal statement could be made about the class, say, if we had all of them in front of us to verify them. Moreover, and this is where Russell would really take umbrage, many universals in general that we already have, such as *sister*, do not need every predicate verified by induction: we do not need induction to verify the proposition “All sisters are female.” We already know that the *essence* of sister includes this; the finding of a male sister would be illogical, perhaps a solecism on the grammatical level of logic, and one could deal similarly with his example, “all Greeks are men” (198).<sup>38</sup> Yet Russell rejects this argument because these things are apparently made from dictionary definitions, with no connection to reality. With this apparent distinction between perception-based premises and dictionary-based premises in hand, Russell burns at Aristotle’s failure to distinguish between the following two types of syllogism: ‘All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore: Socrates is mortal’ and ‘All men are mortal. All Greeks are men. Therefore: All Greeks are mortal’ (196).

I will delve more into why Russell thinks this distinction is important shortly, but first I must note that Aristotle does see a distinction between these two types of syllogisms: namely, he sets off the syllogism form with two positive universal premises as the foundational form of the syllogism, and one would expect nothing less from a

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<sup>38</sup> See the discussion of Russell’s “all Greeks are men” example below.

man who believes that knowledge of the universal is the highest form of knowledge. Also, relevant here is a great contribution of Aristotle to logic, one that requires looking at the whole *Organon* to see its importance—the placing of the particular statement and the universal statement on par in terms of logical validity (see Chapter 4). The great detriment to logic by Russell is that he tries to destroy this logical equality by (1) rejecting universal premises because of his misunderstanding of how they are created and work in reasoning; (2) by misunderstanding predication; (3) by failing to have a notion of essence; (4) by failing to realize the importance of essence to both logical validity and verity as well as (5) to ethical reasoning. (6) He also fails to set proper limits to formal logic by incorporating inappropriate verification procedures with the formal validity of the syllogism; i.e., he does not allow logic to have a form at all. We will see quite a bit here of how Aristotle rejects Russell's arguments, and in Chapters 4 and 5 we will see Aristotle's positive arguments regarding the same issues.

Early on in the chapter on Aristotelian logic we have the following passage that shows how he tries to avoid universals in reasoning:

There are some inferences that can be made from a single premise. From “some men are mortal” we can infer that “some mortals are men.” According to Aristotle, this can also be inferred from “all men are mortal.” From “no gods are mortal” we can infer “no mortals are gods,” but from “some men are not Greeks” it does not follow that “some Greeks are not men.” (196)

Firstly, Aristotle tells us it is impossible to deduce from one premise, “for nothing follows of necessity from the being of some one thing, but from two at least [...]” (*Pr.*

*An.* I.15, 34a.18; cf. I.23, 40b.30-36). And in a certain sense, it is doubtful that one can really “infer” from one premise with nothing else. Besides needing a proposition to prompt the deduction/inference, which would result in the creation/selection of a premise, one needs a rule that tells us, say, about the relation of a genus to its species so that we can infer that some men are mortal from the statement ‘all men are mortal’. We cannot really make any inference from ‘some men are not Greeks’ for this very reason: it fails to give us a rule to go on. It is a negative particular statement; by itself it gives us no internal or external class relationship, to a class higher or lower than it. That is, it neither affirms or denies anything on the level of essence and thus can have no notion of logical necessity applied to it, nor even probability.<sup>39</sup> Russell seems only able to “infer” that it does not follow that some Greeks are not men because he knows that Greeks is a species of men. Even so, one definitely needs some help in going from ‘some men are mortal’ to ‘some mortals are men’ as compared to going from ‘some men are mortals’ to ‘some mortals are men’. This is our first hint that something may be off in his theory of predication and that he is missing an idea of the true syllogism proceeding by essential predication.

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<sup>39</sup> Russell may be right that there are non-syllogistic inferences, if we mean by syllogisms those arguments where the middle terms are connected with the extremes. It is not hard to think of a three-premise argument where the minor premise is simply a topical maxim. In Russell’s example, “A horse is an animal, therefore a horse’s head is an animal’s head,” we just need some topical rule about the relationship of part to whole, species to a genus, or rule of relatives (cf. *Cat.* 7, 8a.14-28). But if we’re being completely explicit, we would then need a third premise connecting the first two together to get to the conclusion, and then our example is starting to look more like a syllogism. Actually, Russell’s example still not the syllogism *qua* syllogism, because we are bringing in something of an external authority, which, as we shall see, is not a part of the validity function of the syllogism itself, and we should keep in mind the differences of the validity of a syllogism and when a syllogism, or perhaps rather a type of inference, is used to verify.

## Predication and the Statements of Syllogisms

Next, Russell goes to undermining the logical validity of the universal statement by attacking its verifiability (and this should sound like an egregiously misguided approach). He assumes an ungrounded empirical verity preconception into formal logic. Russell claims a certain “complexity” for a statement such as “All Greeks are men,” that it assumes the existence of Greeks, as compared to “Socrates is a man,” which apparently for him does not assume the existence of Socrates or man (197). It is easy to overlook that the same charge can be brought against the particular statement, and that there is no formal “defect” or distinction in this regard between the two types of statements (197). If there is a concept or concepts that go to make up *Greeks*, then the same must be said of *Socrates*.<sup>40</sup> The issue Russell brings up is not a problem for formal logic; it is a problem for grammar, and to illustrate this point, I must quote at length:

[...] If we are to be explicit, we must therefore divide the one statement “all Greeks are men” into two, one saying “there are Greeks,” and the other saying “if anything is a Greek, it is a man.” The latter statement is purely hypothetical and does not imply that there are Greeks.

The statement “all Greeks are men” is thus much more complex in form than the statement “Socrates is a man.” “Socrates is a man” has “Socrates” for its subject, but “All Greeks are men” does not have “all Greeks” for its subject, for there is nothing about “all Greeks” either in

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<sup>40</sup> One can emphasize here the importance of universals to mind that will be discussed near the end of Chapter 4, especially the issue of their remaining after the individual has gone, which also may show one sense of how Socrates the person is a substance and therefore has essence.

the statement “there are Greeks” or in the statement “if anything is a Greek it is a man. (197)

Aristotle flatly denies such thinking: “A single affirmation or negation is one which signifies one thing about one thing (whether about a universal taken universally or not) [...],” or as Edghill translates it, “it matters not whether the subject is universal and whether the statement has a universal character, or whether this is not so” (*De Int.* 8,18a.13). If Russell is right, all predication, the tying of one thing to another, is impossible, and any predication attempt would become nonsensical, as in a discursive transliteration of first-order predicate logic: Socrates [“There exists Socrates” or “Socrates is”] is a man, and if Socrates exists, he is a man.

But this is not all. What, ultimately, is to keep us from questioning whether the predicate exists? If predication and logic, with which perception seem the whole of truth for Russell, require the noting of the existence of things predicated of each other, we are caught in one of Zeno’s games, one where we always seem to be getting closer to predication without making it: “Socrates is a man” becomes “Socrates [There is (There is such a thing as being) Socrates] is [There is such a thing as relationship] a man [There is (There is such a thing as being) such a thing as man]”. This series could go on indefinitely, incorporating the existence of perception, the perceiving of perception, predication, and so on, and I did not even get into the delicacies surrounding the indefinite article.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> This argument is part of a larger complaint against such systems of logic: they seek to bury the discursiveness of discursive reasoning, and this is probably the reason why many rhetoricians have never had anything to do with them. While I can appreciate these rhetoricians’ sentiment, leaving logic to be defined by someone else has not helped the field of Rhetoric.

Now, obviously, predication is possible.<sup>42</sup> Where Russell errs here is trying to tie together the function of predicating and the function of verifying that predication. Russell seems to want to make sure a thing is true before it is even said (by affirming the existence of the existents in the statement), but, one may ask, how can a thing be true apart from discourse or at least how can it be said to be true? Affirming the existence of something is an important part of truth finding, but it is not the only part. To focus only on existence or emphasize it to the obscuring of things, especially as is the case with an empirically limited view of existence, is in a significant way to shut down discourse and predication. I may never communicate to you that this pear is delicious if I am constantly trying to empirically show or tell the existence of the pear and deliciousness, especially at the same time, for in this isolated mode of verification it is not uncommon to question what has happened to the pear (or deliciousness for that matter) once a moment of time has passed, even before I utter *delicious*. Predication asserts a relationship between things, which is why it is important to logic, including universal type relationships, which tries to prove the predication of things by other relationships. A syllogism and predication is verifiable because the topical rules are both grammatical and physical (i.e., based in and on nature).<sup>43</sup>

Now, Russell favors the particular statement because it is so easily verifiable (or, he believes, verifiable at all as opposed to universal statements), but the topical rules that make for verifiability of the particular are the same ones that make for verifiability of inductions, so it is not possible to elevate the particular statement on that issue. But Russell believes he has the universal statement's number in asserting that a

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<sup>42</sup> At the very least, we can predicate with probability, despite Derrida's very long books that assume and insist on an absolute or one might say analytic standard of predication, one that is all or nothing.

<sup>43</sup> Again, see Chapter 4

whole class cannot be gathered to verify empirically. His assumption is partly correct in that the truth partly lies outside of discourse, which is why it is so odd he makes a rigid distinction between verbal universal statements and empirical universal statements.<sup>44</sup>

Russell, again, is seeking to undermine the syllogism through undermining the *sine qua non* of the syllogism, the universal premise, and this is where further ramifications of Russell's inattention to predicating is glaring and must not be overlooked.<sup>45</sup> Russell believes there is a distinct epistemological difference from how we know 'all Greeks are men' and how we know "all men are mortal." He uses the premise 'all men are mortal' as an example to drive this false wedge between what

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<sup>44</sup> One more note can be added on how Russell tries to undermine universal predication. Russell, in arguing that the premise "All Greeks are men" assumes something and is therefore dangerous, also argues that the following two arguments are equivalent: 'All Greeks are men, all Greeks are white, therefore some men are white' and 'All golden mountains are mountains, all golden mountains are golden, therefore some mountains are golden'; Russell says this latter syllogism has a false conclusion, though the premises are "in some sense" true (197). The first distinction to be noted of these two arguments is that the latter one is actually attempting to work inductively, which results in this example causing serious threats to the validities of the inductions of others if it makes Russell's point. This is really bad for Russell who believes induction is the only way to come to knowledge, and one could add that the first example's major and minor premises are pointing toward an induction or mere summation and that the conclusion is actually deductively reached by the assumption of a negative premise regarding how all Greeks are not all men (cf. Robin Smith's example syllogism below). Another distinction to be noted is the differences in predication, especially in the first premise of each argument. They may look like they are asserting a subtype of a class, but only the major premise in the first argument is actually doing so. The major premise of the second argument redundantly predicates (and is really not grammatically different from "All golden mountains are golden mountains"). Russell sees this as redundant predication, but misses the importance of it. The premise is of course tautological and does not predicate in a logical or actual sense. The predication is false and from this results the false conclusion. One may object that people constantly use these types of statements in deductions, as in "President X is [still] President X, and you know that he [President X] will take care of this situation." Of course, in this example, which I believe is fairly typical of these types of deductions, the second *President X* is not the same as the first but represents a different concept, a character or character complex.

<sup>45</sup> Considering the grand scheme of arguing, Russell's jumping into this issue of how universal statements are verified before discussing how syllogisms work is not only putting the cart before the horse but placing an insuperable barrier between them, denying to both their ends. The cart (universals) is separated from the horse (the syllogism) in Russell's arrangement of critique because he is dealing with how isolated universals are known and verified, but the problem with this is akin to the common critique of Platonic Forms: what benefit is there in knowing a universal in isolation? Universals only have value in relationships, and this is why the syllogism is such a significant and often purportedly dangerous thing (for many even see Truth as dangerous), because the way people say that universal statements are related, or even how a universal statement is related to a particular or particular statement, has consequences. Truth and knowledge deal not only with universals but the right relationship among universals—universal relationships.



might be called linguistic universal statements (what others of Russell's ilk call *analytic statements*) and empirical universal statements (*synthetic statements* that use the verification principle):

“all Greeks are men” [which] is known because nothing is called “a Greek” unless it is a man. Such general statements can be ascertained from the dictionary; they tell us nothing about the world except how words are used. (198)

He might as well have said that hands tell us nothing about the world except for how things feel, or that perception tells us nothing about the world but how things appear. How words are used tells us a very important lesson about the world: it is orderable. This is why if the implication is true that *Greek*, like *sister* above, is linguistically essentialized apart from the real world, like a mathematical concept, it only shows why mathematics are always trying to bring things into the world.<sup>46</sup> Words are used in such a way because things can be and are structured in such a way; there is not much difficulty in explaining what *sister* means to anyone or what a Greek is to someone who has never heard of Greece, for others can draw on how the world is structured naturally, including the natural structuring of groups (see Chapter 5), and this structure has a lot

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<sup>46</sup> It is ironic that with Russell's disregard for predication and dialectic that he believes his logic is so much better in dealing with identifying and form: “In the empirical sciences it is not so much in relation to inference that mathematical logic is useful as in relation to analysis and the apprehension of identity and difference of form”; and “Outside mathematics, the important inferences are not deductive, i.e., they are not such as mathematical logic makes. But logic can state their character with a precision which was formerly impossible” (“On the Importance of Logical Form” 39, 40). What Russell is pushing for is the mathematical establishing of probability in empirical sciences, but it is hard to see how math could establish probability and not be connected to reality, reality being important for probability, as we shall see in later chapters. Pure math has no need for reality, which is why it has no need for probability, and Kaplan confirms such a view in Russell by revealing Russell's skepticism toward modality (Footnote 933). Indeed, Russell seems to think of his notion of logic as a sort of panacea for science and the “general public” which “through logical incompetence, has been led into grave practical errors”; he even asserts that the “dictionary principle” just alluded to in the extended quote can “suffice to dispose of large numbers of metaphysical question” (39, 42).

to do with the predicables, (see Chapter 4). As Weaver argues in “To Write the Truth,” the world is ordered well-enough to enable us to make predictions about it as well as rhetorical sentences, i.e., those sentences that order the world in terms of value or seek to reflect the world of values (235; cf. “Some Rhetorical Aspects of Grammatical Categories” in *Ethics of Rhetoric*).

What Russell *really* objects to is any notion that the *world* is *ordered*, for as he baldly states, “a *word* may have an essence, but a *thing* cannot” (201); there is no inherent anything to a thing, no element of consistency that makes it what it is and what something else is not, and thus no essential relations among things.<sup>47</sup> He does not apply this belief to such things as *mother*, which would be very controversial, but this belief is definitely why he attacks not only the subject of the universal premise “All men are mortal,” trying to show that there can be nothing said of all men, but also the predicate, refusing to allow the most basic of predications of humans, their mortality, to all humans, even if one could have all of humanity in front of oneself. Thus Russell is seeking to abolish from logic the notion of essence, that which ties formal and material logic together and which he does not have such a firm grasp on, perhaps because he precludes many metaphysical issues from being considered.

### **The Botheration of Essence**

As we have seen, the first part of Russell’s project to eliminate essence is in destroying discursive reasoning by focusing on the illegitimacy of predication and arguing that universal predications that can appear to stand alone, such as “all Greeks are men,” are unrealistic in several senses of the word. Now he turns to arguing that

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<sup>47</sup> I am alluding here to the connection of grammar, predication, and order mentioned above, and we will see more on how these notions are tied up with essence, explicitly in Chapter Four. And we will see the connections of essence, order, and virtue for Aristotle in Chapter 5.

there is no essence in things, which he ironically cannot do without assuming some universal concept of man, i.e., of how man *really* is. Russell cannot, as he tries, remove mortality from the essence of man without assuming some more foundational concept of all men; he cannot show how a statement is non-essential (in the universal sense of *essential*) without assuming/using an essential statement, which is a very dialectical way of arguing, and dialectic relies on the essence of things, first principles, to work. Russell tries to get around the idea of the essential statement because to say something true of a whole class of things is to make a *binding* order between those things and whatever is subordinated to them, which has ethical ramifications.

Russell seems to think that the statement about the mortality of all men is disingenuous, that it is a probability and perhaps should read “all men for the most part are mortal.” For him, it seems that to admit that all men are mortal is to make an essential statement of things in the real world, which he finds intolerable. This is why he wants to deny the being of classes and even the essence of individuals, as we shall see. But Russell cannot escape the problem, for even in the premise “all men are probably mortal,” we cannot escape from the class of all men or the universal concept of mortality, what mortality is in every case that it is found. If not, if we have to specify what type of mortality we are talking about, we find Russell in more trouble: how can we get the “non-deductive” inference he asserts, “some mortals are men” from “some men are mortal” without it? Indeed, if *mortal* and *mortals* are so interchangeable, as Russell himself assumes, one may wonder if the “all men are mortal” example would have seemed worth contending with if it were framed as “all men are mortals”.

And even if we could find a man who has not died after 150 years, we would be hesitant, I think, to label that person an immortal. For one reason, we could never be certain that the person would not die the next moment or is not killable. This reveals the necessity of probability that Russell maligns. Besides the problems here and given above, one would have to be immortal oneself to be able to verify on the level of perception that another is immortal, which is the only thing Russell leaves us with, and if that, for we still need universal classes to induce. Further, time is a problem here in several ways. Though Russell is trying to show how universal statements do not work in time, he brings time into formal logic through universal statements, formal logic always being timeless and the latter having to be timeless or atemporal to be used validly in reasoning, which is to say that he tries to equate truth with formal logic instead of placing formal logic in the realm of truth or how we come to it. One could make the case that he is thrown off in his critique of Aristotelian formal logic because he brings his preconceptions of what things are true and why, apart from realizing how a syllogism often shows a thing to be true in a secondary sense (from the premises being true).

Further, considering his notion of completely linguistic universals, how do we have a universal concept of mortality without the real world? Even without the argument above, the question should be asked, what keeps statements like “all Greeks are men” true or what keeps them from being false, if, as Russell argues, the reason why this one is true or “known is because nothing is called ‘a Greek’ unless it is a man” (198)? The answer is real world predication. Indeed, despite what he says about dictionary definitions, we might help Russell out here and show how far his two

examples, “all Greeks are men” and “all men are mortal,” are on the same level of epistemology or verifiability. After all, which is more unlikely, the immortal man he imagines to undermine the essential universal in the latter statement or that a horse or group of horses born in Greece acquire the power of discourse and perhaps eventually political power? What is to keep us from calling these horses Greeks (though, understandably, it might take human Greeks a little longer to warm to the idea)? Still in question here, whether it be *Greek* or *man*, is essence.

I pause to remind the reader who may be put off by such terms as *metaphysics* or *essence* that I am not advocating a particular view of metaphysics at the moment, though one could say I am advocating what is generally acceptable to people from Aristotle, whom many view as a conservative, to Eagleton, a Marxist.<sup>48</sup> One gets to this point by simply trying to describe how humans beings argue, and they all argue as if things *are* a certain way. Of course, any person, group, or culture may vary in how much of the world, including values, is foundational, those who are completely open at this level being the most insipid.

Of course, to talk seriously about a “true order of things” of “essence” or “universal” would seem to be a step backward in the development of contemporary rhetoric. Indeed, in that this is a book on commonplaces, I could easily discuss that the

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<sup>48</sup> Some may protest that I am not being honest to a political continuum in what I am implying here, yet it seems that Aristotle and Eagleton can fit somehow into general ideas of conservative and liberal respectively. Now, I freely admit to detesting the use of political labels and simply use them here for the benefit of some readers here, but what may actually be of more interest and more beneficial to resolving the tension behind the claim might be how Weaver’s ethical argumentation hierarchy could be used to label these two thinkers. Weaver labels as conservative those who tend to argue from definition, and thus believe in and are held accountable to essence and tendency in the world, while liberals are those who tend to argue more from circumstance. As Patrick Shaw has recently argued, using labels with such notions behind them may remove some bitterness existing between the nominated camps, for, I might add, what is essentially behind Weaver’s distinction is essentially an ethical ideal of how to argue—from principles that keep one honest. There is at least an ethotic appeal lying here that most can respect. One could argue that Aristotle and Eagleton are both conservative in the Weaverian sense.

debate between anti-essentialism and essentialism is rife with rhetorical commonplaces itself, and the anti-essentialist side seems to carry more credence in the humanities today. Yet as Eagleton argues, defending the misunderstood target of anti-essentialism, essentialism is not a doctrine of dogmatism or complete uniformity. He follows the political philosopher John O'Neill in disregarding this caricature of the doctrine of essences that is so overtly reviled, replacing it with the presumption that thematization requires "the belief that there are properties which some things need to have if they are to be the kind of things they are" (qtd. in *After Theory* 121). In other words, any categorizations we receive or create may or may not be necessary, though it is reasonable that some are, and that some are "only" probabilities is important for reasoning too, as we shall see. In any case, categories or classes are themselves necessary for human beings to understand, discuss, judge, or even care about what we are to understand, discuss, or judge. And some things have to be what they are if we are to make sense. But perhaps because of they are impressed by the diversity thought is capable of (along with perhaps a misunderstanding of freedom), many still mistakenly advocate for anti-essentialism, but as Eagleton says, "Anti-essentialism is largely the product of philosophical amateurism and ignorance" (121).

Finally, what categorizations we come up with or find may often only be grasped at a cultural level, but we would be surprised to find how many are essentially similar on an intercultural level and on the level of what Weaver in *Ideas Have Consequences* constantly refers to as "the metaphysical dream," the connection between a person and the *world* "an intuitive feeling about the immanent nature of reality, [...] the sanction to which both ideas and beliefs are ultimately referred for

verification” and without which “it is impossible to think of men living together harmoniously over an extent of time” (18).<sup>49</sup> Of course, one could argue that there are many metaphysical dreams, such as one proposed by green morality or even several that may be derived from the many sects of one religion, but, again, we would be surprised at how many of these point back to what Lewis refers to as the *Tao* in different ways, that is, if we could step out of our postmodern mode of difference finding. The other point that is often forgotten when thinking about such things is that just because there are many versions does not preclude there being a right one; rhetoric

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<sup>49</sup> This is a particularly sensitive but important issue when the topic is human nature, as we can see with Russell or when discussing what understanding of human nature it is best for the judge to have so there can be equity. As Eagleton admits, the anti-essentialists are right to claim that talk of human nature is disturbingly general. However, those who respond to such general notions by precluding discourse on human nature ultimately fall into the trap of idealism: “If you play down the material ‘species being’ of humanity, you may be left assuming that human beings exist only at the level of meaning and value. And this is a convenient mistake for intellectuals to make” (*After Theory* 120). This is convenient because it removes the restriction, the limit of Nature (what Aristotle calls primary *ousia*), when defining what human nature is and thus allows what could be called human nature, but probably termed something else, to be totally culturally determined. But this is not an error endemic to those in the Humanities; a scientist who holds unswervingly to the *idea* of humans as totally materially determined is just as guilty of ignoring how human beings are in reality.

Eagleton might part ways with me at this last point, but we can both agree, as he notes, that this idealism allows culture to replace God or Nature and is extremely hard to challenge to a rhetorical defense, (though I have found that students are less apt to accept culture as a defense for not being *Green*, but this would need a long commentary itself). This sort of idealism prevents many from even putting Commonsensical limits on what humanity is (and thus what we think it can do and be allowed to do), such as those who do not believe people can be distinguished from texts or machines. Without a dialectic connected to real world objects, that faculty of the brain that finds similarities totalizes everything (though it can just as easily run in the other direction and try to catch the infinitely divisible). Though necessary for induction and deduction, it runs amuck without the steadying of grounded dialectic, which uses *topoi* to group and separate, with emphasis on separation—the truth is sharp.

Cultural theorists justify themselves, then, in putting off indefinitely the question of what human nature is, i.e., the ideal of human flourishing, and we will see in Chapter 5 that essence and the topics are important to Aristotle regarding this. What is more, since they have already begged the question or because human nature is so hard to define in the first place with its ability to construct so many varying cultures, many end by asserting that there is no such thing as human nature (120). Some, like Lyotard, actually believe this stance, this type of thinking on the subject, this postmodern condition of knowing, will continue *ad infinitum*. Eagleton may have those like Lyotard in mind when he quips, “it would be worth asking ourselves who has the authority to blow the whistle and call history off” (*Illusions of Postmodernism* 19). (Žižek for one, seems to be willing to pull back from such metanarratives of “progress,” e.g., the bildungsromans where the ‘stupid essentialists’ progress to people who are aware of contingency, noting that scholars such as Laclau and Butler still are subject to it (*CHU* 106-8, 223)). Postmodernism attempts this historical endgame of philosophy through its *topoi* (even in their valid inference forms, valid belief forms and ethical forms without bringing this reconciliation to its proper light) in a specific dialectic that tries to become the dialectic of the public sphere, as will be discussed in a later project.

has no such arbitrary stopping point. Yet the multi-level significance of essence, its grounding, and connectedness it reveals does mean that we have ethical guidelines that we need to follow when discussing such things (borrowing other premises from the *Tao* or perfected ones, of course).

### **Essence and Ethos**

Now, there are several ways to talk of how the denial of essence causes problems for ethical argumentation because there are several ways to see it as undermining ethos, and it is not without significance that Toulmin tries to take on the problems with this rationalistic type of arguing through a focus on ethics.<sup>50</sup> As mentioned, Russell denies essence to individuals. He has already attempted to show that there is no essence in things, including people. Now he asserts that a particular person, such as Socrates, is only “a collective name for a number of occurrences. If we take it as anything more, it denotes something completely unknowable, and therefore not needed for the expression of what we know” (202). Such thinking denies the stability of character, which, as we shall see, frustrates Aristotle.

Russell may also be trying to account for that substantial/essential nature of personality that I mentioned above, the unique universal of the person (which may give us more reason for speaking of virtue in people in terms of properties and accidents for Aristotle), while trying to materially reduce it because of his flawed epistemology. Both points he makes here are hard to accept: (1) how is this essence “completely” unknowable, unless there is no such thing as deduction in the world and one’s personality has nothing to do with being human (both of which seem to be the case

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<sup>50</sup> See Appendix B for one way the denial of essence can undermine ethos and cause ethical problems in argumentation. See Chapter 5 for how this can be true in a secondary sense.



according to Russell)? (2) What does the unknowability of a thing have to do with the *expression* of what we know (*expression* being a conveniently vague term that avoids the notions of showing and proving)? If he is talking about knowledge in terms of demonstrative knowledge, one cannot have that of a first principle anyways, if knowledge in terms of perception only, he is short-sighted. That is, here we cannot use Socrates to induce anything about man and we cannot deduce anything about him from man. Of course, to make a somewhat *ad populum* appeal, people all over the political spectrum assume that this substance does exist and/or that it is somewhat knowable, from the Ayn Rand type of individualists to the GLBT mask theorists, though the latter may reduce Socrates to only a name too, as we shall see below.

Again, I must emphasize the empirical bias here and the negation of ethics and character in Russell's view, for Russell is also throwing out the *self* or *personality* denotation of essence, which is rather nonsensical and repugnant, and which Aristotle, if this is in fact what he does, is rightly chided for.<sup>51</sup> As Russell says in "On Denoting," the "subjects [...] must be regarded as particulars, and as *radically* different from any collection of those general qualities which may be predicated of them" (20 my emphasis). On a Commonsensical level one can honestly say that qualities are radically different in one sense but in others senses, dialectically and rhetorically, many are said of people in a very real way. (Again, I must hint at the human relation to virtue in terms of properties and accidents.) Qualities go into "filling in" the foundation of people and many are used in how we make up kinds of people, which influences sometimes how we understand these qualities. This is how people tend to think of themselves too: "I am a charitable, honest person (or human being) and also an engineer." In this example, all

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<sup>51</sup> See Chapter 5

of the qualities are of character in one way and also help determine the ethical relationship to others, even the last quality. Metzger shows how one can try to use one's occupation to limit one's ethical responsibility ("The Call for Rhetoric"); in some sense, people use their occupations to not only figure out how to limit their responsibilities for whom they work with and for, but also limit what type of people they are responsible for. The Aristotle of *Nic. Eth.* I.6 seems to be thinking in the same vein, or at least this is the outcome of his thought there.

I discuss in Chapters 4 and 5 how such qualities can become a part of a person, and I will return to it below. Importantly, all such qualities do not make up this personhood essence; there is something beyond these qualities that is naturally prepared for certain qualities. As Lewis illustrates in an apocalyptic novel, there is even danger in tying up the wrong qualities or wrong types of qualities with what a person really is (*That Hideous Strength* 315). I will not go into a soul-spirit analysis (that should eventually be discussed in a desire to see the proper relation between ideas of soul and personality), but I will note that there is a correlation of many dangerous political ideologies of the last century to the ignorance of this foundational notion of the person so important for reasoning.

Russell is throwing out not only the metaphysical grounding of ethics but also its secondary grounding in humans. Further, with ethics and character, with personhood, goes rhetoric, not only the active rhetoric that seeks good for the other but also defensive rhetoric, for "a hard heart [or no heart] is no infallible protection against a soft head" (*The Abolition of Man* 14). Yet this state of affairs results from Russell's

limited view of reason. The heart, the personal essence of the person, he throws out without any notion of how it connects that person to others.<sup>52</sup>

### **Knowing and the Syllogism**

Before we return again to defending the syllogism explicitly, we must note Russell, with his absolute knowableness empirical standard and his denial of essence and real predication, precludes two necessary assumptions in knowing and meaning that give the syllogism validity and value: the principle of non-contradiction (see below) and the necessary assumption that every predicate can be truly affirmed or denied of every subject (*Post. An.* I.1, 71a.15) and not just crossed off a list as unworthy of consideration. The latter principle is an example of one of two types of preexistent knowledge—that which must be assumed that it is—necessary for talking about the possession of knowledge at all (and has an important relationship with the syllogism—see Chapter 4 and below); the second is comprehension of the meaning of the term used (which is important for learning new things).

In some cases of philosophy or debate, both are needed, but at least one is always needed, since “All teaching and intellectual learning come about from existing knowledge” (*Post. An.* I.1, 71a.1).<sup>53</sup> Mathematical sciences and the arts are acquired in this way. We have these different types of preexistent knowledge because recognition of the truth can come about in different ways, such as getting knowledge of the same at the same time if it is under a universal. However, it seems there can be overlap of the

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<sup>52</sup> The human essence and the essence of the person are also important for the fundamentals of reasoning (see Appendix B and Chapter 5).

<sup>53</sup> Mure has “All instruction given or received by way of argument.” Mure seems to often have dialectic in mind when he is interpreting text concerning deduction’s use of prior knowledge, seemingly supporting the notion of dialectic and demonstration being tied together that I deal with in Chapter 4 and which is important here, whereas Barnes seems more willing to separate the dialectical syllogism from what is being discussed in this text.

things that can fill these slots. Aristotle gives two types of immediate deductive principles: *axioms* (those which are necessary to grasp if anything is to be learned, which can refer to the principles of all knowledge or just to the principles of a specific science) and *theses* (non-demonstrable principles which are not necessary to grasp if one is to learn anything, under which Aristotle places definition and which hints at the importance of dialectic for reasoned knowledge of a thing).<sup>54</sup> This view of immediate deductive principles can be very informative of Aristotle's views of rhetoric and dialectic, but what we have seen in this chapter is that Russell (and Toulmin later) is requiring is the demonstration of the indemonstrable, and he wants demonstration in a very limited sense. He is denying the rightful part of mind and the world in reasoning: for "there is not only understanding [episteme] but also some principle of understanding by which we become familiar with the definitions" or immediates (*Post. An.* I.3, 72b.24).

Also applicable here is the discussion about how something can be both known and not known, as seen in *Pr. An.* II. 21, which is basically the "new" knowledge from deductions issue that Russell attempts to refute. Aristotle says the two types of arguments, deductive and inductive, which are how teaching and learning are carried out, rely on preexisting knowledge: the former "getting their premises as from men who grasp them, the latter proving the universal through the particular being clear [or known to the audience]" (71a.5-8). Mure, who, again, seems to assume a broader dialectical context for the *Analytics*, has deduction "assumes an audience that will accept its premises." Regardless of the translation, one can in another way see here the

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<sup>54</sup> Aristotle talks of the principle on non-contradiction itself in terms of axioms at *Meta.* IV.3, 1005b.15-20, "for this is naturally the starting-point even for all the other axioms" (1005b.34).

importance of people for reasoning, that it is even important to reasoning, especially right reasoning, that we have people and their thoughts on things, which some forms of empiricism and rationalism neglect.<sup>55</sup> There are some views of reasoning that seem limited to the individual, with a constrained view of senses and mind, and to the bald, physical world. One might find some things about the world in such a view, but one would not see most of what is there. Augustine, in a line he uses frequently, might fittingly censure products of such reasoning by saying, “Who is so left to himself to think such a thing?”

Now, the claim that deduction produces no new knowledge, thrown down as if it were a gauntlet, would have baffled Aristotle. Primarily, deduction makes what is apparently knowledge a certainty, so from this standpoint it may be easy to think that the syllogism does not create new knowledge; it just affirms it, though, this is still a very important part of *knowing* (See Chapter 4). Aristotle explains how the failure to make deductions causes the problem of knowing and not knowing. To take a simple example, one can know that stars are made of gas and that the sun is a star without ever realizing that the sun is made of gas. So one can say that clarity through a deduction counts as new knowledge, and any clarification or correction counts as new knowledge (*Physics* VII.3, 246b.18-247a.10). However, the syllogism does not create new principles, unless we are applying the conclusion to another field or argument.<sup>56</sup>

The conclusion of the syllogism is also new in other senses. Most importantly, a conclusion can be a new realization to the audience, whether internal or external, who

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<sup>55</sup> See Appendix B for more on other people, reasoning, and the natural world.

<sup>56</sup> Toulmin’s map metaphor mentioned in the Introduction also speaks to this way we can know and not know, how we can know certain truths but never “read” how they are related or related from a certain perspective/principle (cf. *Philosophy of Science* 96-97).

has never put the premises together. Otherwise, why would we try to use deductions in any type of argumentative discourse? Moreover, Russell himself inadvertently affirms that a deduction creates new knowledge in the course of denying it: an induction “has less cogency than a deduction, and yields only a probability, not a certainty; but on the other hand it gives *new* knowledge, which deduction does not make” (199 emphasis in original). Russell does not see that the very move that makes new knowledge in an induction is deductive and still reliant on topical rules, whether inducing in the mode of possibility, probability, or necessity. Robin Smith gives an example of how an induction can be rendered deductively:<sup>57</sup>

Every X is an F  
 Every Y is an F  
 Every Z is an F  
 X, Y, and Z are species of A.  
 Therefore, every A is an F.

Smith continues, “[s]o understood, inductive arguments can easily be supplemented so as to make them deductively valid: we need only strengthen the last premise to ‘X, Y, and Z are the *only* species of A.’ Aristotle proposes just this in *An. Pr.* II.23” (85-6).

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<sup>57</sup> In *The Philosophy of Science*, Toulmin seems to make some of the assumptions I allude to here, for he too does not think that the deduction creates much of anything new, at least new in the sense that he thinks is valuable—*discovery*, looking at “familiar phenomena in a new way” that the physical science appear to have the hold on (18). As we will have occasion to see later, Toulmin does not realize how many universals are being drawn on in his examples in this book, nor how much the inductions of the physical sciences require deduction and discovery requires induction, that the syllogism and dialectic are still useful in testing not only the work of natural histories, but also the physical sciences as well, as it is still useful in testing the works of philosophy (cf., e.g., 25, 36-39, 50). Discovery actually seems the hunt for definitions; to this point, one might look at how Toulmin tries to say identifying and defining are interdependent in the physical sciences when he is trying to throw the universal premise out of them (47). We will see how much definition is reliant on induction and deduction and with these on the same things in Chapter 4, while Toulmin’s understanding of identifying and defining may lead to the conflation of his premise types discussed in Chapter 3. He assumes that the syllogism cannot handle the ways that the demonstrations of physical science can often cause theories to shift (e.g. 44-45).

Yet it seems not simply by virtue of having a complete set that the induction is made necessary, but by the essence that comes prior and is the same way in each case. It is the way A is that the mind can grasp. We will find this point concerning essence particularly important when we come to discuss probability; induction needs essence to work. Otherwise, what constitutes an appropriate sample size seems impossible to gauge in a principled way.

Now, one could have made a valid in/deduction in the possible mode without really changing much here, just the wording of the conclusion: “Therefore, it is possible that A is a F.” If we had a sense of the limitedness of the class of A, we might even have grounds for making a probable valid in/deduction.<sup>58</sup> Russell, however, who does not have much focus on validity because he sees the formal theory of the syllogism as unimportant, is ready to talk about such things in terms of probabilities only, which is something hard to do without universals and exterior grounding. As Kaplan suggests, Russell’s conception of propositional functions, their use and how he sees their relationship among logic, truth, and validity, poses a possible “challenge to the interpretation of modality,” and Russell’s skepticism concerning modality may have kept him from not only investigating this issue but other reliable ways of knowing (Footnote 933).<sup>59</sup>

Another way of viewing these issues of induction, deduction, essence, empirical bias, and universal premises can be seen in taking another example from Smith. Smith (162-3) tries to refute A.’s claim in *An. Pr.* I that every syllogism must contain at least

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<sup>58</sup> Aristotle seems to instead use *example* for that sense of induction which establishes probability, while *induction* is set apart as something that can prove conclusively because it considers all the particular cases (*Pr. An.* II.24, 69a.16-20), which seems a fair conclusion if all deductions, as well as induction as a form of deduction are all based on the same figures (II.23).

<sup>59</sup> The discussion of modes will be picked up again when discussing Toulmin.

one universal premise with the following type of “syllogism” that Smith says is accepted in modern logic (inferring ‘Something is F’ from ‘*a* if F’):

Socrates was executed.

Socrates was the teacher of Plato.

Therefore the teacher of Plato was executed.

This is a sort of perplexing example: here we have two particular statements that seem to result in a deduction. But there seem a number of ways in which to question the deductiveness of this example. First, one can question whether the conclusion that necessarily results is something other than what the two premises state and whether there is a middle-extreme relationship among the premises. One could make the case here that the ‘conclusion’ is merely a compound predicative statement made out of two singular ones, a tautology, while both predicate accidents of a particular.

Now, one may be inclined to believe me that this is not a syllogism, but still argue that there is something logical going on here: induction. But induction and deduction need some type of universal to work. Now, if Socrates is just a material subject, as he is in several philosophies, induction is absent because multiple particulars are absent. As was shown above, induction needs a class (made up of particulars) to work, and even an example needs an implied class. What could be happening here, then, is just perception of a particular. One cannot render deductively this would-be induction of the traits of a particular, because (1) a particular is not a class and (2) even if one were silly enough to talk of a particular as a class of traits, there would still be no way to *demonstrate* anything of it because there would be no way to set limits to the



class. The amount of accidents would be infinite.<sup>60</sup> And accidents cannot be deduced from (see Chapters 4 and 5)

Of course, one might object by taking some of these traits and calling them identities, a very ambiguous notion in this sense, and placing different identities under the class name of a person. But it would be hard to distinguish the different identities so that they could make up the class of, say, *Socrates*, so that we could have the set of Socrates, Socrates Mask#1, Socrates Mask #2, Socrates Mask #*n*. Assuming that such a separation is possible, one could easily imagine a situation where one could illustrate that something is true of each identity, that the identities are the total of the particulars of the class Socrates, and thus demonstrate, e.g., ‘Every Socrates likes to have fun with friends.’

But there is an apparent equivocation here, besides the issue of whether all the differentiations of identity could account for all that is Socrates along the lines of the infinite amount of accidents. The statement cannot equal ‘Socrates likes to have friends,’ for we really cannot speak of Socrates the individual anymore. Assuming these identities make up all that is Socrates, the statement loses worth when we try to speak of the person Socrates, because there is nothing over and above the class to be predicated of. Though the personhood of Socrates first gave us a way of classifying these identities, once we try to account for of Socrates through his identities, Socrates loses himself (if not, perhaps, his core human nature), which is similar to the problem Russell causes by saying a person is a “collective name for a number of occurrences”

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<sup>60</sup> Indeed, without a solid idea of essence, it would be hard to tell where the accidents ended and Socrates began, or, for that matter, where Socrates ended and everything else began. One can see examples of this difficulty in reasoning in many works of Textual Studies and New Media, though there it is often a celebrated effacing.

(202). This situation also makes it difficult to generalize about humans too without any universally common identities; it would thus be hard to say anything of Socrates because he is human. Thus a likeness among the identities could be induced but the univocation of name and definition is not here, which is necessary for deduction (see Chapter 4).

Again, we need personhood, as an essence, especially as what are predicated here are accidents and allow us to infer no notion of essence, but a statement about the existence or consistency of personhood is missing from the example Smith gives. Without what might be called an *a priori* of reasoning and the real (for the real presents it)—personhood, we are back to seeing this as not really reasoning at all; we may just have here perception of accidents of a particular, for these premises do not really need explicit reasoning to get to them.<sup>61</sup> Reason cannot work without universals and universal statements, and deduction needs to go through a middle term; one can see what I am saying here in a similar syllogism:

Animals move.

Animals have limbs and muscles.

Therefore, animals move and have limbs and muscles.

To say that inferring is being done here is misleading at best. What is being proven? If something is being proven, how is it being proven without a universal premise or warrant to stand on? This is a tautology, a concept that is very important to Toulmin.

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<sup>61</sup> See the discussion in Chapter 3 concerning reasoning about particulars. Also, concerning the personhood essence, one might be able to speak of the second premise as a property; see the discussion of Russell's Sir Walter Scott example below.

### RUSSELL RECAPITULATED

Some objection may be made that I misrepresent Russell by attacking him at the soft spot of a popular work, so I will make an attempt at verification of this criticism of Russell by taking a brief look at his essays mentioned earlier. His more considered thought on the relationship of predication, language, and logic shows up in “On Denoting.” There one finds a view of language use and predication overly bound to a very limited view of logic for truth and meaning. A more skeptical reader may be alerted to trouble along these lines at the beginning of the article where Russell attempts to define *denoting phrase*, a key term in the article, by giving a long list of examples (41). What he seems to mean by the term is the description of an object, but this is so vague as to be capable of referring to its definition, one of its properties, or even an accident, e.g., “the present king of France.”<sup>62</sup> As we saw above, Russell basically desires to throw all three of these out of the realm of knowing, which causes serious problems for knowing and respecting different ways of knowing.

For Russell, these phrases purport to have an object but one that does not “subsist”; recalling his notion of where essences lay, in some linguistic realm, this bothers him. Again, he seems to be concerned with universal or absolute, mathematical truth here with the requirement of presence (the absolute part being something Toulmin takes up arms against, as we shall see). What seems to be working here again is his privileging the individual and perception in knowing, asserting a difference in knowledge of *acquaintance* (perception, even in the mind) and *knowledge about* (“things we only reach by denoting phrases”):

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<sup>62</sup> For more on Russell’s problems with predications and descriptions, I refer the reader to works by Timothy Smiley and both Alex Oliver and Timothy Smiley, including an article in the same issue of *mind* as the Kaplan article (see also <http://philpapers.org/autosense.pl?searchStr=Timothy%20Smiley>).

In perception we have acquaintance with the objects of perception, and in thought we have acquaintance with objects of a more abstract logical character; but we do not necessarily have acquaintance with the objects denoted by phrases composed of words with whose meanings we are acquainted. (41-2)

For Russell, denoting phrases have no meaning in themselves: “but [...] every proposition in whose verbal expression they occur has a meaning” (“On Denoting” 43). Russell is again trying to rule out how we know through language, an important part of how we understand and engage the world (see Chapter 4). Russell asserts elsewhere, “somewhat out of the blue, that acquaintance is characterized by ‘perfect and complete’ knowledge” of the thing (qtd. in Kaplan 994), but one could ask, then, how Socrates or *Man* subsists (as we saw how he problematizes these notions and the resultant ethical complications)?

In what could be called an Occamite turn, Russell next gives three propositional functions, represented by  $C(x)$  and the most primitive of denoting phrases (*everything*, *nothing*, and *something*) in a very restrictive logical-semantic system that attempts to prevent meaning outside of propositions (while he glides over the issue of basic induction and designation and the transfer to propositions on page 43). His system attempts to eliminate denoting phrases by trying to reduce all meanings to what can be said in these propositional functions. This is in keeping with the view of predication abstracted earlier from Russell:

Predicates may themselves have predicates, but the predicates of predicates will be radically different from the predicates of substances.

The predicate, on this view, is never part of the subject, and thus no true subject-predicate proposition is analytic. Propositions of the form "All A is B " are not really subject-predicate propositions, but, express relations of predicates; such propositions may be analytic, but the traditional confusion of them with true subject-predicate propositions has been a disgrace to formal logic. (23)

He not only affirms the impossibility of universal predication, but also denies a large part of predication in general, not only drastically limiting the way one can say a true thing but even drastically limiting what things can be talked about in terms of truth; that is, again, he tries to limit what can be talked about. There is no necessary freedom to affirm or deny the truth of everything, as there is in Aristotle. Now, the attempt to make a system for semantic clarifying for the end of logical application is not bad in itself; I even do a bit of this latter on. However, Russell errs in allowing logic, as well as sense perception, to have too much control in predication, meaning, and truth, negating much of human existence and how humans exist in the world.

Kaplan explains the assumption behind this overly logical bias in Russell's predication theory:

For Russell, his contemporaries, and those that preceded them, it is the realm of propositions, existing independently of language, that form the subject matter of logic. One consequence of this propositions-before-language point of view is that the symbolism used in the language of logic must be developed with great care. Our ability to study the logical relations among propositions may be helped or hindered by how well the

syntax of the language of logic articulates with the structure of the propositions that form its subject matter. (935)

This not only results in overly complex symbolic of logic but mathematical absolutes being applied to every type of knowledge and anything that can be argued about, which is what Toulmin has in mind when he brings his complaint against modern formal logic. And, again, things that cannot be argued about on the grounds of acquaintance are seen as unfit for investigation, as trifles. I have already shown how he regards what he appears to believe about the artificial “dictionary” explanation of things, and now we see a further bias against the broader class of denoting phrases.

Again, Russell’s focus on acquaintance unnecessarily restricts knowledge and what can be validly talked about as being known to the individual and her perceptions from her immediate environment. Kaplan, somewhat with my intention, tries to loosen the death-grip that Russell places on knowledge and give more validity to coming to knowledge through language:

The key to our *use* of language is comprehension of the linguistic *representations*, not acquaintance with that which is *represented*. It is the language that we need to connect with. When we comprehend the representation, we can use it to reach what it represents, *its* content.

When we don’t, the linguistic representations are inert. (997)

This reconsideration of language can be an important step in also opening truth again to common experience, which formal logic in its modern instances has precluded for a long time, as we will see later.

Finally, Russell does give here an interesting investigation into the relationship of logic, meaning, and a (very general) concept of predication, but he tries to give a strict logical form for this relationship (in his propositional schema) where denoting phrases are involved, which is not necessary.<sup>63</sup> If we look at the “present King of France” or even “the King of France” as an accident or a relative property, which always can be predicated of an individual but has no real existence without an individual, Russell’s concern over denoting phrases is less troubling to our complex epistemological faculties.<sup>64</sup> Accidents depend on essence in being what they are, as well as for their use in material logic and logic overall (e.g., in modes); the idea of essence even affects what they are in the realm of rhetoric, for bound up with the notion of rhetoric here is the idea that something can be more important than another to focus upon.<sup>65</sup>

Of course, also driving Russell here is an over-reliance on logic for truth—truth with the universal absolute standard, i.e., the notion that a thing can only be spoken of as true if it is *demonstrated* absolutely to be true (oh, the pickle for first principles!). For example, at 55 he seems to confuse “Scott” and “author of *Waverly*” as the same

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<sup>63</sup> Actually, one could argue that Russell is dealing with a somewhat trivial problem here in his approach to dealing with subsistence and presence in reasoning and knowing, one more of a benefit to a sophistic theory of arguing, and that he gives a solution, by an ultimate reduction of denoting phrases, that leaves dialectic, rhetoric, and vibrancy of knowledge in a bind. I suggest that the problem Russell is dealing with, and this is a simple explanation I know, may be a result of being consumed by the thought that signs exist for things and not the other way around, as Augustine advocates, or even that some mean exists between the two views.

<sup>64</sup> Kaplan notes that Russell was very concerned with the representation issues of logic (997).

<sup>65</sup> The issue of essence and the trouble with how to deal with accidentals continues for Russell in “On the Relation of Universals and Particulars,” where one finds him lumping universals and so-called accidental universals together in the class of universals (See Chapter 4):

We may then define a particular in our fourth sense as an entity which cannot be in or belong to more than one place at one time, and a universal as an entity which either cannot be in or belong to any place, or can be in or belong to many places at once. (21)

As we see in *Meta*. VI.2, accidentals come from there being necessity and for the most part in the world, that there is “matter” that is “capable of being otherwise that as it usually is” (1027a. 27-31, 14-15). We will see later on other ways accidents are dependent on essence.

through his notion of identity, when they are not the same. Russell marks some distinction but does not dwell on its importance, but there is a problem here that one can talk about in the most basic of predicative terms—*is*.

It is true that Scott is the author of *Waverly*, and the phrase and the name are substitutable in certain cases, but this is not to say they are the same. Scott *is* the author of *Waverly*, and in the limited scope of this proposition this *is* what Scott *is*, but this is not all Scott *is*; his authorship of the novel *is* a property of his; the name and the phrase *are* not mutually inclusive. Russell seems to imply that these are the same as ‘*x is x*’ and are not, and further, he seems to really want them to be the same to have *acquaintance*, the higher form of knowledge for him (55-6). The consequence of this is that Russell would have to say that one cannot say anything of the actual, present King of France if one does not know who he is, even though one may know certain powers that the king of France will have, which one could deduce the actual king of France will have.<sup>66</sup> This is something of the obverse of the personhood-essence issue raised above, that universals, in whatever the predicable type, can be said of people and known of people, and it is also a way of illustrating how problematic is Russell’s separating of linguistic universals.

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<sup>66</sup> Russell makes the point this way when he makes the first attempt to “*justify*” the principle that “all thinking has to start from acquaintance” (Kaplan 993):

The fundamental epistemological principle in the analysis of propositions containing descriptions is this: *Every proposition which we can understand must be composed wholly of constituents with which we are acquainted.* ... The chief reason for supposing the principle true is that it seems scarcely possible to believe that we can make a judgment or entertain a supposition without knowing what it is that we are judging or supposing about (qtd. in 993).

But in a very real way we often do know what we are talking about even when we do not know the thing. This is the importance of universals to reasoning. Yes, it may often take one present example to spark the creation of a universal in the individual, but the groundwork for the universalizing of that concept has often already been laid down earlier in many ways. Otherwise, what is there to compare the example to and universalize to, including things we have only heard about? Cf. also Chapter 5 on how properties help in acquiring knowledge.



This is not the only commonsensical notion that Russell is tossing, though. In “On the Relation of Universals and Particulars,” a paper given before the Aristotelian Society, Russell somehow manages to come strangely close to Aristotle’s view of universals and particulars at the conclusion, talking of timeless universals and talking of particulars as Aristotle would talk of primary *ousia* being the subject of predication. Yet Russell forbids predicating of universals and asserts the existence of particular relational terms (as if the different uses of *outside* are fundamentally separable without some universal notion from which they are derived) (23-4, 17). Again, Russell privileges sense over commonsense in his privileging of acquaintance:

The immediate object of (say) visual perception is always of finite extent. If we suppose it to be, like the matter corresponding to it in "real" space, composed of a collection of entities, one for each point which is not empty, we shall have to Suppose two things, both of which seem incredible, namely: (1) that every immediate object of visual (or tactile) perception is infinitely complex; (2) that every such object is always composed of parts which are by their very nature imperceptible. It seems quite impossible that the immediate object of perception should have these properties. Hence we must suppose that an indivisible object of visual perception may occupy a finite extent of visual space. (12)

This isolation of perception from the other processes we use when we identify and come to know something is forced for the purpose of logical certainty. We can even see him trying to divorce logic from the real world: “We are so accustomed to regarding such relations as ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ as incompatible, that it is easy to suppose a

logical incompatibility, although in fact the incompatibility is a characteristic of space, not a result of logic” (16). Further, “these conditions are not demonstrable by purely logical considerations: they are synthetic properties of perceived spatial relations” (17). It follows from this that the terms of spatial relations cannot be universals or collections of universals, but must be particulars capable of being exactly alike and yet numerically diverse. One could also glean in both quotes a denial of a real principle of non-contradiction, and as will be discussed in Chapter 2, such terms seem to have a common ancestry. We may also be able to talk of the logic of contraries as a bridge between real world and logic, and this is an inherently better approach to logic than assuming a disconnect, which gives mathematics the opportunity to absolutize a possibility, which could then become a probable explanation to the public by being “Mathematical” or “Scientific”.

### **Conclusion**

To summarize, as well as to introduce what is to follow, Russell and Toulmin get to their conclusions a bit differently, but it seems obvious that both are ignoring the issues brought up in the *Topics*. Both induction and deduction are necessary for knowledge, but Russell, for one, is so busy trying to be the iconoclast to what he sees as the glorification of linguistically-driven deduction, that he does not seem to realize that induction is also built upon the necessary connection between words and things, or rather he recognizes it, conjoined with the notion of substance, as one of the greatest errors ever unleashed on philosophy. He states that “a *word* may have an essence, but a *thing* cannot,” but the result of this would be to have only inductive knowledge of words, which would undermine the standard of absolute empirical validity that both

Russell and Toulmin use to undermine the status of deduction, if not deduction itself (though this criticism is less applicable to Toulmin). Moreover, Russell would not have the necessary concepts of genus and species (and the other predicables) to be able to classify and distinguish things in order for an induction. What he ends up with is a philosophy that divorces logic from reality and thus how logic is used in argumentation. Argumentation is almost always concerned with the real in some way, and responding to this move may be one reason why Toulmin tries to write *Uses with everyday* argumentation in mind.

Another way to characterize Russell's abstraction of logic is as an attempt to make formal logic alone philosophy. The biggest problem that this neo-Cartesianism presents for rhetoric is that it leads to the loss of the four *aetia*. There is no chance to argue the different explanation of things, no chance to understand the *why* and *is* together nor respect and appreciate the power of this. More explicitly for rhetoric, there is no chance to honestly argue or inspire with potentials, for essence is precluded and thus is a thing's end, along with the things that can be potentially developed out of its essence for its good end or end in light of the good (as Aristotle separates these ends in a sense). There is no opportunity to know a thing by understanding its nuances from competing explanations, and there is no symbol. There is no chance of wisdom. Of course, the loss of essence had great repercussions for the natural sciences and medical ethics that have been well documented, but the loss of *aetia* as a way of describing essence has been even more profound for how we think and argue about the world, humankind, and the place of people in the world in general. Here is a reduced way of

human being in the world that, as we will see Toulmin argue, begins with Descartes and is tyrannically reinforced by Russell.

Moreover, Aristotle, after discussing the importance of principles and *aetia* to the first science, opens the *Metaphysics* with discussion of how early philosophers, focusing on first causes, were apparently materialists and did not address causal concerns that satisfied the mind, such as the cause of beauty, and eventually were “forced by truth itself” to inquire into another kind of cause besides the material (I.3, 984b.10-13; cf. I.8, 988b.23-31). For if matter is all there is or is primary, there is no substance, “for both separability and ‘thisness’ are thought to belong chiefly to substance” (VII.3, 1029a.29-30). Matter by itself (which would be the case if it were primary too) does not have these qualities. Accordingly, these “early thinkers had no tincture of dialectic”; they did not focus on definitions (I.6, 987b.34).<sup>67</sup>

Thus loss of the *aetia* is the loss of philosophy and rhetoric, or since a complete philosophy cannot be without rhetoric, the loss of rhetorical philosophy—the motivated persuasion of knowledge of and doing of the true and good. When the *aetia* are suppressed, we forget that the world is rhetorical. We forget that there are competing definitions and explanations of things. This is often something we just have to tell students. Otherwise, they will simply go about the rest of their lives with their disciplinary chunks, which are set to batter them to death at the moment of conflicting belief or set for use as a set of “facts” to pound down another in argument and the public square, often without realizing the contradictions of their principles. They

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<sup>67</sup> In contrast, Aristotle’s complaint against Plato seems to be that he, driven by dialectic and a focus on definition (besides some of his philosophical influences) went too far in the opposite direction from the materialists, though Plato cleared up some problems posed by the Pythagoreans in the process (987a.20-28; 987b.30-35; I.9, 991a.8-18; 992a.24-35). I will return to the relationship of *aetia* and dialectic in Chapter 4.

misunderstand how a disciplinary field is authoritative regarding a subject and thus often misuse the authority of the field or even apply the wrong field to the issue at hand, an issue I will return to in Chapter 3. Here seems one of the greatest impetuses to critical thinking that the writing teacher possesses. For those who are ignorant of the world of explanations and potentials are often doomed to receive concepts haphazardly (which is often a way of precluding any light on the good that an individual could bring into the world).

Also, it could be argued, as part of an aetiological investigation, explanation, and definition of culture, that Big-S Science (a quasi-metaphysical rhetorical force that is attached to the natural sciences in particular) continues to have such cultural persuasion because it parodies the *aetia*. One might see it in the way they often try to harmonize with one another, especially when an object has shown itself to cross disciplines (giving motives to objects is still a popular way of speaking in the natural sciences). But perhaps the greatest illustration of a complete parody is the non-discriminatory use of *why* and *how* when people apply scientific principles or the cultural understanding of scientific principles in argument. Obviously, though, science does not cover all the *whys*, for it mostly stays between the ends, mainly focusing on the material how/why.

Along with this parody, or perhaps stemming from it, is the immense power *Science* has been conceded to define, which it putatively strives to do through the material cause alone. Of course, that it even attempts to say what a thing is through just the material is often hypocritical, for this necessarily requires the immaterial mind (*Ideas Have Consequences* 47), and those who try to use the incomplete

definitions/explanations of science often turn the authority of fact into “an idolatry of circumstance” (“Up From Liberalism” 41).

Now, such problems of definitional authority have been intuited by those in the Humanities, and many of these have tried to use relativism to wrest power from the sciences. Of course, the field of rhetoric is perhaps in the deepest hole when it comes to making a viable rhetoric for this usurpation by relativistic means, for (1) relativism is (theoretically) the preclusion of definition, which denies any ends/potentials with which to persuade, and (2) rhetoric *qua* rhetoric never had the ability to define in itself. Perhaps this is why such attempts to wrest power from the sciences often look like they are motivated by spite, as spite itself is a self-contradicting principle, and self-contradiction is what those who argue from relativism typically do. Thus the greatest irony for those who subscribe to Big Rhetoric and the Toulmin method as representative of how reasoning works is that they cry out against their own succession, their own field’s success, for Toulmin requires field-dependency, while the principle of Big Rhetoric illustrates that the field of rhetoric is not competent to judge on anything. What rhetoric needs more than ever for parity, stabilization, and value in terms of disciplines is truth, a truth that can be shared in, and one aspect of this, perhaps a starting place, is substantial dialectic.

As Weaver puts so much effort into showing, definition, an important part of stability, is at the heart of persuasion, even if the definitions are bad, blurry, or not even realized. Again, persuasion has to do with potentials, what can possibly be [the case] in a given situation and what has to be. The only way this can be done with a particular is to draw on, explicitly or implicitly, the universal concepts of things. This work is what

the *aetia* call attention to, even with ethics and values (often in the efficient cause and the thing itself). *Science* often seems so ultimate in argumentation because it is used to shut out other explanations without thought for probability.

Finally, as we will see in Chapter 2, Toulmin argues that this view of science was intentionally set in place but poorly grounded. Most overtly, Toulmin's career is directed in the name of humanism at tearing down rationalist strongholds, such as those theories that place "Science" as the pinnacle of reasoning, whether they stand on Russell or other philosophers and scientists.<sup>68</sup> Toulmin's notion of field-dependency can be seen as a step toward the proper placement of *Science*, an attempt to say what the standards of judgment are in a given situation regarding a certain object, though we will see the problems with this notion in Chapter 3. What is perhaps more important to Toulmin for breaking *Science's* tyranny over ideas and the public sphere is throwing down the ideal of the analytic standard, which will be discussed in Chapters 2 and 3.

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<sup>68</sup> Toulmin seems to see the trends of anti-humanist rationalism as accidents of intellectual history or the history of intellectuals, and he does quite a bit of tracing this problem to philosophers in *Cosmopolis*, which, along with parts of *Human Understanding*, largely makes up the historical justification for his career project.

## CHAPTER 2

### MENDING, RENDERING, OR RENDING LOGIC?

As I am trying to show throughout, logic functions properly when it has a material and formal logic that complement each other and are rooted in the same thing. Logic quickly becomes dangerous if it is limited to just subject matters or to just form. In Chapter 3 we will see the problems caused to the relationship of formal logic and material logic by Toulmin's argument schema and emphasis on field-dependency in arguing. In this chapter, however, I will present Toulmin's important, ethically motivated, critique of those who try to put all of logic into formal logic, a needed critique that simply takes him too far in the opposite direction. Just as matter by itself affords no possibility of distinction, we will see here and in Chapter 3 that such material logics by themselves are ultimately indeterminate and without standards to limit themselves nor judge of their reasonability. The focus on showing the connection between the formal and material below in terms of modes in assessment, showing that there are field-invariant ways of evaluating and this is what Aristotle intends dialectic for (see Chapter 4), is a pushing back against this error, as well as a way to reach one of Toulmin's goals—the prevention of the usurpation of logic by a specific field. Toulmin's quasi-formless material logic notwithstanding, his emphasis on bringing ethics back to the use of logic is a good route to take in fixing some of the problems logic has gotten itself into. It is also something I am concerned with throughout this project and will focus on below; as we will see, Toulmin's presentation of the solution is unfortunately problematic in that it seems to isolate logic in the field of ethics which causes or corresponds to problems in seeing how ethos relates to logic.



Now, Toulmin, in going from Descartes to the Twentieth Century, gives a decent historical setup of how formal logic, the analytic standard in particular, has been isolated and abused. Yet Toulmin fails to see that this is not a problem that necessarily comes out of formal logic or the desire to have formal logic: a formal logic can be formed well and used ethically, as I hope to show in Chapters 4 and 5. Here, I will start with his history, giving some commentary on the way, then move on to discuss how Toulmin tries to fix these abuses in *Uses* but ultimately falls short of a complementary material and formal logic, namely because he (1) throws out the analytic standard and basically formal logic because of a misunderstanding of the ethical nature of the analytic standard and formal logic in general, causing problems that will be discussed here and in Chapter 3. He also fails because of (2) an aversion to dialectic broadly and material-dialectical misunderstandings and omissions in his system, including (a) misunderstanding the importance of dialectic, formal logic, and probable reasoning to each other and (b) the derivations of meanings in terms respectfully. In other words, Toulmin cannot give a complementary formal-material logic, because he disregards much of formal and material logic, a point that will be discussed further in Chapter 3. Also, I am still supposing that Aristotle does give a well-rounded logic and that his project and Toulmin's are not as similar as some, including Toulmin, think. As in the last chapter, I will give Aristotle's responses to Toulmin's arguments and leave the positive statement of his case to Chapters 4 and 5.

### **Toulmin's Brief History of Attitudes toward Formal Logic and a Brief History of Toulmin's Attitude Towards Aristotle**

In the preface to *Cosmopolis*, Toulmin says it is was Europe's submergence of the "tolerant, skeptical attitude of the 16th-century humanists" for the 17th-century "pursuit of mathematical exactitude and logical rigor, intellectual certainty and moral purity [that set Europe] on a cultural and political road that has lead both to its most striking technical successes and to its deepest human failures" (x). He believes that the way to salvage what is good about Modernity is to put these two foci back in proper relation, to "develop a view that combines the abstract rigor and exactitude of the 17th-century 'new philosophy' with a practical concern for human life in its concrete detail" (xi). For in the 17th-century, for the first time since Aristotle, rhetoric was separated from and subordinated far below logic, and an obsession with "theory-centered" philosophy and context independent reasoning began (75-77, 11, 21). This obsession was reinvigorated in the late 19th-century and early 20th-century. As Toulmin tells us, "philosophers in the 1920s and 1930s appealed to [the *Principia Mathematica* of Russell and Whitehead] as the ultimately self-validating system of knowledge" (172).

Moreover, from the theory-centered obsession of the 17th-century were born the absolutist moral philosophies that Toulmin detests: "Like a great Moloch, this appetite for theory consumed all the branches of practical philosophy: case ethics, practical politics, rhetoric, and all" (83). Yet those who developed contrary philosophies from this time period are not much better. Toulmin chides continental philosophy for its misrepresentation of modernism, for it either looks at the rationalist part (and totally ignores the 16<sup>th</sup> century impetus), seeing the only alternative as deconstruction or, as in

Habermas, it looks only at the moral part, à la Kant (172-3, 180). Many scholars of rhetoric follow the same errors: Scott (12, 16-17), Brummett, and Crowley bring moral accusations against those such as Weaver who have any hint of “absolutism” in their systems of rhetoric,<sup>69</sup> but we may find them as Toulmin finds others, “rejecting Descartes for Cartesian reasons” (Olson 198).

In an interview with Olson shortly after the writing of *Cosmopolis*, Toulmin expresses how *Uses* has the same philosophical, historical backdrop:

The deeper agenda [of *Uses*] arose out of a perception about the argument in epistemology—particularly empiricist epistemology, from Locke to Kant, and again from Mach to Russell on through to the Cambridge people like G.E. Moore and the younger people. This argument was largely generated as a result of confusion between substantive arguments and formal arguments and sprang from a demand that substantive arguments meet formal criteria of a sort that seemed to me (and to Aristotle) inappropriate. (199)

We saw elements of the empiricist epistemological problems with Russell, and we will see how Toulmin tries to clear up the confusion over argument types below. First, speaking of Aristotle and the relationship of epistemology and logic, Toulmin argues that people have focused on the *Prior* and *Posterior Analytics* “for the very good reason that it appeared that one could keep those under sufficient control to say (roughly speaking) that there was only one valid answer to any given question, and only one valid form” (199). Toulmin opposes this approach to Aristotle’s own hermeneutical

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<sup>69</sup> *Absolutist* is not an accurate description of Weaver’s work, for his rhetorical and moral philosophies are molded by a wise respect for the unknowable aspect of the absolute that is not absolutely knowable.

emphasis, which ties “ethics, politics, poetics, rhetoric and the other things that Aristotle also regards as worth including in his entire series of linked projects” (203). Toulmin’s goal is to reestablish and recalibrate the connection of all these, by especially focusing on the relationship of the components of logic and rhetoric with the purpose of answering ethical concerns. One could say Toulmin is begging us for an approach to interdisciplinarity through reasoning or perhaps even an interdisciplinary approach to ethical reasoning, which might not be what the reader of *Uses* would expect with its emphasis on field-dependency (see Chapter 3).

Nor would the reader of early Toulmin expect the privileging of Aristotle. Aristotle is not mentioned in *The Place of Reason in Ethics*. In *The Philosophy of Science*, he seems to be lumped with other classical physicists whose theories were “repugnant,” not just because “the theories advanced were so bare and mechanical but, quite as much, the fact their idea of what it would be to have explained everything was so much smaller than life,” though as we will see in Chapter 5, life is the driving force for Aristotle (105). Further, one sees even here a tossing out here of the syllogism, so connected to Aristotle, from the physical sciences as irrelevant to it.<sup>70</sup> Finally, in *Uses*, Toulmin’s animosity becomes overt in his argument that Aristotle is guilty of planting the seed of rationalist abuses in the *Analytics*, and much of the book is concerned with isolating the syllogism even more, this time from everyday argument (2-3).<sup>71</sup>

Yet one sees a slow change in Toulmin regarding Aristotle. As late as *Human Understanding*, Aristotle is still very suspect, though not as bad as Plato. However, by

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<sup>70</sup> Physics here seems a superior field for Toulmin, which is interesting in view of his later goal of not having someone usurp *logic*.

<sup>71</sup> It may be worth noting that Reid blames Aristotle for giving the foundation of the “ideal system” that naturally led to the problems Descartes introduces (see Footnote 213), but Toulmin sees a problematic logical emphasis in Aristotle.

*The Abuse of Casuistry* and even more in *Cosmopolis*, Aristotle has become Toulmin's philosopher exemplar, while Russell is one who recast a rationalism even more confining and dehumanized than that of the 17th-century (*Cosmopolis* 159):

To Aristotle, both Theory and Practice were open to rational analysis, in ways that differed from one field of study to another. He recognized that the kinds of arguments relevant to different issues depend on the nature of those issues, and differ in degrees of formality or certainty.<sup>72</sup> [...]

Seventeenth-century philosophers and scientists, by contrast, followed the example of Plato. They limited 'rationality' to theoretical arguments that achieve a quasi-geometrical certainty or necessity: for them, theoretical physics was thus a field for rational study and debate, in a way that ethics and law were not. Instead of pursuing a concern with 'reasonable' procedures of all kinds, Descartes and his successors hoped eventually to bring all subjects into the ambit of some formal theory. (20)

This is the same complaint that was brought against Russell, and I have already discussed how Russell was dehumanizing. In contrast to Russell's detest for the lingering tenets of Medieval Aristotelian logic in mind, Toulmin asserts that the reasons for deploring Aristotle's influence in medieval science are now anachronistic, and that his influence from the *Ethics*, *Politics*, and *Rhetoric* helped create a flourishing humanism (26).

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<sup>72</sup> Toulmin argues later, "Aristotle shared Plato's hope that we would eventually discover truths that held generally ('on the whole') of human beings as well as natural things; but he saw that our chance of acting wisely in a practical field depends on our readiness, not just to calculate the timeless demands of intellectual formulae, but also to take decisions *pros ton kairon*—that is, 'as the occasion requires'" (190).

Indeed, Toulmin comes to identify very strongly with Aristotle, even referring to his own work as a *novissimum organum* in identification with the way all of Aristotle's works on reasoning are connected to the rest of his works: "that is, all my [Toulmin's] books are in different ways concerned with rationality, reasonableness, the operation of the human reason, and so on" (Olson 198). Further, "what goes with this [*novissimum organum*] is a sense that what needs reviving is not just rhetoric but all the bits of the organon that are not analytic. [...] So for me, what we call 'rhetoric' has to be understood as including dialectic, topics, all those bits of the discussion about argumentation that are not analytic" (203).

Unfortunately, in the Toulmin that composition studies knows, dialectic and the topics are largely left out, though several scholars have pointed out the similarity between Toulmin and dialectical and rhetorical traditions of commonplaces (Bird, Fahnestock and Secor, and Fulkerson). The most pertinent gap in those works, and it is also a gap in Toulmin's system, is the one between dialectical topics and rhetorical topics (the topics being largely invisible in most of Toulmin's work).<sup>73</sup> Now, Swearingen is right that, "Toulmin argues for an alternate Aristotle, the Aristotle of the full *organon*" and that "[i]n such an expanded vision of Aristotle, logic, language, and the human uses of human reason, rhetoric too receives amplification" (233). But Toulmin's Aristotle is stunted by lack of focus on Aristotle's view of dialectic and topics, which is why I have given so much space to expanding Aristotle in Chapter 4 and will work on clarifying Toulmin's Aristotle here.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Again, a fuller discussion will have to wait for another project.

<sup>74</sup> Again, my project is concerned with the unfortunate problems that come from ignoring the topics, whether from rebellion of the mind's proclivity to categorize and "rest" in knowledge or from a Deweyan glorification of issues. Of course, with the latter one can eventually come to a set of rhetorical

For ironically, the strongest opponent of Aristotelian logic today, or one might even say grounded logic, is not Russell, despite his inflammatory language, but Toulmin. Toulmin's status results not so much from the strength of his arguments or vitriol directed at Aristotle, but from the popular adoption of his description of the layout of arguments by composition teachers for all or most of the logic sections of their courses. With this adoption of Toulmin, composition teachers are taking along many assumptions and vacant principles concerning the nature of logic, rhetoric, human reasoning, the world, and the relationships among them. This adoption seems to have happened quite smoothly, apparently justified by the assumption that what Toulmin offers is a clarification of the Aristotelian syllogism and its successor, the *epicheireme* (e.g., Fahnestock 20). This substitution is not *prima facie* understandable, since Toulmin in *Uses* barely acknowledges that Aristotle has anything to do with the project. As was mentioned in Chapter 1, Toulmin's primary focus here was not on making a formula. And what some consider a model more clearly explanatory of Aristotle, and therefore take as an improvement on Aristotle, is really almost completely separate from Aristotle and less grounded in how it explains logical processes. This is a problem. Toulmin has the right emphasis of material logic in mind when combating the rationalists, but his ignorance of the topical tradition and dialectic is glaring.<sup>75</sup>

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commonplaces or "talking points" about the issues one cares about, but this kind of thinking leads and contributes to all sorts of problems, the greatest of which possibly being unencumbered hubris. We saw earlier how Russell tries to preclude dialectical topics and definition, but the early Toulmin's fault is in being mainly ignorant of them, though he does intuit them in a way early on and give some recognition of them much later on.

<sup>75</sup> One could argue Toulmin's view of logic has not had much better effects on the field of rhetoric in general, where he has had heavy influence. Scott uses Toulmin as his foundation in an important article for the field, "On Viewing Rhetoric as Epistemic". As Lucaites et al tell the story, "[i]n 1967, Robert Scott rekindled the sophistic vision of rhetoric's relationship to truth, arguing that rhetoric is epistemic" (128). Lucaites et al further show the significance of Scott's article by discussing how Scott's position was extended by Brummett and eventually resulted in such studies as the 'rhetoric of inquiry,' i.e., 'Big

### NATURAL FORMAL LOGIC?

Now, in *Uses*, Toulmin works under the misconception, and is perhaps a cause of it spreading in composition studies, that *all* formal logicians drive to make an abstract system of logic without relation to real world uses.<sup>76</sup> Though this is true of Russell and others, it is not true for every theory of formal logic, as we will see here and in chapters to come, especially Chapter 4 which attempts to espouse Aristotle's view. But the dangers of such ill-conceived abstractions are important to point out. In Chapter 1, I tried to show that Russell's formal logic has an unfair relationship with many aspects of philosophy and living, and a similar moral impulse to mine drives much of Toulmin's works. In *Uses*, Toulmin wants to show that formal logic has an unrealistic connection to what one would think is closest to it: argumentation. He is concerned to show that formal logic in general, not just any given theories of logicians, is totally detached from how people argue. "Logic," he tells us, "is a critical not a natural science," but formal logic, it seems, has tried to have it both ways, forcing itself in the natural sphere (87).

In apparent contrast, Toulmin assumes everyday, practical argumentation (without delving into *why* people argue in such a way or whether they should) is the beginning point in studying argumentation and thus has final say in how people should argue—what should be considered valid logic in this sphere. This *organic* approach is certainly a respectable way to approach a description of logic, the difficulty of which

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Rhetoric' or the 'Rhetoric of X' (129), an impetus that simultaneously prompts the field to argue for its own importance and meaning and undermines the attempt. Thus we have people using Toulmin to advocate the subjectivism he was trying to avoid.

<sup>76</sup> Toulmin also makes other charges against logic and logicians based on misconceptions, many of which Castaneda dealt with the year after *Uses* was published (see Chapter 3) and some of which I will deal with here.



the *Organon* and *Rhetoric* can attest. Yet Toulmin fails to notice that logic as practiced and formalized by Aristotle, and by the Renaissance philosophers, as Harpine attests, originally acquired its maxims from studying the same everyday occurrences, from science to casual conversation, systematizing and refining the existing processes (355). These are not made up rules but attempts to account for real things and processes. Where else would logicians get their first principles from?<sup>77</sup> Indeed, in the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle makes explicit mention of the everyday forms of argument but stresses study of the art of rhetoric and the importance of refining these forms. Of course, Toulmin may be perfectly justified in thinking that *modern* logicians have lost their way, as will be discussed next, but this is no reason to abandon ship, much less mutiny.

First, the assumptions that formal logical systems exist without being tied to anything (or much less are circumstantially based) has become a key piece in the postmodern narrative of resistance to “Western” logic, along with the beliefs that they may distort our view of things, ruin how we can argue, or can be forced on or unconsciously imbibed by others. However, although there is cause for alarm regarding false standards of reasoning, as when a field or discipline forces a universal standard of reasoning elsewhere, there is no need for alarm here. Indeed, I hope to show that dialectic, an essential component of logic, is an important tool in judging the logic and conclusions of specific fields and cultures. Yet many postmodernists assume that this is where a battle line is to be drawn, perhaps because Western logic is so visible, or so often portrayed as merely analytic, or simply because logic is of such broad

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<sup>77</sup> If he had inquired into how these logicians arrived at their principles of their formal systems, he probably would have seen this. But the supposition that philosophers since Aristotle have unjustifiably forced the abstract, analytic ideal of the syllogism on reasoning morally drives the second half of Toulmin’s book.

applicability and strict accountability. They thus set about to divorce formal logic, which happens to have been mostly developed in the West, from what is considered reasonable, which is hard to do since reasoning occurs along the lines of formal logic, just as a part of being in the world (See Chapter 4).

As Harpine argues, “when some postmodernists argue that these basic patterns of human reasoning and discourse [syllogism, deductive logic, inductive logic, the argument from authority, empirical observation, and hypothesis testing] are the products of European thought, they claim on behalf of European society what is actually the property of mankind” (355). One can do empirical studies to find them in other cultures (355). Indeed, one needs them *for* empirical studies. And earlier logicians saw themselves as laying out these universal maxims of logic (355). Toulmin’s attempt, however, unfortunately avoids a large part of logic and its foundation; in contrast to Aristotle, Toulmin neglects dialectic, the logic of conversation, which has a primary concern in how we know what we are talking about—though Toulmin believes he is giving a way to argue in conversation.

Now, in a postmodern fashion, Toulmin disparages formal logic in his history of logic and philosophy. In *Human Understanding* for example, he does not do much to distinguish between logical form and how philosophies adhere to logical form. He moves from stressing the historical and contextual nature of concepts, even of logic (though it is hard to see how subjective something like deduction is), to insinuating that belief in universal principles leads to “self-righteousness and parochialism” (46). This, compiled with a list of other bad consequences, leads him to argue, “we can no longer afford to assume that our rational procedures, however impartial, find a guarantee in

*unchanging principles* mandatory on all rational things—still less, in some uniquely valid system of natural and moral philosophy” (51).<sup>78</sup>

Toulmin’s does not deal with this assumption, with why someone would argue for such a way or assume such things, and he also ignores the position that believes that there are some universals that are not absolutely knowable (which taken together actually might represent a bit of a Russellian attitude for Toulmin here).<sup>79</sup> Nor, again, does he deal much with the issue that the “abuses” of formal logic may be prompted by something else, perhaps in human nature, that is seizing upon formal logic and misusing it in groups and personal philosophies. (As we saw with Harpine, logic is a source of commonality for the human race, which should reveal other things to us in light of what we already know.) In this light, one could also contrast Toulmin’s view to Weaver’s, who sees a logical sense to the world and a value for institutions built on respecting that logical sense enough to let it breathe and not participate in something like what Burke called the bureaucratization of imaginative (*Permanence and Change* 281).

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<sup>78</sup> It is interesting to note that Toulmin in arguing for a historicizing of concepts leans rather heavily on chronological arrogance as justification:

If a theory of human understanding is to follow the rest of the twentieth-century science and history [assuming this is a good thing (my insertion)], then, it must be based not on unchanging principles and guarantees, but on the developing interactions between Man, his concepts, and the world in which he lives. [...] Instead of Fixed Mind gaining command over Fixed Nature by applying Fixed Principles, we should expect to find variable epistemic relationships between a variable Man and a variable Nature. (21)

Though Toulmin wants to deflate science, his rhetoric here is very similar to a rhetoric of science in history that amplifies the ignorance and antiquity of old explanations, whether they are 1000 years old or 10.

<sup>79</sup> Regarding the moral “side” of modernism discussed above, Toulmin could be seen to be more Kantian than he lets on, for they seem to share a key emphasis here, a desire to preclude investigation into transcendental dialectic. Further, Toulmin may be so obsessed with the geometrical and circumstantial elements of philosophy, especially epistemology, that he may be accused of the same thing that Kant is accused of by readers who disregard *On the Beautiful and the Sublime*, that he ignores the emotional aspects of knowing and perceiving. Likewise, Schroeder states that “Toulmin’s approach also fails to account for affective and stylistic appeals of persuasion, which are essential” (102).

Thus I do not exactly agree with Toulmin's historical narrative, for it somewhat precludes looking to underlying human motivations based in human nature that preexist the 16th-century and it precludes looking beyond individual philosophers for explanations of concepts. For example, he seems to want to make Socrates responsible for the desire for true and fair discourse on ultimate grounds, by appeal to general principles rather than power (43). Toulmin sees Aquinas, Descartes, and Kant picking up this belief from being under the same philosophical strain, rather than coming to it through individual uses of reason (43-44).

Also, we see here that Toulmin's rejection of logic as a natural science is not quite legitimate, because logic has a grounding in nature, as we will see more of in Chapter 4. *Uses* actually implicitly requires logic to be a natural science, for Toulmin claims to present a natural view of argumentation drawn from everyday occurrences (though he cannot resist making some correction to what he finds there, which implies an ideal), while it is modern logic, the more appropriate object of his scorn, which has actually traded the natural for the unnatural in the Twentieth Century, as we have had occasion to see. Thus the tone of Toulmin's work, which makes it clear that formal logic is a *hypocritical* science, could be less severe, but he burns at people who feel compelled to assess their everyday arguments in terms of pointless formal logic, apparently out of mistaken esteem for a "philosopher's ideal". Again, for Toulmin, this esteem has nothing to do apparently with human beings being philosophizing, rhetoricizing beings, beings that are compelled by these essential impetuses,<sup>80</sup> but is

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<sup>80</sup> I mean something finer and loftier than what Aristotle may have meant if he were to say such a thing, but some of how he might back up such a statement is in Chapter 5.

instead driven by cultural factors, especially the history of intellectual trends and the trends themselves.<sup>81</sup>

### **Brief Discussion of Problems with Modern Formal Logic**

Now, if Toulmin were to direct his critique at *modern* formal logic, his critique may be justified, and it will be of benefit to briefly discuss some of the motives and reasoning of modern logic, in addition to what we saw with Russell earlier, to see what Toulmin may be arguing against. For example, modern logic's "advances" in logic, such as first order predicate logic, are valuable as a means to diagram arguments, but concerning the use of these to assess how people argue, Toulmin is right to be upset. For example, most arguments do not need to start with noting that the thing that is going to be argued about exists. That is, if I am arguing with my friend about which is the better fruit, the apple or the orange, I do not have to declare the existence of apples, oranges, fruit itself, or goods by which we may judge them.

Further, to require existential claims as part of formal logic undermines the right role of formal logic in reasoning and jumps over a lot of philosophical groundwork.<sup>82</sup> It

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<sup>81</sup> Toulmin accuses logicians of preferring the absolute to the practical (as if they can or should be separated!). That is, he accuses them of being human, for the distinctively human urge is to get to first principles and definitions—universals. People crave knowledge, the *sine qua non* of rhetoric (without the universals and the desire to anchor reasoning in them, the example is just as powerless as the enthymeme). Thus Weaver can say that propositions known by the audience are the "settled things which afford the plane of maneuver" (*Ethics of Rhetoric*, Footnote 174). Part of the problem with Toulmin may be in undervaluing the drive toward universals. Russell goes wrong in unrealistically reducing the sphere of first principles and looking at first principles incorrectly, for some principles we have to look at as being absolutes that are not absolutely knowable. If we are speaking of what is knowable as what is demonstrable, than no first principle will be absolutely knowable.

<sup>82</sup> Modern formal logic's claim that the incorporation of the existential claim into logical form is an improvement on the syllogism is a mere bogey. Requiring an existential statement does not really get us any closer to existence, the real; there is still the ontological question that is avoided, as we saw in Chapter 1, and ontology is essentially important for what we call true. The existential claim, like any other affirmation, can be argued as true or false, and here this can eventually push us toward the stasis theory of topics, informal logic, and the external without even noticing it. That is, there is quite a lot of question begging that happens at this door.

What is really being avoided here is a foundational rule for Aristotle: "with an affirmation and negation one will always be false and the other true whether [the subject] exists or not" (*Cat.* 10, 13b. 26;

tries to include verification proper into form and makes a mess of ontology and its right use in verifying. We saw such problems in Chapter 1 and will see them again in Chapter 3, and one can see how the incorporation of verification into formal logic denies humans' having any commonality of experience at all, or commonality of senses, or perhaps even that no human (mind) has ever met another, all of which are so important in truth finding. At least, it assumes that such commonalities and essences are quite worthless and the metaphysical and philosophical issues associated them are trivial. This is the point where Russell's system collapses, for its overreaching formality nullifies the value of perception in some instances and definitely disregards experience—and common experience at that; its focus on acquaintance and denial of language in making universals eventually precludes any use for experience (cf. *De Int.* I.16a.5 and Appendix B). Yet many logicians seem to think that not placing a guard at this post of existence allows falsity to slip into one's logical system and devastate it, when actually formal logic is made weaker by supposing that this door belongs to it. In a mistaken idea of logical virtue, modern formal logic essentially sterilizes reason.

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cf. 1-35). This rule is equally applicable to affirmations and negations about particulars, universals, and universal statements about universals (*De Int.* 8). This rule, along with the rule that: "a deductive proposition without qualification will be an affirmation or denial of something concerning something [...]" (*Pr. An.* I.1, 24a.27), is very important to logic and reveals why Aristotle's logical and actual notions of secondary *ousia* are so important in dealing with this existence issue in reasoning, as we will continue to see. However, these are more properly aspects of material logic and can thus push to the use of logic for verification. Modern formal logic often has a problem of trying to run material logic into formal logic, with the result of mathematizing the elements of the world and existence that can appear to be mathematized, while often throwing out the elements that cannot be forged as math.

Regarding the first rule, one may think that Aristotle is using *truth* in different ways in the examples he gives, and I will give a comparable one here: if Tom does not exist, the statement, "Tom is a liar" would be false but "Tom is not a liar" would be true. Some may see the latter statement as being true in a secondary sense, where one has to substitute *nothing* for *Tom*. But one of the main arguments through this project is that predication allows for, captures, states, different levels of being that are useful in logic and argumentation. Such things can be abused by would-be liars, people trying to clarify an argument or judgment often use such steps or "truths," and it seems Aristotle's rule is important for the *reductio*.

In other words, logicians were trying to work out all the kinks of the relationship between logic and truth (and tossing out the rest), but their mistake was in not realizing that though logic in use deals with the true, as in the validity of asserted relationships or in showing whether an individual is mortal or not, formal logic's domain is not all of truth. Aristotle says as much when he states that understanding or science (*episteme*) is "universal and through necessities," but "there are some things which are true and are the case, but which can also be otherwise" (*Post. An.* I.33, 88b.33).<sup>83</sup>

Formal logic is more properly in the service of truth. We not only get to what is true through formal logic, but also through perception, authority, other people, emotions, even the Socratic "check," not to mention the fact that logic still needs a material logic for saying what is true.<sup>84</sup> These ways of coming to truth may be described in logical terms, but trying to always force an analytic standard of necessity on all of them and their conclusions every step of the way is foolish, especially when ontological standards for this process are not thoroughly vetted. If modern logic keeps

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<sup>83</sup> Aristotle says these are opinion and its object and separates it from the realm of *episteme*. At first glance, this division seems radically different from his treatments of truth, *episteme* and its tool of demonstration at *Meta.* XI.8, 1065a.5 and *Pr. An.* I.13, 32b.4-21. But if we look at opinion and its object as accidental propositions or propositions in the mode of the indefinitely possible, part of the problem goes away, that the only universal knowledge one can have of accidentals is that they are accidentals and are subject to laws of accidentals. Of course, before this issue there is the issue of the opiner who has yet to test what type of predicable the attribute is, and he obviously cannot say anything about necessity. However, we are still left with the issue of where for-the-most-part propositions fit in here. This problem also disappears when one restores *commensurately* to *universal*, as Mure has it, when Aristotle says. "science is commensurately universal and proceeds by necessary connexions" (*Post An.* II.33, 88b.31). Logic works with necessary relationships, such as the topical maxims, though a science may not have absolute epistemological authority over its subject matter.

<sup>84</sup> For example, if we want to determine whether a miracle or something improbable actually happened or not, formal abstract logic will not be of much help, for these things are by definition impossible and improbable respectively. It is no use showing how impossible and improbable they are; one could even make these things seem more miraculous or improbable by doing so. One has to switch to ethotic reasoning here, where logic is still used, but will not suffice alone in resolving an argument, unless existential declarations are valid and verifiable for abstractions.

pushing the boundaries of what logic is meant to do, it will no longer be universal, which was the point of describing a formal logic in the first place.

That is, if formal logic must account for whether Socrates is, or Man is, or mortal is, what responsibility and necessity in arguing and knowing is left, say, to the body, what to the mind?<sup>85</sup> We are left alone with logic, and this is an intolerable place to be in, or as Chesterton states a related point, the “madman is not the man who has lost his reason. He is the man who has lost everything except his reason” (24). Formal logic, which is primarily for validity, becomes invalid without a proper material logic, one that is open to all of reasoning: modern formal logic seeks to invalidate dialectical reasoning, and we will see later how we cannot have formal logic without the real.<sup>86</sup> As we will see below in the discussion of modes, proper formal logic actually helps us in demonstrating the true but not perfectly true/revealed.

Thus Toulmin’s complaint regarding pure abstraction is just, but, unfortunately, this result is unavoidable, for modern logic has sought first and foremost to abandon Aristotle’s idea that relationships are the subject matter of Logic. They (with perhaps all of the Humanities) have almost succeeded in stripping us of any valuable idea or clear notion of relationship at all. Modern rhetoricians, for example, revel in associations, but to speak of essential similarities is to be seen under the debasing

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<sup>85</sup> The body in this sense is a significant limit to logic (and thus helps define it). One could argue that this is so Commonsensical that Aristotle does not feel the need to go into it that much when dealing with the impossibility of refutation of the syllogistic part of the argument from infallible sign (cf. *Rhetoric* II.25, 1403a.10-16). For more on the importance of the body to reasoning and arguing and the importance of the link between mind and body to these (see Appendix B).

<sup>86</sup> By trying to mix material logic concerns or other aspects of reasoning into formal logic, modern formal logic has become not only anti-dialectical but ultimately anti-wisdom. Plato consistently illustrates that people argue from unknown principles, usually ones concerning value. But Plato and Aristotle both realize that people often have a part of the principle and that the existence of the principle is not the issue but clarification of it. The modern logicians harping on existence is perhaps illustrative of just how close empiricism and rationalism are, especially in how they become circularly philosophically materialistic and thus *unreasonable*. That is, we again have a breakdown between the discursive realm, the real, and the mental realm.



enchantments of Oberon. Yet such a notion is necessary if, say, Big Rhetoric is to be of any use. Toulmin unfortunately concedes to his enemies without fight on this point, for he believes logic has no subject matter, thus allowing him to defenestrate formal logic and Aristotle's contribution along with it.

However, Aristotle, as the description of this difference between modern logic and traditional logic has implied, has a system of logic with limits. It has a form (and a material), as opposed to what might be called informal formal logic. Thus I will be using the phrase "formal logic" to refer to my understanding of Aristotle's system and the plural to refer to both Aristotle's system and modern systems of logic. Toulmin, perceiving the problem as he does, champions a *via nova* in *Uses*: in defiance of a two and a half millennia-long tyrannical rule of formal logics in argumentation, we must block out systems of formal logics that have so long distorted our perception of argument and begin with everyday occurrences of argument, almost like an attempt to describe natural reasoning by going to the source.

What I will be doing for the rest of the chapter in critiquing Toulmin is showing that formal logic does not have to be a villain and is actually very important for arguing, though it can be abused without a proper ontology. The way I go about this here may seem a little strange, since I will be focusing on modes, which are prominent in the forms of syllogism. But modes are closely tied to things extraneous to the form of the syllogism. We will see below why focusing on modes is important for a complementary formal-material logic, while a discussion of what some may see as Toulmin's formal logic will wait until Chapter 3. First, to further understand how Toulmin sees logic, we need to examine his bias against dialectic.

### **If Dialectic is Abandoned, Where Do We Situate “Logic”?**

Again, both formal logic and its partner dialectic have the broad applicability we have been discussing. And Toulmin, perhaps because of the broad applicability, is also against the latter too. We will see below, and in Chapter 3, how his substitution for material logic fails. It is important, first, to take note of some evidence of Toulmin’s anti-dialecticalism before one analyzes what he considers the grounding of his system. These anti-dialectical assumptions, besides being correlated to his misunderstanding of formal logic, act as principles in his argument, driving the rhetoric and the reasoning, and ultimately undermine his discussion of modes and his attempt to present a formal-material logic. His avoidance of dialectic, of the method of distinguishing, leads to a lot of blurriness, as we will see among the terms of his system in Chapter 3. It may not be that he is against all of dialectic. It may just be that he did not study it early on, that he shared the assumption mentioned above about logic being limited to analytics. But it is very problematic that he avoids in *Uses* what for Plato, Aristotle, and those after them is the heart of argumentation, especially everyday argumentation, as well as a large part of the foundation of reasoning and coming to knowledge, no matter how they saw it connect to metaphysics and the other uses of logic.

In Part One of *Reason in Ethics*, Toulmin definitely has Plato in mind when critiquing objective approaches to morals, but here he is not so much focused on undermining an absolute standard of logic (though he does try to take the principle of non-contradiction out of ethical reasoning on page 28) as the Platonic method of dialectic itself, as seen in the argument against any common meaning of goodness (see

especially 23-5). This argument against Platonic dialectic can also be seen as an attack on Aristotelian dialectic, which is largely reflective of Platonic dialectic.<sup>87</sup>

Next, early on in *Uses* he tells the reader that he will try as much as possible to avoid terms from logical theory, such as ‘deductive,’ and ‘demonstrative’ (7). Toulmin seems to assume that logicians use these two terms interchangeably and carelessly, which gives him reason for ignoring formal logic in preference for his field-dependent manner of assessing arguments (149). Aristotle, however, actually marks demonstration as a species of deduction among other types, such as the enthymeme and the dialectical deduction. As will be seen in Chapter 4, deduction, which is in the charge of dialectic, as the foundation of discursive reasoning gives a formal validity to arguments in all areas (through the modes, for example), and we shall see how Toulmin runs into problems by not giving more of a foundation for modes and jettisoning formal logic, especially in his attempt to refute the premise Aristotle says is necessary to all deduction—the universal one (see Chapter 3).

Further evidence of Toulmin’s anti-dialecticalism is that he is suspicious of the use of definition in philosophy (and other areas), as well as of doing the work to come to an agreement on what people are actually talking about in a discussion:

Not every distinction which needs drawing in philosophy can properly be presented as a distinction between different senses of a word; such a presentation, indeed, often conceals the real source of philosophical difficulty, and leaves one feeling that one’s authentic problem has been conjured out of sight. (77)

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<sup>87</sup> Toulmin seems to have some concept of the strong methodological ties between the two (*Human Understanding* 4-5).

Toulmin may be right that not all philosophical problems are solved by distinguishing the senses of words, but it is misleading to say that this often the case.<sup>88</sup>

This passage echoes one from *Reason in Ethics*, where he reveals his belief that people predicating good of something but meaning different things by it has nothing to do with conflict: “All that two people need (and all that they have) to contradict one another about in the case of ethical predicates are the reasons for doing this rather than that or the other” (28). One could argue that Toulmin should be grasping here for the connection between the *aetia* (causes/explanations) and the definition of a thing, for the causes of a thing also help us understand and evaluate its goodness, that is, if he even believes these two people have some tertiary standard in mind. Not clarifying such things can lead to problems. Dialectic has two uses in resolving such problems: finding what a thing is and finding whether it is better than another, and trying to meet both goals simultaneously often causes conflict.

The main point to be emphasized here is that Toulmin’s work could have benefited from applying this method of dialectic (as we will see below). For, ironically, what Toulmin is trying to do is a function of dialectic—the leveling of the playing field of epistemes and their relation to big-L Logic in the public sphere. In *Uses*, Toulmin’s goal is to remove the scientific ideal (or any ideal) from argumentation, especially the notion of the probable (88-9). Toulmin is right to challenge the use of Science as a model for argumentation, which results in “lesser” forms of argumentation being of lesser value.<sup>89</sup> Aristotle espied this problem as well, but his response was to articulate a

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<sup>88</sup> He may also be grasping here for that difference that is often described by contrasting conviction to persuasion.

<sup>89</sup> To hint at the significance of this, one can ask a question of Toulmin’s rhetorically, “what sort of priority in logic, if any, can matters of fact (say) claim over such things as matters of morals?” (41).

broad system for judging the sciences—dialectic. Dialectic allows science to be a partner in argumentation, and it seems a more ethical, equitable, and palatable way to reign in that bloated arm of Academia, to restore order to Academe in its representation in the public sphere, than promoting relativism or some other infertile epistemology.

The solution is not to make logic and epistemology one, as Toulmin argues (254), which is what the rationalists did in a sense. Though logic and epistemology are often used together for the purpose of analyzing an argument, they are not the same: e.g. perception falls under epistemology in a sense and outside of the immediate domain of logic, while immediate propositions have difficulty finding a place in epistemological formulations. My goal is to reiterate that argumentation (casual or otherwise) and science/philosophical discourse work largely the same, as Aristotle implies early on in the *Rhetoric*, and it is the notion of probability as grounded in the essence of things that allow everyday argumentation and academic discourse to work or affords how they should work.

Returning to the right regarding of science, then, Toulmin is justifiably on the offensive against Carnap's disregarding of the everyday notions of probability as 'pre-scientific,' though this does not mean that probability has to be removed from applied logic, as Toulmin seems to suggest (46-7). Toulmin also rightly chides other disciplines for trying to make logic a specialized part of themselves, for, again, this is what happened with Science (see Chapter 3). If logic could be a formal science (Toulmin believing that there can be scarcely any formality about it), then, deduces Toulmin, the only thing to figure out would be which discipline it belongs to. Why logic would have to be a science with principles outside itself, he does not say. But if logic can be made

subordinate to another science, Toulmin is right that no matter in which discipline we locate logic, the discipline itself will skew logic by applying its own first principles to it. This is a problem Aristotle foresees in his discussion of the special topics in the *Rhetoric* and one Toulmin's system is not capable of preventing.<sup>90</sup> Again, Toulmin's answer to the problem is to throw out the analytic ideal of formal logic and offer a quasi-logical system of a mix of material and formal concepts, and much of this seems to be based on a misunderstanding of modes and dialectic. The better solution, as I hope to show, is to keep formal logic but have a better understanding of its purpose and use in reasoning.

Before we move on to discussing modes, it needs to be noted that Toulmin, try though he might, cannot get himself out of the hole of attaching logic to something else either. As mentioned, all his books are about ethical reasoning, and it is in ethics where he places his logic, as we will see in his understanding of modes through *ethos*. Now, it is not that ethics and logic are ever separate in real world uses, but we run into problems in saying that one is the foundation of the other. This placement of logic is noteworthy too since Toulmin totally ignores the issue of which discipline Aristotle attaches logic to—theology—and instead places it in pragmatic ethics, which allows his not coming to better terms with absolutes. Toulmin, though he later sees himself as an Aristotelian defender of general reason, does not come to see the reciprocal relationship among logic, ethics, and even metaphysics that Aristotle does. In view of Toulmin's pragmatism, one might have to assert that a discussion of *ethos* has to draw on things outside of *ethos* if it is not to collapse in on itself, that is, if it is to be ethical. Indeed,

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<sup>90</sup> Elsewhere I will discuss the problems that result from such an identification of Logic with a logic, especially as it concerns the public understanding and the field of Rhetoric as a watchdog over the public sphere.

perhaps this omission of external elements contributes to Toulmin being used against his wishes somewhat for the epistemological-ethical goals of Scott and others.

### *ETHOS AND MATERIAL MODES*

#### **A False Dilemma of Ethos Versus Dialectic?**

Unfortunately, Toulmin's ethical grounding in *Uses* is mainly narrower than pragmatic ethics, for his chief concern with *ethos* is funneled through the aspect of authority.<sup>91</sup> Toulmin, mainly under the influence of Austin, seems to think that authority is the chief consideration in argumentation—what one should give one's authority to (which relates in the long run to character, though he is not concerned here with how one acquires authority) and what authority evidence has. His formula is subordinate to this.<sup>92</sup> As we shall see below, Toulmin does incorporate the notion of ethical as that which can be done in good conscience into his argumentation scheme (though, as a good pragmatist, he gives no explanation for why a person should act so). However, his treatment of logic might still be called unethical, especially in that he seeks to bar logic from ethical discussions—an anti-ethical ethic of knowledge, one without recourse to or use for universals.

Now, the relationship of authority to argumentation is a hard one to define and describe (and we will see this in Toulmin's use of *backing* and *warrant* in Chapter 3). Toulmin's approach of analyzing logical practice in the metaphor of jurisprudence, for example, results in a false sense of authority for logical moves: to give a simplified example of his theory, it is the law, not, say, the topical rules (as Boethius might say),

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<sup>91</sup> For a brief explanation of some of the dialectical terms I am using here, see the Introduction, or, for a fuller explanation, see Chapter 4.

<sup>92</sup> His notion of authority may somewhat echo Aristotle's notion of *ethos* in the *Rhetoric*, but Toulmin seems more focused on product as opposed to process.

that gives the authority to an argument.<sup>93</sup> And even before one gets to defending or backing an assertion, ethos is considered:

The claim implicit in an assertion is like a claim to a right or to a title. As with a claim to a right, though it may in the event be conceded without argument, its merits depend on the merits of the argument which could be produced in its support. (11)

When Toulmin refers to a claim being “conceded without argument,” he means that the authority of the speaker, perhaps based on his character, which may have been established by having good arguments in the past, is enough to carry the claim. Toulmin seems to think that ethos is usually the first assessment of an assertion, and he is probably right. We see this simply as the honesty aspect of ethos: we take the assertions of others seriously and expect that they want to be taken seriously (11). And if a person, even a stranger, has enough of an ethotic presence to support the weight of an assertion, we allow it. Of course, part of how we perceive this ethotic presence and its verus-capability is not only somewhat dependent on the situation but also on our own character or general philosophy of human beings and people types (as well as the kinds of claims involved and their matter).

We may be seeing with these points, including the subordination of his formula, is that Toulmin is separating this kind of assessment from material logic, which is problematic. Ironically, in tandem with his focus on field-dependency, such an emphasis could allow self-proclaimed keepers of Reason, those who try to make logic a part of a vague field or specific discipline, to retain their spot in the sphere after a brief

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<sup>93</sup> Though Toulmin makes a point of telling Olson that the jurisprudence metaphor was an afterthought and not part of the original plan of the book, Toulmin does use it to express his idea of authority and its relationship to argumentation (Olson 201).



tremor, for the result is that there is no ground to challenge them on, as we shall see when we come to discuss the special topics in Chapter 3. Toulmin's focus on ethos is an important push back against modern formal logic in the battle for reason, but Toulmin does not seem to see that ethos has a much deeper connection to material logic and how we employ formal logic, as we shall see below and in the rest of the project.

One can see that Toulmin ties up a lot of notions with argumentation and we shall see further how he ties in epistemology. Ironically, this gets him much closer to Aristotle than he realizes and would like here. Unfortunately, he is not as clear as Aristotle on how these things can work with argumentation but still be abstractly separable from it. We thus have to analyze Toulmin's 'system' for him, focusing on the first three essays of *Uses*. We will first focus on his representation of modes, for modes reveal a connection between material and formal logic, as well as reveal the broad general or universal base of logic for all subjects and how this base shows up in everyday argumentation. Toulmin causes a problem, however, in that he tries to throw out almost everything in logic that can be referred to as *universal* and tries to make a complete disconnect between the force of a modal term and any general rules for how a modal term has its force. I.e., he disconnects mode from material logic. We will see how this prevents him from keeping logic from usurpation by a field. Now, Toulmin does not totally abandon universal *notions*, for he believes the aspects of argumentation can be differentiated into two categories: the field-invariant (the common procedure of arguments and force of modal terms) and the field-dependent—the criteria used to assess arguments, especially as linked to the modal term. Much of this chapter and the next will work at showing how the "field-invariant" aspect of argument is much larger

than Toulmin suspects; these chapters will also show the proper parameters for the field-dependent aspect of argument.

Also, in Chapter 3 we will focus more on Toulmin's notion of form, how he tries to replace it with *procedure* and the vague terms he uses to describe this. By analyzing his discussion of modes here, we will see one way how he fails to separate material and formal logic at a natural joint, which causes problems for probable argumentation. For we have to focus on how plausible it is to say that evaluation is strictly or mainly limited to fields. And it will be worth asking how useful this notion of field-dependent criteria is as opposed to a system of universal rules, since, as Aristotle implies, "possibly the sciences are infinite in number" (*SE* 9.170a.22-3).<sup>94</sup> Again, part of this can be done here through an investigation of the modes, and we will come at it from the formal angle in Chapter 3.

### **Force Versus Mode**

Toulmin's first two essays are concerned with his explanation of the logical modal terms (*possible, probable, impossible, necessary*, etc.). These are very important terms for logic for they, for one, reveal logic and argumentation's use and reliance on ways of being in the world. Toulmin's paradigm for explaining the use of these is ethos, and, as with ethos, values and authority are bound up with these terms in his explanation of their use. He implies that subject matter has something to do with which

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<sup>94</sup> Toulmin thinks that it will turn out to be a complicated issue if valid arguments require proper procedure and form, for how can these two requirements come from practical everyday use? I.e., 'How is it fathomable that a system of rules could be abstracted or developed that would cover all the things people argue about?!?' Also, "Supposing valid arguments can be cast in a geometrically tidy form, how does this help to make them any the more cogent?" (*Uses* 95). Of course, the casting into syllogistic form isn't primarily for making more or less cogency but for checking validity (see Chapter 3). The anthropologist Ward Goodenough would seem to support the idea that these argument forms help with judging criteria because they come out of our experiences: "Logic begins with the mapping of our experience of things and relationships into words and with generalizations about relationships that can be rendered into propositions" (qtd. in Harpine 352).

mode we choose to place our premises in, but the main factors are how much responsibility one is willing to take for a statement and how much force one can use. Now, again, trying to explain the modes in terms of ethos would not be a bad thing, for it has the possibility of reminding us how we treat values as real things, things that we argue over and come up in our reasoning, but it would be an incomplete thing.

Also, similar to his treatment of logical terms discussed above, where Toulmin runs into problems here is in ignoring the previous logical use of modal terms and having a shallow knowledge of dialectic, while apparently aiming to make generalizations of the popular uses of these terms alone. For example, with *possible* he uses the following reasoning to show how one comes to which modes one will pick when arguing: when looking for solutions to arguments, he says, those which are called *possible* are entitled to more or less consideration depending on their seriousness. He then labels the person inconsistent who refutes a claim as impossible and proceeds to prove it *per impossibile*, because the person has “considered” it, as if the possible and impossible are always immediately apparent to everyone (19). He is fooled by his own use of terms (using “consideration” as a property of possible but in two different meanings) and by not using the traditional logical terms, as will be discussed below.<sup>95</sup>

According to Toulmin, once we have sorted through the ‘possible’ solutions and find what we think is an unequivocally better conclusion (the ones having been ruled out now spoken of as ‘impossible’ in the “natural” use of the term), we will mark this conclusion with terms like ‘must’ or ‘necessary’ (21, 20). There is apparently no logical standard in doing this. The use of these terms will be similar in all deductions, from

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<sup>95</sup> We will see later how Castaneda censures Toulmin for the misuse of the logical term *analytic*. We will also see what is also hindering Toulmin here is conflation of logic with arrangement and only considering arguments at the smallest possible level (see Chapter 3).

math conclusions to ethical ones, because the *force* of the term is what counts (20). As I will discuss below, he believes such modal terms do not have a common designatum. Now, people can be and are loose with these terms, as they are with many others, and they do try to abuse the power of them, and we will see below and in Chapter 3 how these adverbial modal terms can be used with ethos for good or ill. Yet the standards of fields, or the standard of field-dependency, do not, in the end, prevent this abuse; general criteria for the use of these terms is still needed.<sup>96</sup>

Toulmin uses the example of math to show how force is separate from criteria. In math, he argues, the contradictory must be separated from the impossible (i.e., the mathematically impossible) so that the force of *impossible*, the throwing out of a supposition, is not nullified (31-2). He admits that separating these two notions may be “mere hair-splitting” in this case, but it is a crucial distinction when applied to philosophy and the notion of the logically impossible (32).<sup>97</sup>

It seems more the case that the Principle of Non-Contradiction is at the heart of all impossibility and its force, but this is what Toulmin explicitly denies: “It will also be a mistake, and a more serious one [than valuing the force of modal terms according to

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<sup>96</sup> In light of my argument in Chapter 5, I will add that I am not saying that the good arguer or good person cannot develop a “feel” for a good argument and/or a truthful argument, but the existence of a such a person does not disqualify criteria for good argument.

<sup>97</sup> Aristotle’s talk of the general and specific uses of terms does not apply in the same way to argumentational terms, for logical consistency applies to all fields:

[...] you should determine what kind of things should be called as most men call them, and what should not. For this is useful both for establishing and for overthrowing a view: e.g. you should say that we ought to use our words to mean the same things as most people mean by them, but when we ask what kinds of things are or are not of such and such a kind, we should not here go with the multitude: e.g. it is right to call healthy whatever tends to produce health, as do most men; but in saying whether the object before us tends to produce health or not, we should adopt the language no longer of the multitude but of the doctor. (*Top.* II.1, 110a.14-21)

One could add that a field has the authority of a finder over the use of one of these modal terms regarding a certain object, but the probability is in the thing itself and often in its relationship to something else of permanence—relational permanent properties. The use of the expert here is important, and later Aristotle discusses problems of predicating *science* of different things in different senses (II.3, 110b.16-38).

fields], to pick some one criteria of impossibility and to elevate it into a position of unique philosophical importance” (34). In one sense, Toulmin is right to be weary of such a criterion, such as when a system fuses *supernatural* and *impossible*. But the principle of non-contradiction is another matter; it is crucial for the valid use of *impossible*. One does not have to look at the criteria of theology and mathematics to understand the same use of impossibility in the statements ‘It is impossible that God killed that man’ and ‘ $X \neq 0$  in the function  $(X+1)/X$ ’; one looks to the definitions of things to come: e.g., ‘It is impossible that X be both a divider and Zero’. In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle talks about how different uses of the same word can be tied to one beginning point and adds “a term belongs to different sciences not if it has different senses, but if it has not one meaning *and* its definition cannot be referred to one central meaning” (IV.2, 1003b.6-7, 13-15; 1004a.23-25). *Impossible* does not seem to be such a term.

Yet Toulmin, similar to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, is trying to get us to a place that we will accept that ‘logical impossibility’ has the same force but different criteria in each field.<sup>98</sup> Thus since formal logics (to which the PNC is crucial) have no

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<sup>98</sup> Given the difficulty in conceiving of the basis of impossibility, such as whether logical impossibility stems from perception of nature, the mind, some combination of the two, or something else, it is perhaps not so strange that many scholars and logicians publishing in Rhetoric and Composition journals do not address this specific issue of *force*. Compared to the use of other material from *Uses*, there is little addressing of this pragmatic notion of force, perhaps because it cozies up so well with Burke’s notion of god-term, as will be discussed below in part.

Yet Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca seem to have something like Toulmin does in mind, that contradiction has the force of impossibility. However, for them, one can hardly ever use contradiction in a rebuttal because most argumentation is only quasi-logical and full of equivocations, drawing only on formal logic insofar as it can increase the ethos of the argument and the arguer. Thus the appeal to logical impossibility is a distraction from the argument and ultimately an obstacle to resolution (which also may be the result of Toulmin’s thinking). To avoid this obstacle, one should, in response to a quasi-logical argument that a contradiction is present in one’s own argument, show that what is seeming contradiction is really an “incompatibility”, being outside the realm of formal logic in that “it depends either on the nature of things or on a human decision” (196). However, the absence of an explanation of how these

subject matter of their own, as Toulmin argues, they have very little use. They have nothing of anyone else's to assess either, since all fields have what amounts to an endemic logic. In considering how criteria for claim dismissal differ from field to field, Toulmin remarks that he found "nothing which led us to conclude that any special field of argument was intrinsically non-rational, or that the court of reason was somehow not competent to pronounce on its problems" (40).

In general, the point he is trying to make is important: Biology *qua* Biology is no more 'logical' than Chemistry or, for that matter, Phrenology. That is, Biological reasoning *qua* biology cannot be held up as an exemplar of how reasoning should be done in all cases, as some biological theories were used in the "hard reasoning" of eugenics movements in the Twentieth century and today. Toulmin thinks that he can even knock off formal logic, and with it dialectic, from such a pedestal too. But this leaves Judgment in a lurch. Of course, any science will seem logical to itself and in itself; we can hardly call something a field or science without it containing some sort of systematicity stemming from more or less vague principles. However, it takes the universal science to make sure it is on track with general reason, for it is important to ask what makes each field's logic "logical." One needs this check to prevent a bad totalizing or usurping logic.

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realms are absolutely separate from formal logic leaves us with the same complaint we have against Toulmin—where does formal logic come from and why do people appeal to it?

In other words, this argument to incompatibility seems to be an argument from circumstance, which, if considered as a valid basic form of arguing, would throw out probability and impossibility. One can see this circumstantial aspect in their manner of dealing with incompatibilities: logically (eliminating incompatibilities to the best of one's abilities beforehand by focusing on the circumstances), pragmatically (dealing with them as they arise), and diplomatically (delaying dealing with them) (197). What Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca leave us with (and one could bring the same complaint against Toulmin) is a way of not letting anything be impossible in our argumentation or even improbable; this was the problem with ancient sophistic argumentation. It ironically leaves us in a place where we must resort to using the principle of non-contradiction, formal validity, and univocal terms if we are to choose anything.

After all, human beings link logic to the way things are; at some point they consubstantialize what is Logical with a theory or principal of what is real or a specific field or philosophy, such as natural philosophy or “science”. How well they realize they have done this will have a large impact on what rhetoric they use and what they think rhetoric to be. Of course, danger comes in improperly linking or linking Logic to a bad or overly restrictive field or view of being. One frequently sees, for example, unjustified labeling of things as “illogical,” often with an expectation to insult or preclude further discourse; it works as sort of a rhetorical devil-term in some circle without much of a reasoned foundation. The latter alternative is closely related to what Burke is trying to deal with in his works, and Toulmin does not allow a strong defense against any of these. A similar complaint can be brought against Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, that their logic and whatever it is linked to do not let us break unethical rhetoric from its supposed moorings.

Here, to express the importance of some notion of universal or formal logic, I will take some time to show how *cannot* is usually grounded on the notion of formal contradiction and receives its force from it, allowing arguers in almost every situation an appeal to formal logic based impossibility (which finds its own strength in the nature of things). And it is worth emphasizing here that if dialectic is to have any use as critic of the sciences, it has to have the principle of non-contradiction in its universal applicability.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Long before the influential works of Toulmin and Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca came along, Weaver noted how difficult it is to gain the simplest of admissions, such as the deduction that Socrates is mortal, “from those who believe that genera are only figments of the imagination and have no self-subsistence,” as these authors are assuming :

Such persons hold, in the extreme application of their doctrine, that all deduction is unwarranted assumption; or that attributes cannot be transferred from genus to species. The issue here is very deep, going back to the immortal quarrel over universals, and we

## The Impossible Mode

Toulmin begins by looking at the various fields where ‘cannot’ can be used as a modal term, without investigating how dialectic and demonstration use the notion of impossibility in the same way, just the ‘type’ of premise being different (whether one or two premises being given by an adversary or based on a common opinion). In Aristotle’s view, a valid dialectical deduction still has a necessary relationship among the premises, even though a premise may not turn out to be true as discovered by the appropriate science. As we will see, *cannot* has this deductive value even in casual conversation, which is important since this is a spot where dialectic is used. Toulmin, however, assumes that the colloquial uses of ‘can’t’ are more expansive than formal-impossibility and that the former precede the latter, that “in cases of formal impossibility, one or more of these simpler sorts of impossibility and impropriety is commonly involved as well [...],” instead of the other way around (23). Yet we can’t make much sense of ‘can’t’ in the uses of these “simpler” sorts without reference to the notion of formal impossibility and definitions (in that knowledge-of-principles-being-higher-than-knowledge-of-particulars kind of way).

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shall not here explore it further than to say that the argument from definition or genus involves a philosophy of being, which has divided and probably will continue to divide mankind. There are those who seem to feel that genera are imprisoning bonds which serve only to hold the mind in confinement. To others, such genera appear the very organon of Truth. (86-7)

The undermining of genera as a concept is always connected to the undermining of the principle of non-contradiction. One can see this is a moral act because of its moral consequences in application:

We feel that the morality of intellectual integrity lay behind such resistance to the breaking down of genera [as in Lincoln’s rhetoric that confronted those who placed “Negroes” in the genus of man but did not treat them fully as humans]. Lincoln realized that the price of honesty, as well as of success in the long run, is to stay out of the excluded middle. (95)

Weaver goes on to argue that Lincoln saw the “perdurability of laws and other institutions” as bound up with the acceptance of the principle of non-contradiction (105). That is, “he came to repudiate, as firmly as anyone in practical politics may do, those people who try by relativistic interpretations and other sophistries to evade the force of some basic principles.”



Indeed, it is these principles we refer to first when we see the use of *can't*, causing us to find some uses of the term awkward, as in Toulmin's own example from *Punch*—the afflicted train passenger who responds, "Can't I?", to the steward's statement "You can't be sick in here, Sir" (qtd. in 11). The joke hinges on the linking of 'can't' to impossibility and then the ambiguous and inappropriate use of impossibility. For example, the impossibility here, one might say, is founded on the definition of the good passenger, e.g., "You can't be sick in here and be a good passenger at the same time" or the supposed impossibility of a biological process trumping a societal expectation. But the impossibility is seen by the passenger as being applied to the relation between sickness and space, which is based on the understanding on the range of places where it is possible for one to be sick. Obviously, it is hard to think of a place where it is impossible for one to be sick, but it is certain that the anecdote would be difficult to understand (and therefore probably less humorous), if it took place in Heaven.

Another example will make the tie between the force of the term 'can't' and the field-invariant elements of criteria clearer: "A stern father denounces his son as a dissolute wastrel, [sic] and turns him out of the house. A friend intercedes on the son's behalf, saying, 'You can't turn him away without a shilling!'" (28). Both courses of action here are the result of practical syllogisms (or, as presented here in the way practical syllogisms are usually presented, practical enthymemes), but, as Toulmin himself implies, the question hinges on the notion of father. Toulmin sees the issue as one of relationship: the father and the friend have different ideas of the relationship between a father and a son, especially the aspect of responsibility. Toulmin is on the

right track here, but one must add that the relationship, here represented in two ways, cannot exist without a definition of the terms. Thus a restatement of both arguments could take the form 'It is impossible to both be a father and do  $x$ , for the definition of father is  $y$ .' It would be difficult to come up with a field of argument to which this is limited.

Finally, regarding other modal terms, Toulmin applies his anti-dialectical prejudice by renouncing the word 'meaning' (35). He thinks that his distinguishing of criteria and force is adequate to cover at least two main aspects of terms like *impossible*, *possible*, and *good*, and that one should not be tempted to investigate whether different uses of these terms constitute differences in meaning or not. Both responses to the investigation, he says, are untenable: we shall either have to record an innumerable amount of meanings or say that there is no difference in meaning. He does not suggest the possibility of a derivation in meaning for each of these terms, which is the area where dialectic would get involved, distinguishing different senses and uses of terms. He seems to say we can pragmatically opt out of investigating what the sense of the term is because we have the force and that is what is important. But this issue cannot be ignored for the sake of the general reliability of logic he is trying to undermine, as we have seen with *impossible* and will see with *probably*.

### **Probability and Ethos**

We have already seen Russell's essential dismissal of probability, and Toulmin thinks that logic, as in the case of *cannot*, does not account for how one uses 'probably' in everyday language. He gives us two examples to show this: the first is of a boy who is worried both about saving face in front of a girl he likes and not disappointing her by

not meeting with her per their custom, so he tells her with the help of his mother that he will ‘probably’ see her the next day, for he suspects a trip to the zoo might prevent a meeting. The second example, which is meant to be from a more philosophical/scientific realm, is of a weatherman making a ‘probably’ prediction of the weather. Drawing on Austin, Toulmin believes that both uses of *probably* are primarily based in *ethos*. That is, the speaker is trying to keep his image in tact for later utterances. Yet, in the second case especially (and this gets back to the issue mentioned above of grounding logic solely in ethics), there is no reason to assume that the weatherman (or any other type of scientist or philosopher) has his own representation first and foremost in his mind when he uses the mode of probably.

We can see this by examining Toulmin’s own example for the weatherman: “Cloudy conditions now affecting Northern Ireland will spread to N.W. England during the day, probably extending to the rest of the country in the course of the evening and night” (50). Instead of looking at the motivation of fear of loss of esteem in the audience’s eyes as the motivating factor, a just as likely explanation for the use of *probably* is knowledge and honesty, a valuing of truth, or all these motives could be equally present, perhaps under a desire to do well in the right way in light of the Good.

Concerning knowledge, Aristotle makes the important point that the degree of certainty a science permits of or should have expected of it depends on its subject matter (*EN* I.3, 1094b. 20-5), an understanding of the limits of human reasoning. A science, such as weather or even politics, still requires universals (which rely on the principle of non-contradiction to be what they are), for this is the only thing knowledge is accurately said of in the sense of science (since these can be actualized). However,

the nature of some of the things these sciences deal with, such as “cloudy conditions,” due to the things that make them up and affect them, can often only be talked about in ‘for the most part’ statements (which also allows one to still use dialectic to judge among the arguments of the sciences).<sup>100</sup> One can see the foundation of *probably* here by rewriting the statement: “From the general nature or essence of this type of cloudy condition and the other applicable universals of weather (both laws and objects), we expect *x* to happen.”

The same is the case with the boy; he is drawing on his knowledge of the nature of things to make an application to a particular situation. In both cases, an interlocutor can continually ask ‘Why?’ to get to the speaker’s explanation for what he says: as Aristotle says, both knowledge and opinion are of causes/explanations. Full knowledge is attained when an attribute no longer inheres because of something else, and this is the universal, the stopping point (*Post. An.* I.24, 85b.36). To use *probably*, one must have knowledge, i.e., knowledge of universals, and in areas where universals can only be ‘for the most part,’ the *probable* is the mode of valid deduction.<sup>101</sup> (Of course, as in the

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<sup>100</sup> As we will see in Chapter 4, Grimaldi argues that in “the *Rhetoric eikos*, or the probable, possesses a note of stability and permanence. [...] a kind of universal with respect to individual probabilities (*A* 2, 57b 1). While this stability is not inherently necessary yet it is not subjective and extrinsic. It is intrinsic and objective since it is grounded in reality” (*Studies* 107). Grimaldi sees this meaning of *eikos* carried through the *Nicomachean Ethic*, the *Metaphysics*, to the *Prior Analytics*, where it is even stronger and is usable in demonstrative syllogisms. This view of probabilities might also be derivable from the *Topics* where Aristotle refers to propositions that no one would ever challenge.

<sup>101</sup> This view of probability allows one to maintain the expression “improbable but true” in opposition to Toulmin, who seems to believe the expression is an actual contradiction (*Uses* 54-5). But it is a phrase that is only applied to particulars in light of a universal. In the case of the weather prediction, only an indefinite ratio is overturned if the clouds do not move as predicted, for this ratio is really at base a possibility with something applied to make it a probability (78-9). Perhaps if we had full knowledge of all the objects, influences, and causes the weatherman is dealing with, including concepts meteorology has yet to discover, we would not be talking in terms of the probable, but as it is, meteorologists do not have full knowledge of all the things involved and their tendencies of things and use the term probable. Either way, the phrase is still especially important to theory building and application in human sciences, such as politics, or even defeating commonplaces in law courts, areas where human choice is concerned and does not always correspond to human nature. The weatherman’s character is involved here in that he is trying to honestly represent what is perceptible of a truth. Actually, speaking of ethics, knowledge and

example above, an increased amount of variables and the relationships among them often hinder our predictions.)<sup>102</sup> That certain areas use probability and others use necessity is no reason to completely toss out one mode or the other.

Yet, again, Toulmin's goal is to remove the notion of necessity from argumentation (which one might see as a full rebellion against the analytic standard itself). This removal, coupled with his undermining of probability, leaves only field dependency for argumentation evaluations criteria, which is a problem. One notices this attempt at removing necessity in his ignoring of the Principle of Non-Contradiction and in his disregard for universals. He leaves us, like Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, with the argument from circumstance or field, without giving us a helpful way to limit *field*. He is adamant about denying universal premises and he apparently believes universals fall out with these.

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wisdom, Toulmin takes a step backwards on the following page: "we [since we know the stories of Marco Polo to be substantially true] have no business to describe them as ever having been improbable, since for us to do this tends in some measure to lend our authority to a view which we know to be false" (56). It is hard to understand why a person who is so concerned with ethics and reasoning would ever say such a thing, placing so much weight on authority that the rest of ethics collapse. I hope the dangers of this attitude (and its combination with chronological arrogance), whether by an individual or in a group or society, are apparent: wisdom, culture, charity, and the very gift of persuasion would be at stake.

<sup>102</sup> Note the importance of this issue: as already alluded to, trying to figure out the criteria for episteme in Aristotle is a key part of understanding how dialectic and demonstration work together. One criterion is necessity: in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle uses necessity to set off scientific knowledge from the other "states [i.e., art, practical wisdom, philosophic wisdom, and intuitive reasoning] by virtue of which the soul *possesses* truth by way of affirmation or denial" (VI.3, 1139b.15). (These *hexeis* should be referred to as *states* (of mind), as we will see below and keeping in mind such figurative descriptions of verbs as substantial by arresting the mind. Ross translates them "ways" one "arrives at" truth, which is problematic, for judgment and opinion, which Aristotle throws out here as unreliable in knowing, would be unreliable in trying to acquire truth. Such a translation would nullify much of Aristotle's approach, such as the relationship between experience and theory, as well as render moot the discussion in *On Interpretation* of how to form contrary judgments.) Here Aristotle sets scientific knowledge apart by foregrounding how a given piece of knowledge is considered/thought/recollected by the knower: that scientific knowledge is thought to be incapable of being otherwise than what it is; therefore, the represented object is eternal because it exists by necessity. In the *Post. An.* and *Meta.*, Aristotle further qualifies this knowledge to be knowledge of the cause on which the fact depends, that which cannot be otherwise. Of course, necessity is, in one sense, at work in the sciences, regardless of subject matter, because it is at work in the modes.

I will develop these points in Chapter 3, but I will note here that this bias toward universals is seen in the epistemology he adopts: through his focus on the ethos of the individual he only deals with the knowledge of the individual as the individual acquires it, not considering such notions as shared universals among a people (such as even between the boy and his mother in the example) or even among all people, though by just focusing on modal terms we have seen that logical grounds exist to support at least the existence of logical universals and for-the-most-part universals. (I have given other arguments elsewhere that extend reliable knowledge beyond the subjective level and why this is important).

Toulmin also misapplies ethos to reasoning in throwing out universals and universal premises. First, Toulmin, in the course of his argument, confuses the correct notion that every assertion makes one responsible for an argument with the idea that every assertion is an argument, making it easier to throw out the necessity of universals. He might say, “where lurks the universal premise, and thus the deduction or need for it, in the argument of the boy, ‘I will probably come here tomorrow’?”<sup>103</sup> Yet in this form one still needs another premise to make this an enthymeme. One could also argue that even if one admits this is an argument, there are still universals being drawn on in the terms themselves, which, with the implicit claim to authority, one could tediously unravel into a syllogism. But even this does not have to be done; one can extract a complete syllogism out of the example Toulmin gives to see the presence of the universal premise (there is more than one here in the entire argument, but the showing

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<sup>103</sup> See below and Chapter 3 for Castaneda’s arguments concerning Toulmin’s preclusion of statements and predictions. As Aristotle says, “any one who has made any statement whatever has in a certain sense made several statements, inasmuch as each statement has a number of necessary consequences [...], so that by the demolition of any single one of these consequences, of whatever kind, the original statement is demolished as well” (*Top.* II.5, 112a.16-21).

of the following will suffice): ‘We meet here every day (and will meet here everyday). I’m going to the Zoo tomorrow. Trips to the Zoo usually take all day. So I’ll possibly-probably be here tomorrow.’

Unfortunately, I cannot write faithfully to the description Toulmin gives, for Toulmin logically misuses the term *probably* himself, as seen in the mother saying to her child, ‘Tell her that you’ll *probably* come, darling. [...] say that you’ll come if you possibly can’ (48). *Probably* as it is here used seems outside of logic proper or even in opposition to probability and tendency in a sense. An outside observer, taking the important things and their natures/tendencies into consideration, would likely say that the boy *probably* will not show up. But the boy sees it differently. To look at the reasoning behind its use by the boy, one might think his utterance more than one intended to guard the ethos of the speaker, as Toulmin believes. Depending on how the boy emphasizes the words in accord with his intent, it is possibly a declaration to reveal ethos, a sign of will and intent that will use and develop or establish ethos. If the boy could give the odds that he could come tomorrow, this would become even clearer: it is no sure thing, and he is anxious in light of his tenuous relationship with the girl. He shows his commitment by saying he will come if he possibly can, that is, against any odds he could face or an amount of odds consistent with his valuing. (Of course, that he may be picking the Zoo over her also reflects on his will and intent.)

Now, neither use of *probably*, the ethos-based one or the for-the-most-part based one, is necessarily wrong in argument, but one needs to be aware of the uses. Weaver’s comments about the rhetoric of adverbs can be instructive here, as modal terms are usually adverbs: (1) the adverb is “the most tempting of all the parts of speech

to question-beg with” (as in ‘Surely you can’t be serious about doing that’, where *surely* hides ‘no doubt’ a very complex syllogism), and (2) “the adverb is frequently dependent upon the character of its user” (134). One can argue these two aspects can coincide and be used in an ethical or unethical way: regarding the latter, often in everyday argument, reasoning and ratio adverbs like *likely* and *most* amount to grammatical bluffs. But both uses of *probably* that we have been discussing will be reciprocal in any truthful mode of living/arguing.<sup>104</sup> This seems to be similar to something we saw Toulmin himself say earlier, but we are seeing that Toulmin’s approach precludes the development of criteria for establishing prudent argument and the establishment of good character.

Toulmin’s concern for ethos in argument, as mentioned above, seems one of *preservation*: I.e., I must beware of what I put my stamp of approval on because if I don’t my ethos is damaged, which is possibly the strongest card I can play in an argument. Without ethos, I have to place a lot more effort into showing my work, and even then it is still hard to *persuade*. Yet, as mentioned above, Toulmin is not concerned with how one acquires or develops character, a lack of concern that perhaps results in his preservationist view. (From a pragmatic perspective, it is an easy jump from the assumption that a decent character needs to be assumed by the opponents in an argument that has hope for resolution to the assumption that people actually bring this ethos which he seems to think needs preservation.)

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<sup>104</sup> One could see a similar use of my premise above, “We meet here everyday (and will meet everyday).” (This seems a hidden lesson of the *Laches*, that character is capable of confirming a universal; Cf. the comparison of *necessarily* and *certainly* in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.) Toulmin argues that ratios and relative frequencies can only be possibilities until talked of in relation to a moral (by which he seems to mean insertion into a practical syllogism); then they become probabilities (78-9).



Yet there is a lack of vigor here, something of a preclusion of the whole person in reasoning, an inability to realize that people can fight tendencies within themselves and even in nature and that, most significantly, this can be done to a good and noble end, which proper acting in light of, including acting in argument, can cause character to develop. There seems a failure to see here that the preservation of ethos is not the end of ethos but a sometime by-product or extra gain of doing the right thing, for the right reason and in the right way, which should be primary. Ethos is an important part of argument, but if we preserve ethos for a pragmatic purpose of argument alone, our character will remain unethical, i.e., uncharacteristic. However, as alluded to above in the example of the boy, the preservationist view of ethos is not the only way to see ethos at work in argument or virtue in logic.<sup>105</sup> In this light, we will also see a need for talking of actualization and development of ethos in argument and active virtue in reasoning. I will show in Chapter 5 how Aristotle understands character to develop (though it may not be directly applicable here if he does not have a value for personhood; see Chapter 4 and Appendix B). Aristotle's view of character development allows us to see how character can be used as probable argument.

These points will be developed in Chapters 4 and 5, and a brief Aristotelian preview touching on aspects of probability will close out this chapter. But before leaving this discussion of ethos and in setting up the preview, it should be reiterated that Toulmin is doing an important service here, reminding others, especially modern logicians, that arguments have a relationship to things outside of them that determine how the internal can work. Yet, again, Toulmin consciously focuses mainly on the

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<sup>105</sup> See Chapter 4 for Hintikka's argument regarding this. I may be walking the same path as Hintikka here, and perhaps Toulmin falls in line with the same people that Hintikka points out who have a 'don't make errors' notion of logical virtue—the same people who Toulmin is opposing (See Chapter 1).

ethical/authoritative relationship between an argument in its speaker or authority, to the neglect of the way arguments are bound to the material world. As Keith and Beard point out,

the term Aristotle uses to describe the character of logical inference in the syllogism, *anagkhaios*, is usually translated as *necessary*, but it might also be rendered as *constrained* or *compulsory*; in a valid syllogism the reasoner “needs to” draw the conclusion. In contrast, in a Toulmin argument, she is *allowed* to draw the conclusion. A warrant, normally, is permission to do something, and that permission is conditional. (22)

In one way, one is constrained to render the conclusion because of the topical relationships, and one is constrained to admit that the conclusion is true if the premises are true because of the relationship of material logic to formal logic. Of course, more ethical factors come into play when one considers the conclusion in terms of acceptance as a principle of belief or being persuaded by the syllogism or larger argument it occurs in.

Yet Castaneda sees the permissive rendering of warrants as allowing Toulmin to make a false distinction between statements and warrants. As we will see in Chapter 3, this distinction denies a large part of material logic, because statements, which rely on connection to the real world, cannot be thus counted as warrants, as things that can be inferred from.<sup>106</sup> Further, with this false distinction, the reciprocal relationship between

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<sup>106</sup> Castaneda illustrates:

A warrant is not a statement; it is a license or permission and is properly formulated in a deontic sentence, i. e., with the help of a permissive or deontic word like 'permissible', 'may', 'not forbidden', 'authorized', etc. By being permissive, a warrant is not about objects and their properties, but about agents and actions. None of this is, however, easily found in an assertion like (S) "Every Russian is ready to fight for his Motherland." The utterance of this sentence is ordinarily taken by those who make it or

the ethical and material that I pointed out is precluded in both directions, throwing a wrench in the broader rhetorical situation:

ordinary warrants, permissions, etc. are always addressed to somebody. However, Toulmin tells us that once it is established, e.g., that whales are mammals, here is a warrant licensing certain inferences. But this warrant does not seem to have been issued by the discoverer of the fact or by the person who utters "Whales are mammals." The zoologist who discovered that fact could have correctly said that he was not interested in authorizing anything, but only in reporting an important fact. Presumably, the warrant "A whale may be taken to be a mammal" is addressed to the whole of humanity, or perhaps only to those who speak the discoverer's language. And a naive reader of Toulmin, stuck with his ordinary use of warrant cannot help being bewildered by these peculiar warrants, which need no issuer and hold so universally. Indeed, he may even feel tempted to compare them with those "frozen," "timeless" propositions Toulmin attacks unmercifully (192-186, et. al.). (Castaneda 282-3)

I will return to these attacks, which correspond to Toulmin's anti-dialecticalism, in Chapter 3. As alluded to, Toulmin's attempt to brush aside any foundations for necessity and probability reveals his desire to avoid the *why* of argumentation, and definitions are the causes of arguments (in more than one sense).<sup>107</sup> He would rather

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hear it as a statement, viz., a statement about the Russians, which has nothing to say per se about the speaker or hearer. It includes no permissive terms, no names or descriptions of actions to be performed by the hearer, or the speaker. Furthermore, the statement, for that it is, is not a census report to the effect that every Russian has been found to be in such a state of readiness. (Castaneda 281-2)

<sup>107</sup> I will return to the claims made here in Chapter 4.

have his thesis upheld that *probability* itself has no designatum and that modal terms do not come from nouns, but verbs and adverbs (62). Yet, as we can see in the examples above, we are in a position to discuss what probability is or stands for, for it is a mode, and we have something that we can say that it is not—simple, indefinite possibility. Toulmin even does some of this work for us, arguing that such algebraic “sums” as “the probability of drawing two successive black balls from a bag” have hardly anything to do with what we mean by probability (that is, unless we talk of this calculation in terms of universals) (69). Thus in regards to his organic creation of a system of argumentation, Toulmin is not as those who equate *natural* with *good*; that is, he is willing to note misuses of terms in his attempt to derive rules for argumentation from everyday occurrences, but somehow he sees this misuse as reason for not being able to come to a common designatum for probability, probably because of his antipathy toward the dialectical use of finding common designata (70).

#### *AN ARISTOTELIAN RESPONSE*

But, again, there does seem to be a common designatum for *probability*. Probability statements, especially when part of arguments, are essentially about relationships between universals (in the different applications of this term to predicables). Again, it is often the way we construct universals, or construct them in a field such as politics, which requires us to use this mode. In this light, it is hard to see how a Qualifier can be separate from a warrant, as Toulmin believes, even if they appear separable in time in a particular application of a warrant which is probably caused by thinking that the Rebuttal does not rear its head until the moment of application, but this is the first-person knowledge limitation coming up again in

Toulmin (101-2). Also, again, the ethicalness of the properly made logically probable argument and that of the ethotically made probable argument should coincide. We can see this in a brief discussion of Aristotle's idea of probability, which will be expanded on in different ways in Chapters 3, 4, and 5. Chapter 3 will look at how important the syllogism is for seeing how the logic of an argument is properly grounded, though not all the reasoning be stated; Chapter 4 will look more into that theme mentioned in the introduction of the importance of "ground" for probable reasoning; and Chapter 5 will look at how Aristotle uses character for probable reasoning.

Aristotle looks at modes rather differently than Toulmin does, believing that one can deduce from different types of sources: "from what is necessary, another from what is, a third from what is possible" (*Pr. An.* I.8, 29b.34). In one sense, the first two have no distinction in terms of deduction; if something is true, it does not matter if one adds the term 'necessarily' to the stating of it: the predication will be necessary. This is still the case even with changeable things: 'Socrates is a man' is a necessary predication until Socrates becomes a corpse or something else. The same mode is equated to the expressions 'to be in something as in a whole' and 'to be predicated of every', for the conclusion from these types of premises will likewise be necessary if true because of the topical maxims. As Aristotle says in the *Topics*, every proposition and problem is formed from the predicables, and "every predicate of a subject must of necessity be either convertible with its subject or not" (I.8, 103b.6). (The importance of these statements will be seen in Chapters 4 and 5.)

Now, *probably* does not formally enter Aristotle's vocabulary of modal terms. From *De Int.* 12 & 13, where he discusses how the possible and the necessary must be

discussed, Aristotle moves on in the beginning of the *Prior Analytics* to make careful distinctions between the possible and what one could call the probable, in how they convert and in how and what one can deduce from them. The possible has two main senses in deductions: to be “for the most part but fall short of necessity,” what one might call the probable, and to be indefinite, to be capable of being “thus and not thus” (I.13, 32b.5, 11). As Aristotle implies, deductions in the mode of the second sense are not as useful in arguments and inquiries. This is easy to see: deductions in this mode, which can only be made in a few ways, are often only useful for telling us whether a conclusion is possible. Also, as Aristotle points out, this is the mode of chance (32b.13): i.e., these are propositions of accidentals, and sophistic “alone busies itself about the accidental” (*Meta* XI.8, 1064b.28). As Aristotle affirms in the *Prior Analytics* and *Metaphysics*, “all science [and demonstration] is of that which is always or for the most part [i.e., the natural]” (*Meta*. XI.8, 1065a.5; cf. *Pr. An.* I.13, 32b.4-21).

As for modal terms not being derived from verbs, Toulmin might be right, but one should recall Aristotle’s wisdom that there is something substantial about the verb, which we might expand by saying that, as with some uses of the verb ‘is’, verbs can represent a substantial or real connection between a subject and predicate. The adverbial claim is harder to swallow: yes, modal terms often take an adverbial form, but that does not mean they originate there. Indeed, there are solid grounds for believing these modal terms come into being as representative of a relationship between nouns, perhaps the substantial verb: the modal terms are the results of connecting universals. This is where their relative strengths lie, similar to how Weaver speculates about the

strength of prepositions: “as a regular orderer of nouns and of verbs, it takes upon itself something of their solidity of meaning” (139).

From this perspective we can with Toulmin distrust the saying ‘Probability is Relative to Evidence’ as epigrammatic (81). For when solving a problem, the relevant particulars or ‘facts’ are only part of the ‘evidence’ being considered: they point us to universals, definitions, and principles, which are placed in contention. That the suspect of a murder is a rich man causes us to draw on our knowledge of rich men and how they are given to act in certain situations (ideally, according to our definition of them). This syllogistic thinking is the prompt for the rhetorical topics in the law courts and seems to rely on the same inferential nature of dialectical *topoi*.<sup>108</sup> And we have seen, and will see again in the last few chapters, the importance of universals.

Now, the notion of the probable is tied to other difficulties, ones relevant to the hard divide between science and dialectic or demonstration and dialectic and ones that make the importance of a discussion of authority in logic more apparent. Science and demonstration are usually said to deal with the necessary and dialectic with the probable. As Aristotle shows us, this is both true and incorrect. Science and demonstration are of the natural, meaning the necessary and the for-the-most-part, while dialectic deals with probabilities, such as reputable opinions and good sayings, but it does this with necessary rules to find out whether something is necessarily true or

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<sup>108</sup> A comment should be made here about Toulmin’s misleading thinking: his including of *probability* with other terms such as goodness, truth, and beauty under a class of “abstract nouns formed from gerundive adjectives” reveals his strictly subject specific epistemology again, but what is more disturbing is that he asserts that experience cannot teach us general concepts of probability, that we cannot look to it as having taught us “that there is no need to expect the extremely unlikely. Such questions do not arise about truisms” (68-9). Where we can get concepts such as high probability or extremely unlikely, or how we learn to move on with acting in our lives, i.e., how we get a universal concept of ‘presumption’, without experience is hard to answer, and it is true that we don’t ask questions such as these about truisms in conversational-dialectical encounters, but Toulmin purports to be doing something for philosophy, and what he seems to be doing again is trying to clip first principles (21).

better. So one could put the definitory maxim thus: science deals with the necessary and the probable, and dialectic deals *necessarily* with the probable. But using *probable* or *probabilities* to refer to the subject matter of science seems to be a large source of the headache in distinguishing dialectic and science: as we saw above with Toulmin, there is a leap involved in going from a frequency or ratio to a probability, and a for-the-most-part may look like a frequency, but its strength actually comes from nature. Thus regarding certain subjects, such as the response of a proud man to insult, one may not be able to state an exact frequency, not only because of the difficulty in carrying out such a study but also because of the complex of human nature and the vice-properties (see Chapter 5). We also catch glimpses here the importance of dialectic for science and demonstration, which will help put a proper perspective on the authority of science and logic, something Toulmin aims at.

### **Probability, Nature, and Authority**

We will see in the following chapters the importance of a discussion of probability for putting science and logic in their proper shape and place, as well as the problems Toulmin has in trying to do this. For Aristotle, as alluded to, the power of probability lies somewhat outside the ratio and its use in a syllogism: a probability is “a reputable proposition: what men know to happen or not to happen, to be or not to be, for the most part thus and thus [...], e.g. envious men hate, those who are loved show affection” (*Pr. An.* II.27, 70a.2). Probability for Aristotle, then, lies in authority as well, which one could understand from the discussion of the reciprocal relationship between ethos and material logic above. Dialectic in its deducing looks to reputable opinions that can be talked of as probable because of their authority, but it is clear that Aristotle



intends the premises for dialectical deductions to work as necessary ones inside a discussion (*Topics* VIII.1, 155b.16-20; cf. *Post. An.* I.4, 6).

One could put this in another way. Dialectic begins with probable opinions, perhaps ones even mainly based on external authority, a good reason for accepting the premise (at least for consideration). There is an understanding of nature and the nature of things, including connections to the good, that people can acquire by living in the world, and there is some authority in this knowledge, somewhat based on at least some partial grasp of an essence or its properties or being and the good. But the dialectician is in no way compelled to let any given dialectical premise remain probable in Aristotle's sense. One can apply the dialectical method to see whether the premise is for-the-most-part probable: this is a more obvious lesson of the earlier Platonic dialogues.

Ignoring this part of deducing, probability and the universal pull, leads Toulmin into an old ethical dilemma. In the case of 'mistaken' conclusions, for example, his method of assessment is simply looking at how many facts are/were known, with nothing said about deduction or definition (*Uses* 59). What he in effect does is validate sophistic types of argument that Weaver refers to as the arguments from circumstance (which actually seems a broad category for logical fallacies): "If we are to keep clear in our minds about knowledge and probability," says Toulmin, "we must remember always to take into account the occasion on which a claim is being judged, as well as that on which it was uttered. [...] the superstition that [these claims can be judged outside of time] may play havoc with the most careful of arguments" (61-2).

Of course, the wise judge will consider the circumstantial factors of knowledge and probability affecting the individual, such as what the individual knew and when,

but he only does this on the grounds of other universals or for-the-most parts. Toulmin is apparently using inconvenience to justify the consideration of circumstance to the exclusion of universals. What he may vaguely perceive and try to avoid is something central to Aristotle's logic and view of argumentation, that definitions and universal statements are the easiest things to overthrow, but this is not a reason to avoid them. Indeed, we cannot get by without them, even when assessing arguments from circumstance and consequence.

### **Conclusion: The Good Mode?**

Regarding another aspect of evaluation, the main theme of the next chapter, Toulmin seems to conflate how we judge the way a person argues from different perspectives in time with how we judge an argument (61-2). The first is easily something one can talk about in terms of good and bad, but the second is much harder to qualify.<sup>109</sup> From Toulmin's perspective, there is little we can say about how can we understand an argument as good in any meaningful sense, criteria that apply everywhere. What would we call a good argument? What needs to be considered? What are the standards?

I have already shown a bias toward probability that will be developed in Chapter 4 (and I hope to reveal a bias toward good authority), but obviously, the question of what is a good argument is totally field-dependent for Toulmin. He justifies this by equating value terms, such as good, with modal terms. These are all types of "force" for him. *Good*, like *probable* and *impossible*, are field-invariant forces that have different sets of criteria in each field. Since all the things talked of in terms of the good

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<sup>109</sup> Weaver has a system for such assessing, as mentioned in the general introduction to dialectic provided in chapter one.

have different criteria according to Toulmin, one can talk of criteria for good in regards to arguments, which begins his rather misguided discussion of 'good' argumentation. But, to paraphrase Aristotle, "if the word is used in virtue of something common, [good] will fall under one science" (*Meta* XI.3, 1062b.35).<sup>110</sup> Toulmin asserts that *good* has a common force, but he does not say what this force is or what separates it from other types of forces. And the way force and criteria interact in any given argument is a difficult issue.

For Toulmin, *good* is used in the same manner wherever it is used. Now, this is not a writing on ethical philosophy, but there are a couple of issues one can bring up here concerning the relationships between ethics and material and formal logic. One is to ask whether Toulmin would maintain his solitary view of good force in light of the simplest divisions of good into the good in itself and the good for its usefulness in acquiring the good in itself. Do not many fields have this division of goods? Could these be field invariant uses in their own right, or, perhaps, does each use of *good* draw on the force of the good in itself or is this something that should be explained in god-terms? Indeed, as mentioned above, upon the issue of force Toulmin wanders into the realm of god-terms, the capacity and way certain terms are persuasive in themselves and give other terms persuasive power in relation to themselves.

These god-terms are used not only to describe how argumentation works but are analogies or constructs for understanding how human beings and culture work in light

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<sup>110</sup> Of course, one could argue that Aristotle does not believe there is one science of the good, since the good can be said of each Category and since he does not see the point in trying to seek any Form of the Good, for it would not be "achievable or attainable" by people and would not be of much use to people in their arts and sciences (*Nicomachean Ethics* I.6, 1096a.25-33; 1096b.33-1097a.14). However, one could also argue that much of this is contradicted in the *Metaphysics*, as in IV.2 and XII.7. For example, by analogy one could argue that since in the first *Ethics* passage paraphrased (1096b.24-9) Aristotle likens good to being (since good is predicated in each of the categories) and in *Meta*. IV.2 he argues for one science of being *qua* being, that there could be a science of good *qua* good.

of (a) good and how this good works on them, which Toulmin's notions of force and fields do not cover. God-terms are too large a concept to cover here, but I can give a brief description of them: there is what I call Burke's dialectical god-term, whose notion of dialectic has a tendency to the Hegelian type (as compared, perhaps, to an Aristotelian dialectic that is more objective in a couple of senses), that which makes over the whole world and history in its image, makes everything explainable in terms of itself, as the believer in Big Rhetoric says that every thing is rhetorical and has a numberless amount of demonstrations to prove it. There is also what I call Weaver's rhetorical god-term, a term that, when it is associated with other terms or proposed courses of action, persuades because it is seen as, or representative of, a higher good or the highest good but often with little of its meaning settled. These two types of god-terms sound very similar. For example a dialectical god-term may be considered persuasive because of the way people value what they believe is ultimate or a rhetorical god-term may have received its force from some dialectical operation that is now forgotten or dismissed. They both have persuasive power, the former perhaps because of rhetorical and sophistical (because of its resemblances to dialectic) notions are tied up with it, but they have important distinctions in how they are believed to function and how they can be argued against, which will not be discussed here.

But I can hint at their analogous explanatory use, regarding specifically the several ways *good* works in argument and human understanding, in applying them to Toulmin's notion of *field* of argument, a main subject of Chapter 3. Recall first, according to Toulmin, people cling to formal logic, including the universal premise, as an evaluative standard out of mistaken esteem for a philosopher's ideal. Now, one

should wonder why formal logic is so powerful and appealing that it has even swept up people who have never heard of it. Is it because of the waves of rationalism that have broken on the shore of our culture? Is it because *logic* is used as an ethos appeal, as we saw with Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca? Is it because of the dialectical-mystical forces that compel us, as in Burke, often under some sign or image (*Rhetoric* 86-9, 150)? Or could it be simply something essentially human, or an essential relationship of humans to something else, that drives our argumentation until it crosses a higher value and keeps driving us to absolute authority and being? If our valuing of the analytic standard or even universals is the result of resurgences of rationalism, for example, what makes many open to receiving rationalism? The purpose in asking these questions is to prevent us from throwing out the analytic standard and universals before we have sifted them thoroughly in the hope of finding out what their appropriate use(s) and end(s) are and how the concepts in their fullness relate to ultimate human concerns. Chapter 3 says something to this end.

Yet, though his focus is ethics, Toulmin is not referring to some ultimate Good as an explanation for this force.<sup>111</sup> We have seen how different uses of the probable and impossible can have “field-invariant” grounds for their “forces,” but Toulmin thought it was a great innovation to separate force, which is field-invariant, from grounds which are field-dependent (8, 30). In contrast, it needs to be emphasized again that what Toulmin somewhat trivially deals with here was rightly talked of in metaphysical

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<sup>111</sup> In *Cosmopolis*, Toulmin quotes from the *Nicomachean Ethics* to the effect that the Good has no universal form and that ‘sound moral judgment always respects the detailed circumstances of specific kinds of cases’ (31-2). One can see him looking for Aristotelian authorial support for *force* and field-dependency here, but there are other things that Aristotle seeks to respect in reasoning. Toulmin seems to miss what Aristotle means by ‘matching methods to problems’ in light of larger dialectic (qtd. in 154).

language by his contemporaries, such as Burke and Weaver, through such terms as god-terms and in attempts to describe the source(s) of motivation.

Here the question is whether good can or should be a field-invariant force with separate grounds for each field. For the pragmatist (to whom Toulmin's system caters) the answer is straight forward, but one could argue that it is hard to imagine how *good* has any force without some notion of an ultimate Good that it is related to dialectically, rhetorically, sophistically, or in a mixture, even though a person can, and often does, set different things in this position at different times, even making a means an ultimate Good. But can people get away for long with calling an argument good without appeal at some point to at least a logical standard or a god-term, for example? *What about when an argument is taken out of its field and presented to the public sphere?* We will see evaluative problems with his notions of fields in the next chapter. Here I can say that Toulmin's way of binding up field-dependent criteria and the notion of the good while ignoring the notion of an ultimate Good (which he mistakenly feels compelled to do under the impulse of his conclusion that one ultimate Good is an intolerable thing) leads him to a place where he expressly does not want to be, where "the terms of commendation and condemnation in which we so frequently express our judgments of value have as many meanings as there are different sorts of thing to evaluate, and this is a very unwelcome suggestion" (33).<sup>112</sup> The assumption that force and criteria are

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<sup>112</sup> Toulmin seems to have in mind not just a philosophical control issue but power and political issues as well, that the single-mindedness of something like Utilitarianism ironically leads to bad consequences itself (perhaps as a dialectical god-term gone amuck). Of course, religions have found another way to get around this—attach many ultimate goods to an ultimate Good, though this can lead to other problems. Toulmin, again, intends for this thinking on the good to cripple logic: it has no subject matter, so what do we know is a 'good' argument, and where is the ultimate good by which to judge formal/material arguments?

separate and that force is field-invariant does not get us off the hook on this question, especially if we preclude an investigation into force and the reason of its universality.

This is not the only problem. How are we to speak of how people use their character in their arguments and how should these moves be evaluated. How are we to speak of people damaging or building their character? Is there an overarching field of good character? Does each discipline have its own ethical aspect justifiable separate from everything else? Is their criteria found in both fields and an overarching field? If so, which one holds the authority?

Part of the answer lies beyond the scope of this project. It requires looking at the process and uses of idealization (and how these properly relate to the process and uses of classification and show the importance of *infima* species), looking at how the good and better are considered dialectically (which requires looking at the two uses of the dialectical problem), and looking at how these issues come to bear on the virtues and the definition of human nature in relation to the virtues and worth. Thus it would involve describing dialectically how Aristotle might see the relationship of God or the Good, the moral and intellectual virtues, and human essence (e.g., a representation in terms of the predicables of how Aristotle sees the “The Golden Mean” applying to human beings, how the virtues work to move people and how they are in people or “stick” in them). In other words, we need to see again the importance of the whole person for reasoning and the good whole person for reasoning. Now, I will be doing parts of these tasks in Chapter 5 and will leave the rest to another time. Namely, we will be looking at how the predicables, especially property and accident, allow us to speak of the Golden Mean as a part of virtuous ordering, including the person to everything

else, which makes for good reasoning, which, as some might be amazed to find, is bound up with the good.

But this project will not delve deeply into rhetorical *topoi*, which needs to be done because of the stress that Toulmin places on the comparable concept of *fields*, both being causes of controversy in their own ways. Coming to understand rhetorical *topoi* requires us to understand the proper limits and uses of dialectic and formal logic, since they are intimately related and the rhetorical *topoi* are built on these in a sense. We will see, however, how Toulmin, with his stress on field-dependency for what he considers ethical argumentation and evaluation, fails to supply proper limits and uses for dialectic and formal logic. He uses this emphasis to divorce formal logic from dialectic, form from “substantial” or material logic, which results in the concept of fields acting as his material logic.

That is, we have been discussing how Toulmin’s logic does not harmonize on the level of material and formal logic because of material-dialectical misunderstandings and omissions, as exemplified in his replacement of logical modes with *force*. Now we must look at how his mishandling of these issues and other causes lead him to not only misunderstand how form works but to throw out the analytic standard (not just a misuse of it) and almost all significance of logical form all together, leaving him with a material logic of field-dependency that has dangerous consequences for the realm of reasoning and rhetoric. We saw here that logic does not have to deal with absolute universal premises in order to work. We will extend this discussion in chapter three as we consider the role of probability in logic.



## CHAPTER 3

### TOULMIN'S FORMAL MATTERS

In *Uses*, Toulmin's battle against rationalism and formal logics proceeds by giving a much-needed simplification of the description of argument and logical processes, in the hope of removing the restrictions of his opponents.<sup>113</sup> However, as we will see here, Toulmin's description ends up being too simplistic in some ways and even restrictive itself. Part of his restrictive description is the division of all the aspects of argument into the field-invariant (the common procedure of arguments and force of modal terms) and the field-dependent (the criteria used to assess arguments). We saw in Chapter 2 through a focus on modes that there are important evaluative criteria that are "field-invariant." Here we will see how formal field-invariant elements are much more *significant* to reasoning and more united to material than Toulmin realizes. In good reasoning, material logic must be strongly tied to the field-invariant elements on a developed "procedural" level and not just through the forcial connections with which Toulmin tries to make do. We will also see that the syllogism turns out to be more receptive to the proper description of arguments than Toulmin's notion of procedure.

I will begin by discussing how Toulmin's disdain for form causes him to be reluctant to use it in analyzing and evaluating arguments. We will see here briefly the importance of the syllogism to evaluation, as well as hints of the problems with field-dependent evaluation that Toulmin will run into by avoiding formal logic. I then move on to briefly discussing the issues of concealment in the premises of the syllogism, as well as in the vague premises and terms of Toulmin's system and how their vagueness

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<sup>113</sup> In this chapter I have mainly Aristotle's formal logic in mind, but I will rarely use *formal logics* to refer to his system and modern renditions of formal logics, as Toulmin lumps these together in *Uses*.

prevents a proper evaluation of authority in arguments. After this discussion of some key terms and the problems involved with them, there will be a brief discussion of fields and how the terms and premises of Toulmin's schema cause problems in trying to evaluate by field-dependency. A fuller discussion of the problems with his emphasis on fields will come after we see how Toulmin's schema itself, which he seems to want to be a mostly material logic, causes problems in reasoning, because Toulmin isolates from everyday argument standards of reason—formal logic and the analytic standard—supposing them to belong to formal logic alone. I will then show how Toulmin's system short-circuits formal logic and thus, contrary to Toulmin's intention, undermines evaluating arguments by field-dependency. Finally, as we started off Toulmin discussion in Chapter 1 in the context of composition studies, the last section will be a discussion on fields and how they need to be considered in the epistemology of the composition classroom.

#### *FORMAL CONCEALERS AND THE TERMINAL PROBLEMS OF FIELDS*

Toulmin's antagonism to form is felt early on in *Uses*. Toulmin begins his description of the field-dependent and field-invariant by asking, 'What things about the form and merits of our arguments are *field-invariant* and what things are *field-dependent*?' (15). It is hard to tell whether he actually answers this question since one is hard pressed to say what Toulmin means by "form" and thus how it is related to merit. By the phrasing of the question itself, Toulmin seems to imply form cannot mean process or procedure of argument, for how could pieces of different processes be used in different fields and *process* itself still be called field-invariant? But later he seems to

think that *form* can refer to the shape and procedure of an argument but that these are separable (43).

What does become clear is that Toulmin, with his method, is trying to avoid what he accounts a sin of formal logics: they hold one to a form or shape. Toulmin seems to believe that many problems are caused by unethical expectations on argument that require one univocal form and one univocal standard to be applied univocally to all situations. He wants to avoid this by focusing on “procedure,” so that there can be formality but only what is called on by the situation.<sup>114</sup> A consequence of his particular thinking, one seen in the division into field-dependent and field-invariant too, is that form is allowed little to do with evaluation.

To relieve form and the analytic standard of their evaluative duties, Toulmin tries to wear down form and universals (for these are in a sense the form of the analytic standard). He tries to throw out universals and universal premises, as we saw in Chapter 2 regarding modes. He also tries to get around the form-procedure issue by distorting the syllogistic “shape” of arguments and supplementing a softer shape—that expressed in his diagrams—which is a vague mix of form, verification procedures, arrangement considerations and other things. Toulmin allows a procedural mess that hinders evaluation, a mess that is in part caused by his misunderstanding of the limits of the syllogism and thus its relationship to everything else.

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<sup>114</sup> One could say he is thinking of arguments in terms of a computer programming flow chart: one goes down the flow chart in a simple enough fashion unless there is cause for a function to be done on the side and the result returned to the main flow. The question to ask Toulmin, besides issues of knowing and how knowing should be related to argument, is who is the user, or main user, and whence her authority to determine the flow of the argument or where extra work is needed, as well as whether there is a limit or not to how many functions can be required.

## Concealing Form

I will develop many of these claims more thoroughly in the next major section, but first we need to speak of Toulmin's evaluative problems more generally to lay down some principles for understanding that section. I will begin by looking at Toulmin's misgivings about the role of form in logic:

Is the logical form of a valid argument something quasi-geometrical, comparable to the shape of a triangle or the parallelism of two straight lines? Or alternatively, is it something procedural: is a formally valid argument one *in proper form*, as lawyers would say [...]? Or does the notion of logical form somehow combine both these aspects, so that to lay an argument out in proper form requires the adoption of a particular geometrical layout? [...] Supposing valid arguments can be cast in a geometrically tidy, form, how does this help to make them any the more cogent? (*Uses* 95)

One can see from these questions that Toulmin, like Russell, mistakes the emphasis of the logicians, for arguments do not have to be presented in a certain "shape," i.e. the syllogism, to be cogent or valid. Aristotle, in his discussion of enthymemes, recognizes that to put every argument, especially oratorical ones, in syllogistic form is even a threat to cogency in some cases, especially if a speaker attempts an extended syllogism.

However, this does not mean arguments should not be thought out enough to stand up to formal scrutiny, as alluded to in Chapter 2: the assumptions in the mind should be able to properly fill the invisible parts of the structure. Arguments are convertible into this form for testing and, perhaps depending on the audience's

perception of the speaker and what he speaks about, should be so converted and tested. These syllogisms, or the ones that make them up, should be able to be ‘converted’ in Aristotle’s sense to the first figure in the interest of full disclosure.<sup>115</sup> Form is important for evaluation, and full form is always of use in analyzing and evaluating arguments; the use of modes, for one thing, makes it flexible for this; for reasoning to be good it does not have to use the necessary mode but it does have to be necessarily modal and considerate of the mode (see below). As we will see, to say the elements of form allowed is purely determined by the situation or the field is contrary to wisdom and begs the question of the field’s authority.

Yet Toulmin sees the syllogism as too simplistic—how could one really boil down an argument to a major premise, a minor premise, and a resulting conclusion? Toulmin here mistakes a principle of deduction for all of formal deduction. Aristotle sets apart the three-premise syllogism as *perfect*, the last standard by which to judge the claims of the other syllogisms, which in essence have more premises than just three because of the assumptions they take: “[...] the primary demonstrations, each of which is implied in many demonstrations, are called elements of demonstrations; and the primary syllogism, which have three terms and proceed by means of one middle, are of this nature” (*Meta.* V.3, 1014a.37-b.2; cf. *Post. An.* I.14, 79a.30-32). That is, Aristotle, in his formal logic and dialectic, allows for analysis and just methods of assessment of broad and complex arguments.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> One can even convert the major and minor premises of the perfect deductions into inductive deductions to show how these principles are arrived at, “the deduction which establishes primary and immediate propositions,” as discussed in Chapter 1, a process that Toulmin somewhat compresses or even conceals in *backing* (*Pr. An.* II.23, 68b.30).

<sup>116</sup> In *Meta.* V.3, Aristotle sees demonstrations in general as often having primary demonstrations as elements. Aristotle appropriately attests to such complexity in the *Topics*: “Every deductive proposition either is one of the constituent elements in the deduction, or else goes to establish one of these (and you

But Toulmin accuses the syllogism of concealing assumptions in arguments (though it and the dialectical topics are intended to reveal concealment), and he thinks that he is helping out by adding such notions as *backing* with its reliance on field, but his expansion here only limits argument because he does not consider the larger context of arguments. As we will see, in trying to diagram a complete argument, he only makes an isolated form or procedure that is of little help in judging complicated arguments, even the everyday ones that he wants to deal with.

Now, Toulmin is not alone in his complaints against the syllogism. Recall from Chapter 1 that some claim the syllogism is of little use. Fulkerson, following Hirsch, believes that logic should not be taught to writing students because it does not help them write; people do not write in syllogisms, and when they do, “the complex rules about distribution of terms and validity simply don’t apply” (“Logic and Teachers of English” 199).<sup>117</sup> But as Gross argues, though Toulmin’s alternative is wonderfully more simple than the complex symbolism of modern formal logic, it is too simple, dealing only with isolated conclusions or claims: “we deal, in the real world, not in isolated claims, but in whole arguments whose larger structures must be grasped intuitively. Moreover, this intuitive grasp must precede the application of Toulmin’s system, or that system will most certainly be misapplied” (310-311).

In an evaluative emphasis similar to my own, Gross argues that we need to be able to translate natural-language arguments (as they often appear in

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can always tell when it is secured in order to establish something else by the fact of a number of similar questions being put; for people for the most part secure the universal by means of either induction or of likeness); [...]” (VIII.8, 160a.35-40). This is appropriate because dialectic is over demonstration, which we see evidence of here, a point that will be developed in Chapter 4.

<sup>117</sup> It should be pointed out that the art of logic is not just something used immediately in writing, but also in pre-writing in various forms.

retorical/dialectical discussions) into their logical equivalents to be able to discover the larger structure of arguments:<sup>118</sup> “There is unfortunately no easy equation between the two. We may dispense with the symbolism of formal logic, but we may not assume that ordinary sentences may be trans-posed unaltered into Toulmin's system, nor that the logical equivalent of an argument is entirely explicit in a text” (311). Gross implies that there is a danger of not doing any logical equating at all in using Toulmin's system.<sup>119</sup>

Now, one could argue that in such “translations” we are vivisectioning an argument by boiling it down to its key terms and relationships, and in one sense we are: we are abstracting the logical part to see if it is right because, for one, the three main types of rhetorical appeals rarely occur separate from each other. And other things are at work in arguments besides formal logic, such as the rhetorical and even metaphysical elements.<sup>120</sup> Toulmin's schema seems to want to keep the resemblance to everyday argument intact during evaluation, but how he does so precludes aspects of thorough evaluation, especially evaluation by typical moves we use for evaluating ethos, pathos,

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<sup>118</sup> P. Christopher Smith also points out Toulmin's avoidance of the larger context of arguments, along a line that can be closely tied to the dialectical—the dialogical: “For, on the whole, the dialogical origins of argument are suppressed in Toulmin's schema, which fails to make explicit that not just grounds, warrant, and backing, but claims too are offered in *response*. Furthermore, Toulmin's schema fails to make explicit that [...] a claim is made in response to something more than a challenge, in response, namely, to the contradictory claim” (172 emphasis in original).

<sup>119</sup> Castaneda also takes on the accusation that formal logic conceals premises (that is ultimately an attack on the evaluative use of the syllogism). He argues that customary logic is not concealing anything since Data, Backing; so Claim still needs a Warrant, even if it is assumed, so that the typical form is D, W, B; so C (283). Indeed, one could argue that it is really Toulmin who obscures by not distinguishing D, B; so C and D, W; so C enough in argument in how they work, in how the external is brought in.

<sup>120</sup> A full discussion of these qualities will have to wait for another project. A discussion of rhetorical *topoi* will be relevant to it. We have to see how rhetorical *topoi* work and should work in argument, and part of this is understanding how they relate to general dialectic, which ideally works in connection to the Good through spirit in a somewhat Augustinian sense (and not simply objectively) but also can unfortunately be related to a dialectic that has been welded to some field or limited world view. Perhaps the way material and formal consequences are relatable, as Bird discusses, allows for this process. See Below.

and logos dominated arguments across fields. His ultimate privileging of field-dependency complicates the issue by not allowing us to properly evaluate arguments that draw on a variety of fields nor make claims that are fair game for several fields, as will be made clearer below.<sup>121</sup>

### **Concealing Premises**

But before we introduce the problems with Toulmin's view of fields, we must also see how not only the syllogism as a whole promotes concealment for Toulmin but also its parts. For Toulmin, the notion of premise is too broad: "Is there even enough similarity between major and minor premises for them usefully to be yoked together by the single name of 'premiss' [sic]?" (*Uses* 96). The Aristotelian answer is 'yes', not only because these premises are alike in that they assert something, but because they assert things in like manner—within the confines of the categories and according to the manner of the predicables, the rules of being, thinking, and grammar; this is why he goes into so much detail on primary and secondary *ousia* (substance) in a logical work. These premises connect two extremes through a middle (though it may be an extended middle) and in this sense should be considered equally premise, whether of a specific or universal type (see Chapters 1 and 4). On a formal level, these types of premise are easy to distinguish in a deduction and thus allow for a measure of specificity in analyzing and building arguments, in seeing how premises are connected to a conclusion (cf. the discussion of universal premises in Chapter 1). We will see below

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<sup>121</sup> One way of stating the problem of Toulmin and Russell's formalizations of arguments is to say they try to abstract too much with logic; that is, they both in their own ways try to bring too much into the notion of logic or argument. Russell is willing to throw out what he cannot get into his system, and Toulmin tries to reconfigure all in terms of the ethical, as we have seen. Given what we know of the importance of field-dependence for Toulmin in evaluating arguments, the ethical emphasis pushes another issue to the surface—whether ethical arguments are field-invariant, field-dependent, or are divisible into both, as was mentioned in Chapter 2.



the exact opposite in Toulmin's thinking on premises, how his poor distinctions of premise types and throwing out of simple statements is a hindrance to reasoning and evaluating.

Castaneda also counters Toulmin's claim that the categories of premises are too broad and act as grounds for covering up how different types of statements really work in argument. He argues that the major premise does not conceal the difference between backing and warrant, even less the distinction between secondary backings and warrants (which Toulmin does not seem to have worked out so well himself):

Indeed, it is hard to see how customary logic has failed to perceive the differences in backings that Toulmin has in mind. No logician has ever denied that we have to support our major premises, independently of the syllogism in question. No logician has ever even hinted that different major premises cannot have different supports or backings. Surely, every logician will readily out-Toulmin all of us by agreeing that the backings are statement-dependent (or warrant-dependent, if you wish), not merely field-dependent! (284)<sup>122</sup>

In contrast, Toulmin's terms are fuzzy and work to obscure reasoning here, which eventually undermines his system of evaluating by field-dependency, revealing its limitations by pointing out the lack of them.

For example, Gross argues that it is hard to tell the difference between warrant, grounds, or claim according to Toulmin's definitions and complains that there are no intrinsic markers for warrants, that one man's grounds may be another man's claims or

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<sup>122</sup> The logic I am trying to advocate in this project is especially aware of these external relations, especially when the external relation is to something outside of the logical discourse, and is also cautious that they do not get confused with other moves of logic and argument.

warrants (312, 313).<sup>123</sup> Toulmin loosely defines other concepts also, which increases the ambiguity here and the difficulty of evaluation. He refers to the notoriously vague concept of ‘fact’ in his explanation of *datum* (or *grounds* in later usage), the foundation of a claim. From his examples we get the sense that a fact is a true proposition regarding a *particular*, e.g. that ‘Petersen is a Swede’ or ‘X was timed at 45mph’ (97). He later mentions, however, that a datum can be a categorical statement of fact (105), and that as “long as we interpret universal premises as expressing not warrants but their backing, both major and minor premises are at any rate categorical and factual,” which implies that “Karl Henrik Petersen is a Swede” is categorical, a problem discussed below (*Uses* 113-14).<sup>124</sup> Yet this vagueness is important to Toulmin, for it allows him to say that what goes for a fact or datum is field-dependent. As Gross clarifies, there has to be some consideration of backing before we can determine if a statement is a fact or not, so data are reliant on backing, not just the other way around (312), but how we even determine what field’s backing should be considered is problematic, as we shall see.

### Concealing Authority

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Toulmin is mainly concerned with ethos and authority in argument, but we will see that his vague terms and premise types, along

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<sup>123</sup> Stratman, is right that the terms of Toulmin’s heuristic, such as *warrants*, *data*, and *claims*, are intended to make our intuitions more explicit (“James Stratman Responds” 319). However, the obscure relationship set up here between material and formal logic is a great obstacle to achieving this end, as we shall see.

<sup>124</sup> How this is so, Toulmin does not say, unless he means that the statement makes use of a category or means the same thing in every application. I mentioned above how Aristotle gives equality to premises, which is important since many people place factual statements higher in terms of arguing and knowing. Weaver puts a lot of energy into knocking the factual premise off its pedestal, for factual is technically only applicable to particular statements, but it has become common to apply the term to universal statements that are really an act of mind, which Toulmin may be doing here, an act that can result in neglecting the importance of the mind and the other types of universal statements that it makes which do not concern the real world alone. In this regard, students’ hasty dispatching of different claims to nebulous categories of fact and opinion is cause to shudder. See below.

with the undermining of the other parts of logic he accomplishes, leaves us without a good way to discuss authority for field-dependency. Moreover, field-dependency is very much concerned with authority in a number of ways, but Toulmin's system hinders the critiquing of the authorities.

For example, further in the ambiguity of terms, warrants seem to be only practically distinguished from backing: "Backing is all the principles and all the methods; warrant is the particular principle or method which allows the reasoner to move from grounds to claim" (313). P. Christopher Smith points out that Toulmin does not address the issue of why we must stop at backing "in founding our train of thought," nor how backing is different from the other elements in this regard (173).<sup>125</sup> But at some point one needs to know where the buck stops and what this authority is. Is it a person or a principle? Is it backing or warrant(s) or something else? Does the same thing give the field structure—the distinguishing of backing and warrant that seems so important to a field in knowing what its first principles are—and is this authority in the field or outside of it?

Castaneda complains that Toulmin never reveals the exact relationship between warrants and backing because he "neither discusses nor illustrates warrant establishing arguments" (283). P. Christopher Smith suggests that backing be called authority since that is what it functions as: "Not that the authority here must be a person, rather authority refers to whatever premise in the argument must be taken for granted"

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<sup>125</sup> We will see that many of Toulmin's examples of backing actually imply an authority or agent, but he does not really talk about how ethos works in his evaluative terms of field-dependency (cf. Chapter 5 for an angle on how Aristotle believes ethos to work in arguments in general).

(173).<sup>126</sup> Now, that backing is authority causes some problems in how Toulmin uses it. If he would stick to using it for the diagramming of arguments, it would be ok, but he argues that statements that express backing can take the place of warrants or major premises. Because of the nature of formal logic and how it works, this would ultimately blindly incorporate external authority into its form, into the syllogism *qua* syllogism, which would nullify the purpose of form.<sup>127</sup> But the *form* of the syllogism, as with other forms (including artistic ones), has a type of authority when dealing with this concept and how it should be used. The nullifying of form may be Toulmin's purpose, but we will see the problems it causes, which may be put succinctly here under one heading: *it eventually makes everything tautological*, even the drawing on of authority; this tautologizing is a denial of reason.

Toulmin thus falls terribly short in his failure to deal with *backing* clearly, and we will see how his notion of field-dependency contributes to and confirms the tautologizing just mentioned:

In fact the fundamental term of Toulmin's system, the one on which all of the others directly or indirectly depend, is one least mentioned--*backing*. Traced to their roots, all arguments making serious epistemic or deontic claims are found to exist within specific fields of knowledge whose basic premises may be articulated but cannot be proved. These basic premises, taken collectively and in conjunction with accepted methods of inference,

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<sup>126</sup> Smith also points out that Toulmin does not address the important notion of consensus, like Aristotle concerning dialectical arguments from *endoxa* (173).

<sup>127</sup> One could add here that logic and authority may ultimately be one in metaphysics (though the importance of mystery may break apart what may be an idea heading for a platonic notion of the One), but an awareness of the distinction of formal logic from authority and how they relate to each other is important for good reasoning and arguing.

are what Toulmin calls backing. To work in a particular field is implicitly to accept its backing [...]. Toulmin's term for a syllogistic conclusion, a *claim* is then simply any statement whose truth is not taken for granted within a particular system of knowledge. (Gross 313)

As we will see, Gross points to a big flaw of Toulmin's work: setting up knowledge, reasoning, and arguing in such a way, without any general arbiter of logic and authority, is counter to how both human reasoning and the liberal arts are intended to work. It is contrary to wisdom. As Augustine says in *Against the Academicians* in the context of the search for wisdom, "we are prompted to learn by the twin forces of authority and reason" (3.20.43.13-18). One can glean from Augustine's argument that this authority, which seems to be not only the authority of what is true but also evaluating what is true, is not a divided authority, with a little tyrant for every aspect of human knowledge, the view that Toulmin may ultimately leave us with.

### **Ambiguity of Premise Terms and Fields**

One can also point out here how the claim of one field could be the backing of another and vice versa; e.g., the same statement could be a backing in biology and a claim in chemistry.<sup>128</sup> But then how do we know how to apply them in everyday argument? We normally do not worry about such issues and just let the claim rest under the authority of *Science*, an act that is conducive to the problem of Science dictating what is logical, which Toulmin takes on.

Moreover, if we continue to speak of fields as academic fields, one could even see how claim and backing, premise types that are in a sense procedural opposites, could be said of the same thing in a particular system of knowledge. Thus we might

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<sup>128</sup> That is, if these are not too broad to be really fields, an issue of significance I will discuss below.

have trouble describing how revolutionary claims are or should be dealt with according to the backing of the field. Or one could perhaps say that revolution starts a new field, perhaps two competing fields for one place. And if a general field arises from this division, one might wonder how and what properties are predicated of it and how these are verified and validated.

In these conflicts over what to label a statement, beyond needing to know how fields are even established, one might ask “Why and how do fields and the members of a field come into conflict, and why do they persist in it?” Are they fighting over some division of an Enlightenment theory of knowledge, some place in the encyclopedia where students in general can get their equipment for arguments? That is, does Toulmin want to avoid expert discourse altogether and just simply see fields as Ciceronian *topoi* that provide fodder for trained arguers and students? Or are fields at the end of the day simply arbitrary and nebulous, without much ultimate use in evaluating, leaving us to find some other motive for why people fight for the soul of a statement?

One might further imagine how the conflation of premise types may lead to problems when a particular system of knowledge is forced on others or may lead to problems concerning how justifying general moral claims, which seem important for Toulmin’s morally focused system, are ultimately even possible, considering the potentially ambiguous limits of a field.<sup>129</sup> The linking of backing to field described here

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<sup>129</sup> Freeman zeros in on the epistemological difficulties Toulmin has with warrants. Though his full critique is beyond the scope of this current work, I can say he supplements Toulmin through something related to *topoi*—*stases*.

Freeman provides several issues and questions for Toulmin’s way of evaluating arguments: it is often difficult to determine to what field a warrant and its backing belong; what constitutes a field is ambiguous (333). One may also bring up other problems of field-dependency, such as “what is the size of a field?” “What about the issue of how fields change, as Toulmin and Kuhn try to describe?” And it’s hard to say how we should judge which warrants are “legit” in a given field. As Freeman writes, we “may expect that warrants in different fields are backed in different ways. How then do we assess

could even shut down arguments between fields and could eventually be an excuse to build up walls between not only disciplines but anything that could be considered a field, such as a culture (see below).

Also, backing is bound up with the notion of authority, as I mentioned, and a conflation of warrant with backing makes it difficult to see whether authority attaches differently to these or should. As alluded to above in terms of the form of the formal syllogism, the ambiguous relationship of Toulmin's terms to authority also points to a problem in using Toulmin's system of knowing what type of authority is called for in a situation: logical, moral, force, or all in one? Given field-dependency is all we have to go on, it becomes very difficult to say who can answer this question, whether we are talking about fields as academic disciplines or not.

One could say that an academic discipline can say what kind of authority is called for in its own field's arguments, but could they have looked to something internal for establishing that thing as the authority? If no, which I believe is the answer, whither did they go and to what field did they appeal? What is the backing for applying the warrant of that field's authority to their own? How does the backing of it make it authoritative here? To accept an argument in a field or to accept a field's argument in general we must ultimately look outside of the field and see it in relationship to other

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whether a warrant is properly backed? Are there canons for this? Are those canons themselves field-dependent or field-transcendent?" (333). Beyond these, speaking of the variability in field size, one might wonder if they have to get smaller as the various deductions and points continue until we have to agree with another on the basis of perception to resolve a point. Of course, this resolution would involve universals, which brings us right back to dialectic. Also, there is the problem for any given field in how to determine which warrants are both more relevant and reliable.

This last point may be somewhat related to a problem Freeman points out about Toulmin's attempt to avoid an infinite regress of warrants: "That we must accept certain warrants provisionally, taking for granted that the most reliable warrants can be shown acceptable, raises some significant epistemological questions. Do we simply provisionally accept certain warrants or are some warrants acceptable in a basic way, analogous to acceptable basic premises? If the acceptable warrants are those most reliable, how do we recognize these warrants?" (334)

things. In other words, Toulmin's system forces us to look for a universal science, which dialectic must be a part of, and with it a full philosophy and authority, for must we not eventually deal with the issue of the existence of a field of authority if we play by Toulmin's concepts?<sup>130</sup>

In other words, a focus on the material and on material logics, or field logics, begs us to ask questions about the field-invariant and its connection to the material and material logics, how it properly works with material and how material must work in it and likewise with material logics, some of which we saw in the discussion of modes in Chapter 2. (My small attempts at trying to understand how *force* and *procedure* work for Toulmin may also show that these are not concepts sufficiently developed enough for answers to such questions.) Again, the formal and the material aspects of reasoning are only understood well and work well when they are understood together (and in the light of something greater), the showing of which will be an explicit aim of Chapter 4 on dialectic. The next subsection is a way of transitioning to a discussion of how Toulmin fails to give a clear connection for these by speaking of the dialectical *topoi*, a

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<sup>130</sup> One may find some answers to some of the questions I have asked regarding fields in an earlier work by Toulmin, *The Philosophy of Science*. There, at least in the examples of the physical sciences, fields are structured things: "the propositions of an exact science form a hierarchy, and are built upon one another" (73). But physicists have versatility in how they may use different laws, such as descriptions or definitions (80). And though he makes it clear throughout that he believes these propositions are not deductively related, his idea of discovery that finds many of the propositions seems to be a use of inductive deduction and is at least reliant on it (cf. 36-40). Moreover, there seems no principle to tell which of these propositions are off limits for challenging nor under what circumstances others are challengeable, though it seems clear that the challenging of a physical science's propositions is the science's business alone and can be done by an individual scientist (72-3, 82-3). These sciences seem isolated, without having to give much thought to what its conclusions might cause elsewhere. The disregard is similar when the participants in a field are arguing over what makes a complete theory in the field, over the field's limits of explanation and what the primary principle of the field is and what it should do, and Toulmin asserts that if the participants do not have a common standard, these changes of a "philosophical kind" will not be resolved, though he offers no solutions either (104-6). But he does not seem to realize the importance of their understanding their first principle in light of everything else, and these physical sciences still need the judge of dialectical-prudence for this and for making sure their propositions are internally ordered, especially since they have far separated from their beginning in common sense, a separation Toulmin may recognize (cf. 16-17, 41-2).



sort of materially based abstraction of the real that in a sense connects formal logic and matter, and emphasizing the importance of the connection, while the rest of the chapter explores many of the problems given above in more depth.

### **What's the Matter with Form?**

Material logic is important in how we see, perhaps even derive, formal logic, and formal logic helps reveal the proper use of material logic.<sup>131</sup> To speak of the former first (and to show the latter in the next section), Toulmin values his formal scheme of argumentation for its non-formal nature and practicality, but Bird showed early on, in “The Re-Discovery of the Topics,” that Toulmin’s *Uses* was an attempt to reinvent the dialectical wheel of the *topoi* (a crucial aspect of material logic), specifically the Boethian understanding of Aristotle’s *Topics* that was refined during the Middle Ages, and that Toulmin does this without apparent regard for the *Topics* or its history. The illustrations that Toulmin gives to explain his formal notions, such as *data*, *claim*, *warrant*, and *backing*,

make it clear that Toulmin is primarily concerned with arguments which derive at least some of their argumentative force from relations of meaning among the non-logical words—e.g., Swedes and Catholics [...]. In fact, he declares that the backing of an argument is “field dependent” in that it “varies from one field of argument to another” (T. 103).

‘*Formal*’ in this connection has to do with the syncategorematic terms,

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<sup>131</sup> By looking at this relationship, we will see important connections between the field-dependent and field-invariant that Toulmin misses. One might even say Toulmin sets us up to analyze this relationship by making *backing* (and the other notions that are hard to distinguish from it) a significant part of procedure or form, which is field-invariant. Such relationships are also a main subject of Chapter 4.

‘and’, ‘or’, ‘if...then’, ‘not’, and the quantifiers ‘all’ and ‘some’, whereas ‘*material*’ refers to the categorematic terms (AS.f.24rb). (536)

Toulmin’s use of form is simply to focus us back on the material and avoid form, and we will see how he over-emphasizes the material in reasoning. One can add here that since Toulmin “is primarily concerned with arguments which derive at least some of their argumentative force from relations of meaning among the non-logical words,” i.e. material connections and consequences, the other field-invariant or even *formal* part of argumentation for Toulmin is *force*. Again, this is a vague term that covers a whole slew of concepts and ways non-logical words, things really, can be really related to each other to have “power” in argument—in matters of likelihood and evaluation (see Chapter 4): e.g., “It is *possible* for fish to be red”; “*For the most part* Spartans are brave”; “The courageous friend is *better* than any other.” This term may also cover that difficult concept of rhetoric of how words can have an effect on several or all the faculties of a person, from the physical to the religious, such as those terms rhetoricians have appropriately called *god-terms*.

I discuss these forcial and modal issues in Chapter 2, but what should be pointed out here is the necessary relationship between material and formal logic that such issues point us to: “The logical study of material consequence, *i.e.* of logical consequence that depends in some way upon categorematic terms, was for medieval *formal* logic primarily the study of the Topics”. (Bird 536 my emphasis). The medievals seemed to see the importance of this connection, that one cannot simply possess an absolutely formal logic that subordinates the world, as the modern logicians thought and Toulmin so importantly fought against, nor can one have a completely material or field-

dependent logic, to which Toulmin eventually succumbs. Again, one apparently can end up with the latter because abstractions can be made from material logic; it can have something of a “form” itself (see below). But material and formal logic need to be understood as in harmony; one cannot simply throw formal logic out the window and try to find some isolated standard for evaluation in the subject matter.

Accordingly, “a Topic as a ‘material consequence’ is to be understood with reference to a ‘formal consequence’” (538). One can see what Bird is saying here in two ways, both ways giving strength to the connection of the material and the formal: (1) as the relationship between a Topical Maxim (e.g., “Of whatever the species is predicated, so is the genus”) and the Topical Difference (e.g., “‘Man’ is related to ‘animal’ as species to genus”), both being called topics, as Peter of Spain explains, ‘because both confer validity (*firmitatem*) on an argument’ (qtd. in Bird 537). (2) Or one can assume a necessary proposition to reduce a material consequence to a formal one, as “If man is a species of animal, then if it is man, it is animal”: “The consequence is ‘formal’ because it holds good in virtue of the form regardless of the terms that realize it” (Bird 538).<sup>132</sup>

We will see more connections between matter and form in Aristotle’s logic in Chapter 4. Bird’s main point here is to show the similarity between warrants and topical maxims and backing and topical differences respectively, as well as to show that

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<sup>132</sup> Yet Keith and Beard inadvertently reveal that Toulmin wants these things separate in a desire for his theory to be both specific and general:

Toulmin parses this difference in traditional logical terms, as the difference between formal and substantial concepts of inference, where formalism yields generality and substance is tied to specific contexts of use. He claims [...] that warrants are non-formal devices that nonetheless can yield conclusive arguments—substantial, yet possessing the attractions of formal argument. (39)

I will discuss the problems caused by separating specific topics from general topics a little below and more fully in another project that completes the comparison of Toulmin and Aristotle in the light of the latter’s *Rhetoric*.

Toulmin has not done his homework. He implies that Toulmin's schema may have been made more similar to the medieval one and Toulmin himself more open to the formal aspect of logic if he would have not missed the deeper, formal aspects of material logic and would not have allowed some warrants, such as, "Harry's hair is red, so it is not black," to be self-authenticating (534, 537-8).<sup>133</sup> I believe that if Toulmin would have done so, he would have also been able to present a way to evaluate arguments, the absence of this being a common complaint against him. I will simply note here that Toulmin's vague use of *force*, his separation of it from any common ground, and his attempt to take most evaluative use away from form, reducing it to arrangement, largely preclude any attempt at giving evaluative standards.<sup>134</sup>

#### *PREMISES AND REASONING AND ISSUES OF AUTHORITY IN LOGIC*

Before I further discuss Toulmin's premise types, I will emphasize one more problem that comes about in his field logics from his concept of material logic and its premises. Toulmin's system conflates data, warrants, and backing, which, along with the apparent foundational arbitrariness of facts and the indefiniteness of field, makes it easy for the often unethical argument from circumstance (D, so C) to slide by, as alluded to above. Everyday arguments seem especially vulnerable to this in incorporating arguments from disciplinary domains, and this would be made easier by Toulmin's preclusion of general grounds of evaluation, dialectic. In one sense, it precludes while apparently giving a way to evaluate, but as we have been seeing,

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<sup>133</sup> I will discuss below the problems with this notion of Toulmin's.

<sup>134</sup> As we saw in Chapter 2, Toulmin has no answer for why the field-invariant aspect of probability is field-invariant. He allows that possibilities of different fields (i.e., their criteria) may be analogously compared, but he does not really think of this as an area for fruitful philosophical investigation (*Uses* 37). He seems to assume that there are no general criteria just because the infinite amount of subject matter and possible sciences (39).

simply teasing out the components of an argument is not to have evaluated it, though it can contribute to evaluation. We will see more on how fields in themselves are ineffective for evaluation, and, I could add, so are the arbitrary standards of logical fallacies: something more grounded is needed. And such preclusion, in addition to many other problems it causes, contributes to any given field growing wildly out of control in the public sphere, co-opting a culture in its tendency to establish general truths, which is what one could expect to happen without good standards of evaluation. The general rules of logic, based as they are in the real, though many people can be misled by artificial replacement and manipulation of them, can help prevent the skewing of what is reasonable, especially when they are used by what best works them—wisdom.

Ironically, Toulmin is trying to stop such things as Science from defining what is reasonable but, again, cannot because he throws out much of the basis for defining. This preclusion of dialectic, which is over demonstration and deduction, as well as woven into the logical-philosophical aspect of the ground for authority that is begged here, occurs for interrelated reasons: (1) As mentioned above, the primary syllogism is important for evaluation, and here we will see how Toulmin tries to get rid of it and the problems he runs into by doing so. As opposed to Aristotle's system, Toulmin's method may at the bottom preclude the first form of the first figure of the syllogism and thus evaluation, for he at least prevents one premise from being universal.<sup>135</sup> Without this form, there is no deduction of the universal affirmative, which is what Toulmin is against here. Really, without this first form of "All A's are B's; All B's are C's; Hence,

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<sup>135</sup> We saw other problems resulting from throwing out universal statements and a good deal of the notion of categories in Chapter 1, and we will see more below and in Chapter 4.

all A's are C's," there are no deductions, including dialectical ones. This would preclude principled argument and even seem to prevent evaluation and resolution of arguments.<sup>136</sup> Yet to understand these points about form, we will first need to see (2) how Toulmin's mistaken notions of premise types causes problems in reasoning, especially the formal part of reasoning, as well as (3) how Toulmin treats authority, which is important for evaluation. We have been set up for this discussion above, and now we can take it further, seeing, for example, the importance of the distinction and right relationship of facts and universals in arguing, as well as backing and fields. For example, as mentioned above, people commonly use universal statements as facts too, which can cause problems and elisions for deductive reasoning, especially enthymemes, and Toulmin's vague terms do not help prevent this. (Indeed, considering the vagueness of *fact*, one wonders why Toulmin does not talk about the force of *fact*, the force often acquired in everyday argument by calling something a fact.) Also, backing is so broad a notion that it can even include fields, such as statistics, which can cause all sorts of evaluative problems (312).<sup>137</sup>

In other words, we dealt with Toulmin from a largely material logic angle in Chapter 2, but we are now setup for understanding how Toulmin's formal-looking material logic prevents the use of formal logic and the consequences that this and throwing out formal logic has on his trying to use field-dependency to evaluate

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<sup>136</sup> In giving one of the ways universal demonstration is better than particular demonstration, Aristotle says:

[...] the more particular a demonstration is, the more it falls into what is indefinite, while the universal tends to the simple and the limit. And as indefinite, things are not understandable; but as finite they are understandable. Therefore they are more understandable as universal than as particular. [...] the universal demonstration is better, since it is more of a demonstration. (*Post. An.* 1.24, 86a.4-10, my emphasis)

The universal demonstration reveals in order that there may be resolution.

<sup>137</sup> Even Toulmin admits that in *Uses* backing is a "carpetbag concept" that labels "a variety of different things", but he seems to think he remedied this in *An Introduction to Reasoning*. (Olson 201).

arguments. Here we will again see the close connection of dialectic and formal logic that will be elaborated on in Chapter 4. Though Toulmin is somewhat attempting to develop a new dialectic, he cannot throw out the material or formal without throwing out the other because of this close connection.

### **Universal Statements**

Again, there needs to be at least one universal type premise in a deduction, whether it be negative or positive, but Castaneda affirms that Toulmin throws out universal premises.

The central fact seems to be that Toulmin does not acknowledge universal propositions or statements in the customary sense. Assertions like "Swedes are Lutheran" or "Every Swede is a Lutheran" is for Toulmin either (i) an inference-warrant, whose clearest, proper formulation is "A Swede can be taken certainly to be a Lutheran," or (ii) a statement of fact, etc., which backs the warrant, and whose formulation may be, say, "Every Swede has been found to be a Lutheran" (99, 111, 124, etc.). (281)

Like *fact* and *opinion*, *backing* and *warrant* are found to be a misleading dichotomy of premises or statements, especially for universal statements, as we shall see. Castaneda's point (ii) is what Toulmin refers to as *backing* but can also be seen as a *datum*, which is problematic. Castaneda's point (i) is generally referred to by Toulmin as a warrant, which can be talked of in terms of being his first substitution for a major premise (for he thinks basically that backing can stand in for a major premise as well); a warrant is a way to get from data to a claim, "general, hypothetical statements, which can act as

bridges, and authorize the sort of step to which our particular argument commits” (*Uses* 98).

Castaneda rightly finds the binary disjunction of major premise type of statements into *backing* and *warrant* “quite oppressive” (281). Yet what is most contradictory to Toulmin’s goal of expressing common language argumentation here is that he denies the simply asserted statement, a very important type of predication:<sup>138</sup>

Doubtless, the statement (S) [“Every Russian is ready to fight for his Motherland.”] may have resulted from a statistical analysis of a random sample, but it is not itself the statistical report or analysis--only the final product of the latter. And it is odd to insinuate that if (S) is not such a report [i.e., is not backing], then it is an inference warrant. It is odd to insinuate that regardless of how hard we may try, if the class of Russians is not closed, if we have not gone through that class until its complete exhaustion (Cf. 126f, 132), then to say that (S) every Russian is ready to fight for his motherland is not to make a statement, but to issue a warrant, or to quote an already issued warrant, for the making of inferences. (282)<sup>139</sup>

The disjunction of statement types is used by Toulmin to back up the charge that universal statements are concealers. That this is not the case is borne out from the discussion of modes in Chapter 2 and what has been discussed here already, and we

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<sup>138</sup> One sees Toulmin’s attempt to throw out the universal statement from the physical sciences in *The Philosophy of Science* (47).

<sup>139</sup> Castaneda also adds another complaint along these lines:

A consequence of Toulmin’s claim and charge is that we cannot make statements about the future: only warrants. In fact, at one place Toulmin writes “‘will (i.e., may be taken to) have’” (124), and regards as obvious that there is a difference in ‘logical type’ between, say, ‘It rained an hour ago’ and ‘It will rain within 20 minutes’ (121, 13f.). Yet this seems to run counter to the ordinary use of language. (282)



will see more problems associated with this idea below, that Toulmin's premises do quite a bit of concealing of inference and prevent articulation. For example, warrant actually swells here in incorporating other premise types, which causes it to lose its own identity and causes problems in evaluating by field.<sup>140</sup>

I will return to the issue of universal statements below, but I will simply mention again here that perhaps Toulmin has such trouble distinguishing between, say, data and warrants, as we will see below, because he does not look outside of the field-dependent: he cannot see that real inferential rules, such as the dialectical *topoi*, are outside of fields and applicable to all fields. This is a very important point if a warrant is "a general *moral* of a practical character, about the ways we can argue in view of [certain] facts," for the most basic warrants would be dialectical *topoi* or the PNC (*Uses* 106).

Aristotle says as much regarding the PNC in the *Metaphysics*: affirmation (which I discuss in Chapters 1 and 4) and the PNC are "common beliefs, on which all men base

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<sup>140</sup> Keith and Beard document the history of ambiguity and misrepresentation surrounding the term *warrant* in composition and communication studies that has led to warrants, even with the same basic understanding of them, being seen as either magical inference makers or simply just major premises of a *modus ponens* argument scheme (33). They rightly see this latter interpretation as weakening the effect of Toulmin's contribution, so they set about trying to say what a warrant really is and does (29), but whether Toulmin actually conceives of warrants as conditionals, as they see them, is another matter.

They cite several studies that highlight the problems that students, instructors, and professionals in research and development have in finding warrants and distinguishing from the other elements of Toulmin's scheme, such as backing or even data (31-2). Osborne, Simon, and Erduran have problems with inter-rater reliability among middle-school teachers when trying to label grounds, warrant, and backing when analyzing student papers. Evens and Houssart complain about 11-year-olds not being able to find a warrant or give one when called upon. Keith and Beard note that many blame the implicit nature of the warrant for problems with warrants, such as Chambliss (who rewrites the arguments for the students so that they can see the implicit warrants) and Adelman et al who rewrite the arguments in their research so other scholars can see the warrants in their study of participants from a research and development corporation. This final study concludes that though the Toulmin model helped some participants "reassess and convey the logical soundness of an argument,"

the results were not robust, with the value of generating Toulmin structures being tied to how well the original argument was aligned with the Toulmin formalism. In addition, the structures varied considerably and were not easy to generate nor necessarily easy to understand. (347)

To these empirical studies, one may add Voss's, where "some difficulty determining whether a given statement was datum or backing, especially when a signal word such as 'because' did not occur," was experienced in the coding of arguments of experts (327). He also suggests that "the solvers virtually never thought of a warrant, since the warrant is implied by the argument stated" (326).

their proof" (III.2, 996b.26-30). These are the common sense of all reasoning and sciences: "every demonstrative science investigates with regard to some subject its essential attributes, starting from the common beliefs" (997a.20-1). These and the genera they allow for are both what the common man and the specialist use to make and validate their inquiries (See IV. 3, 1005a.18-30 and IV.4 and 8). Here, then, lies an issue of ethical argumentation I will return to later, for Toulmin, in contrast, basically gives us specific topics for specific data, which are really of no use at a more foundational or exterior level of critique (*Uses* 99-100).<sup>141</sup>

### **Authority and Premise Types**

In other words, Toulmin's premises conceal how different notions of authority work in reasoning regarding a field, as well as reasoning in general. To return to the issue of premise types, one can see this in the problems resulting from how his notions of how the syllogism or form and authority relate, which we can look at more in-depth here. We will see how (a) authority is vaguely connected to backing, (b) how authority can be concealed in warrants (which causes problems to the right regarding of form), and (c) how backing and warrants are conflatable, which causes even more problems in determining how authority is being used in an argument. Also, and this will bring us back to (1), (d) allowing backing to be a major premise, a problem mentioned above, also reveals problems with Toulmin's distinction between analytic and substantial arguments. And (e) we will see that Toulmin obscures notions of validity and

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<sup>141</sup> Again, Toulmin seems to mean warrants, the millions of general premises, are field-dependent in the sense that they will have more or less "currency and authority" depending on the field they are used in. As I have been saying, the inevitable outcome of such thinking in conjunction with the vague limits of field is to make warrants argument-dependent without any authoritative reference to a class/field or, if so, only through backing, which is a problem, as we saw above (112).

verification here, which, along with the problematic notion of field, becomes a part of his eventual preclusion of probable reasoning.

Now, Toulmin does try to show how backings are field-dependent (the backing in each example is in parentheses): ‘A whale will be (i.e. *is classifiable as*) a mammal’, ‘A Bermudan will be (*in the eyes of the law*) a Briton’, ‘A Saudi Arabian will be (*found to be*) a Muslim’ [...] (104). One can ask when considering these examples, and this may point to Castaneda’s critique just given of loaded premises, “Why cannot all of these use the ‘is classifiable as’ type of backing?” All of these premises predicate a class of something, which gives us a clearer road to go down in light of dialectic, as we will see in Chapter 4. But Toulmin is instead chiefly concerned with how these classifications are authoritative, though how this is separate from the classification is not clear; the true and final authority is often ambiguous in his examples.<sup>142</sup>

As mentioned above, notably absent from *Uses* is a working out of how anything is authoritative in a field or how things are given to be more authoritative than others (see *Uses* 106). Again, this would not be so much of a problem if he did not make all authority field-dependent. If we find the authority of a given field as based, say, in what *most* of the experts believe about x, we do not have the surest ground for probability. If we put this as backing in an argument under the guise of a major premise (in so doing actually bringing in something external to syllogisms in the abstract), and consider his conflation of warrants, modal premises, along with his idiomatic uses of logical terms, his distinction between warrants and backing again collapses. To allow this conflation to go unchallenged or unnoticed is a serious drawback to any system of argumentation that hopes to make ‘good’ arguments or criticize ‘bad’ ones, which is

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<sup>142</sup> For more on Castaneda’s critique of this see Chapter 2.

compounded by the way Toulmin ties up the notion of good argumentation mainly with field-dependency. But it seems whenever we are talking about the good in any terms, something outside of the field must be considered, as was mentioned at the end of Chapter 2. Toulmin may confine, without magistrate, the notion of logic to the rhetorical or even sophistical space, which is chalked full of enthymemes and, naturally and inevitably, misunderstandings (See Below).

One can even see Toulmin as concealing authority in his premise types and procedure, such as the way he renders a universal into a *warrant*. Now, ‘All A’s are B’s’ and “All A’s are necessarily B’s’ amount to the same thing for Aristotle if they are true, but, contrary to Toulmin’s belief, neither one equates to ‘All A’s are *certainly* B’s’ (cf. *Uses* 119), which may be a way to make Castaneda’s point above. One way of talking about this latter re-phrasing in some uses is to say it is a brow-beating (pragma-dialecticians) or evil-dialectician (Weaver) move, a move that tries to rush through the truth of the premise on the authority of the speaker. The adverb here and its meaning make apparent what Weaver would call adverbial question-begging. This type of statement has no place in primary syllogisms for it appropriates external authority. It is a misrepresentation of the formal syllogism qua its formality to predicate such premises of it or to imply that *certainly* could be freely used in any actual primary syllogism, for then there would be a necessary question begged.

This premise is not a way of support through setting up an inference. If it were, if one were allowed to beg a question in a syllogism, then a syllogism could be mere shuffling of parts to fit a conclusion, as Toulmin wants us to believe so he can rid us of the notion of formal validity. But this is not the case. Premises can be teased out.

Again, the deception is in saying that ‘X is an A; An A is certainly a B; So X is certainly a B’ is a complete syllogism or the same as ‘X is an A; An A is necessarily a B; So X is necessarily a B’ (119). Modal terms, such as *necessarily*, are not easily ethically interchangeable with terms such as *certainly*, as we saw in Chapter 2, especially since *necessarily* is an unnecessary word in premises of necessity.<sup>143</sup> Some things must ultimately rest on authority, but it must be clear that this is the case and it rests as said, but other things often do not necessarily need an external authority brought into the syllogism in the practice of argument (especially if the concept of the authority is clear and agreed to), for example, when the premises are Common Sense, primary or self-evident truths, though all true things may eventually be grounded in the same authority.

Toulmin could have corrected idiom here, but instead he uses the enthymematic form to apparently refute any plausibility to the importance of formal validity: ‘Petersen is a Swede; The recorded proportion [by an Almanac or some demographer?] of Roman Catholic Swedes is zero; So, certainly, Petersen is not a Roman Catholic’. Again, Toulmin is trying to get us to see that arguments of the form D;B; so C are just as acceptable as those of D;W; so C and thus formal validity is overrated. I say the former argument is enthymematic because there are only two premises as far as the syllogism is concerned: ‘Petersen is a Swede’ and ‘So [...] Petersen is not a Roman Catholic.’ The missing premise is ‘Swedes [for the most part] are not Roman

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<sup>143</sup> One may point out that both these terms are adverbs, but there is a definite difference in the meaning of the terms: it is much easier to use *necessarily* with transparency, since it has a logical sense of an objective or “material” constraint, than *certainly*, which is hard to deprive of its obstructing and assuming connotations. There may be a special exception, a sort of primary-authoritative syllogism, where form and (a) material meet in authority (or all meet together) and are inseparable. Indeed, it seems reason expects this from being in the world, but I am trying to stick to speaking about the abstract formal here.

Catholics.’ The premise Toulmin inserts instead is backing, a result of induction, in place of a warrant, but there still needs to be a premise that attaches this one to the warrant and the warrant itself. As can be seen in the term *enthymeme* itself, these premises should be in the mind and be capable of being teased out and tested by formal logic.

We will see below more problems with how Toulmin believes backing works in syllogisms. Here note how Toulmin believes backing and warrants are often interchangeable in daily use because people do not realize the ambiguity between using the warrant and the authority for that warrant, the backing—the legitimizer of the force called on, and he implies this is the fault of formal logics (110-111).<sup>144</sup> As with modal premises, Toulmin distrusts the universal premise relied on by formal logic because it can be deceptively used as authoritative backing in the way it is stated. As mentioned above, one could make the same claim against many of his examples of backing, which do not give the authority either, though a nebulous agent or authority is often implied, as when the backing is stated in the passive voice. His unclear idea of authority hurts him here (as well as the blurred notions of authority used by people in arguing), especially the distinctions among the true premise, the authoritative premise, the true syllogism, and the authoritative syllogism.

Indeed, as mentioned in Chapter 2, Toulmin defers so far to the notion of authority in argument that he comes to see the universal premise (even as a warrant in a simple syllogism) as a guarantee “*in accordance with* which we can safely take the step from our datum to our conclusion [...and it] will be neither factual or categorical but

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<sup>144</sup> Probability having an actual designatum is important for resolving such ambiguity, as we have seen and will see again.

rather hypothetical and permissive” (114). Toulmin chooses to avoid, if not beg, the question concerning whether there can be really universal statements and simply just treats these in terms of hypotheticalness and permissiveness, the latter term really being only applicable to ethical syllogisms. One can see Toulmin confusing a notion of logical authority or fixity with the notions of authority and fixity, such as nature (in the various meanings of that term), that arguments often have to appeal to, and this is especially where the study of material logic could have helped him. That is, having premises do two things at once in an argument is not necessarily a bad thing, but we need a system that is capable of distinguishing them when needed and allowing us to see how the premise is working, which is sometimes in a most powerful way.

I will return to the issue of ethos in the syllogism shortly, but first, a problem with letting only warrants be hypothetical premises for deductions is that it prevents resolution of arguments: “we must not try to reduce hypothetical deductions; for with the given premises it is not possible to reduce them. For they have not been proved by deduction, but assented to by agreement” (*Pr. An.* I.44, 50a.17-18). We cannot reduce these arguments because we cannot apply the principle of non-contradiction so important to reasoning; therefore “it is not possible to resolve such deductions into the figures” (50b.2). This denies to us a powerful move in argument—the *reductio*. And even hypothetical deductions, such as the argument *per impossibile*, still need the first figure to work in a way (I.23, 41a.23-5) and need some term outside of it agreed upon (I.29).<sup>145</sup> This hypothetical bit seems to defenestrate episteme for any specific field, but

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<sup>145</sup> Slomkowski criticizes Sainati for reducing hypothetical syllogism to categorical ones, which Slomkowski does not like because he thinks something about the hypothesis guarantees the hypothetical syllogism (which may be a Kantian move in morality) (102). (At 114 there is discussed the possibility that Aristotle thought that an accepted hypothesis made necessity.) He argues the hypothetical syllogism

then what becomes the standard for a specific field? What is just agreed upon? As alluded to above, there are different disputes regarding different levels of principles in many fields.

Finally, as we saw in Chapter 2, Toulmin tries to bring ethos in to the syllogism *qua* formal syllogism in the two ways that rhetoricians use the term ethos: character/moral (as we saw in the discussion of *probably*) and authority. In how he does so, he is again mixing the classifying of things with the authority for classifying them (112 and see above discussion of the end of the universal premise). One cannot help but speculate whether he could have avoided this unfortunate error if, again, he had not placed so much stress on the ambiguous notion of *field-dependency* (for a field can apparently be limited to a person or the notion of a field for just one person, as discussed below), as well as the ambiguous notion of *force* (the latter seeming to be what he has in mind when trying to undermine the syllogism through devaluing the notion of premise), and would have instead tried to see more of the proper connection between the material and the formal, as well as the importance of both to reasoning. But this is not the case:

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consists of two arguments: hypothesis and syllogism, and the “hypothesis is a protasis which as a result of the connection it expresses seems to have inferential power itself” (117). On 129 he says it works according to an internal rule [but this does not exclude it from working by an external rule as well]—a syllogism proper is set apart by only working according to an external rule. He says an implication is contained in between the two parts of the hypothesis in all hypothetical syllogisms (132). I have shown that the hypothesis is not only an agreement, but also contains an implication [...] and is regarded by Aristotle, at least in the *Topics*, as a protasis. Furthermore, it has to be endoxical. It is a protasis of a certain kind, namely one which possesses what could be called inferential power. The conclusion is concluded on the basis of a hypothesis [...] despite the misleading mode of expression which suggests that the proof ends with the proof of the substituted proposition. This result was confirmed by the investigation of the argument per impossible and the Law of Subalternation. (172) Moreover, Slomkowski could use *Pr. An.* I.44, 50a16-28 to show that Aristotle doesn’t think hypothetical syllogisms should be reduced. But this only holds for the context of the dialectical dispute, not dialectic in and of itself: there still must be a Truth that holds these, thus a truth that exists for the actual relations of the content.



So long as we interpret universal premises as expressing not warrants but their backing, both major and minor premises are at any rate categorical and factual: in this respect, the information that not a single Swede is recorded as being a Roman Catholic is on a par with the information that Karl Henrik Petersen is a Swede. (112)

Obviously, both these examples are not both categorical and factual, unless we are prepared to apply *categorical* and *factual* in different senses to these premises.

*Categorical*, applied to the latter premise, could have the sense of *predicating a category*, but this is not the logical use of the term, and *factual* must be used differently here: the latter is a perceivable fact, the former a “fact” that relies on the construction of a universal without immediate reference to the perceivable. Toulmin fights against a necessary truth for reasoning for Aristotle (see Chapter 4).<sup>146</sup> The value, distinction, and relationship of particular and universals statements need to be seen, as I have mentioned.

### **Analytic Standards**

Toulmin’s misunderstanding of the relationship of authority, especially epistemological authority, and the syllogism is seen in his flimsy distinguishing of substantial and analytic arguments. His primary belief is that almost all arguments in the end are substantial, and he sets up the idea of an analytic argument as a mere bogey to shoot down.<sup>147</sup> Toulmin must realize that if there are any strong cases for the

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<sup>146</sup> Indeed, Toulmin seems kowtowing to modern logic at this point. Slomkowski provides an alternative: the “fact that [estin] is existential does not mean that we have to interpret the thesis as expressing a particular belonging, as modern logic tells us to do—in Aristotle’s logic both universal and particular propositions have an existential import (as is clear from his Law of Subalternation)” (Slomkowski 162).

<sup>147</sup> Being substantial may put an argument outside of the purview of the formal syllogism for Toulmin. In *The Philosophy of Science*, Toulmin seems to see the syllogism as for things very close to tautologies if not tautologies, perhaps only seeing them as made up of three premises (though he rejects the

existence of analytic arguments, there is a case for the importance of formal validity.

He gives the following example of what could be considered an analytic argument:

Anne is one of Jack's sisters;

All Jack's sisters have red hair;

So, Anne has red hair. (120)

Toulmin provides the following backing: "Each one of Jack's sisters has (been checked individually to have) red hair" (124). Toulmin sees this backing, which he believes is usable as a major premise, as constituting a tautology when so used. And he uses this notion of tautology at this point in *Uses* to define the analytic: "An argument from D to C will be analytic if and only if the backing for the warrant authorizing it includes, explicitly or implicitly, the information conveyed in the conclusion itself" (125). If this is the definition of an analytic argument, it is hard to see what argument will not be analytic. The backing/major premise will always have the subject implied in it by the minor premise (this points to the problem Castaneda spoke of—not letting a premise be simply a statement).

This is, again, the problem of not properly distinguishing formal validity and verifiability (which we will see more on below), as well as verifiability and authority. If authority is going to be drugged up in every argument as an essential part of the validity of the argument, then of course every argument is going to be tautological because every argument, even the syllogism for Toulmin, requires authority in it, and, of course, the authority will assumedly say, implicitly or explicitly, what is in the conclusion.

Otherwise, we would not bring up the authority or we would try to avoid it.

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tautological test for analytic arguments later in *Uses*). Thus here may be an application of what was discussed earlier, his desire to remove formal logic from the physical sciences, then from everyday argument.

Thus Toulmin has not only succeeded in showing how all arguments, outside of math (or perhaps even in math as it has a way of drawing on authorities), are substantial but also in showing how they are all analytic (126-7). Actually, modal syllogisms are simply tautological per the mode since the mode is part of the major premise and the conclusion.<sup>148</sup> Toulmin would want to resist this conclusion. He accuses the analytic syllogism of being useless on the grounds that it is tautological, that it has in its premises implicitly what is in the conclusion, but this seems equal to accusing it of using materials relative to the matter at hand (see the section after next for more on the issues of this section).

#### Probability and Form

First, Toulmin believes the analytic standard leaves us in the lurch where the arguments are probable, that the analytic ideal results in skepticism because nothing can reach it, because there is always a possible exception (221-3, 231). Toulmin is describing a standard in a way that formal logic never had it, setting up analytic as an all or nothing standard of *verifiability*, a narrative he uses to throw out this analytic standard as irrelevant (168). But we will see further in Chapter 4 that a syllogism's being necessarily true happens as much inside of logic as outside.<sup>149</sup> Again, I mention

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<sup>148</sup> Again, the modes are an important link between materiality and formality, as we saw in Chapter 2.

<sup>149</sup> As we saw, the later Toulmin believes this use of logic was actually a misuse of logic in the name of logic. Part of the problem with Toulmin's argument in *Uses* is his mis-defining of *analytic*; e.g., one of Castaneda's many complaints is Toulmin's leaving out the ability to substitute defining expressions, which led to misrepresenting logicians as not concerned with hidden premises or anything not geometrically valid and as failing to distinguish between warrant-establishing arguments and analytic ones (285-90). His problem with the notion of analytic also leads him to a false distinction in analytic and substantive arguments:

in spite of his great ado about entailment or contradiction having nothing to do with conclusiveness, often via Toulmin's concept of analyticity (12f., 136, 138, 150f., 153, 160ff.), when Toulmin condescends to examine actual examples we find that his test of a tentative, i.e., not conclusive argument, is that the assertion of the premises with the denial of the conclusion involves no contradiction. This is exactly what logicians would call an analytic argument [...]. (Castaneda 290)

the idea of modal validity and the necessity that just because a claim or statement is not inevitable does not mean it has to be regarded skeptically, and one sees the importance of the relationship of the analytic standard and probability when a possible argument is set against a probable argument. For example, in response to an argument that is universal in terms of for the most part, we can deduce what is possible, i.e. a possible exception, and do this analytically. I.e., ‘If it is possible that an A is a B, and all B’s are C’s, then it is [necessarily] possible that A is a C’. And conclusions deduced through the mode of probability are necessarily probable. This seems the reasoning behind Aristotle’s statement at *Rhetoric* I.2.15, where Aristotle discusses enthymemes using premises that are necessarily true and mostly true; he explains, “a probability [*eikos*] is what happens for the most part [...], is so related to that in regard to which it is probable as a universal is related to a particular.”

And in line with the *Rhetoric*, it is important to stress that just because *possible* deduction is analytic does not put it on the same grounds in terms of probability and verifiability as the first argument (see Chapter 4).<sup>150</sup> A person would have to go on to show not only how the exception is possible but is representative of more of the class in question to make it more probable and defeat the first (or argue in terms of authority), at least in cases of establishing universals. Conflating the possible with the probable, allowing the lesser argument to seem the better or *making* the exception the rule, is to

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Castaneda goes on to imply that Toulmin confuses the distinction between analytic and substantial arguments with the distinction between necessary and tentative arguments.

<sup>150</sup> Toulmin supposes, to the contrary, that formal logic thought the modal syllogisms, as well as induction, “fell away from any formal standards of validity” (149). But we have seen and will see further the importance of the same “authority” to all these types of arguments—the dialectical rules. These authentic modes of syllogizing and reasoning are completely validatable in their own ways, and verifying still has to go on outside of the syllogism (cf. 153-4).

give a seat of reverence in philosophy to the reviled type of defense attorney (to extend Toulmin's metaphor of jurisprudence).

Often an attorney piles up possible rebuttals with the jury's having little chance or method for dealing with each. Now, these possibilities can point us toward doubt, but arriving at or having someone accept a "positive" doubt from these, i.e. a probability, involves a complex process, one that Toulmin's schema is not equipped for. Schroeder, discussing Toulmin's relativist bent from how Toulmin perceives backings justify warrants, argues "the potential exists for students to get lost in a crooked maze of justifying warrants rather than substantiating claims. In order to avoid this maze, teachers must stress the importance of audience awareness, which naturally surfaces in a discussion of warrants and backing" (102).

That is, as mentioned before, if there are no universal standards, we face the problem of what constitutes appropriate backing for our warrants, and it is easy in argument to avoid this issue or get distracted by arguing the appropriateness of the backing for each warrant.<sup>151</sup> The latter may be a good thing sometimes, but Toulmin's field-dependency would likely get in the way of getting it done. Indeed, it may be one of the ethical problems of Toulmin's idea of field-dependency that it stifles correction of fundamental mistakes in a field, preventing possible corrections from other "fields" and general dialectic, as was mentioned above regarding the PNC and dialectical *topoi*,

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<sup>151</sup> Schroeder warns of the "inherent capacity for exploitation" within Toulmin's approach because "Toulmin's system is a system for justification instead of evaluation" (102, 101). Schroeder uses Stygall's article to illustrate the potential danger of changing argument fields to suit one's end(s) (or just focusing on argument fields for evaluation really), that it precludes the considering of other data: "Students, in an attempt to justify their positions, can ignore certain data [...] rather than revise their claims in light of the new data" (101-102).

and Schroeder's talk of audience points again to the issues of authority in fields (See Below).

To end this brief discussion on probability, we can refer Aristotle's distinction between the possible and the probable, the main focus of his thought on refutation in the *Rhetoric* (II.25, 1402b.21-1403a.2). Here one finds one of the only spots of moralizing in a work that is strangely devoid of moral precepts: Aristotle, regarding the commonplaces on the law in I.15, tells us the true meaning of the phrase 'giving a verdict in accordance with one's honest opinion'<sup>152</sup> is not only judging "from necessary arguments but from probable ones, too" (1402b.32-3). Otherwise, justice will often be replaced with injustice where a necessary argument cannot be made and where an unreasonable doubt is used as proof. The judge is supposed to be able to judge according to the distinctions of the necessary, the probable, and the possible, but we will see below that Toulmin's notion of field-dependency does not make for good judges in the public sphere, making ironic his placing of jurisprudence as the argumentational ideal.<sup>153</sup>

#### Some Issues of Validity and Verification

Finally, how Toulmin shows how all or most arguments are substantial reveals just how confused are his notions of the relationships of authority, verifiability, and validity, as well as how tenuous the line he draws between analytic and substantial arguments. The whole point of pointing out anything like an analytic argument for Toulmin is to make sure that no one thinks formal validity is important to a D; B; So, C argument type. Toulmin argues formal validity has nothing to do with the truth of the

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<sup>152</sup> Roberts Translation

<sup>153</sup> I will touch on some of Aristotle's notion of how argument/reason and the good person/judge relate in Chapters 4 and 5.

argument, but the checking does.<sup>154</sup> Formal validity, he believes, is not so strong as one might think, because once any time has passed and Anne or any of Jack's sisters have left us and has now possibly changed her hair, we have to make our syllogism less authoritative (i.e., he is again destroying the syllogism *qua* syllogism by inserting a mode in the conclusion without one in a premise):

Datum—Anne is one of Jack's sisters;

Backing—All Jack's sisters have previously been observed to have red hair;

Conclusion—So, presumably, Anne now has red hair. (126)

Here, because of the burying of mode, even under a level or two of ethos issues discussed in Chapter 2, we have lost the truth power of the backing and, apparently, the truth-usefulness of formal validity.<sup>155</sup>

Toulmin asks the question, how do we make the leap to the conclusion 'Anne has red hair' from the two pieces of information: 'Anne is Jack's sister' and 'All of Jack's sisters have red hair'? Again, he does not see this syllogism as exemplifying a smaller group of syllogisms in this respect, or something that draws on a particular topical maxim. Instead he hopes to refute the notion that there can be any general principle of the syllogism, or perhaps [allow] some notion of this principle to be "the warrant of all analytic arguments, while retaining other kinds of general statement as warrants for arguments of other types," though the former would be practically useless

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<sup>154</sup> See Chapter 1 for other "checking" issues.

<sup>155</sup> Further, one might argue that he draws a false or too hard of a distinction in backing between warrant-using and warrant establishing (117, 120-2). He believes that induction and deduction work according to different rules, that the way formal logics use deduction (positive entailment) is too narrow for what people actually talk of as deduction. One can, again, compare this to Aristotle's distinction between demonstration and deduction and induction ("or rather the deduction which springs from induction" (*Pr. An.* I.23, 68b.15)).

and a warrant without backing (129, 130). The danger of ignoring the topical rules regarding the latter is shown elsewhere; both these topical rules and any principle of the syllogism would not really be considered a warrant but logical backing, field-invariant backing. Toulmin errs in assuming that formal logic sees the two premises as data and in trying to pass one off as warrant or backing (134).

Toulmin seems to believe that to have a properly analytic argument outside of math, one must have the entire class of things in question in front of one, which negates the purpose of arguing (cf. *Topics* V.3, 131b.19-24). Further, since all of his examples are simply demonstrations regarding a particular, he can assert that we do not even need the whole class if we just have the one particular in question: “The thing to do now is use one’s eyes, not hunt up a chain of reasoning” (126). This is a nullifying of mind. There is a very subtle trick in his argument: there is quite a difference in verifying something of a class (or establishing a class) and verifying something of a particular. We don’t even need to know what species Anne is to verify by perception that she has red hair (though even here we need the universals of *red* and *hair* and must in a sense deduce from these definitions to produce the statement). We do need a class, however, to see that Anne is one of Jack’s sisters; we need the class *Jack’s sisters* and the class *sisters*, if class is separate from concept at this point (see Chapter 1). This class necessity is a key step in knowing and arguing that Toulmin overlooks.

Again, one sees here that Toulmin is misled by trying to bring in external authority to his notions of syllogism. True, you and I may not need to *argue* about something if we have the entire class in front of us and the definitions of our terms are agreed upon, but this fact will have no pertinence without universals, such as *sister* and



*Jack's sister*, and logic (deduction and induction). I.e., we need the syllogism to describe our knowledge and to build it and to carry it with us, instead of an inappropriate melding of internal and external that throws out reasoning: "For we know no sensible thing, once it has passed beyond the range of our senses, even if we happened to have perceived it, except by means of the universal and by possessing (but not actualizing) particular" (*Pr. An.* II.21, 67a.39-67b.2).<sup>156</sup> Perception cannot of itself demonstrate, for we still need universals, because Jack's sisters' hair could change color the minute we leave the room. It also seems pertinent to allude here to Aristotle's arguments that something can only follow of necessity from the necessary being of two things at least (I.15, 34a.16-19) and all deductions, even rhetorical ones and inductions, come from the same figures (II.23, 68b.9-14). The same is true of examples; thus we need the same logical gear to even talk of Anne as an example of Jack's sisters and their shared quality, though *qua* example we do not need to check the whole class (II.24, 69a.14-19).

Yet, again, one of these things in the deduction has to have a universal nature [to have any probability or necessity at all]; they both cannot be particulars. But Toulmin could be arguing the contrary, as we saw similarly with Robin Smith. I.e., speaking of the necessity of a clear mode for verifiability of syllogism (via premise), it will be recalled that I claimed that the mode will show up in the major premise, and this seems to be the way Toulmin understands the relationship between modes, warrants, and backing. One might argue, however, that the mode can show up in the minor premise instead, so that one could see something like:

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<sup>156</sup> I.e., [...] and by 'the possession of the knowledge which is proper to the particular, but without the actual exercise of that knowledge' (Jenkinson original translation in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*).

All men are mortal.

Socrates is possibly a man.

Therefore, Socrates is possibly mortal.

Or

All humans have souls.

All Academics are possibly human.

Therefore, all Academics possibly have souls.

Toulmin gives no consideration to the two-universal-premise syllogism, but it is interesting that he does not give much consideration to the first type either. For all his censure of universals and universal premises, Toulmin is still naturally drawn to focus on the *sine qua non* of reasoning—the major universal premise, which he tries to explain as warrants and backing.

Of course, it is easy to be skeptical of these syllogisms. For one thing, the use of *possibly* in the latter example's minor premise catches one's eye: it does not make sense to talk about every member of a class having something possibly being predicated of it unless a significant amount of the class's members are believed to have that same thing predicated of them. (We also might look to the usual context for such arguments, such as the attempt to establish an absolute claim (many times unnecessarily) in the face of a possible exception.) But once the terminology is corrected, how to think of the validation of the syllogism would seem much closer to hand.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> If one desired to connote simple possibility, one would render the premise as 'It is possible for an Academic to be Human' or 'It is possible for Academics to be human,' which amount to the same thing since *Academic* in the first example is representative of Academics as a species, but the latter example or assumed deduction shows how rhetoric can sneak into the employment of the syllogism through grammatical use. Both premises are used to make a simple possible deduction, but the latter can easily convey a connotation of probability through the plural, allowing the audience to run ahead of the argument, so to speak, and assist the sophistic lawyers, say, in gaining an acquittal.

And in the first example, validity does not seem the primary issue; our logical faculty gives us no check when running through this syllogism. The issue here is verifiability: we and Toulmin are usually concerned about verifying whether a predication is modally true of a particular if this predication is made in a conclusion, e.g. 'Petersen is likely not a Roman Catholic.' We would have serious reservations about calling the minor premise of the syllogism, 'Petersen is a Swede,' a *Datum* if it were rendered 'Petersen is possibly a Swede' and the corresponding major premise were converted to a necessary universal. Toulmin seems to want to use Datum to describe minor premises, whose truth is immediately perceivable or assumed to be so. Yet we would wonder at someone saying that 'Socrates is possibly a man' or 'Petersen is possibly a Swede' in their respective syllogisms, since these types of "facts" seem to be the easiest to verify: this person must be a bad arguer, have a barely defensible position, or must have some ill-defined universals of *man* and *Swede* or is hoping that the judges have these. Or, as in the example Toulmin gives of trying to determine whether a person is a British subject or not, one might realize that the person is relying on another syllogism for this premise that has data, likely a universal premise-datum, and a modal premise of its own (99-107). And we might see Toulmin's fuzzy notion of authority is again fouling him up here, his trouble keeping in mind the distinctions between how validation is made qua syllogism, in "deducing" from perception, and in deducing from authority.

### *FINALLY FIELDS*

Finally, as a way to transition to the final discussion on fields, we can mark how telling it is that Toulmin does not consider field-dependency and the issue of authority

when analyzing the sister example. It seems that perception could be used to verify premises in all types of fields. Again, we have to get past the false distinction between analytic and substantial arguments since both argue from universals that can be checked inductively and recognize the different ways things can be “authoritative” in an argument. Otherwise, we would have to find a way to show how perceptions are valid in a given field; again, this would place us in an anti-dialectical and anti-critical spot, for each field would be set up tautologically, labeling valid perceptions those which are in accordance with its principles.

Complicating the matter is the vague notion of what constitutes a field, as well as how large or small a field must be: this is especially the case with cases so vast or so trivial a problem as how we know the color of Jack’s sister’s hair. The field-dependent authority here seems reducible to the level of the person; we have to ask, ‘Who has checked the color of the hair?’, and once this is answered, ‘Why should we trust his or her findings (or even our own if we have done the checking)?’ Well, the only way to proceed here it seems is to take each verification person by person and case by case,’ since we may have cause to doubt someone’s perception at some point. But then there is no field authority.<sup>158</sup> We are left with just the traditional meaning of ethos, having good sense (including perception), good moral character, and being of good will, to judge the truth of an argument. Ironically, then, Toulmin gives us an Aristotelian “ethical” system of argumentation without realizing it but not much besides the ethical, and he really does not give much discussion to the field-invariant modes of ethical verification. And discussing ethics with no objective thing outside of it seems harmful.

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<sup>158</sup> In addition to this problem, there is also the issue of who is in charge of connecting a universal to a particular meaning; e.g., in the case of Jack’s sister, how is one to know that we are using the term in the biological sense instead of, or along with, the adopted and religious senses?

Thus, though he hoped to avoid the extreme of skepticism by abolishing the analytical syllogism, he produces a system that is the prescription of the only way a skeptic can accept arguments, even though the skeptic may reject the grounding for character judgment itself.

Now, in a certain sense, Toulmin's *field* is a buttress against sophistry, though it is only a pragmatic one. The concept requires order (for the distinction between warrant and backing totally disappears without it) and a stability of application that outright sophistry has no reasonable claim to, though Toulmin refuses to fuss about the nature of order and evaluation, which perhaps leaves him ultimately in the same mess. The pockets of order he seeks to establish with fields ultimately unravel without a broader order and eventually preclude the philosophy of everyday life, such as in the searching for and comparing of *aetia*.<sup>159</sup> Toulmin's is, again, an *ethos*-driven system, mainly in the authority sense that has been given to *ethos*. Toulmin is concerned with what a person gives her authority to because of its consequences for future argumentation and with the authority of fields, which seem to be the only things capable of putting an end to an argument, which is a drastic simplification of how *ethos* works in arguments. That is, the ultimate goal of argument in Toulmin's method is to find the proper field so that their can be evaluation (at least in the "who says so" sense) and validation. Toulmin, however, does not really go into how to find the appropriate field or even what a field is, as we have seen.

Though I speak of it a little below, I will be more concerned in another project with comparing Aristotle's notion of rhetorical *topoi* to Toulmin's notion of *field* (as

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<sup>159</sup> See Footnote 130 for how Toulmin gives a problematic understanding of a very broad structure for the field of physics. Chapters 4 and 5 will seek to describe generally how Aristotle sees such an order, though a fuller picture of how this order influences a "field" will have to wait for another project.

well as its related notions of backing and warrant) and other notions of modern *topoi*. The rhetorical *topoi*, for better or worse, are bound up with the everyday ways we verify and validate arguments, which make them particularly apt for comparison with Toulmin's project, the aim of which is to somewhat systematize everyday argument. I see these rhetorical *topoi* working in this capacity to verify and validate ultimately through their link to dialectic and dialectical *topoi*, which Toulmin does not really investigate in *Uses*. I believe the nature of this link and the nature of rhetorical reasoning allows for these rhetorical *topoi* to be a catalyst of controversy and Logical usurpation in their misuse and in their confusion with dialectical *topoi*. While I will not be arguing for the total dismissal of rhetorical *topoi*, since they can be important to cultural heritage and community, I will be trying to give parameters for their proper regard, for these same natures make them very appealing to modern and postmodern theorists of *topoi* and philosophers who try to describe people and the world as being moved by and according to sophistic (see Appendix E).

Now, for modern academic purposes, the easiest route to go for composition teachers is apparently to allow fields to be academic disciplines, which all but resolves the trouble of evaluation in conjunction with the vague but firm belief held by many students concerning the relationship of expertise and knowledge in the general sphere. But the astute student, or perhaps simply the idealistic or arrogant one, will *feel* cheated by such assumptions about reasoning: she will intuit something unethical about giving over such power to these disciplines, so terrible in their supposed autonomy and unquestioned in being placed as the arbiter over an idea. She will feel it most intensely when a classmate tells her that an expert or field says so and expects her to accept that

this settles the matter. She will feel constrained by the preclusion of her own reason at the point of “Science says so and so.” In short, she will feel taken from her the possibility of harmony of emotion, rightness, and reason for which all good people seek, as well as the possibility of helping another to it, for this is also a result of putting the answers to complex questions in a single field.<sup>160</sup> She will be denied the freedom for which the Liberal Arts exist and which they seek to cultivate.

Granted, this may be a simplified example, but assumptions about the nature of knowledge and evaluation are not things the composition teacher is entitled to take lightly. Such assumptions may make for more easily attainable and gradable class goals, but the result is detrimental to passing on the heritage of the liberal arts, and these assumptions have and will disrupt communication and argumentation in society at large. What Toulmin attempts to do with fields, Cicero already did with his notion of rhetorical *topoi*, a view of knowledge and its relationship to rhetoric and argumentation that results in what we today refer to as the silo effect.

### **Interdisciplinarity and the Liberal Arts**

Now, *prima facie*, Toulmin’s evaluation scheme may seem interdisciplinary. How much more interdisciplinary can an English teacher get than by requiring students in all majors to back up their claims from appropriate fields? It seems to require students to use all of their education. Beyond this, the approach just seems intuitive: teach students to go to experts or expert fields for resolution or proof of points (though, again, Toulmin’s system is not equipped to deal with the issues that cause problems here—issues of what makes for authority, whether there needs to be a field of authority,

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<sup>160</sup> This oneness seems also at the bottom of resolving *aporia* for Aristotle, and we will see a bit of how these things come together for Aristotle in Chapter 5. How they come together in terms of the authority Augustine speaks of above will have to wait for another project.

and whether every conceivable field is autonomous). After all, arguments from authority are one of our natural, best loved, and necessary modes of learning and arguing. The physics novice needs to rely on them as much as the preacher. Moreover, Toulmin's notion of *field* seems prime matter for discussing what is involved in reviewing the disciplines and how they should respect one another and even build each other up in the right sense and ways.

However, *field* is not a term that is used as frequently as *backing* and *warrant* when the Toulmin method is being taught, though it is of ultimate significance to the latter terms. A field is something that is supposed to give the criteria by which we judge the merit of an argument; these criteria for judgment are backings and warrants, the principles and demonstrated principles of a discipline. The notion of field is intended as a stopper on the "Who says?". The final resolution of a problem or point begins and ends with the proper *fielding* of an issue. However, as mentioned above, having fields as the apparent final level of evaluation causes Toulmin to rely heavily on the claim that the "existence of considerations such as would establish the acceptability of the most reliable warrants is something we are entitled to take for granted," though it has been a fundamental notion of sciences since Aristotle's day that they have foundational principles that cannot be demonstrated (*Uses* 106), and Toulmin himself wants to avoid establishing such principles outside of fields. The ultimate grounding of this entitlement and its limits he does not reveal (Freeman "Systematizing Toulmin's Warrants" 334).

Also, it is quite easy now for students to slip through college with the chunk or stuff theory of knowledge—believing that the goal of higher learning is to acquire (or momentarily retain) the "facts" and principles of whatever disciplinary classes they are



required to take, especially the non-major ones. After experiencing math (which is frustratingly un-chunk like), tolerating a semester of sociology, and trying to maintain concentration through a year of biology, many ultimately maintain whatever “truths” that strike their interests or support their idioms, and these become the rhetorical *topoi*, or basic “logical” principles to them, with which they interpret their world and use when engaged in arguments. What separates many smart students is the capability to retain more of this information and to make more dexterous application of it.

Of course, this argumentation is not based on knowledge in any ultimate sense, not on knowing something to the ground, but on non-actualized possession of “facts.” There is no liberal arts education here, no attempt to see the competition over definitions and ideas that is constantly going on among the disciplines, even those over the end of education itself. And students are not the only ones under the sway of the rhetorical-topical view of knowledge, whose unfortunate resurrection was completed in the Enlightenment. Any time we hear complaints over, or justification for, the silo effect in education, we see evidence of it.<sup>161</sup>

Moreover, much of the struggle over authority and the explosion of scholarship regarding the *issue* of epistemic authority in the field of rhetoric can find an exigent in this view of knowledge. And in the field of Rhetoric specifically, regarding the explanations or knowing of a thing, the advocating of a sampling of different disciplines does not have any hope of a ‘resting knowledge’ without something like the

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<sup>161</sup> I have hinted at restrictive field-thinking being a possible cause of problems and controversy, but it would be unfair to pin this on Toulmin. Again, field-thinking has been a popular pedagogical rhetorical-pedagogical value for a long time. Fields share a similarity with Cicero’s later notion of commonplace in *On the Ideal Orator*. Commonplaces there are advocated as ways to organize the different divisions of knowledge for the rhetor for application in argument. These commonplaces are essentially collections of rhetorical *topoi* gathered under a disciplinary differentia, which is a rather technical way of expressing the modern philosophy of education.

*aetia* and dialectical *topoi*. The more dangerous consequences of this view of knowledge for argumentation, knowledge, and ethical interaction among people is discussed elsewhere. Among these effects are a permissiveness to Weaver's notions of corruption of Form issues (from *Visions of Order*) and usurpation of "logic" by a specific dialectic with no general [based on common sense] dialectic to defend against it. Also, we might find that this isolation of arguments and its relationship to the valuing of field-dependency that sets off arguments from other discourses is conducive to controversy, such as in disputes over the "right" of a given discipline to solve an issue or define something or as seen in how the linking of backing to field shuts down arguments between fields and could eventually be an excuse to build up walls between not only disciplines but anything that could be considered a field, such as a culture (See Appendix E).<sup>162</sup>

What needs to be remembered is that fields can only have order and evaluate things or parts of things that belong to them because they rely on the structure of the dialectical maxims. This is not only a point of epistemological significance but of ontological significance as well (see Chapter 4). To ignore this contributes to the problems mentioned above and others. Again, fields are only reasonable because they draw on a general logic, and this general logic is important for resolving debates among the fields or among people regarding important issues for it helps get behind the issues.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> I will include one personal anecdote here to illustrate another concern stemming from the chunk appetite: in a sophomore level argumentation class, after a complex discussion of the nature of facts and universals and what they share in common, students wanted me to give them the answer to whether universal definitions existed or not. The apparent readiness to accept whatever answer I gave them on such an essential question of human life was quite shocking.

<sup>163</sup> Of course, that terms like *logic* and *reason* are still rhetorical god-terms (having force but no clear concept beneath them) only makes the problem worse. The hollow rhetorical concept allows many to

## The Corrective of Dialectic

Basically, I am again emphasizing the propositions of the *Topoi* that dialectical reasoning must point to in order to win points or throw out false arguments (the propositions or we might even say rules that make deduction and induction valuable) as grounding for the other types of arguments and inferences Aristotle discusses. One important example that cannot be fully discussed here is the rhetorical enthymeme, for “it is a function of dialectic, either as a whole or one of its parts, to see about every syllogism equally” (*Rhetoric* I.11, 1355a). I see these dialectical rules as the grounding for rhetorical or specific *topoi*, by which I mean not only the later understanding of the term, whereby a general question (*thesis*) is discussed in terms of particulars (*hypothesis*), e.g., whether it is right for man to marry vs. whether it is right for Bill to marry, but also the connotation of the topics of particular sciences, where a general dialectical rule is often welded to particular material to make a principal of a science or specific dialectic (and used for more deductions).<sup>164</sup> One could also talk here of the place where thesis and hypothesis fuse, or these places where a rhetorical value can now be instilled (and become confused with logic) because of the material. This welding entails ethical problems of its own, especially once these logical moves of specific sciences are taken up in the public sphere as elements of general logic.<sup>165</sup>

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attach to these terms any field or idea they wish, which results in many problems for general reasoning and thus many ethical problems. Another drawback that applies to many rhetorical god-terms, and it applies here, is that by being hollow and placed alone at the pinnacle, they prevent the right concepts from being valued in themselves and valued rightly in relation to other things. Of course, these two acts of valuing are often not done in isolation; reason, for example, is a good thing because of its relationship to something else, and to mar that relationship is to mar the goodness of reason.

<sup>164</sup> One might even glean this from Bird’s discussion of the close relationship of the formal and material aspects of *topoi* discussed above.

<sup>165</sup> I could also include here those context/content-specific *topoi*, such as the ethical appeal to liturgical services rendered or the “I am an inexperienced speaker” *topos* (Hesk 364, 371), but these seem to be where *topoi* become tropes or *topoi* built on emotion and character *topoi* become tropes, so I’m going to

These problems consist of not only the problems of the use of Big-S Science in the public sphere and everyday argumentation but also the problems inherent in issue-driven discourse and contribute to the development of these issues and the problems. Indeed, this is how many current rhetoricians conceive of the rhetorical *topoi*: issues and their related arguments, and these as the foundation of a society. This not only precludes dialectical *topoi*, it precludes the significant similarity portion of reasoning, resolution of issues, and any centering of culture or human being. That is, it precludes culture in any formative and valuable sense, and it serves to isolate cultures and their wisdoms from each other, but this claim is beyond the scope of this work.

I will also have to wait to get to the other concepts that specific *topoi* cover and their rhetorical nature/conduciveness in another project, but in order to understand some of the problems we will run into with the rhetorical *topoi*, it must be reiterated that it is impossible to build up a science in the truest sense without the structure provided by the dialectical maxims to which these concepts are related, anymore than it is possible for an architect to design a safe building without the laws of physics or for people to communicate with each other without a “setness” of things and ideas. The

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leave them alone for right now except for noting their connection to practical syllogisms, as well as demonstrative ones (*Ethics* VII.3, 1147a). Regarding the figurative use of *topoi*, McKeon seems to suggest that Poetry, under the auspices of rhetoric, removed the argumentative aspects of *topoi* and modified them to be used as “devices for remembering, for amplifying, for describing, and for constructing figures” (“Rhetoric in the Middle Ages” 29). He does not say if the two aspects of *topoi* existed side by side or in the same *topoi* for a length of time or if the argumentative aspect of *topoi* completely died off until the Renaissance, where they were used “as inspiration for a scientific method of discovering, not arguments, but things, and the scholastic logic was viewed as a verbal discipline inferior in precision and practical effectiveness to these devices of rhetoric” (10).

But the point he makes seems to be borne out in Geoffrey of Vinsauf’s discussion of *demonstratio*. Geoffrey places *demonstratio* in the figure of thought category, and it seems to contain all the topics of Weaver (who organizes everything according to definition: “the subject is revealed so vividly that it seems to be present to the eyes; this effect will be perfectly achieved by five means: if I show what precedes, what constitutes, and what follows the event itself, what circumstances attend it, and what consequences follow it” (62). His demonstration uses particulars, then, but also requires complete knowledge of a thing, which includes species and the formal and material explanations (and thus how circumstances will affect it), to make the impression.

dialectical *topoi* allow for and represent the setness of the world and knowing, as will be discussed in Chapter 4 (and they can sort of work like the hidden foundation for a formal structure). Thus they are still more or less present in situations where imperfect knowledge is being built upon, applied or drawn on.

Of course, the drawing on of imperfect knowledge often happens in everyday argument, for as my students answer to every hard question, “Everyone has an opinion.” Though this statement is usually employed as a stopper or an attempt to get the student off the hook (they seem to think it works well for both, employing it in isolation without any other claim with which to make an inference), what they are pointing to is the issue of evaluation (or the absence of a gauge).

Now, Toulmin gets quite a bit of criticism for failing to provide a method of evaluating arguments, because, for one reason, he tries to take evaluation totally away from formality, as I have shown. But he does not write off evaluation all together; Toulmin gives us the assumed order of a *field* to help in evaluation of arguments/points made. I say *assumed* because he does not do much to explain these orders, but he seems to believe they exist (*Uses* 40). For his argument scheme to work, fields have to be ordered. How else could one continue to reach back for another warrant or backing? Again, one sees the importance of dialectical maxims for this concept.

Finally, to speak to the issues of authority regarding fields, the modern rhetorician does call into question such notions of automatic trustworthiness of experts and fields. This is, indeed, a good cause if they ultimately seek to define or ground authority. The field of rhetoric for the past 50 years or so has been pushing against notions of authority and expertise, including the epistemic authority of fields. They

have had good cause to do so, such as the modernist glorification of Science.

Unfortunately, their critiques are often seen to be motivated by jealousy or spite, as if to say, “If we can’t have any epistemic authority, neither can you.” But there is a better way of approaching such an issue. There is no need to sacrificing all authority and ultimately value in the mode of the liberal arts, especially since such thinking only makes the field of rhetoric’s attempt at persuasion very hard (even theoretically impossible, for value is obscured in the valuing of nothingness). That is, if the authority for knowledge and wisdom is thrown out, the value for knowledge and wisdom becomes very hard to see.

The better method is to promote general dialectic, for as it is bound up with the specific dialectics of the disciplines, it can be used to maintain the value and authority of these disciplines and properly augment them. Of course, such a promotion will have its own value driving the dialectic, and how value affects dialectic or a dialectic will need to be discussed in another project in terms of rhetoric and in terms of what this value should be. (See Appendix E)

## **Conclusion**

I will attempt to describe how Aristotle sees the connection of general dialectic and formal logic in Chapter 4, but we can end one formal logic strand of this project here. As we began with the issue of whether the syllogism is valuable in the composition classroom, we might now ask if Toulmin’s schema is valuable. The empirical research is inconclusive, and one might see why if one stops to squint at this schema, for one sees then something secondary to logic. One sees claims that need to be backed by warrants and backing, along with rebuttals and qualifications that need to

be considered, with very little help in labeling these or defining them. If one keeps looking long enough, one may find that this schema relies not so much on logic as it does on arrangement, the old rhetorical cannon. If we substitute *thesis* for *claim* and varying levels of *support* for backing and warrant, we're just talking about the arrangement part of composition we've covered elsewhere in class. Thus, if Toulmin is found at not very useful for the teaching of logic, as he argues concerning the syllogism, one can say it is because it is not fundamentally concerned with logic.<sup>166</sup> Equating his schema to the syllogism will not help the matter.

Fulkerson comes to the same conclusion:

Teachers ought to be aware that many specialists in argumentation have roundly criticized Toulmin's system. [...] And as a scheme for analyzing real arguments, it seems to me much like our concept of the standard paragraph with its opening topic sentence. One can build good discourse by following the scheme, but lots of real discourse *doesn't* fit it. The generative capabilities it has are completely lacking in traditional formal logic (but see Kaufer and Neuwirth who argue otherwise). ("Logic and Teachers of English" 205)

One could say that the generative capabilities of the Toulmin model are in arrangement, which has overlap with rhetorical invention and the discussion aspect of dialectic:

Now so far as the selection of his grounds is concerned the problem is one alike for the philosopher and the dialectician; but how to go on to

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<sup>166</sup> The equating of *arrangement* with *reason* is a complaint Aristotle has against rhetorical handbooks that I will discuss in another project.

arrange his points and frame his questions concerns the dialectician only;  
for in every problem of that kind a reference to another party is involved.

(*Topics* VIII.1, 155b.7-10)<sup>167</sup>

Aristotle believes that arrangement does not bend the logic itself behind a valid argument, but when Toulmin turns to arrangement of arguments to look for general features, he assumes that how one gets to a conclusion and how one supports it are not, in general, the same process (17). Besides allowing him to skirt a deeper discussion of evaluation of argument, such thinking could explain how he seemingly confuses premise types during the invention stage, mistaking conclusions for possible premises.

Now, in a sense Toulmin's assumption is true in some cases; e.g., when arguing we can draw on things that were not a part of our original deduction: rhetorical topics, examples in support, and/or changing the arrangement of the argument to suit the audience.<sup>168</sup> But this doesn't make the original deduction less true or change it in essence; we have just crossed over into a realm where its effectiveness must be considered in light of an audience (that is, the Aristotelian realm of dialectic and rhetoric). Even Demetrius points out the resemblance of the period to the enthymeme, an "incomplete syllogism," but stresses their differences, especially the non-logical nature of the former: "If you break up the structure of the enthymeme, you destroy the period, but the enthymeme remains intact" (I.32, 31). One can imagine how Toulmin

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<sup>167</sup> Thus I find it somewhat fitting but also somewhat ironic that Stratman tries to tie Toulmin to sentence-combining type of arrangement for a generative capability in "Teaching Written Argument: The Significance of Toulmin's Layout for Sentence-Combining." Gross seems to think that Stratman sees the Toulmin method and sentence-combining as connected; at least, Stratman sees him as saying that ("James Stratman Responds" 314).

<sup>168</sup> Stratman notes that Toulmin himself admits that his formula is meant to "exemplify the 'rational process' of defending claims, not discovering them," but Stratman argues for reinvestigating this claim, that it may well be that the layout does represent, in some circumstances, how we 'come to know' what we are arguing about—and not merely how we should organize our response to meet the challenges of our opponents" ("Teaching Written Argument" 725).



could use his assumption to attack the notions of universal premises and essences. But it is interesting to note here what might be Aristotle's ethical stance on argumentation: grounds are selected independent of audience. This seems akin to Weaver's position of the ethical principle of arguing from definition discussed in the Introduction.

Seeing Toulmin's schema as arrangement makes it odd that we find him saying "in most cases, it is possible to separate the features that give our arguments genuine 'rational merit' from those other rhetorical devices that have the effect of making them more attractive and persuasive than they deserve to be" (*Introduction to Reasoning* 238). Arrangement was somewhat of a no-man's land between rational argument and ornament for Aristotle. Toulmin offers no art of criticism or argument building with his field-dependent method, a far cry from claiming to give us an ethical system of criticism (180-1). Indeed, as we saw, it is even unethical and subjectivist (See also Appendix E). This is not to say arrangement is not important (though I may not know how to manipulate it for my own ends). Toulmin is right in the sense that in our reasoning there is something pre-logical about arrangement, at least as it regards the validity test of logic: "Nothing is decided by merely putting a case in proper form, but rather a situation is created in which we can begin to ask rational questions: we are put into a position in which we can use substantial decision-procedures" (*Uses* 172). But arrangement is not logic, no matter how long the border or great the territories they share.

Toulmin's schema is valuable as an impetus for question asking, for the Toulmin pedagogy is always referring us back to the backing. But Toulmin, with all of his focus on authority, ironically leaves the student with just one semi-logical

apparatus—the “Who says?” Such questions, if they don’t stifle arguments (which they are usually intended to do), must drive the conversation toward first principles, concepts that people agree on and that necessitate consequences in relation to one another. And this process will eventually move beyond the vague notion of fields in moral issues. In contrast, students who study formal logic and dialectic will be able to critique and build arguments: more simply, they will be able to argue.

So how should we refer to the classroom where everyone fails to see the value of the syllogism? Concerning teaching, Weaver writes that there are “two postulates basic to our profession: the first is that one man can know more than another, and the second is such knowledge can be imparted” (“To Write the Truth” 233). One might wonder, then, if teaching the syllogism without a deeper understanding of logic, i.e. knowledge of logic, is really teaching at all. Moreover, it is certain that teaching with dialectic cannot proceed without knowledge. In the *Gorgias*, for example, it’s very easy to get the sense that Socrates has definite notions of both what he is leading Polus and Callicles to and what he is drawing them from, and here we also see the analogous desire for improving the student that comes out more strongly in the *Phaedrus*.

The desire for improving the student was once more explicit in the Liberal Arts, especially as it would allow a student to advise and improve society. One way of improving the student is to give her the proper view of knowledge and reasoning, which is in large part a responsibility of the argumentation teacher, and this is why we have

had to critique the notion of field.<sup>169</sup> Chapter 4 will focus on Aristotle's view of reason, the connection of dialectic, logic, and the *aetia*.

We should note that a related issue presents itself here, one I have alluded to frequently: the stress on field-dependency requires us to ask "Who is the expert in deciding what issues belong to what fields? And what is his field?" It is hard to answer this question without the notion of the Wise and Good person, the teacher the characters in the *Laches* are getting at. And defining this person requires that we go beyond pragmatism and seek out what the Good is and what Wisdom is, which requires, among other things, a breaking down of barriers and better communication between the academic disciplines, including theology with everyone else. How Aristotle thinks about the Good person and Wisdom will be discussed in Chapter 5.

The point I have been trying to make regarding Toulmin can be summed up thusly: despite his good intentions, his treatment of logic and everyday argument ultimately effectively precludes how all people exist philosophically in the world. This is an existence on several levels—how we all try to figure out things and people and our proper relationship to them in light of other things, as well as how we try to persuade them of the good. As we will see in the final two chapters, Aristotle's position, though not perfect in significant ways, is much more open to this way of coming to a fullness of being.

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<sup>169</sup> Again, a more thorough critique in light of Aristotle's notion of rhetorical or specific *topoi* will have to wait for another project, but see Appendix E as a hint of the work to be done there and as another transition to Chapter 4.

## CHAPTER 4

### WHERE'S THE LOGIC?

Throughout I have been trying to show that dialectical *topoi* have just as much claim to *logic* as the syllogism does and are just as necessary in the realm of informal logic. I will now work at showing how Aristotle's full view of logic can address, in several interrelated ways, the difficulties we saw in Russell and Toulmin's views of logic. I will be working from the bottom up here: after some brief general remarks about the fullness of logic and the relationship of it to right reasoning and living for Aristotle, I turn to discussing the interrelation of his foundational notions for living and thinking from the *Organon*, such as substance and the predicables. After an introduction of such terms and their related issues, I discuss how these concepts are important for logic, ethical reasoning, and arts. The development of the general remarks will occur throughout Chapters 4 and 5, and has occurred quite a bit in the project already; Chapter 5 will focus more on the importance of Aristotle's foundational concepts for ethotic reasoning and good living.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> I should also note that I do not think the importance and usefulness of dialectical *topoi* stand or fall with Aristotle, yet I agree with Toulmin that Aristotle's logical-philosophical system can be an important part of the cure for disciplinary discord in academia, a theme that has been discussed already and will have to wait until a project on the *Rhetoric* to be discussed further. More directly, focusing on Aristotle's dialectical *topoi* and definition, which *topoi* are necessarily concerned with, opens up space for rhetoric. Though I will not get deeply into it here, I will note that dialectical *topoi* show that formal logic is tied up with rhetoric, as alluded to in Chapters 2 and 3, and should therefore not be ignored by rhetoricians, especially as many rhetoricians are more and more concerned with matter. The legitimacy of dialectic actually gives to rhetoricians what they have long desired—a sense of parity among the disciplines, especially between the humanities and natural sciences. In contrast to the attempts of many modern rhetoricians to do this by establishing some sort of relativism and then trying to get others to accept that it applies to their respective discipline, dialectical *topoi* give a shared ground, a real ground, for reasoning among the disciplines

As was pointed to previously, the shared grounds for reasoning and defining is a vastly superior approach than relativism, allowing the scientific disciplines to retain most of the grasp on the knowledge of their respective objects, but allowing the more rhetoric oriented disciplines a strong ground for critique of how these sciences come to points and how these points are made to others. That is, rhetoric can become more rhetorical, even more eloquent, by being more dialectical (in Aristotle's sense). Moreover, dialectical *topoi* also are instrumental in definition, which, whether we talk about it in terms of is/ought,

Here, I will focus on describing what Aristotle's logic is and how it is reliant on his notion of dialectic or material logic, how formal logic is grounded in "grounded logic." Aristotle realizes reality has an "influence" on what and how logic is and should be used. We have already seen how Toulmin fails at defining such a relationship. In contrast, Aristotle works with several important concepts when rendering logic, the predicables (*genus, species or definition, property, and accident*), which are at the heart of *logic* and *defining* and which tie *being* and *knowing* together. For Aristotle, all of these need to be united for reasoning to work (especially in light of its goal of wisdom) and for there to be good people in a good world. Moreover, these predicables have a great deal to do with how Aristotle believes dialectic to work, especially dialectical *topoi*. These *topoi* are representative of and influence how *philosophy*, the *mind*, and the *world* work together, as well as influence what formal logic is and can be. Thus predicables and *topoi* are important for how we understand and shape the world (see the last section of Chapter 4 and Chapter 5).<sup>171</sup>

The common "matter" for understanding all these concepts, activities and their relationships is *essence*. As we have been seeing, the world, mind, and language are all important for giving logic its right limits and thus proper and advantageous use.<sup>172</sup> In

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rhetorical force, metaphysical force, *aetia*, etc., is intrinsically related to the explaining and knowing of a thing and its rhetorical potential or its potential to move (see Chapter One and below for discussions of *aetia*).

<sup>171</sup> The predicables are also important in how one can understand the very special way humans can be in the world, a theme that is expanded elsewhere, which also makes them important to the study of rhetoric.

<sup>172</sup> As we have seen, the placing of logic too much in language, mind, or reality creates serious hindrances to several ways that human beings know, as well as precludes any ethical applications of logic because of the considerations that are omitted. But this is what many modern rhetoricians and philosophers have done. Granted, the task of uniting dialectic to formal logic and the rest mentioned is quite difficult. Even Aristotle admits the difficulty in finding a principle behind all the predicables, which would seem necessary to establish their place in logic or how the mind works, etc. (*Topics* 102b.35-9). As mentioned in Introduction, the difficulty may come from this principle being in perennial reflection amid the real world, discourse, and the mind, thus being in something of an eternally shared origin.

other words, logic's validity depends on how we understand and use *essence* in light of such concepts as mind, world, and logic. We saw how a missing notion of essence hurt the systems of Russell and Toulmin, when actually the more popular aspects of dialectic (its focus on definition and clear expression which are so important to logic) draw attention to the relationship of a somewhat ordered world, the mind that seeks to know this world, and the medium of language so important to knowing and reasoning.<sup>173</sup> Dialectic is a way of separating and ordering reality, helping to reveal the structure and essences of it: it is an assurance that the world has order (Weaver, "To Write the Truth" 235). As we will see in Chapter 5, this type of reasoning is very important for ethical development and happiness for Aristotle; order has much to do with justice and contemplation.

Also, dialectic's connection to essence and ability in finding it (as well as the order of the world, mind, and logic met in the grammar of predicables) allows one to

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Take as another example of the limiting of reasoning Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's attempt to reject the consistency of *topoi*, which they try to do by exclusively focusing on rhetorical *topoi*. They (and those who follow them, such as Leff, Warnick, Miller, and Jost), believe that topic use, which they limit to quasi-formalized arguments arising from issues, is simply expressive of value—expressing, or perhaps just simply reflecting, the specific cultural value of the person that uses them, and this value, as well as the topic itself and its value, is determined by audience and social knowledge. (Working with this belief, Jost seems to want to change common perceptions by forcing postmodern topics, or sophistic topics regarding human nature, i.e., definitions of humanity, on students.) But they skip over discussing dialectical *topoi*, and how rhetorical *topoi* may be based on these, as socially acceptable because based in the unchanging laws of nature, natural law, and mind. For there seems to be some rules of thought that do not change across cultures (e.g., induction, deduction, and argument from authority), but many postmodern scholars are mainly concerned with pointing out differences among cultures (Harpine 355). According to Common Sense, one would even be hard pressed to find a culture that defines differently, because of how the grammar of predicables reflect the grammar of the natural order, though other culture may have different definitions of things, not necessarily because of linguistic relativity, but because of different starting points, metanarratives, or metaphysics leading to a different Absurd (in Burke's use of the term) or shading of the Good, while the steps on the upward and downward ways are similar (*Rhetoric* 243-265).

<sup>173</sup> There are two related issues here: where are logic and essence properly grounded? There has been large pushes of late to say that essence is solely based in culture, or is mainly a fabrication of the mind, or that it is based in language. The early Burke, for example, wants to allow some validity to a person's experience, but his view of language with its vast array of powers and its ability to affect even the most basic forms of thought, causes the human to ultimately be the symbol-used animal rather than the symbol using animal, forever a prisoner of the realm of terministic screens (*Permanence and Change* 295). The grounding of essence eventually affects the grounding of logic and vice versa.

speak of predictability and thus probability. These are important aspects of knowing and using knowledge ethically in argument. That is, the predicables, the different arrangements of which are Aristotle's dialectical *topoi* or general inference rules, are at once how we go about finding definitions or essences (or principles for use in arguments), as well as the guarantees in demonstrating these definitions (for genus and species are essential and property is derived from the essence).<sup>174</sup> Definitions are needed, of course, for principled arguments, a prerequisite of ethical argumentation, and Aristotle asserts that all arguments have to deal with definition or its parts, which is why he attaches the parts to the categories in *Topics* I.8-9.<sup>175</sup> That is, good argument needs to be grounded in the clearly stated actual. Accordingly, when used properly, dialectical *topoi* are also important for keeping arguments honest in terms of fair moves, language use, and arguing from probability: i.e., essence and the relationships among essences, which the predicables help to reveal, are a very important part of probable, ethical argumentation.<sup>176</sup> Indeed, it seems the primary purpose of the *topoi* is to render what *is*, whether of reality or abstract concepts, though they also help us with describing what a thing's best form is, what it can and ought to be (see Chapter 5), and thus eventually what is better and worse.

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<sup>174</sup> For example, logic requires such categorical concepts as *genus* and *species* and these categorical constraints are important to the mind. E.g., to deduce that Socrates is mortal, one must place him in the "category" of man. From combinations of the predicables we can derive such a dialectical maxim or *topoi* as "what is predicated of the genus is predicated of the species." This maxim allows us to validly deduce. Of course, where some people can get into trouble is by focusing only on the existence of categories, and then consequently trying to place all of logic, say, in the mind or language (because of the belief of how it structures the mind). The connection of these categorical concepts to essence will be discussed in the next section.

<sup>175</sup> Definition and logic are connected and reliant on each other in a number of ways, as we shall see. As mentioned in the Introduction, definition seems the common element of ethics, epistemology (including the ethic of knowledge), and ontology.

<sup>176</sup> For the role of the predicable *property* in ethical reasoning and argumentation concerning ethos, see Chapter 5. See the Introduction for how a focus on definitions can help make for ethical argument.

Accordingly, these purposes of dialectic in logic, understanding, and ethical reasoning seem to even apply to causal relationships, the *aetia* in particular.<sup>177</sup> For example, it is easy to grasp the necessity of dialectic for determining a final cause, and we will see below how Aristotle speaks of allowing causes into syllogisms in terms of definition.<sup>178</sup> Thus again will we see the importance of dialectic to knowing and ordering (to what things should be)<sup>179</sup>. Of course, other aspects of living in the world and knowing, such as *aetia* and emotions, also need to be considered for ethical argumentation, for these are valid ways of understanding the world and relate in different ways to dialectic.<sup>180</sup>

Simply put: to speak of logical theory, argumentation, and human reasoning requires discussing how we know what things really are. As we have seen, logic has a form, but it cannot be a field unto itself or be capably represented by an academic silo. There is an interrelation of full logic and full living, a way of existing in the world that accepts that there are a way things are and that these can be largely known, valued, and argued for and from. It seems natural to human beings to exist in such purposeful ways. Yet, as we have seen, when one carves logic at unnatural points or just lops off aspects

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<sup>177</sup> John of Dacia apparently uses “Aristotle’s four causes (from *Metaphysics* I.3) to treat the modes of signification” (Murphy 155), and Moss describes how Aristotle’s doctrine of the four causes became *topoi* through Boethius and Renaissance rhetoricians and logicians. It should be pointed out that, though Moss does treat of the relationship between the four causes and *topoi* developed from the Middle Ages into the Renaissance, her emphasis seems to be on how Carbone sets off the causes as a *differentiae* (in Boethius’s sense) of *topoi* (78) and not *topoi* as part of a process of actualization in argumentation (actualization being something that requires the four *aetia* to talk of). See below for more talk of *aetia* and Chapter 5.

<sup>178</sup> One can also talk of arguments from sign working in such a way, a discussion for another project.

<sup>179</sup> In Chapter 5, we will see how order is bound up with virtue for Aristotle.

<sup>180</sup> This talk of the emotion in terms of *pisteis* and *topoi* will have to wait for another project, though emotions are something very important to keep when talking about reasoning in general. For example, Weaver is concerned with making sure students have emotional balance in arguing, that writing/persuasion is not just relegated to logic, especially abstract formal logic: “To write well, one must be alive at every point of one’s being, with the result that composition, more than any other subject, is a training of the whole [person]” (*Composition* xiii). Talk of emotional balance will come up again in Chapter 5 in terms of *hexeis*.



all together, the results can be disastrous for philosophy and daily living.<sup>181</sup> The next two chapters attempt to present Aristotle's solution.<sup>182</sup>

This chapter has three major sections. The first section argues the connection between Aristotle's treatment of predicables and the rest of Aristotle's *Organon*, showing the predicables' importance to right reasoning through their connection to language and the real, largely through *ousia*, substance or essence. Aristotle focuses specifically on the predicables in his work on dialectic, the *Topics*, and the second section will show *substantial* dialectic's connections to demonstration, thus its connections to formal logic and knowing. Such connections as *aetia* and definition are an important part of the basis for probability mentioned above. The third section focuses on the mind's connections to the real, including language, and how it knows the real and can be used to "clarify" it. As argued in earlier chapters, it is important to keep clear the ways a person connects to the real, for this has ramifications for what the limits of logic are.<sup>183</sup> This discussion will set us up for the discussion of people, predicables and ethotic reasoning in Chapter 5.

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<sup>181</sup> Indeed, even Aristotle's logical philosophy is not above reproach when talking in terms of how to connect definition to the real. Whereas one might argue that the ethical-philosophical views of Brummett and Scott, when taking on an Platonic-Aristotelian opponent such as Weaver, deny form as a final cause and thus deny becoming in an ethical sense (see Appendix B), one of the main difficulties in using Aristotle's system is trying to preserve Personality as a personal form coming to exist through the ethical life (while not creating an individual ethical form—that each person can do as s/he sees fit). As Bonaventure points out, Aristotle does not have respect for the personality of an individual in his view of the perpetuation of species (which is actually an obstacle to moral inquiry); thus it's easy for Aristotle to throw either kind of form (personal and individual ethical) out (Jordan 66). That is, Aristotle is not a moral relativist, nor does even have that division of souls according to god types that the *Phaedrus* offers, much less the position that every person has a unique relationship to the Good that each should aim at fulfilling, as others have argued.

<sup>182</sup> One can also refer to the Introduction for more background on these opening remarks.

<sup>183</sup> For example, we saw how Russell's view of how the mind and language works allows him to advocate a view of logic that is far too overreaching and ultimately works to preclude many reasonable voices and explanations from discussions on issues important to human beings. Some of the ethical import for a person's connection to the real will be discussed in Chapter 5. The significance of other ethical connections mentioned in this chapter have been discussed throughout the project.

## AN ORGANIC VIEW OF REASONING: PREDICABLES, SUBSTANCE, AND THE ORGANON

I will start with grammar here in discussing Aristotle's groundwork for the essential, i.e. the essential's justification and how one may know and use the essential, for grammar is a way of talking about mind, language, and the real all at once, and we will see how substance is connected with all of these through a topical discussion of the *Organon*. Crucial elements of this grammar are the *predicables*, the four elements from which dialectical propositions and problems can be made, though there is little reason not to say that all propositions are made up of these elements and thus that all discursive reasoning needs them.<sup>184</sup> This claim about propositions holds whether the proposition concerns the possible, the absolute, or somewhere in between.<sup>185</sup> One could say the predicables are at the core of predication. Once we see how the predicables, specifically *genera* and *species*, are grounded in the real (a similar discussion of properties and accidents will come in Chapter 5) and are the building blocks of dialectical *topoi*, we will see again how logic is based in the real and needs to be if it is to be of good use.

In *Topics* I.5, Aristotle briefly defines the predicables: *property* ("a predicate which does not indicate the essence of a thing, but yet belongs to that thing alone, and is predicated convertibly of it"), *genus* ("what is predicated in the category of essence of a number of things exhibiting differences in kind"), *definition* ("a phrase signifying a

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<sup>184</sup> As Aristotle says in the *Prior Analytics*, "Every proposition states that something either belongs or must belong or may belong," and it is hard to have these modes without properties or accidents, as well as the secondary substances of genus and species, either mentioned explicitly or guaranteeing implicitly (I.2, 25a.1). E.g., 'Socrates is white' can only be true if that is a color a man is capable of being.

<sup>185</sup> This is an important point for remedying some bad influences of Descartes that Toulmin takes on, as was discussed earlier and will be briefly returned to at the conclusion of this chapter.

thing's essence," made by combining a *species* and *genus*, and which can be called simply *species* because a genus is required to state a species), and *accident* ("something which may possibly either belong or not belong to any one and the self-same thing").<sup>186</sup>

The main thing not accounted for here, though it is apt to come up in many propositions, is the particular, such as *Jeremy* in "Jeremy is a cat" or "Jeremy jumped off the fence." One might expect this since Aristotle thinks of dialectic abstractly as a general mode of reasoning. However, it should be pointed out, one still needs the other predicables to make these intelligible statements and to reason about these statements, e.g. one needs the *definition* of cat or of fence. One can see the importance of these "universals" if one recalls the importance of statements as claims for arguments, "for all particular arguments really reason universally as well, and a particular demonstration always contains a universal demonstration, because it is impossible to deduce at all without using universals" (*Topics* VIII.14, 164a.9-11), a statement examined in Chapters 1 through 3. We will see shortly how genus and species (the two major types of universals) are crucial for making claims and reasoning/syllogizing.

But before addressing genus and species directly, we need to first view predicables in light of their relation to the rest of the *Organon* to better understand how they work (much of the connection of dialectic to the *Analytics* will come in the next major section). As Gillespie might say, it handcuffs our understanding of Aristotle to talk of the *Topics* without the *Categories* (2-4). As a whole, the *Organon* contains not only most of Aristotle's logical theory, but also, with the *Metaphysics*, many of Aristotle's statements regarding the connections between logic and philosophy, especially ontology and epistemology. Again, the most important connection, for

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<sup>186</sup> I leave *differentia* out of this discussion since it is in some ways a secondary predicable.

Aristotle, is substance or *ousia*. Substance and its connecting function is chiefly seen among the predicables in *genus* and *species*, which help Aristotle explain and hierarchize other concepts, qualities, and concepts of being.

### **Substance and Speaking**

Now, it seems that whenever a problem needs resolution or something is being argued, it concerns one or more of the predicables, any one of which will always be in one of the ten classes of the predicates hierarchized in terms of substance (*Top.* I.9, 103b.20-8). These ten classes for categorizing and distinguishing different elements of reality are expounded in the *Categories*. The first book of the *Topics* actually seems to be a bridge from *Categories* and *On Interpretation* to the subject matter of the *Topics* (though the *Topics* does not list all ten categories when referencing them), inasmuch as it summarizes issues related to equivocal and univocal predication and the nature of terms, issues that can derail a discussion or argument. In this way, the first book of the *Topics* identifies an important link between logic, language, mind, and the world, as the reader goes from a treatise about how we can say anything about the world to one that helps us deal ultimately with how we come to a clearer understanding of reality and its order.

Now, even though Aristotle does not use the term *dialectic* in the *Categories* and only uses *demonstration* once (12, 14a.37), here begins Aristotle's grammar of assertion, which is carried on in *On Interpretation*—the rules by which one must abide when making a statement, whether the statement be used as part of a dialectical syllogism or a demonstrative one. On the lowest level, these rules are necessary for making intelligible statements and are in this sense even foundational to knowledge.

But on a higher level, these rules are necessary for any philosophical inquiry, or even any casual conversation, that aims at finding truth or has any regard for truth.

To take the lower level point first, Aristotle does not explicitly talk much about truth and falsity in the *Categories*, but he gives the beginning foundation for arriving at truth, i.e. sense making, by giving boundaries to the field where one could play fast and loose with the key concepts of meaning making. One of the easiest ways for any type of discussion or communication to go awry is in the naming of the objects being discussed, and Aristotle opens this book with a discussion of how things are referred to (equivocally, univocally, and derivatively).<sup>187</sup> Then, once possible causes of errors in making and understanding claims are laid out, all the discussion concerning predicaments and the relationships of terms centers around investigating primary and secondary substances with the goal of knowing what these are, connecting grammar to reality and mind. For substance, Aristotle believes, is all people *really* talk and care about.<sup>188</sup>

In revealing the rules concerning substance, Aristotle, not only provides the ways different types of substance are marked in applications and ways these types must be talked about to make sense, but he also lays down rules for reasoning. He tries to give principles for a good way of understanding and arguing about the world. For example, the term that stands in the slot of *substance* can either refer to a primary substance (e.g., this man) or a secondary substance (man as a species), but both the

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<sup>187</sup> The concern of equivocation seems to be always on his mind as he discusses the different meanings of the predicaments (categories of predicates, such as quality, length, etc.), how these and the terms that fall into them can be talked about (e.g., the five senses of *prior*, the six types of movement, and the different types of relationships between terms that fall into these slots, such as the four types of opposites). Knowing the different senses of all these terms limits where they can be applied and helps one to avoid error, not only in discussion, but in what seems to be the main goal in Aristotle's system, finding the essence of things, the truth of things—philosophizing.

<sup>188</sup> This is true in a number of senses: cf. *Meta.* XII.7, 1072a.26-30; 1072b.17-19

name and the definition must be predicable of the *subject*.<sup>189</sup> Of course, without this predicability, this connection, we will not really be able to say or think anything of anything, problems with which we saw in Russell and Toulmin, and we will see below the importance of this particular principle to reasoning, especially its necessary role in acquiring knowledge of secondary substance and using it.

In other words, Aristotle's discussion of grammatical terms in the *Categories* reveals the importance of grammar and philosophy to each other and logic in particular. As we shall see next, it seems that one cannot talk of or identify a substance without the use of induction and deduction—the deriving and applying of universals or for-the-most-part universals. Moreover, one cannot induce or deduce anything without the standard of univocation that we are discussing here, which means more than just perception and reality is needed to reason.

### Substance and Logic

As we saw in Chapter 1, one cannot induce and deduce without univocation, because univocation is necessary for the proper predication of genus and species in

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<sup>189</sup> In other works, Aristotle seems to relax this definition of substance in talk of universals; In *On Interpretation* he calls a universal “that which is of such a nature as to be predicated of many subjects,” a definition that includes such things as ‘man’ but is also vague enough to include things such as ‘white’ (*De Int.* 7, 17a.37-40). How to deal with so-called accidental universals such as ‘white’ (even though we may also want to refer to them as properties) is a knotted issue. Many issues come into consideration, such as the difficulty in conceiving of them as *ousia* contrasted to their apparent potential to be arranged into species and genera, as well as their capacity to be a subject in a sense; e.g., ‘White is a color’. As Ackrill points out, Aristotle's use of ‘subject’ is very broad (76). There is also the issue of ‘being in’ and the requisite of existence for such qualities. The interpretations of Ackrill and others results in the notion that, “General attributes are not in individuals, particular attributes are not in more than one individual,” which would make it very difficult to even account for general attributes (100). Owen's interpretation of the criteria is more satisfying and sufficiently saves what seems the foundation of interpretations here—Aristotle's contempt for Plato's concept of form. Owen correctly understands Aristotle's notion (“By ‘in a subject’ I mean what (a) is in something not as a part [cf. *Cat.* 5, 3a.30-4], (b) cannot exist separately from what it is in”) as not referring to the given individual but more broadly as “Z is in something... and Z could not exist without something to contain it” (104). These accidentals are not primary *ousia*, then, and Aristotle helps us see that they are not secondary *ousia* either, for the only way for white to exist is in objects, and he argues that something such as ‘white objects’ are not a genus, for white objects are not specifically different (*Topics* IV.6, 127a.20-25). Cf. *Metaphysics* VII.13 where Aristotle is concerned to show that qualities are not substances.

truth finding and for the acquiring of various notions of secondary *ousia* from particulars. Genus and species are the two “types” of secondary *ousia* and the key components of definitions, that with which dialectic and demonstration are intently concerned. Dialectic is generally taken as trying to find these universals, and demonstration (and syllogisms in general) usually relies on these universals in making proofs.<sup>190</sup> These two predicables are properly called secondary substance because they are made up of primary substance at the foundation (and things said of these can be said of related secondary substance), and they are the only other things of which the other predicaments can be predicated. That is, secondary *ousia* are foundational grammatical elements. For example, one cannot predicate of a measurement or a quality. One cannot say, ‘the green is two feet,’ unless one is referring to, say, a green bit of yarn or a representation of it. This foundational quality makes these two predicables or substance types very important for how we connect to the world and reason about it.<sup>191</sup>

Further, Aristotle’s description of these substances and their relationship to the world allows the same validity for particular statements and categorical statements, the premises of syllogisms: “the same relationship which subsists between primary *ousia*

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<sup>190</sup> A property, which is derived from something essential, can be used in similar ways in a syllogism as well, as will be discussed in Chapter 5. We will see below how definition and deduction can switch roles.

<sup>191</sup> In a similar light, one can look at Aristotle’s claim that a verb is “substantial” (the updated translation has “a verb is a name and signifies something”) since these “arrest the hearer’s mind” with a concept (*De Int.* 3, 16b.19). Verbs can make real connections, a very important concept in logical predication. Weaver may echo Aristotle, including how the latter sees language tied to the world, when he says the

verb is regularly ranked with the noun in force, and it seems these two parts of speech express the two aspects under which we habitually see phenomena, that of determinate things and that of actions or states of being. Between them the two divide up the world at a pretty fundamental level [...]. These are the symbols of the prime entities, words of stasis and words of movement (even when the verb is said to express a “state of being,” we accept that as a kind of modal action, a process of going on, or having existential quality), which set forth the broad circumstances of any subject of discussion. This truth is supported by the facts that the substantive is the heart of the grammatical subject and the verb of a grammatical predicate. (*The Ethics of Rhetoric* 135)

and everything else subsists also between the species and the genus: for the species is to the genus as subject is to predicate, since the genus is predicated of the species, whereas the species cannot be predicated of the genus" (*Categories* 5, 2b.18-21).<sup>192</sup> Aristotle's assertions at 3a.34-3b.9 confirm this: "It is the mark of substances and of differentiae that, in all propositions of which they form the predicate, they are predicated univocally" (3a.34), and the definition of the genus is applicable to the species, and the definitions of both of these, as well as the differentiae, are applicable to the individual. Again, this univocal predication of predicables is not only necessary for asserting something (and thus defending something), but also for knowing something in all applications of discourse.<sup>193</sup>

In the traditional arrangement of the *Organon*, Aristotle gives *genus* and *species* a special place in knowledge acquisition. When one knows something, whether universal or particular, whether genus (animal) or species (man), one knows substance.<sup>194</sup> Aristotle claims species is more substance than genus because it is closer (in the sense of *prior* as "better" discussed in chapter twelve) to primary *ousia* (5, 2b.7-

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<sup>192</sup> Aristotle seems to have the issues of the different levels of being in his mind while writing these early chapters (especially the one important to predication and predications in deductions—levels of certainty of being), but this does not seem to come into his thinking in terms of logical validity and reasoning, as we shall see below. Toulmin, however, with his concern for authority and verification, has problems in this area, specifically problems concerning how one verifies different types of statements and which types of statements are more authoritative/verifiable and when, as we saw. Indeed, problems with the trustworthiness of different types of statements are long standing. For example, one common sophistic argument against universal statements attempts to assert that a possibility is just as or more authoritative than a probability. Also, particular statements have been attacked on the grounds of fallibility of sense perception, and by implication, universal statements are tarnished since our knowledge of universals come from knowledge of particulars, which is often responded to with the argument that one needs ideas/universals to even be able to discuss how perception falls short. I discussed the Toulminian attacks on universal statements in Chapter 3, in addition to the discussion of Russell's problems of not giving logical equality to particular and universal type statements in Chapter 1.

<sup>193</sup> In this sense, asserting that ambiguity is the foundation of language, mind, or nature is self-defeating.

<sup>194</sup> As will be discussed below, genus and species, what go to make the essence of something, are connected to *aetia*, especially the formal ones that explain what a thing should be and why, the *aetia* giving a fuller connection between thought and the real and even language because they offer a Common Sense way of talking about how these all work. We will also see below their role in acquiring knowledge and arts.



22): species are more “real” because they are less of an abstraction it seems. Genera can only exist and be made because of species, and he seems to say that a genus cannot determine a species (the issue then becoming whether he means not at all or just not finitely). Moreover, the predication of a species is more specific and thus more satisfactory to the inquiring mind than the predication of a genus.

But in light of the relationship of logic and knowing, especially how one comes to know through logic, one must point out again that species is not privileged in terms of logical certainty. For one, such usage would break the rational rules of substance that Aristotle uses *genus* and *species* to describe: *genus* and *species* seem intended as species of secondary substance, and one species cannot be more indicative of a genus than another. Species is also not prior to genus in that they are created simultaneously, a rule Aristotle discusses in chapter 13. Aristotle, in the same chapter, clarifies his earlier sentiment about the determining relationship of species and genera: “genera are prior to species, for the sequence of their being cannot be reversed” (13, 15a. 5-6). This statement brings to light again Aristotle’s view that there is an ultimately knowable order of things (though Ackrill asserts that Aristotle does not explicitly proclaim any particular ‘right’ order), and the species come first in a particular person’s coming to know it (75). One can also see here the importance of this relationship between genus and species to the issues of truth/falsity and demonstration in terms of the *prior*. The prior existence of a genus is necessary for a species to exist, to be differentiated, and species have to exist as the prior elements of genera (as letters to syllables or elements

to propositions in geometry) for demonstration (12, 14a.36-14b.2).<sup>195</sup> A genus is also substantial or essential to a thing, and thus necessary for understanding it (see below). Thus genus has all the strength of a species in terms of truth and validity, which is important both for knowing and arguing, a theme that is later taken up by Boethius and revived by Richard Weaver.

Moreover, considering *Cat.* 5, 2b.18, genus and species seem to have equal truth and validity to particulars in arguing, though their truths are verified differently. They both need to have equal logical weight if one is to come to knowledge. And Aristotle, as opposed to Toulmin and Russell, is concerned with giving equal authority in argumentation to particular and universal statements, for logic and ethical argumentation would break down otherwise. This equality is also significant if dialectic is to be the universal science that Aristotle believes it to be, which is also important for ethical argumentation among the disciplines, for Aristotle seems to believe that the essence of a thing is as much in it as it is in its class.

### **Dialectic with Knowledge and Logic?**

Many of these points concerning substance, predicables, and logic will be expounded on below and have already seen elaboration at other points in the project, but here seems a good place to meet one objection: Aristotle's assertion that the question "What is it?" is not a dialectical question may seem to contradict to my view that Aristotle believes dialectic is concerned with finding the essence of things, the genera and species. But his assertion should be taken in the (a) pragmatic and (b) epistemological light it is given in: (a) Aristotle has in mind here the mechanics of

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<sup>195</sup> I.e., here is exemplified Aristotle's notion of the logically prior, things "whose actuality is in nature prior to their potentiality, though posterior in time" to the perceiver (13, 23a.24). We saw the importance of both types of knowing for argumentation when discussing Toulmin's and Russell's works.

dialectical disputes that he discusses in the *Topics*—a dialectical question must allow an opponent the chance of choosing one of two alternatives. But to be in a position to ask a dialectical question, one must (b) have already progressed in one's knowledge of a thing; one must have already made an attempt to categorize the thing, whether it is this categorization that is in question or some other type of differentiation pertaining to the thing (thus the importance of particular knowledge again). As Aristotle says, dialectical questions require "a more definite form" than 'What is it?'" (*De Int.* 11, 20b. 26-30).

One could give a simple framing of the gist of Aristotle's knowledge acquisition system by saying general induction and deduction, within the system and rules of primary and secondary *ousia* and univocation, lead us to what something is or give us a good hunch, while the more rigorous dialectic seeks to separate it from similar things and/or things going under the same name (as if one can really disassociate induction and deduction in real life from even corrupt dialectical actions or even each other).

### **Asserting, Arguing, and Logic**

That is, dialectic is how ideas must be reconciled, and it is hard to do this without some notions of foundational truths or a notion of Truth, as illustrated many times in Plato (see below). The rigor of dialectic brings clarity to areas where things are difficult to separate, such as the zone between contraries, as well as where contraries and contradictories exist in the same thing, whether at different times or, in a sense, the same time, and this clarity of dialectic is important to the work of assertion and argument discussed above. Aristotle espouses in *On Interpretation* the laws of contradictories and contraries regarding universals, particulars, and the statements that

convey them (which also rely on univocation or at least not equivocation), as well as how to order and infer from these (Ch. 10).<sup>196</sup> These processes are crucial to the ‘alternative’ work of dialectic, for Aristotle teaches here how to properly deny something (the basis for this coming from *Cat.* 10, especially 13b.1). For example, when dealing with contradictories, the denial of a single affirmation must be single, denying just what the affirmation affirms of the same subject and in the same aspects of universal/particular and distributed/non-distributed. Such rules regarding denying are important for argument and knowing, for not allowing sophistic reasoning that puts the possible on par with the probable, denying essential reasoning. (Of course, such a rule is important too for wise living and judgment, and we saw the importance of this rule regarding universals in Chapter 1.)

Aristotle gives these rules with a sense of logical necessity, but it is easy to see that clear argumentation in any mode, especially in dialectic (if this can actually be kept completely out of any type of argument), also needs such rules. That is, necessity is behind all the rules of logic, either immediately or sitting back from the action: “necessity and its absence are the initial principles of existence and non-existence, and [...] all else must be regarded as posterior to these” (13, 23a.18-20). Aristotle here makes a connection between logic and being, one that is fleshed out with the topical maxims (according to different ones considered with different applications of necessity), placing limits on how one can argue validly (see below).<sup>197</sup> Logic reflects its being with the “initial principles of existence” in the principle of non-contradiction, a

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<sup>196</sup> Cf. 6, 17a34 for more on the parenthetical note.

<sup>197</sup> Topical maxims can also be rules that result from inferring or deducing from the predicables.

notion demonstrated with physical objects and concepts.<sup>198</sup> One can even see the point of necessity applied to all of creation: ‘if something is, it is necessarily, even if it be just for the moment,’ and ‘that which is necessary is actual, though that which is actual is not necessarily necessary.’ Indeed, the absence of any notion of necessity causes problems for logical and ethical argumentation, and the Principle of Non-Contradiction is very important for reasoning about particulars, as we have seen in previous chapters. Now, Aristotle is not saying that every argument should be put in the necessary mode, but logic cannot exist without necessity and that which tends toward it and away from it—probability, possibility/improbability, and impossibility—the positive ones existing in the nature of things, which means one needs the real, full of for-the-most-parts as it is, to discuss them.

Really, one could say substance has to be involved to “show” anything, in demonstrations and deductions. One can take Aristotle’s statement at *Meta.* VII.9, 1034a.30-32 as regarding dialectic’s connection to demonstration and the other elements we have been discussing, that substance is the starting point of syllogisms, and at XIII.4, 1078b.24 that “‘what a thing is’ is the starting-point of syllogisms.” Both assertions are important for the connection between formal and material logic, which is discussed throughout this project, as well as the reliability of dialectic regarding knowing, and they are also important here in the additional light that dialectic is over all syllogisms and that substance is in a sense the end of syllogisms, as will be discussed in the next section.

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<sup>198</sup> Aristotle’s idea of logic being bound up with the real world, which Lear sees as a foundational link between mind and the world for Aristotle (209), allows Aristotle to argue in the *Metaphysics* that the study of logic is part of the first science (I).

Now, in anticipation of the next section concerning the relationship of substantial dialectic and demonstration, we can say that both necessity and the relationship of logic and the world are expressed in the *Prior Analytics*. In order for there to be a deduction, there must be a necessary consequence from the relationship of the middle term to the extreme term, and illustrative of the real connections here, Aristotle gives us examples for *perfect* deductions in lists of terms, as if these terms have set meanings and set relationships to each other (I.4, 26a.11-12, 36-37, etc.; 26b.29-33). Again, a deduction can only work from terms being related according to the relevant rules of the *topoi* (which, at some point, rely on the principle of non-contradiction themselves), such as ‘what is predicated essentially of the genus is predicated essentially of the species,’ and the necessity of sameness (universality). The issue of predication, as in the *Topics*, is essential to logic here, particularly universal predication as the basis for all syllogizing: “Every proposition [including deduced conclusions] states that something either belongs or must belong or may belong [...]” (I.2, 25a.1). And Aristotle explains the sameness of “one term being in another as in a whole” and “the other [being] predicated of all of the first,” which shows the relationship between demonstration and the rules of the predicables (I.1, 24b.27).<sup>199</sup>

Again, the connection of dialectic and demonstration will be more fully elaborated in the next section. Thus far, I have attempted to provide some Aristotelian documentation for the complex view of logic I will be trying to use and show throughout this chapter and the next. Again, almost all of what has proceeded finds elaboration below and in previous chapters. To summarize what is here and is to come

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<sup>199</sup> The connection of the real, language, and the mind will be further elaborated in the next section, while a discussion of modality just alluded to can be found mainly in Chapter 3.

and also point to the connections of these predicables to the external and internal life, I will say again that the order of the world, mind, language and logic is completed in the grammar of predicables.<sup>200</sup> These predicables, the grammar of reality, the different arrangements of which are Aristotle's dialectical *topoi* or general inference rules, are at once how we go about finding definitions (or principles for use in arguments), as well as the guarantees in demonstrating these definitions. Grimaldi's phrasing of a related point expresses better the relationship of logic, mind, and reality and the ultimate significance of each to reasoning and living (also revealing why *topoi* are often referred to as a significant part of "material" logic):

[*Topoi*] are ways—determined by reality—in which one must think about the subject. This kind of analysis is a vital, logical one, grounded in the metaphysical reality of the subject, and one engages in it in order to discover as far as possible the true nature of the subject [...]; [...] we have here a method of analysis originating in the ontological reality of the subject. ("The Aristotelian *Topics*" 185)

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<sup>200</sup> In this belief, John of Salisbury takes on the pre-Occam nominalists, arguing that not only words can be predicated of each other but things as well (II.20). Though, according to Bird, we have Ockham to thank for reconnecting the predicables to logic because they were separated in the Latin tradition that followed Aristotle ("Tradition of the Logical Topics" 308). Other terminists, such as Buridan, try to flesh out the ways these predicables, or the actual terms that fulfill their capacity, can validate linguistically along the lines of signification and supposition, a tradition still carried on in the modern period. Bruxelles et al. construct a recursive, topical linguistic schema to show how such arguments forms as the argument from circumstance can be validated topically. In the modern field of rhetoric, Leff, in "The Topics of Argumentative Invention," draws a distinction between the rhetorical and dialectical *topoi* in Aristotle by asserting that the former deal with propositions, the latter with terms in propositions (25-6) But to apply a dialectical *topoi* to a rhetorical *topoi* (as Boethius proposes), a dialectical proposition qua proposition must figure in somewhere. And Weaver advocates realizing the rhetorical nature of grammatical categories themselves (such as nouns and verbs), how they reflect a person's intent, when describing the necessary connection among language use, logic, and the intelligential world (*Ethics* 142).

## THE TOPOI AND DEMONSTRATION

The topics are so interwoven in the shared foundation of reasoning and disciplines of thought that, no matter where one starts, one is always heading for or must touch on the same subjects quite often. Thus the pervasiveness of the *topoi* prevents a perfectly linear discussion. In the previous section, our discussion of the *topoi* led us through the grammatical and substantial. This section will take us through the logical and epistemological. Here we must discuss the relationship of dialectic and demonstration, as well as how these need to be related for ethical argumentation. Dialectic needs to (1) be seen as something of a genus for demonstration; otherwise, we do not have the material or formal components necessary for demonstration to work. And (2) dialectic needs ontologically grounding for such positioning and work, which also makes it reliable for finding and understanding *aetia*, important elements of understanding essence and syllogizing. Without these points, arguments arise that advocate the uselessness of demonstration or say that only what is necessarily demonstrable is admissible into argument. Much of the preceding discussion about the relationship of substance, logic, and knowing is pertinent to avoiding such constrictive views of reasoning, as we will see especially when we discuss again the importance of essence for probable and thus ethical argumentation.

### Dialectic Before Demonstration

Aristotle begins the *Topics* by separating valid reasoning (demonstration and dialectic) from spurious reasoning.<sup>201</sup> Regarding the relationship of dialectic and

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<sup>201</sup> Again, Aristotle identifies the largest part of his logical works with the subject of the *topoi*. The bulk of the *Topics* itself is divided among rules to use regarding the four predicables: accident (Books II-III), genus (IV), property (V), and definition (VI-VII). Predicables are, again, the materials with which any argument, any proposition or problem deals (I.4, 101b.13-35), and their definitions allow for the



knowledge, it is important to note that dialectic and demonstration here do not seem to be in a hierarchy of logical functions for Aristotle but are suited for different ends of logic. Valid reasoning or syllogizing (a syllogism being “an argument in which, certain things being laid down, something other than these necessarily comes about through them”) is dialectical, or dialectical and demonstrative (scientific syllogistic reasoning). Aristotle sets apart demonstration with premises that start from knowledge that is true and primary or derived from this knowledge, while dialectic starts from generally accepted opinion (I.1, 100a.25-30).

That is, from this book and the way Aristotle uses dialectic in other works, it appears that dialectic precedes demonstration, not only in terms of the individual coming to knowledge, but in other ways too. Dialectic, as a type of reasoning, is broader in scope than demonstration; it is useful in “intellectual training, casual encounters, and the philosophical sciences,” while demonstration is not of much use in intellectual training and especially casual encounters.<sup>202</sup> Here other types of syllogism

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construction of the *topoi*. Moreover, their being, which allows for both uses, connects logic and knowing and allows formal logic and *topoi* to work together in different ways of knowing and reasoning.

Green-Pedersen accurately portrays the historical debate over what Aristotle exactly means by *topos*; Aristotle never explicitly defines it, and in the list of *topoi* he gives in the *Topics*, there seems to be two parts to many of them: the reason and the instruction or strategy. Alexander of Aphrodisias calls both parts topics, but many choose one or the other (Green-Pedersen 23-24). Stump sees the *topos* as the instruction, and perhaps Carruthers does too in her thinking that topics are made (“Dialectic and Aristotle’s *Topics*” 165-168; Carruthers 34; cf. “Between Aristotle and Boethius” 208-212). I will side with DePater in believing the reason, or what he interprets as logical law (or axiological law for Book III), is the *topos*, or at least the fundamental part of the *topos* (Green-Pedersen 24).

Aristotle also gives *topoi* a separate, explicit treatment in Book II of the *Rhetoric*. These separate treatments have given rise to distinctions between dialectical *topoi* and rhetorical *topoi*, but in what ways these are distinguished is still up for debate. For example, are they given the names dialectical and rhetorical because they are corresponding species to these genera or are they divisions of the genus of *topoi* or both? What relation dialectical *topoi* hold to rhetorical *topoi* will be discussed in another project.

<sup>202</sup> This is not to say that demonstration is useless in argumentation; for example, chapters 19 and 20 of book II of the *Prior Analytics* are concerned with argumentation and read much like a selection from the *Topics*. One could say that demonstration can be useful to dialectic, but the way Aristotle conceives of dialectical encounters keeps him from exploring the applications in the *Topics* because demonstration

are more effective, the dialectical syllogism and the enthymeme, which is most often understood as a dialectical syllogism with the major premise missing (I.2, 101a.26-27).

Indeed, dialectic is not just over demonstration but over all deduction, all syllogizing or even reasoning, as some translate *syllogismos*, and a brief discussion of the enthymeme can support what we are saying about how Aristotle thinks about dialectic and its connection to demonstration. As Kennedy notes, the phrase Aristotle uses when first describing the enthymeme is “rhetorical *apodeixis*” (1355a.7). The latter term, demonstration, usually means the logical validity of scientific reasoning, but occasionally refers to a more general sort of reasoning, “including probable argument (as here)” (Kennedy Footnote 33); probable arguments are the realm of dialectic. What such usage of *apodeixis* may reveal is not only a sort of philosophical Common Sense, but also that Aristotle realizes that rhetorical arguments rely on dialectic for their demonstrative force.

The broader scope of dialectic is also affirmed in the *Rhetoric*, which has its method of argumentation built on dialectic (as I hope to show in another project): “it is a function of dialectic, either as a whole or one of its parts, to see about every syllogism equally” (I.I, 1355a.8-10). As we have seen and will see again below, this “seeing about” makes dialectic unavoidable in argument. For now, it is enough to note that this statement reveals that Aristotle thinks dialectic is crucial in all demonstration (since demonstration is a species of syllogizing) and thus in all demonstrable knowledge acquisition; it is just that not all dialectical uses have the end of a demonstrative syllogism. To perhaps understate the argument, one could say that just as a species

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causes one to go back to the beginning in a dialectical encounter, which is not conducive to some of the uses he intends for dialectic in this book.

cannot exist without the genus, as we saw above, demonstration cannot exist without dialectic. This is important to keep in mind when others, looking only at the *Analytics*' presentation of the syllogism, accuse the syllogism of being a closed off argument that stifles thought and is complicit with intolerance, as was discussed in Chapter 1.

Moreover, having dialectic as the foundation for demonstration is in keeping with how Aristotle most often proceeds, going from probable opinions, whether of the masses or the experts, to *episteme*.<sup>203</sup> Dialectic is necessary for most knowledge, and as I have alluded to in earlier chapters, dialectic's broadness also allows it to discuss the indemonstrable principles of the sciences, the opinions usually held on these among the experts, and it also helps to find these principles and thus knowledge: "for dialectic is a process of criticism wherein lies the path to the principles of all inquiries" (*Topics* I.2, 101b.3-4). That is, dialectic can bring one to knowledge, but it does not have to.

Allen, however, provides a rebuttal to this position, which we need to consider. Arguing that the *Topics* were written before the *Analytics* and that the *Topics* deals with analytics in part, Allen asserts that analytic replaced dialectic, not by abolishing it or weakening it, "but by supplanting it as the master discipline of argument whose responsibility it is to treat of the syllogism in general" (93). Allen uses such evidence as the statement about dialectic from the *Rhetoric* given above and the observation that "in the *Prior Analytics* Aristotle explains how the method of invention based on the categorical theory of the syllogism will be of use to the dialectician in his quest for

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<sup>203</sup> This is not the extent of dialectic's relation to knowledge. For example, Boethius seems to develop the relationship between demonstration and dialectic even further, dialectic being able to "borrow" demonstration for its own use (after finding the principles) yet seemingly inferior to demonstration in terms of force of argument ("Dialectic and Boethius's" 182, cf. Boethius II.1184D). As already alluded to, to discuss dialectic's relationship to knowledge, we also have to talk about probable knowledge and probability, as we will be doing throughout, as well as the right place of expert knowledge in all of this and argumentation, as we saw in Chapter 3.

sylogisms” to support his notion of this replacement (91-2). Yet Allen sees analytic as abstracted “from the concerns of actual practices of argument”: “The kind of logical understanding of argument [...] which a master of the discipline of analytic will have, though possibly a help to participants in argumentative practices like dialectic and rhetoric, cannot by itself equip them for success in the way that the disciplines of dialectic and rhetoric must” (98).

But as we are seeing, a special quality of dialectic is to appropriate analytic for argument. Again, it is fitting that the *Analytics* would follow the *Topics* and the *Rhetoric* as a mirror of Aristotle’s own way of coming to knowledge, dealing with how probable arguments are used first. That is, Aristotle sees demonstration and dialectic as two necessary sides of the same coin (see below). Allen is right in part, then, that the *Analytics* hammer out the syllogistic strains in the *Topics*, for it is definition, or a thing’s essence, which is the end of dialectic, “seeing that the whole purpose in rendering it is to make something known” (*Topics* VI.1, 139b.14-15).<sup>204</sup> Again, proper reasoning starts and ends with essence; we will see more of how Aristotle’s fully appreciates this in Chapter 5.

### **Dialectic, Essence, and Ethical Reasoning**

Now, how the essence of anything is reached is by examination of the parts that compose it. The predicables, in the three types of reasoning given above and also in the realm of rhetoric, can be conveyed incorrectly, or not properly found, in many different ways, for which Aristotle gives hundreds of destructive topics (or rules) to show where

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<sup>204</sup> Though the Conley of “‘Logical Hylomorphism’ and Aristotle’s *Koinoi Topoi*” may deny it, we may have grounds here to believe that Aristotle conceived of his logical and rhetorical works in hylomorphical terms that mirror his own thought process, the coming to or presenting of a form or essence.

an opponent has incorrectly categorized a part or has used a part incorrectly in making a proof. He shows similar rules in the *Prior Analytics*, as in II.21, where he gives examples of how a person can have mistakes in demonstration, resulting in knowing and not knowing the same thing. Many of these destructive topics can be reversed to help in finding the correct description of a part or its correct use, but Aristotle's approach seems to be more focused on paring away the unnecessary and the incorrect to arrive at the essences of things. This is in keeping with Aristotle's common sense approach, that people usually have some part of a right reason for labeling something (even if the term is incorrect). This seems to be actually an influence from Plato, whose influence on Aristotle's notion of dialectic is widely accepted, though its extent is greatly debated, especially how much Plato's idea of form influences Aristotle's notion of final form.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> Indeed, Plato is not the proto-Descartes that Toulmin describes, as we saw in Chapter 2, but even shows flashes of common sense reasoning, reasoning from the natural and commonly accepted (as well as the commonly accepted about the natural), and this similarity with Aristotle is important to point out for it helps reveal just how broad Aristotle's dialectic can be and in some ways pushes itself to be. Take, for example, *Gorgias* 481c-d:

if human beings did not have some feeling that was the same—some having one and others another—but if some one of us suffered some private feeling different from what the others feel, it would not be too easy to point out one's own affection to the other. I say this bearing in mind that you and I now happen to have suffered something that is the same: we are two lovers [...].

Besides pointing out an important element of reasoning, especially of emotional reasoning and reasoning about emotions, i.e. other people, one should also point out that there is an empirical or commonsensical measure to Plato's reasoning here, a measure that is a starting point and way to verify, which actually turns out to be an important part of emotional *pisteis* in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. (As I have tried to stress throughout the project, much thought on reasoning and logic neglects the importance of other people or the importance of the person in general. See also Appendix B.)

There is debate over how Platonic Aristotle's *Topics* itself actually is. Gillespie argues the *Topics* were taught in the Academy through Platonic dialogues and that dialectical practices codified in the *Topics* are predominantly if not exclusively Platonic (2, 4). Ryle argues, and this would seem to back up the close bond between scientific demonstration and dialectic, that

however strenuously Aristotle criticizes Plato's ontology of Forms, he and Plato are in perfect agreement about the difference between 'common' or ubiquitous concepts [existence, non existence, identity, otherness, likeness, unlikeness, coming to be, ceasing to be, unity, plurality, part, whole, etc.] and all the other concepts. They are in perfect agreement too that it is these ubiquitous notions which constitute the proper or basic subject-matter of dialectic. (77)

Of course, it is likely impossible to separate from Aristotle that particulars point to what a species is (see the discussion of the *Topics* next), but beyond the issue of how abstractly formalized Aristotle's notion of form is, the important, consistent point of the comparison seems to be that the universe, through the constancy of its workings, whether of the stars, say, or the eternity of species, is understandable to the human mind by induction, going from particulars to universals and back down again.<sup>206</sup> And what we are touching on with this issue of forms are the *is*'s and *shoulds* of definition itself, or at least the issue of how definition can be legitimately used for *shoulds* in how they legitimately express the *is*, which is seen in a special way in humans (see Chapter 5). Again, what this thought is ultimately working in is Aristotle's hermeneutic of *aetia*, which gives a way to connect causes, or understandings, and final ends (*shoulds*) in the context of how mind, the real, and even language works, as we will see below.

Before moving on, however, we should note that the problem with missing *shoulds* is another way of characterizing the "essential" problems and their relationship to the dialectic and demonstration relationship. That is, Aristotle ironically clarifies Plato on how logic and definition can be grounded in the real and, as Solmsen notes, divorces dialectic from its purpose of knowing how things are or should be in the *Topics* (61). This latter result is likely because, again, Aristotle's writing is pragmatically shaped here for an audience who will be engaging in dialectical competitions, and we will see another argument against such a view below. First, Elders, seeing the Platonic influence in the *Topics*, argues that the book with its predicables possibly expresses a Platonic principles of being theory, that the predicables are tied to the Platonic levels of being, that primacy is given to definite

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<sup>206</sup> We will see more on the importance of this constancy to Aristotle in Chapter 5.

things; Aristotle does not rule out using these predicables to get to first principles—a view that would make philosophy and dialectic synonymous, as they seem to be for Plato (132-2).<sup>207</sup> This also points to the use of dialectic for finding a final form. Yet Socrates' goal is often to transcend reality, to get to the Truth beyond our real, which requires a certain ethical standing, as well as a certain attitude towards, and certain moral impetus for, reasoning (all of which bring another shade of meaning to the proper relationship to being one should have). Thus also an issue of concern here is whether Plato and Aristotle have an ethical view of *topoi*, say, as they are used in discussions and thought.<sup>208</sup>

#### Dialectic and Probability

I will return to the concern of the right attitude toward reasoning shortly and the concerns over ethical standing and moral impetus in Chapter 5 (the importance *aetia* for rhetoric was argued in Chapter 1). First, the ontological and essential issues surrounding dialectic and the *topoi* are important to keep in mind for they directly bear on the viability of arguing and knowing with probability, which is important for ethical arguing. Again, perhaps distancing himself from Plato, Aristotle is not always

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<sup>207</sup> It also may result in the same conclusion regarding probability and the predicables that John of Salisbury comes to (see below).

<sup>208</sup> This is an issue Weaver begins the discussion on concerning Plato, showing the ethically privileged argument from definition as explicitly and metaphorically represented in the speeches of the *Phaedrus*. (See the Introduction for a brief discussion of Weaver's ethical hierarchy of argument types.) Weaver's analysis of Plato could be expanded to include a discussion of less ethical arguments, such as from circumstance in Lysias' speech and the argument from apparent or "undialecticized" definition in Socrates' first speech of the *Phaedrus*. The *Euthyphro* also uses a number of different *topoi*, including from definition [of holiness] but does not hold to the latter in this particular case, and the *Menexenus* can be seen as illustrating the poor use of rhetorical commonplaces. Now, if one were looking for a Platonic doctrine or expression of predicables and *topoi*, one might say that the predicables and the relationships among them would not be forms themselves but would be formal or perfect relationships among forms, a way of arranging the forms that may be obscured to humans because of existence in this world, which would seem to make it very close to Aristotle's view. In this system one would not speak of one species being more of a species than another or one species being more predicated of a genus than another, a rule that might solve Rosch's problem of "prototypes" in "Principles of Categorization." See also *Cat.* 5, 3b.34-4a.6.

concerned with finding absolute knowledge. Some modes of discourse it does not belong to properly, and some subject matters should not be expected to show it.

Sometimes probabilities are all that can reasonably be expected, but these need still to be based on a way that things actually are, which Aristotle tries to give a system for doing, by linking world, mind, and language in a checks and balances system of knowing, at once grounded in reality and each other, and revealing reality to us.

Actually, Boethius is the first to try to repair the rift between the predicables and reality in the Platonic-Aristotelian tradition, a rift that occurred through the subsequent Greek and Latin traditions. McKeon derogates Boethius for giving such a Platonized form of Aristotle's topics because he "bases knowledge on the opinions used in dialectic in dialectical syllogisms of the *Topics*, rather than on the scientific principles used in demonstrative syllogisms of the *Posterior Analytics*" ("Creativity and the Commonplace" 28). That is, in McKeon, we are again seeing the assumption of a fundamental difference in how dialectic and demonstration proceed.

But before we return to this distinction, we must note that Boethius, in thinking he is following Aristotle and Cicero, does seem the first to connect the topics to argumentation, and this in a platonic ethical sense, by making apparent the use of the *topoi* in validation (and thus in all types of syllogizing, since demonstration is a species of deduction, which is under dialectic). He sets the predicables up as *differentia* which contain maxims or inference rules. The arguer sets out to find out what predicable is at issue in a given proposition and then finds the appropriate maxim that either proves or disproves the proposition, such as the rule *what is predicated of the genus is predicated*



*of the species*. Once one of these rules or standards is applied, the point or sub-point is either won or lost.

One could argue that Boethius sees the topics in such a way because he seems to agree with Plato, Aristotle, and Weaver regarding the emphasis of ontological dependence in argument. He argues that, though dialectic may deal with the rules of predicables in general (e.g., genus) and rhetoric with the particular use of a predicable (e.g., animal), “in order to proceed, the argument (ratio) depends on the fact that the nature of genus is known beforehand,” i.e., the essence of genus (IV.1216b). Rhetoric needs the foundation of dialectic and all its rules if it is to proceed honestly. In an example he gives, one is lead to know that a person was not drunk because one knows that the person was never dissipated, the genus of drunkenness.

I will discuss the ethical importance of ontological dependence in argument more below, but I can make one last related point concerning probability and the relationship of dialectic and demonstration here. Recall first that McKeon, like Smith, seems to assume there is an irreconcilable difference between how the *Analytics* and *Topics* proceed, that dialectic cannot be used in science (specifically to find first principles, though, as we have seen, this is important for how we can justifiably critique the premises and arguments of disciplines). But others contest this fundamental split that severely distances or even separates dialectic from knowing: Allen, as mentioned above, thinks the *Analytics* replace the *Topics* as a mature form, and Boethius shows us one way of how they can work together. Also, Hintikka, as we will see below, seems to see a link between the two stemming from a direct Platonic influence. Finally, Grimaldi, in a view that I am advocating, calls the field to action to assert that the

*Topics* and *Analytics* work together, that dialectic and analytic are necessary to each other.

Again, many scholars may take McKeon's view because of the stipulative definition of dialectic in the *Topics*, that dialectic deals with probabilities and accepted opinions.<sup>209</sup> However, Grimaldi discusses how the use of *eikos* in the *Rhetoric* explains how the sources of knowledge used there and in the *Topics* are not far separated for Aristotle. He thus reaffirms the Common Sense (in one might say the Reidian understanding of the term) of Aristotle, his arguing from probabilities to true things:

In the *Rhetoric eikos*, or the probable, possesses a note of stability and permanence. [...] a kind of universal with respect to individual probabilities (*A* 2, 57b 1). While this stability is not inherently necessary yet it is not subjective and extrinsic. It is intrinsic and objective since it is grounded in reality. (*Studies* 107)

Grimaldi sees this meaning of *eikos* carried through the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the *Metaphysics*, to the *Prior Analytics*, where it is even stronger and is usable in demonstrative syllogisms.

This notion of probabilities is important for Aristotle, as well as for Liberal Arts rhetor-defenders. This is because it takes a stand against letting the improbable (based on an incorrect or spurious idea of a things nature or the nature of things) go from the realm of the merely possible to the probable, i.e., letting the lesser argument be equal to or even stronger than the better one as if by default.

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<sup>209</sup> Again, this book is a competition manual not a theoretical piece on inference guarantees. This is a missing consideration of audience that may lead Miller to deny Aristotle believed in constants or universals and causes Slomkowski to mistake the hypothetical premise forms of the topics as meant only for hypothetical syllogisms.

Of course, saying that probable arguments are better than possible ones and should be generally accepted over them is laying down a moral rule (and we will see more of his moral view of logic and reasoning below and in Chapter 5). Aristotle is able to do this because he does not abstract epistemology from ontology when laying down rules for argumentation. It is only at the end of his strictly logical works, the *Analytics* (as contrasted to the *Metaphysics*), that he often speaks strictly epistemologically, and it is not coincidental that many opponents of the Aristotelian logic focus there attack here and ignore its relation to the rest of his logical works. After all, if the whole of Aristotle's work on logic is just the *Analytics* (which is very concerned with simply knowing in the abstract), if there is no material logic for formal logic, then it is easy to undermine his system by just showing the uncertainty of knowing, assuming the Cartesian assumptions of what belief and knowledge are that lead to skepticism ("Premise Acceptability" 18).

#### Problems with Analytic Alone for Ethical Reasoning

Actually, it is ironic that many of those who attack Aristotle's system on only epistemological grounds go about constructing a replacement system on epistemological grounds. However, using epistemology in the abstract to derive principles for argumentation is dangerous, as we saw earlier, for epistemology in the abstract is only a matter of knowing or not. This reduction creates a critical weakness for epistemology that others have pounced upon. For example, Scott, in "Rhetoric is Epistemic," busies himself railing against just absolute certainty, refuting apparently the only opponent to relativism, and then builds the case for relativism on the same

misunderstanding of knowledge.<sup>210</sup> Of course, using such approaches is anti-rhetorical, for there is no notion of opinion or probability, no notion of more being or more true, without ontology. It is anti-rhetorical whether we define rhetoric in terms of the probable as Aristotle does, or a more sophistic view of rhetoric which still relies on probability for imitation and the capability of valuing one thing more than another.

But Scott continues, apparently working with epistemology alone, to lay down *shoulds* for argument, which do not stand up on his own epistemological grounds or other grounds. Such arguments against absolute certainty are, one could say, being ontological on another level or, rather, they try to contrive an artificial ontology. For example, Burke and Scott, in their respective projects, try to make a potentiality of uncertainty into an actuality (and necessity) in thought, language, action, and the real world. And this seems to be what they are hesitant to allow others to do—the introduction of a formalization into the social real, the forcing of an abstraction-based definition (in a couple of senses) into the real world of ideas and reality. They seem to believe that this is exactly what others are trying to do (and can only do) in a particular way all the time: the belief is that no ontological foundation is better than another, nor has more primacy (indeed, there seems to be no real ontology at all), and everyone is trying to foundationalize their own. Žižek, Butler, and Laclau try to describe such moves in general in quasi-dialectical terms, but perhaps it will be easier to use Burke and Weaver's dialectically laden language to say that here is actually a bureaucratization of imagination or corruption of form imposed at the foundation of

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<sup>210</sup> Another example might be how Burke uses language to introduce the negative and thus the potential for uncertainty of any proposition, since any proposition can have its negative said against it (*Grammar* 296-7). Thus there is no pure or absolute statement and, again, thus know absolute way of knowing, which makes for a pretty tight case for relativism if there is only certainty or uncertainty.

philosophy, used by many, as by Scott and Brummett, to advocate skepticism/subjectivism.<sup>211</sup> In other words, here is an assertion of a natural order of things that precludes (further) arguing from the natural order of things, and this is apparently because there is no ontology or it is unknowable. The ethics for argumentation derived from this tightly pinioned ontology (since ethics has to be derived from this, as it has to share in metaphysics at some point) are controversial to say the least and, again, anti-rhetorical.

Now, whereas the emphases of Scott and Brummett show up as the impossibility of arguing from the natural order of things, Weaver instead points out the difference between knowing an absolute and knowing an absolute absolutely.<sup>212</sup> Take the case of knowing that *tree* means tree. There may be an arbitrary process in a culture finding the word for tree but once it is agreed upon it is not changed without much time and effort.<sup>213</sup> Here is a place where language meets dialectic and demonstration, reasoning and reality.

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<sup>211</sup> Or one of its types, such as moderate skepticism and intersubjectivism, i.e., subjectivisms which want to assert the reality of an external world but must be ultimately reduced to skepticism because of their skeptical foundation: In rhetorical studies, see earlier works by Croasmun and Cherwitz, Cherwitz and Hikins, and Orr.

<sup>212</sup> Such an idea seems to be driving Orr's criticism of Brummett's intersubjectivity, that Brummett fails to distinguish between objectivism and the concept of objective reality, the external world that exists but is not fully knowable and must remain unknowable to be an impetus to criticism in the search for truth. Intersubjectivity tries to reify one social construction of reality; thus it falls victim to itself, for in "*identifying the real with intersubjective meaning, it lacks the basis for a consistent critique of rhetorically sustained false consciousness*" and takes away the ground of the rebel to social opinion (270). Brummett, moreover, and this may be responsible for some of his problems here, tries to pass the fact off that many people gain confidence in their beliefs through consensual validity as epistemology, but epistemology is actually more concerned with asking whether our agreements about the truth are true, as Orr points out.

<sup>213</sup> The same could be said of abstract words with value connotations, what Weaver calls god-terms. The difference with these is that their meaning can be changed subtly by connecting them to new things while keeping the connection to 'the good'; so a term such as *liberalism*, as Weaver argues, can change from its libertarian meaning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century to its current meaning ("Relativism" 401). Now, Common Sense is also concerned with using or referring to certain probabilities as absolutes, as the way things actually are, such as, I might say, the probable grounding of the predicables in reality (and what we can know about reality by assuming this). We saw with Grimaldi the importance of connecting probability to

It is also where language meets ethical argument pedagogy. The ethical teacher, one might say, teaches naming by dialectic, by having names line-up with reality, and does this well. Crowley cites McCrimmon to the effect that Weaver at this point makes the teacher the lawgiver, but it may be more accurate to say that the teacher passes on the law (which is predicable-based) as one who has knowledge that the student does not and gives the method and instructs in the right moral light for the student to be well-equipped to find more knowledge (qtd. in 70). And through the teacher as good dialectician and rhetorician, the student will learn “that the world is not wholly contingent, but partly predictable, and that, if he will use his mind rightly, it will not lie to him about the world” (“To Write” 235). This is foundational for learning the highest way of speaking for Weaver, *vere loqui*, as opposed to simply *recte loqui* or *utiliter loqui*.

That is, the epistemological and ontological link we have been discussing, one significant for the essentially founded relationship of formal logic and dialectic, is not only important for ethical reasoning but for virtuous reasoning, if one can make such a distinction. In such a vein, one might add Hintikka’s narrative of how the Socratic influence comes through the *Topics* into the *Analytics*:

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reality, of arguing from probabilities to true things, how this is important for Aristotle (as well as for Weaver) because it takes a stand against letting the improbable go from the realm of the merely possible or plausible to the probable, i.e., letting the lesser argument appear as the better one. Yet the importance of probability and its grounding is also opposed in many theories of language (often based apparently still in that rationalist epistemological standard that has no value for probability, perhaps because they mistake the tie it has to absolute standards. To take a simplified postmodern notion, the signifier can never absolutely signify the signified, which effectively means what Gorgias argues in *On Not Being*, that the existence of something is not communicable or knowable (an argument that Augustine places back in the dialectical arena by calling it a plausibility and asserting that it is just as plausible that truth exists and is knowable). Such ideas can result in a lot of subjectivism and relativism, but, again, it seems the abstraction of epistemology (and resultant lack of probability) that allows such thinking to seem to carry weight. Reid, in his book on Common Sense, argues that the existence of such a distinction as between signifier and signified is the result of what he calls the “ideal system,” the notion of ideas existing in the mind as different from the material objects that ‘caused’ them, which he argues has its roots in Aristotle (though Aristotle tries to keep the two components together), is used hazardingly by Descartes, and necessarily ends in the full-blown, but unsustainable, skepticism of Hume (4, 23, 20).

Logic began in the hands of Aristotle as an art of interrogative reasoning, modeled on the Socratic *elenchus*, so much so that he is still in his two *Analytics* assuming a dialectical or at least interrogative framework for all of the reasoning that he is considering there. And Aristotle's original theory, presented in the *Topics*, is firmly aimed at identifying and cultivating excellence in the interrogative games that were thought of by him as the paradigm of all reasoning. (36)

Regardless of whether Hintikka would agree with what Grimaldi advocates, that the *Topics* and *Analytics* work in harmony, his discussion of logic as a virtue has significance for this project. Hintikka analogizes the way the idea of virtue changed, from the Greek idea of achieving an excellence to the Victorian idea of not making mistakes to preserve one's virtue, to what has happened to the 'virtuous' idea of logic, logical reasoning being an excellence for Aristotle and others:

on the way to Boole and Frege, the idea of logic as the study of excellence in reasoning was gradually forgotten. It was largely replaced by an emphasis on the cogency of logical reasoning, on the avoidance of mistakes in logic, not to say, on the preservation of one's logical virtue. Frege's creation of symbolic logic is an admirable intellectual achievement, but no one is likely to claim that his formalization, not to speak of his notation, is conducive of brilliant reasoning even in deductive logic. (36)

The modern ethical view of logic shows up in the classroom as a focus on teaching students how to avoid error, rather than reason well (37-8), and I believe we can make

more headway toward the latter if we focus on proper dialectical logic. Now, a focus on the *Topics* would help a little with achieving the teaching of argumentative strategy that Hintikka emphasizes, really returning logic back to an art, but of course we would eventually have to go beyond this into full fledged philosophy, with the placement of the proper good to reason to and in light of, if a student is to learn good strategy, especially if reasoning is a virtue and thus cannot really be separate from the other virtues. In other words, to be a good arguer one has to be a good person, a point I will return to below and in Chapter 5 in Aristotelian terms. And what also seems implied by Hintikka is the activeness of virtuous logic, as Aristotle's idea of virtue is something of an "active state," and thus we can quote Weaver again: "To write well, one must be alive at every point of one's being, with the result that composition, more than any other subject, is a training of the whole [person]" (*Composition* xiii).

Finally, virtue is an interesting context for thinking about the changes some have tried to make to logic in the workings of modern formal logic. In light of the *loqui* discussion above, one might say that in the twentieth century, many tried to fine tune logic so much, in the hope of making right statements and right arguments, that they left off rightness altogether or at least most of it. This is not to say that what they were aiming at does not have its importance, but it becomes a repressive attenuation of *good* or *right* to set this alone as the ideal for ethical arguing or even the ethics of knowing, as we saw earlier. If there is a virtue of logic (which one might class under the virtue of order), it should be part of the foundation for flourishing, as the other virtues are. And, as with cardinal virtues, it will become a vice if it is allowed to run wild or eclipse the others.



### Essence and *Aetia*

Now, returning to the issue of ontological grounding and language, one might make a Burkean pun that the predicables make for predictability, though many people, while arguing aetiologically and even teleologically, have asserted that language, and thus the world, is essentially ambiguous. We will return to the discussion of language and dialectic below. Here we will conclude this section covering the relationship of dialectic, demonstration, and essence by discussing *aetia*, which are important for how language can meet ends, especially good ends. As noted above, Solmsen argues that the dialectic of the *Topics* is separated from finding what a thing *should* be, but we shall see dialectic is connected in several ways to Aristotle's method of talking about such issues, the four ontologically dependent ways of explaining something: the final cause, formal cause, and efficient cause (which can all be placed under the heading of "formal"), as well as the material cause. How these causes are ontologically dependent varies depending on what one is explaining, whether the thing is artificial, natural, mental, or a combination, but they seem intended to cover the various ways people understand things, including their essences, using mind, the senses, experience, and language, as we will see below.<sup>214</sup>

At least abstractly, essence is even in the cause—final, efficient, and formal (*Meta.* VII.17, 1041a.25-b.33).<sup>215</sup> The specific use of *formal* is the notion of *definition* or *species* that was emphasized earlier, the statement of the essence. Now, the "formal principle is the definitory formula, but this is obscure if it does not include the cause,"

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<sup>214</sup> The medievals added to these causes and even the ways one could come to know forms, but these, as significant as they are, are outside the scope of this project.

<sup>215</sup> The formal causes are more easily linked to a thing's essence, but depending on how one understands these explanations and how they are connected to universals, the material could be part of an essence; for example, some views of humanity have humans being essentially enmattered beings.

or “efficient cause” as Ross reads it. In other words, essence or its statement does not have much purpose or meaning without this way to understand essence, for “we do not know a truth without its cause [...]” (*Meta.* II.1, 993b.23). One might even say we do not really have the essence without the cause and thus that essence is in the cause and cause is in the essence, as we will see shortly. For the purposes of understanding, when “one inquires into the cause of something, one should, since ‘causes’ are spoken of in several senses, state all the possible causes,” and it is “the proximate cause we must state” (VIII.4, 1044a.33; 1044b.1).

That is, what the *aetia* ultimately allow us to do is connect even more fully definition, as a formal cause, both to the world and to why a thing should be a way it is by keeping this and the other causes valid and together.<sup>216</sup> One can find talk of definition as a causal link between why and what in the *Metaphysics*: “The moving causes exist as things preceding the effects, but causes in the sense of definitions are simultaneous with their effects” (XII.3, 1070a.21). This connection of formal cause, world, and ought is important for ethical discussion of items; in any given instance, we

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<sup>216</sup> Expressive of this link of epistemology and ontology, Aristotle seems to make all of the predicables subordinate to definition in one way or another, for a definition is “a phrase signifying a thing’s essence,” that which dialectic hopes to discover (*Top.* I.5, 101b.38). Genus is a necessary part of a definition, but only a part (e.g. man is a *creature*). Accidents and properties, can be predicated of a particular man, but cannot be said to belong to the essence of man, or primarily belong as in the case of property. One could argue here that what Aristotle is doing is lining up his notion of the four *aetia* with dialectic, with logic. I.e., one may read him as connecting definition and *aetia* by comparing the predicables to the *aetia*, e.g., seeking when and where accidents and material causes align and trying to find out just what a property might be. Is it a formal cause? A material cause? Both? Neither? Though this type of comparison might yield a profitable discussion and one relevant to other claims made here, such as ethical actualization in terms of rhetoric (see below), it would also lead us into a subject of Chapter 5: how Aristotle understands virtues, the will, and how he believes virtues exist in individuals in terms of the predicables, namely as accidents and properties. Humans are a special case compared to the rest of creation, and outlining a consistent alignment of predicables is too much to take on here, though it might, for example, ultimately give reason for valuing the not purely logical ways that people understand and know.

can focus on how a definition is explained and how this relates to how it is to be justified as a *should*.<sup>217</sup>

The real connection of essence and cause is also important for reasoning in general, even at the formal level, showing how *aetia*, essence, definition, dialectic are all bound together, as well as the relationship between knowledge (science) and definition under dialectic.<sup>218</sup> First, the presence of this real connection is apparent in the *Posterior Analytics*: “to know what something is and to know the explanation of the fact that it is are the same” (II.8, 93a.4-5), but scientifically demonstrating such knowledge is not often possible. In *Post. An.* II.9, Aristotle tells us that of some things, the statement of what they are and the explanation are the same, such as with some mathematical concepts, but with others, the statement of what they are and the explanation are different: of the latter type of thing, one can make these clearer through demonstration, “but not by demonstrating what they are” (93b.28). That is, there cannot be proper demonstration of the latter, though they can be deduced; there is no demonstrative syllogism of a thing’s essential nature, but definition is “exhibited” by way of cause through a middle term in the first figure (see *Post. An.* II.8, 93a.1-15 and

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<sup>217</sup> We saw at the end of Chapter 1 the importance of the relationship of *aetia* and the ought for rhetoric. We can note here how *aetia* are a way of discussing the ethics of definition in argument. Of course, to ignore the *aetia* all together usually results in arguing from fact to policy or arguing from circumstance: “We’re in a Zombie Apocalypse! We might as well walk outside and get it over with!” There are universals and causal reasoning being drawn on here, but the argument is not given in a way to allow discussion or even allow us to readily perceive the reasoning. Yet *aetia* allow us to do this, to discuss how a definition or definitory statements work in argument, as we will see.

<sup>218</sup> As we will see, realizing that definition (and the genus that is a part of it) is a formal explanation or account of a thing is important for the distinction between demonstration and definition, as well as their relationship.

*Posterior* II.17). The case is the same with ultimate causes, and we will return to this issue of the interrelatedness of definition and cause below.<sup>219</sup>

First, Aristotle seems to struggle with “showing” here in terms of demonstration and definition: “without a demonstration you cannot become aware of what a thing is (in cases where the explanation is something else), yet there is no demonstration of it [...]”; thus definition is not demonstrable but cannot be ‘displayed’ without demonstration in a general deduction (II.8, 93b.17-20). Definition, then, seems to work as a dialectical proof, being grounded in the rules of the predicables and a deductive non-technically demonstrative demonstration (see below). This can be seen in Aristotle’s three types of definitions:

[1] an undemonstrable account of what a thing is [the definition of an immediate, a statement of essential nature]; [2] one is a deduction of what it is, differing in aspect from the demonstration [or a syllogism of essential nature differing from demonstration in grammatical form, as Mure has it]; [3] a third is a conclusion of the demonstration of what it is [of its essential nature] (II.10, 94a.11-13).<sup>220</sup>

The second is the definition that is a “quasi-demonstration,” a formula exhibiting the cause of a thing’s existence; in other words, this quasi-demonstration allows for the equating of formal causes and definition in terms of logic; both can be principle

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<sup>219</sup> One might find support for this claim regarding causes where Aristotle argues in II.11 that the four types of causes are proved through the middle term, the middle term being “explanatory of what it is to be something” (94a.20-23, 35), and asserting later that the “the middle term is the account of the extreme” (II.17, 99a.1): And here again we are seeing the interrelatedness of definition, actia, and essence in logic. For example, at *Post. An.* II.17, 99a.17-20, apparently drawing on II.13, 96a.24-b.14, Aristotle shows how explanations can be used with genera and explain equally the same thing in members of a genera

<sup>220</sup> Additionally, Aristotle talks of definition by division as a weak syllogism (*Pr. An.* I.31, *Post. An.* II.13).

premises. (And both need the broader reasoning I have been discussing, for both rely on essence to work). We can see this equation in that (3) is the statement of the conclusion of either (1) or (2).<sup>221</sup>

Definition and deduction, or even definition and demonstration, are also related and similar in how they come to knowledge of an essence, including its cause. First, an essence (the formal cause) is rendered through other things, through terms, and this makes definition similar to demonstration and ultimately necessary to it: “For the reason why the definition is rendered is to make known the term stated, and we make things known by not taking any random terms, but such as are prior and intelligible, as is done in demonstrations (for so it is with all teaching and learning)” (*Top.* VI.4, 141a.27-31).

One could also argue definition is like demonstration in that it draws on known or more plausible things to prove something that is less plausible, the genus being the most familiar term of all for definitions (VI.11, 149a.17). Thus one can again see here how the importance of genus to reasoning. It is often used as a category for deductions, and it is principal in definition in more than one way: it is to be stated first in the definition, with the thing’s differences appended subsequently (VI.1, 139a.28-30), and

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<sup>221</sup> Again, as mentioned above, definition and formal *aetia* are somewhat interrelated in use, as we see in II.10. Here we find again that one type of definition is the account that tells us what a name signifies, which, once grasped, sets us up for asking why it is (93b.29-32). But then Aristotle tells us that another type of definition

is an account which makes clear why a thing is. Hence the former type of definition signifies but does not prove, whereas the latter evidently will be a sort of demonstration of what a thing is, differing in position from demonstration. For there is a difference between saying why it thunders and what thunder is; for in the one case you will say: Because the fire is extinguished in the clouds. What is thunder?—A noise of fire being extinguished in the clouds. Hence the same account is put in a different way, and in *this* way it is a continuous demonstration, in *this* way a definition. (93b.38-94a.7)

We might also look to II.8, 93b.4-5 for other instances of such interrelatedness in logic. Here Aristotle seems to say that to look for the cause of why A belongs to C is to look for what B *is*, though sometimes we find this *what* without the *why*.

it is also principle in the sense of *arche*, not in the sense of movement or generation but as a controlling factor in what the definition will be, a formal cause. Thus we see again its equal importance in coming to knowledge.<sup>222</sup>

The main distinction between definition and deduction or demonstration is along the lines of proof, the first figure syllogism being the strongest type of proof that lesser forms imitate (although it uses the same universal premises of the dialectical *topoi*) (see *Pr. An.* I.23-24, *Post. An.* I.24 and how we referred to definition as a dialectical proof above). This figure is “especially scientific” because “the deduction of the reason why occurs, either in general or for the most part, through this figure,” the reason why having “the most importance for knowledge”: one can “hunt for understanding of what a thing is through this figure alone” (*Post. An.* I.14, 79a.18-26). Thus definition (and the *aetia*) and formal logic are necessary for understanding (though understanding is not properly demonstrable), working with, in, and sometimes as each other.<sup>223</sup> And Aristotle, again, makes sure to point out that all of these constraints on argumentation

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<sup>222</sup> And we can bring up here a related point discussed above, that demonstration is at the command of dialectic because it must also be acted out in accordance with the rules of the predicables: e.g., one cannot “prove anything from crossing from another genus” (*Post. An.* I.7, 75a.38). And demonstration is dependent on the predicables and axioms of dialectic:

For there are three elements in demonstration: (1) what is being demonstrated, the conclusion (this is what belongs to some genus in itself [an attribute inhering essentially in a genus]; (2) the axioms, (axioms are the things on which the demonstration depends); (3) the underlying genus of which the demonstration makes clear the attributes and what is accidental to it in itself [the subject-genus whose attributes, i.e. essential properties, are revealed by the demonstration] (I.7, 75a.39-75b.2).

(Here, again, we see the reliance of logical demonstration on essence, the importance of which we saw regarding Russell and Toulmin’s systems). Note that the use of *axiom* here seems a more qualified view than the one Aristotle gives in I.3, where axiom is distinguished from a thesis as being a first principle that is required to know to learn anything, whereas a thesis is a first principle that is not required to be known for learning. In an age of skepticism it becomes clearer that there needs to be logical first principles if we are to have any knowledge of a discipline, that our reasonings or dialectic on certain subjects are tied together and validated by the same thing at some point.

<sup>223</sup> In light of this discussion and the connection of dialectic to demonstration, McAdon’s article, which through focus on the enthymeme and its elements makes the argument that the *Rhetoric* is more closely tied to the *Analytics* than the *Topics*, may have inadvertently strengthened the link between rhetoric and dialectic and the *Organon* as a whole.

are not merely a part of language but of the actual world. When, in *Posterior Analytics* II.11, giving the list of the four causes one must understand in order to say that we have scientific knowledge of actual things, he places the “definable” form first, which, like the other causes, can be the middle term of a proof (about a thing), the other causes being more easily seen.

Finally, and this will lead us into the final section, it is not only language and the world that are connected, but these are also connected to the soul and the mind, for at this hub, so to speak, there is a contest between the realm of necessity and contingency:

That which expresses necessary self-grounded fact, and which we must necessarily believe, is distinct both from the hypotheses of a science and from illegitimate postulate—I say ‘must believe,’ because all syllogism, and therefore *a fortiori* demonstration, is addressed not to the spoken word, but to the discourse within the soul, and though we can always raise objections to the spoken word, to the inward discourse we cannot always object. (*Post. An.* I.10, 76b.23-26)

One can see here the stress that Aristotle places on essence in syllogizing and knowing, as well as that essence is known through more than just deduction. This knowledge and reasoning of essence goes beyond the level of words to the discourse of the soul. One way to sum up what is being said and implied here (apart from perhaps the quasi-Augustinian connotations à la *De Magistro*) is a person’s essence knows essence and can learn more about essences and essence itself through essence (cf. *Metaphysics* XII.7, 1072b.22-24 and Chapter 5). In other words, the mind comes to be structured to

nature, to mirror and receive the natural order, as it is part of the natural order, which is larger than just the physical world. Once the mind is structured to the natural order, and this happens in more ways than just through reasoning and observing (as it is an essence itself), it cannot receive anything else, and this structuring can include, say, knowledge of emotions and their causes, as well as the virtues.<sup>224</sup> Though one may be able to cavil about the meaning and placement of words, definitions and essences are settled; action is limited by the structure of nature/mind when these find fit for each other, for they come to be one and the same. And even words become harder to play with after they have gone through that arbitrary process of coming to be used to refer to something and are consistently used concerning the essential idea.

*DIALECTIC: THE MIND, LANGUAGE, AND THE WORLD*

Of course, the mind has an important part in knowing (being for the purpose of receiving knowledge as well as virtue), including coming to know what a thing can be, and we will see the importance of Aristotle's grounded logic for this: how dialectic is reliable in terms of the mind and how the mind uses language and dialectic together to come to knowing. Related to the issue of knowing and being in the world, the mind also has the ability to actualize things, to bring a potential to its essential final form, from making a chair to educating and persuading people, to acquiring notions themselves; this actualization ability shows a special connection of the mind to the real, one that dialectic is often involved in. For example, acquiring the art of carpentry requires gaining essential knowledge of not only materials but of the things one builds; dialectical processes aid in the clarifying of essences and causes involved here, e.g.,

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<sup>224</sup> We will see how Aristotle sees this structuring in light of the virtues in Chapter 5, where we will talk of this in terms of Nature and natures coming to structure the mind and even the person.



separating from an essence what can be mistaken for it, such as accidents or properties. As we will see in Chapter 5, an analogous process can be seen in how a person becomes an ethical person for Aristotle: among other things, an understanding of the essence of people, things in the world, and the essentially-based nature of the world, provides the opportunity to develop what are essentially derived, human properties, into virtues. In other words, whereas we have been mainly focusing on reasoning from the perspective of the knowability of things, this section concludes the chapter by focusing on knowing from the perspective of mind.

Again, the mind does have a substantial connection to the real in several ways, which allows it to acquire and clarify notions and use them. Many modern discussions of problems concerning logic, such as how inferences are made, deal only with the inner workings of the mind. While this may seem obvious to the modern observer, for Aristotle it would be very telling. He and Lewis might agree that this line of thought is illustrative of “that great movement of internalization [after Descartes], and that consequent aggrandizement of man and desiccation of the outer universe, in which the psychological history of the West has so largely consisted” (*The Discarded Image* 42).

Aristotle would indeed be frustrated to have logic set apart from the rest of the universe. For it is the external world that humans use to actualize their capacity for thought; it supplies things to perceive and think, such as the natural order of things itself that helps humans understand themselves and the logic they possess for the purpose of understanding the world (and even ordering it better; see Chapter 5 and Appendix B).<sup>225</sup> For Aristotle, human beings exist to produce and be movers in the

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<sup>225</sup> For Aristotle there is a pleasure in removing *aporia*, but one wonders if there is extra motivation available, such as Longinian view of the sublime, a glimpse of something greater (such as a *telos*) that

world, and the highest production they are capable of comes out of the highest part of the soul, which uses dialectic, the tool of logic, for finding the essence of things.

### **Language**

Before we discuss production or actualization, we must discuss how dialectic is able to find, or even acquire, essence through language, a significant way mind (which is still important for Aristotle) connects to the world. As we will see, language provides the function for the mind that allows one to systematically separate the concept of a thing from it in the way it naturally occurs or its attributes, so one does not have to talk, say, about the shrinking of a particular thing as the changing of largeness into smallness. As was mentioned above and as we will glean from its dialectical use, language can only be said to be arbitrary when compared to other languages, but in terms of names it is not, for names come to things after much classification and deliberation. The connection of language to reality and one's ability to understand reality through language, then, is not arbitrary. Indeed, Aristotle sees language and reality as two sides of the same coin. Everyone, if they adhere to the impulse, is potentially capable of finding first principles after a while, for they can be found in things and actualized in the mind, and full reasoning can also supply us with an idea of what these things should be.

The world and mind's structural connection or reflection in language allows for the knowing of essence (and we will see more of how the soul can be said to possess essence in Chapter 5). As we saw, when Aristotle discusses dialectic and how the

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simultaneously puts one in awe and refreshes one in the journey of understanding, to remove the perplexity and find ultimate rest of knowledge. One might find such a notion lurking in the *Poetics*, as well as *Ethics*, of Aristotle, where noble character, though perhaps not sublime, is meant to inspire (to remove the impediments to ethical living).

essence of a thing can be found, he sets up his system grammatically, having rules of predication and discussions of substance as subject, which helps us to know subjects as substances (cf. *Metaphysics* VII.3.1028b). Arguments about real things occur in language and are thus subject to logic, or the “science of discourse,” as Boethius calls it (I.1180a.32).<sup>226</sup>

Again, the key correlation among language, world and mind, is definition, the primary “mode” of predication: the subservient parts of definition (accident, property, genus) are like the parts of the form of a thing, united by the essence of a thing, but once the essence of a thing is gone the parts do not retain any of the essence, as a man without a soul is no longer a man (VII.10. 1035a-1036a McMahon). Everyone can come to the same first principle, or universal, because everyone experiences the same and our similarly structured languages reflect our reasoning, our logical and dialectical processes:

Just as written marks are not the same for all men, neither are spoken sounds. But what these are in the first place signs of—affections of the soul—are the same for all; and what these affections are likenesses of—actual things—are also the same [the mental experiences, which these directly symbolize, are the same for all, as also are those things of which our experiences are the images]. (*De Int.* 1, 16a.5-8)

Now, the grammar of language, coming out of the grammar of the predicables and their foundation, pushes towards understanding this unification of experience. Language

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<sup>226</sup> Of course, some sciences, such as mathematics, try to bring things into the world from the purely abstract, sometimes resulting in such things as Zeno’s paradox, but language use often reflects the natural order of things. We discussed in Chapter 1 how language use is even an ordering, which is an important aspect of virtue (see Chapter 5).

seeks essence, and we will see below how the rest of reason can be seen to do this too, how the mind's natural state is to have essence, as well as how actual things and things in the soul are one.<sup>227</sup> In *De Int.* we see again a mind, world, language connection.

Language is important for the unification of experience, which comes by formation of the concepts of things. For example, regarding certain natural processes, induction will always lead to the same concepts for everyone, e.g., *heavy objects fall* or *men are mortal*. Nature, the sub-lunar realm, though the realm of change, is ordered for the most part, allowing the same rules to be grasped from it. Language (and the relationships of its parts, grammar) helps one to recognize and distinguish these processes from others and express them.

That is, whereas one could say the *Categories* try to find the 'whatness' of a particular this, dialectic, in its goal of finding the essence of a thing, uses the concepts of the *Categories* often for separation, thus the preponderance of 'destructive' *topoi*, to often make a positive statement regarding a thing's essence. Dialectic's main focus is definition, which can only be of a substance and is only in the other categories by defining them (*Metaphysics* VII.5.1031a); it is analytical for it deals with things that can only be separated in thought. Therefore it must, like mathematics, be precise in accuracy of language, which is difficult to obtain.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> Language does this in more robust ways than what we have discussed, and it can be made to do this well if we ground in the proper philosophical view of things and use it for its right end. Also, natural state of the mind is an important part of understanding how virtues work for Aristotle (see Chapter 5).

<sup>228</sup> Thus a definition, though potentially the most powerful form of argument (for once it is properly laid down other things must follow it of necessity), is easily overturned. Weaver shares this view of definition, for though he is commonly associated with Platonism by readers of his *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, he has some underlying Aristotelian strains as well. Hughes, writing for *College Composition and Communication*, asserts that Weaver was one of the scholars responsible for the modern understanding of Aristotle (37). For Weaver too, the definition can be the most effective type of argument because of two factors: it is easy to overthrow and it is usually assumed by many arguers, often unaware. Now, the first factor may seem a contradiction to an argument for definition's effectiveness, but coupled with the

That is, as alluded to above and as with analytical separation, language use allows the discovery of likeness, sameness, and oneness of things, whether like numerically (primarily when “the sameness is rendered in by a name or definition”), specifically, generically, or analogously. (*Topics* I.7, 103a.26). These types of similarity and sameness lead to unification of experience, and the expression of likeness and unlikeness are important to inductive arguments, hypothetical deductions, and the rendering of definitions (I.18, 108b.9).

### **The Acquiring Mind**

Of course, mind itself is important for coming to universals, as mentioned in Chapter 1, as well as other aspects of the person. Aristotle gives several similar accounts of how one acquires universals or arts or virtues, but perhaps the most significant one for our purposes is the one appropriately placed at the end of the *Posterior Analytics*, and I will quote at length here, as this brief passage is illustrative of many of the main points we are making about Aristotle in these last two chapters: interrelation of mind, world, and language and how they are all important for good reasoning; how knowledge comes to rest in the soul; how universals and skills are similar in how they come to rest in the soul; how skills are like states in how they are acquired, and how states and virtues exist in the soul as a property of the nature of the soul (see Chapter 5):

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second factor it presents an easy opening for the dialectically prepared disputant against the unprepared, who can have sounder definitions prepared. One must also keep in mind that with Weaver’s tying of language to reality via common sense with the agreements on language meaning that exists among a people group (as Aristotle believes), one can, with training in dialectic and a considerable amount of time in thought (“for definition is a certain type of contemplation”), actually come to an adequate definition of a thing (*Topics* VI.3, 141a.7). It is not that any given human cannot understand how to find and define the essence of a thing, but it takes training and practice to do this in general, and this ‘wobble-room’ of definition is where a person in any type of dispute can be the most unethical and fallacious, using false definitions, hiding definitions (thus being able to not concede to them when pointed out by an opponent), and using circumstantial expedients to win (i.e., in forensic debates).

[...] from perception there comes memory, as we call it, and from memory (when it occurs often in connection with the same thing), experience; for memories that are many in number form a single experience. And from experience, or from the whole universal that has come to rest in the soul (the one apart from the many, whatever is one and the same in all those things), there comes a principle of skill and understanding—of skill it deals with how things come about, of understanding if it deals with what is the case.

Thus the states neither belong in us in a determinate form, nor come about from other states that are more cognitive; but they come about from perception—as in a battle when a rout occurs, if one man makes a stand another does and then another, until a position of strength is reached. And the soul is capable of undergoing this.

[I.e.] when one of the undifferentiated things makes a stand, there is a primitive universal in the mind (for though one perceives the particular, perception is of the universal [...]); again a stand is made in these, until what has no parts and is universal stands [...]. (II.19, 100a.3-b.5).

As we will see, knowledge and art move beyond perception to understand in an abstract way through the use of (language) categories. This process is not only important for distinguishing the parts of a particular, but also learning the qualities of a species and a genus, and we will also see shortly how they are important for learning causes and thus skills and virtues.

First, to get to this level of abstraction, memory is required, as well as the real and recollection, which is not only the actualizing of memory, but the retracing of the steps on the path to knowledge to gain even further knowledge, starting at a more objective place (the visible things and processes of nature) and proceeding to an understanding beyond or above them: “For as a regular sequence of events is in accordance with nature, so, too, regular sequence is observed in the actualization of movements [in consciousness], and here frequency tends to produce [the regularity of] nature” (*De Memoria et Reminiscentia* 2.452a.27-30). One could say here that the mind tends to work *naturally*, that it wants to work so, in several senses of *naturally*. That is, one can see the natural dialectical process of the mind’s act of recollection, a natural act of the mind trying to be natural, to understand nature naturally and use it naturally, as in arts. That is, the mind and the real are, again, made for each other, and this recollective-dialectical process can also show up in how we create or acquire arts. (We will see in Chapter 5 that the mind becoming ‘more natural’ is an important part of becoming virtuous for Aristotle.)

As Aristotle says above, the process of moving from perception to knowledge, from particulars to universals, is not only used to learn about objects but is also crucial for learning skills, and the process of recollection eventually makes this actualization *second nature*. Through experiencing many primary *ousia* and by using recollection to go back and forth in the series of steps of how something comes to be, one can actualize the capacity in the soul for possession of a skill (or a virtue). One can not only learn how a whole works or is put together but also the qualities of its parts; e.g., the

carpenter acquires essential knowledge of the house, including its causes and possible causes.<sup>229</sup>

To be clear on acquisition of essences/causes and how a person has them, we must point out that, for Aristotle, the human soul actualizes in three ways. There is actualization of the vegetative soul, which occurs in a normal individual of a species naturally, being fulfilled in physical growth to maturity of this aspect of the final form, as well as through reproduction. Second, the sensate soul actualizes objects of sense and objects of sense actualize it simultaneously: “The activity of the sensible object and that of the percipient sense is one and the same activity, and yet the distinction between their being remains” (*De Anima* III.1, 425b.26-27). It is one actualization. The same process occurs with objects of thought. This is how “the soul is in a way all existing

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<sup>229</sup> Aristotle alludes to the importance of perception and memory for having an account/cause at 100a.2-5, but his understanding of this process becomes clearer in the *Metaphysics*. Again, revealing the importance of essence for how the mind engages the world, he tells us, “from memory experience is produced in men; for the several memories of the same thing produce finally the capacity for a single experience. [...] Now art arises when from many notions gained by experience one universal judgment about a class of objects is produced,” similar to science (*Metaphysics* I.1, 980b.26-981a.7). I discussed the grammatical-substantial components of this process above, but we can note here that this universal judgment includes knowledge of the essence and its causes: “For men of experience know that the thing is so, but do not know why, while the [artists] know the ‘why’ and the cause” (I.1).

This process is important to keep in mind when talking about the *topoi* as maxims of universal applicability or dialectic as a “universal science.” For, again, the *topoi* seem to be inherent in how the world and mind work for each other, the structure of both; this is important for its use in critiquing other arts, and this structure in part allows for the knowing of essence. In other words, the *topoi* are knowable and have something of a causal explanation, though the man of experience may get along without this knowledge.

That is, regarding the more artful side of logic, *topoi* do have to be understood for the student to be able to use them, understanding being knowledge of universals and the predicable-*topoi* (with their connection to the rest of the matters of the *Organon* discussed above) being principles of knowledge regarding universals in general, to argue ethically correct or require an opponent to argue ethically. (Of course, it is possible, however, for an intuition of these to help in such actions, especially if that intuition is being fueled and substantiated by the Principle of Non-contradiction, as it is based too in the real.) I am opposed, then, to Miller’s pedagogical emphasis of alone teaching the material or rhetorical *topoi*, those that deal with particulars. Miller argues that Aristotle favors the discipline specific principles type of *topoi* in argument as opposed to universal, dialectical principles, but such an emphasis, especially in teaching argument, would be ethically problematic, placing expediency over accuracy and correct use of argumentation, as we will find with Toulmin and his fields. Moreover, such arguments are usually the contentious, self-inflaming arguments students use anyway that they have imbibed from hearing other people argue about the issues at hand; students should have a more studied approach to arguments that will result in a better use of this passion.



things” and why the world needs the soul and the soul the world (III.8, 431b.21). But the soul, especially in the sense of being a tool of the mind, is also the originating principle of movement. Thus, thirdly, one can talk of the actualization of a form in the mind, say, of a house, by a house builder into a particular house as being at once the actualization of the form of house and the actualization of builder *qua* builder.

How Aristotle sees the soul acquiring knowledge expresses a thorough connection of the mind and real. One could say the value of knowledge of the universal itself is that it allows one to identify a particular, for it remains even after a particular is gone (*Pr. An.* II.21, 67a.39-b.4) and thus allows for reasoning regarding the thing. One needs both the mind (for one cannot have universals without it) and the world to know things. As we will see more clearly below, actual knowledge, once the potential knowledge is actualized, is identical with its object. One way to explain this is by saying that “potential knowledge in the individual is in time prior to actual knowledge but in the universe it has no priority even in time” (*De Anima* III.7, 431a.1-4). Thus the universals abstracted from actually existing things (through dialectic) are prior in existence but only exist in definitions until embodied (*Metaphysics* XIII.3, 1077b.11-17).

And we see the connection between “mind” and “the real” elsewhere when Aristotle talks about *nous*, which Aristotle understands as the mind’s capacity to have insight into universals:

For knowledge, like the verb ‘to know’, means two things, of which one is potential and one actual. The potency, being, as matter, universal and indefinite, deals with the universal and indefinite; but the actuality, being

definite, deals with a definite object—being a ‘this’, it deals with a ‘this’.

(*Metaphysics* XIII.10, 1087a.15-18).

### States and Knowledge Actualization

Ideally, thinking and the object of thought are simultaneously actualized, but knowing is a trickier actuality for ‘a knower’ has two potentialities: (1) man is ‘a knower’ in the sense that he is in the class of beings that know or have knowledge, so an individual person by definition has the ability to know, an ability that can be realized by “change of quality, e.g. repeated transitions from one state [ignorance] to its opposite [knowledge] under instruction,” so that the person can use experience and recollection to assimilate an art (*De Anima* II.5, 417a.32). (2) A knower can be said to possess knowledge, such as a knowledge of grammar, but not be using it so that it lies dormant. The actualized knower “is already realizing his knowledge—he is a knower in actuality and in the most proper sense is knowing” (II.5, 417a.29-30), and we will see in Chapter 5 that the person in this state the most is the happiest.

Aristotle makes sure to point out that the actualization of knowledge is not an alteration but a transition. If the actualization of knowledge were an alteration, we would have to speak of a carpenter as altered when she uses her knowledge of carpentry to build a house; we would have to speak of one person morphing different essences (once human, now carpenter). Instead, one capacity of the mind is to receive essences, to have essences firmly built up there, which is knowing by the actualization of the knowledge of universals—such as the form of a house or how to build it.<sup>230</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> All these points are revealing for how Aristotle views the human relation to virtue in light of the *aetia* and properties. See Chapter 5

That which starting with the power to know learns or acquires knowledge through the agency of one who actually knows and has the power of teaching either (a) ought not to be said 'to be acted upon' at all *or* (b) we must recognize two senses of alteration, viz. (i) the substitution of one quality for another, the first being the contrary to the second, or (ii) the development of an existent quality from potentiality in the direction of fixity or nature. (II.5, 417b.12-17)

One can try to clarify what Aristotle is saying here about the two senses of alteration by looking at two recent authors working in the same line of thought. Carruthers, in *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images*, devotes a lot of attention to what the ancients and medievals thought about correcting error, i.e., the replacing of error with truth. Instead of outright destroying memory or previous erroneous belief, which seems a thing impossible, leaders and teachers sought to replace a memory or to redirect belief away from previous error. For example, ancients and medieval might correct erroneous "pagan" beliefs by replacing a monument or scheduling a Christian holiday on a pagan holiday. Now, this may seem like the substitution of a contrary quality, but it also could be spoken of in terms of Aristotle's latter option, if what truth present in the former instance is retained, and then clarified and developed. Thus in answer to the issue of whether the people were previously in error, Aristotle could say the previous knowledge was defective if it suffered alteration, for then it was not knowledge (*Physics* VII.3, 246b.18-247a.10). In other words, such acts ideally are dialectical, using what present truth there is, clarifying it, and attaching it to more and higher truth and thus fixing it better in the mind. Concerning teaching in

particular, Aristotle's second alternative resembles what Candler calls "manuduction," a popular practice of medieval instruction as seen in Aquinas, a master leading the student 'by the hand' (through all the objections) to understanding, storing perfected things in the faculty of knowing that remains at rest.

Thus what Aristotle seems to be primarily talking about in this passage from *De Anima* is dialectic, the finding of the proper qualities of things with the help of a trained disputant (sometimes oneself) for the purpose of eradicating error and fixing knowledge in one's faculty of knowing (or sometimes perhaps the knowing faculties of both). One can speak in similar terms of the acquisition of the art of dialectic itself: through much practice one can solidify the concepts and rules of the predicables (which means, one does not have to memorize every single topic). These predicables are the parts of propositions, of arguments, and by knowing the concepts and how they relate to one another, a student will know what the capacities for each predicable are as existing in primary *ousia*. And this knowledge of the capacities for each predicable will help the student to know and understand things. For example, a student will know how animal and man can be predicated of each other in actual arguments by knowing how genus and species can be predicated of each other, just as a homebuilder knows the parts of a house and their individual qualities before he even gathers these materials to build.<sup>231</sup> Likewise, dialectic leads to knowledge, including understanding of causes, by appropriately constructing the relationship between predicables and essence.<sup>232</sup> As we will see in chapter 5, Aristotle's understanding of predicables and essence hints at how

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<sup>231</sup> Cf. Bird's argument concerning the possible fusing of formal and material *topoi* in Chapter 3.

<sup>232</sup> The work of Green-Pedersen can be used to show that the medievals saw the topics in a similar way in their talk of primary and secondary intention, though Green-Pedersen does not see it, for he does not think that the medievals had a holistic understanding of Aristotle (235).

dialectic can be an art for making good arts or an art for acquiring the good forms of the various arts. How we have seen how the mind acquires knowledge and uses it is also an important component of how Aristotle views character.

## Conclusion

This chapter has elaborated the philosophical context for something that Aristotle says in the *Rhetoric*: the same faculty finds knowledge and probability, what is true and what is true for the most part (I.2, 1357a.34). I hope we found and will continue to find as John of Salisbury did, who in his own time descried the disregard of Aristotle's *Topoi*, that "although many are of the opinion that [this book] is of greatest service to the dialectician and the orator, [...] it is almost equally helpful to those who are engaged in the weighty labors of demonstration, or involved in sophistic fallacy and strife" (III.5).<sup>233</sup> And I hope I have shown in this project dialectic's use for knowing, showing probability, and clarifying, especially its use for interdisciplinary knowing (chapter 3), showing probability and clarifying. I have focused mainly in this chapter on connecting logic to the real, for this is a common danger for very different views of logic, from Russell (who defies the connection) to Toulmin who does not clearly see it. We have also seen personhood as an important part of this real. Recall that Toulmin tries to fix the problems of modern logic by reemphasizing the importance of ethos to reasoning (though he does so to the detriment of material and formal logic), but for ethos' place in reasoning to be fully and properly appreciated, personhood, as that

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<sup>233</sup> Out of the 'body' of the logical art (the *Analytics*, *Topics*, and *Sophistical Refutations*—*Categories* and *On Interpretation* being precursors), John asserts that knowledge of the *Topics* is the most important, especially to those who aim to prove with probability (which would include the rhetor), knowledge of which, he elsewhere seems to argue, is a precursor to arguing from necessity (II.13-15).

which is necessary to have virtue and a complete view of probability, must be connected to it, as we will see in Chapter 5.

Now, if I may reemphasize another point with him, John of Salisbury seems to testify to the interrelatedness of dialectic and demonstration, both in the abstract and with relationship to subject matter (which I have been dealing with in this chapter), as well as the importance of paying attention to language use here. He shows this with such statements as, “Demonstrative logic *flourishes* in the [basic] principles of [the various] sciences [...]” and “Dialectic comes into play in all studies, since its subject matter consists in questions” (II.3 my emphasis; II.12). He finds that definition is a ground for distinguishing dialectic from demonstration, that it is generally dialectic’s main purpose to find definitions and demonstration’s main purpose to use them, to prove by the relationship of necessary things (but the relationship of definition and demonstration is much more interrelated than this, as we have seen). Thus, “Demonstrative logic [...] seeks methods [of proof] involving necessity, and arguments which establish the essential identification of terms that cannot be thrust asunder,” and “Dialectic accomplishes its entire purpose so long as it determines the force of words and acquires a scientific knowledge of how to investigate and establish the truth by verbal predication,” which makes it necessary to demonstration in science (II.13, III.2).

We saw earlier how theorists such as Toulmin fail at fully incorporating demonstration and dialectic into their argumentation schemes, and how dialectic and demonstration are more integrated than John of Salisbury believes, even though integrates them by giving modes of predication corresponding to the modes of logic: the essence of something is necessary, its properties probable, and its accidents are

possible but also doubtful (I.15), yet dialectic and demonstration deal with all of these in different senses, and one can see here how the same faculty deals with probability and knowing.

John of Salisbury's view here seems to be that of Aristotle as well, and this chapter has tried to show what is logic and logical for Aristotle. In one sense, the answer to what is logical is "close to everything"; Aristotle realizes that chance happens, but as his numerous treatises attest to, as well as must have been a lifetime of fulfilling the natural desire to remove *aporia*, the world is full of tendencies. We have seen the different things in place to see and know these tendencies: the important concept and reality of substance, how the substantial predicables allow the promise of defining, knowing and arguing with probability, the dialectical foundation of formal logic and the use of *aetia* in formal logic, as well as how the mind is geared to receive, build up and actualize essences and does this better once the art of dialectic has been acquired. We saw the interrelation of topics, *aetia*, mind, language, and the real, and the importance of this for probable reasoning and arguing.<sup>234</sup> We saw the importance of Aristotle's ontological and epistemological theory of predication to logic, rhetoric, and philosophy, especially in that it allows the same validity to universal statements and particular statements and ties all of logic, rhetoric, and philosophy together.

With this chapter we have tried to wrap up how broad the use of logic can be to Aristotle, how general its application and how many things it touches, but as we saw

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<sup>234</sup> It could be claimed that I have not given enough respect to language, the forces inherent to it, if there be any at all, or at least connected with it, and this accusation may be justifiable. But in a rhetorical situation so permeated with mystifications of language and broad associational thinking, I have chosen to focus on bringing balance with other considerations of how we live and know in the world, thought it may hurt what little ethotic appealing power I had to begin with, for some may still object that I do not emphasize language as valuable in itself, but assume its value in terms of something else. If there is inherent value in language apart from everything else, the metaphysics of this is beyond the scope of this project.

earlier, logic is not these things. Recall Russell has problems with the limits of logic, resulting in his formal logic becoming in one sense way too large and in another way too constricting. We saw the importance of material logic for formal logic having a form, as well as its importance for not allowing external, such as existential and empirical measures, to be assimilated by form. These are also issues affecting Toulmin, including the incorporation into form of *ethos*.

What has also been shown is the importance of Aristotle's notions of predication and grammar, such as affirmation and univocation, for keeping material and formal logic honest. Not keeping these parts of logic and their relationship clear (or simply trying to abandon one or both of them) has consequences, as we saw in both Russell and Toulmin's attempts to throw out certain types of predication and undermine universals. With Russell we saw how dangerous it is to untie concepts from the world, with Toulmin how dangerous it is to untie concepts from each other in the privileging of field dependency.

Yet we still have to see how one more thing can be reasonable for Aristotle: people.



## CHAPTER 5

### ETHICAL TOPICS

As we have seen and will discuss again below, probability is a matter of nature for Aristotle; the universe has a certain order to it and this can allow us to understand it, for most of the things that make up the universe have natures. That is, things have essences, and we are able to understand these and what is non-essential because of the constancy of nature and natures. The moral realm is not of necessity isolated from this order; virtues are a matter of nature. Aristotle even seems to see the virtues in the grammatical-natural terms we have been using.<sup>235</sup> Such an understanding applies to both the intellectual virtues (*aretai dianoetikai*) and moral virtues (*aretai ethikai*), both of which seem important to the happy life, in getting it and keeping it—especially through interactions with others.

In this context, we will find that *properties*, especially *absolute properties*, are concerned with essence, and that the virtues are properties and are concerned with the essence of humanity and human happiness (though they do not change the essence for Aristotle, which is fitting since properties do not predicate the essence). But Aristotle also seems to see the virtues in terms of accidents, resulting in a predicable view of virtue important to unravel, for it has many consequences for ethotic reasoning, the main focus of this chapter.<sup>236</sup> I will be focusing mainly on the moral virtues in terms of

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<sup>235</sup> This turns out to be very revealing for the dialectical nature of the *Rhetoric*, which is an argument for a later volume. This argument will provide support for the claim that Aristotle's use of *pisteis* in the *Rhetoric* is consistent, whereas some claim that the *Rhetoric* begins with a dialectically oriented use of the term that seems to be largely purged in later uses in the work (See Kennedy 27-8; 32, note 9). Indeed, the logical nature of *pisteis* is a key component of understanding the relationship of rhetorical *topoi* to dialectical *topoi* and understanding the *Rhetoric* as a whole in light of the *topoi*.

<sup>236</sup> Aristotle's morality is by no means perfect, but I will not focus these flaws here, the worst being his preclusion of many types of people from being virtuous. There is, however, much use that can be gained from Aristotle's insights in ethotic reasoning and ethics. For an example of one important critique of

properties here, though the case will be made that Aristotle sees moral virtues as more closely related to the intellectual virtues than is sometimes portrayed, especially along the line of states.<sup>237</sup>

In cutting across these issues, as well as Aristotle's understanding of how the good man fits into the world through politics, we will see that Aristotle has much to say to our modern rhetorical concerns of agency and identity. We will see not only how the virtues, as properties, are in their tendencies *reliable* for Aristotle, a necessary requisite of reasoning, but also how Aristotle uses the predicables and virtues to describe how a person is usually not totally determined by a situation nor his actions an irrational response. In the case of the good man in particular, the situation is (and should be) a good deal determined by him (though not absolutely), for he works with the nature of things to get the best out of them. Our question for this chapter is as follows: How does the stability provided by virtue itself prevent the person from being erased by her (rhetorical) situation?

There are four points related to this question that we will examine. (1)

Understanding virtue as a property, and in light of human properties, helps us understand how the soul affords stability to things acquired as an actualized part of

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Aristotle's ethics, I will mention Jordan's presentation of Bonaventure's perspective, some points of which may preclude the use of some of the possibilities I suggest are latent in Aristotle's work. Bonaventure goes on the offensive against the speculative errors of Aristotle: the denial of exemplarity (of the Good as Idea bodying forth goodness, rendering God's final causality mechanical), the Denial of Divine foreknowledge (when Aristotle says that everything happens by necessity or chance), and the threefold claim about the self-sufficiency of the world (eternity of the world, absence of individual intellects, and the lack of an afterlife)—all these errors preventing moral inquiry (66). Bonaventure refuses to concede that "the discourse about moral things must have an essentially-different semantics than the discourse about natural things," which is a logical conclusion of Aristotle's denial of exemplarity—that moral truths are less certain than natural truths (70). However, we may see that Aristotle thinks about virtues in terms of "nature."

<sup>237</sup> Aristotle says intellectual virtues are understood as virtues because we praise the wise man for his state (*hexis*) of mind, and praiseworthy states we call virtues (*NE* I.13, 1103a.8-10). I will discuss states below.

itself, the things it acquires having to be stable themselves (which we saw something of in Chapter 4); i.e., the soul is an essence comprehending, or even “quasi-essentializing,” other essences, and one of the things it is naturally fitted to acquire is virtue; essence and knowledge, an aspect of virtue, are seen as some of the most permanent of things by Aristotle.<sup>238</sup> One could say the firmness of *nature*, in both the sense of “how the world works” and a thing’s nature, affords stability in the acquisition of virtues, for virtue is an excellence in accord with a thing’s nature, the thing’s natural state. (2) Naturally, it is a property of virtue, which does not suffer alteration, to be in the soul, giving the soul stability; virtue even gives the body and soul together stability in this light; the properties of the soul and virtue to be for each other also allows for an interweaving in the individual that strengthens stability. (3) The soul affords stability to things as it tends towards virtue, which is essentially an order, making the more virtuous person harder to affect in the wrong way than the disordered person; that stability can be somewhat acquired in light of virtue before the acquisition of the virtuous state itself is also important for probable arguments regarding the stability of people in situations. (4) The good, virtue, excellence are activities; the person who has these cannot simply be passive to a situation but must act to change it in light of the good.

As one can see, we will have to cover quite a few issues here, which will fall under three major sections. First we will need to distinguish between an accident and a property in order to see (Ia) how Aristotle believes properties can be used in reasoning and (Ib) how he believes character traits really belong to people in light of the concept

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<sup>238</sup> We can add here that this substance acquiring substance seems possible through logic grounded in substance.

of properties. We will have to take a circuitous route through these issues, since *property* covers a broad category of concepts for Aristotle and *character traits* also cover a category of concepts that belong to people in different and complex ways. We will see that, for Aristotle, it makes all the difference in the world how virtues can belong to people. That is, people can be said to “possess” virtues in a number of ways, such as naturally or “spontaneously,” as in virtuous acts simply performed when it behooves oneself, but it is only virtue acquired through premeditated actions that is properly called *virtue*. We will see that the former modes of possession are in some sense accidental, which is perhaps one of the reasons people often see virtue as only inhering accidentally.

Ultimately, we will see that, for Aristotle, when virtue truly belongs to a person it belongs in a number of ways and for a number of reasons that make it quite permanent in a person, a permanence that can be described in terms of properties and (when referred to or accessed in argument) the probable mode. And one can talk of how the virtuous person belongs to virtue in a similar way. We will see support for such belonging to each in (IIa) how the virtues develop in people (some of the groundwork for which was discussed in Chapter 4) and (IIb) the purpose of moral development. Also, the permanence (as well as activeness) of virtue will be a constant theme throughout the chapter, especially in the discussion in (1) of properties and accidents, because of its importance for reasoning. To not consider virtue properly in ethotic reasoning—to assume, say, that the good person has no proclivity to virtue or even that he is tending toward vice “like everyone else”—is fallacious reasoning for Aristotle; it is unethical thinking that precludes good reasoning. Indeed, we will see (III) that the

good man's goal for Aristotle is to make the world more reasonable, a delight for the mind that is intended for it. Concerning how virtues belong in people, one could say, for Aristotle, the reasonable is good, and the good makes reasonable; thus a person must be good to reason well, and the good person reasons best.<sup>239</sup>

### *PROPERTY, ACCIDENT, REASONING, AND VIRTUE*

#### **Convertibility, Issues of Character, and Reasoning**

*Property* and *accident* are closely associated concepts for Aristotle and allow for easy confusion. Properties will be discussed more fully below; here we can discuss how accidents themselves are amenable to confusion, and having seen what they are, we can discuss how they contribute to problems of ethotic reasoning that Aristotle finds.<sup>240</sup>

Accidents are "qualities" that are capable of either belonging, not belonging, simply belonging in part, or all at the same time, in the self-same thing. Apparently, we can talk this way about them because these qualities have no connection to a given thing's essence: one can say the cat is black and white at the same time, if he is dark skinned with white teeth. Or one can say that the man is both courageous and cowardly, a courageous coward, if he is courageous in one activity and cowardly in another. Thus trying to convert a name derived from an accident, such as "white man" or even "just

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<sup>239</sup> This is not to say that there is not abstract reasoning, but abstract reasoning does need to be brought back down into the real, moral sphere. How Aristotle's idea of good and the good man falls short, including the omission of other ways one can become good, will not be much discussed here.

<sup>240</sup> Aristotle seems really concerned with morality in the *Topics*. Book II seems to set up the reader for dealing with moral issues, a concern he shows in his examples throughout the work. It is the first book of the *Topics* devoted to topical application and it seems mainly to deal with *accident*, and that it does deal with accident should not be forgotten when reading the opening discussion of establishing and overthrowing universal and particular views universally and particularly, nor when noting that the first examples he gives here concern the goodness of pleasure and many of his examples throughout the book concern the abuse of moral and value terms (II.1, 108b.34-109a.8).

man” is an “extremely precarious thing,” and the possibility of such predication is often an invitation to sophistry (*Top.* II.1, 109a.10):<sup>241</sup>

In the case of accidents [...] there is nothing to prevent an attribute (e.g. whiteness or justice) belonging in part, so that it is not enough to show that whiteness or justice belongs to a man in order to show that he is white or just; for it is open to dispute it and say that he is white or just in part only. (109a.20-26)

Such propositions that call a black cat white (because it has white teeth) or the cashier just (because he made sure you received the right change) are open to dispute and wide open at that.

All of the other predicables, even properties, need to be able to be stated in a convertible formula, such as ‘If it is an A it will be/have B, and if it is/has B it will be an A.’ As we shall see, this convertibility is an important component of necessary and probable reasoning, especially when these are used in ethotic reasoning, but it seems difficult to predicate virtues in such a way. For example, if we say the courageous man stays at his post and fights or that a man is courageous because he does this, the conversion is tenuous because the same man may do this and not rush into battle to defend his friends or may be cowardly in some other pursuit, which would indicate he is not courageous; or a man could be courageous in another way, but how we have predicated courage makes such a statement difficult to accept. Thus courage would have not have been predicated convertibly here, placing the discussion in the realm of accidents, where any real presence of courage could be subtly argued away:

“Conversion [...] is not a necessary process in the case of accidents,” which is what one

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<sup>241</sup> Indeed, one could say it is indicative of sophistic thinking to try to think of everything as accidents.

could argue is the type of predication here, the predication of an accident of courage (or the courageous man), instead of the essence or something directly derived from it (109a.26). Of course, such acts as fighting at one's post may be signs of really present virtue, but we will see below how the notion of property can help us be more careful in our ethotic reasoning. Here we can note that the inconvertibility of accidents limits the ways accidents can be used in valid reasoning as compared to the rest of the predicables, yet we use character traits, including virtues, all the time in probable reasoning, and we usually seem to do this by predicating them as properties, something 'more essential,' and this is important for respecting the presence of virtue.

Now, how people think about character needs to be settled in order to have good reasoning respecting a number of areas of life. One can gather that many people think of virtues and character in terms of either accident or property (if they do not simply universally assert or deny virtue of human beings), and this has ramifications for how they think a situation will affect the actions of a person and thus how the perceiver will understand and argue concerning persons and events. Of course, it is difficult to evaluate ethotic arguments in terms of probability, which some think properties point toward, but to always claim that virtue will always be predicated accidentally of any given person is very problematic for reasoning, as we shall see more of directly. Yet Aristotle pushes us to see the importance of a philosophy of human being for having good criteria for ethotic reasoning and reasoning in general, pushing us beyond the often ambiguous level of signs that character understandings and arguments so often employ so that one can properly understand such arguments from signs. We will also glean how important the tying up of the good man with knowledge of virtue is for such

understanding. Without such understanding, arguers are in trouble: in the terminology of the *Rhetoric*, people often use *semeia* as proofs of character, and we are often without a good way to distinguish between the *tekmeria* and *semeia* that fall into this category. Thus, for example, we may be duped by a sign accidentally predicated in reasoning purported to be probable.

### The Problems of Accidental Character

I believe Aristotle intends in many of his major works, including the *Topics*, to get us past the *semeia-tekmeria* issue, to give a grounding for probable reasoning regarding character.<sup>242</sup> After all, if virtues can only belong accidentally, it would limit them to only use in possible reasoning (though the concept of natural virtue might push the issue; see below). If virtues can only belong to people in terms of inconvertible qualities, evaluating in terms of ethical probability becomes difficult. That is, how am I to know if are of good will or not if you are trying to persuade me of something? What is there to put me on the other side of the fence if virtue can only belong accidentally? If courage or the other virtues are just accidental, how can character be a part of our probable reasoning, as it often is? How can we evaluate or judge character according to probability? Finally, how do we respond to those we encounter who can give a thousand accidental reasons for not trusting us and the good we have in mind for them (which should linked together in a higher good)? Again, I believe Aristotle answers these questions by alluding to a logical grounding for how we evaluate situations for the purpose of ethical action and rhetoric, a commonsensical way of considering and arguing ethotically in a probable mode.

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<sup>242</sup> A discussion of signs and Aristotle's intent concerning them will be postponed until my project on the *Rhetoric*, though signs too are in a way reliant on the type of reasoning I have been discussing throughout this project.



Now, the holding of character and the virtues as tenuous and even unrelated draws Aristotle's ire; he sees the problems this causes to evaluative reasoning concerning morals and character in any type of argument, which we saw something of in Russell's denial of character, or at least his belief about its instability, in Chapter 1. Aristotle argues that many people simply take the law to state what is just and what is unjust; the do and do-nots of the law are easily understandable, and thus people think one does not need to make any attempt to acquire a special wisdom of Justice. All one really needs to do to be just is follow the laws, which, given their assumptions, is just as easy as being unjust: people suppose they have it within their power to act unjustly, and thus they suppose it is just as easy to act justly (*Nic. Eth.* V.9, 1137a.5-25).

Such thinking not only denies the effect *hexeis* (states or habits) have on us, on our acting and thinking, it would apparently throw them out, along with the virtues: "people actually suppose that a just man is as capable of unjust as of just behaviour, on the ground that he could do any unjust act not less well but even better than a just one" (1137a.17-18). One gets the sense in the *Ethics* that Aristotle is chiding people for their cynicism resulting from their misunderstanding of how character, acts, and virtue work and relate to one another. Many people seem to think that the just person is someone who has harnessed enough cleverness to achieve just or more just actions or even simply make their actions appear just or more just, and this is a cleverness that will go in any direction as it fits the desire of the apparently unstable person (or stable in the volitional instability of selfishness). (If one were to push Aristotle's psychoanalyzing further here, one might see these people as projecting their own fluxing condition to everyone else.)

Aristotle finds this view repugnant. Justice turns out here to be only a capacity for many people that can work in either moral direction at any time. In other words, these people, again, hold that virtues belong accidentally, and not as something permanent. Actually, they are setting up barriers against logical converting in ethotic reasoning. One might even say they are denying *ethical conversion* in two senses, logical conversion in ethotic reasoning and precluding anyone from becoming good with their premises.

We will see more on both issues below, but we should emphasize the importance Aristotle sees for both in the grand scheme of things. Ethos seems to be the most important part of rhetorical reasoning for Aristotle and even reasoning in general. Trust in a person's intention, character, and good will is not only an important part of being moved in situations where the intention is overtly persuasive, but is also an important part of judging which accounts of events or factual evidence to accept, even on the academic level. Thus we need stable, honest ways of understanding and evaluating character and how it is being applied and understood in a given rhetorical act.<sup>243</sup>

We will see Aristotle's view below, but, regarding stability and reliability, it should be first pointed out that it is not that the mostly good man will always do good and thus carry the conviction of necessity in reasoning regarding his character, but that he is mostly good is important for ethical probable reasoning and is not to be lightly tossed aside. Of course, there is always the doubt that virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock that we shall relish of vice, but to let this exception be the rule would be

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<sup>243</sup> Crowley supports such an evaluation of character for canonical placement of theorists, but she does not seem to have a stable ground for doing this. As we saw with the discussion of Scott and Brummett in Chapter 4 and Appendix B, subjectivity cannot give it to us either

troublesome for Aristotle. (Indeed, one can see that character for Aristotle might even go into the realm of necessary demonstration regarding the virtuous man.) And that people can be good is an important foundation for how others (and the arguer) can be made better through argument and how this should be a concern of argument.<sup>244</sup>

### **Issues for the Aristotelian Response: Hexeis and Properties**

To set us up for the discussion of virtues and probable reasoning below, I can say that for Aristotle, states (which at a general level allows us to talk about stability and reliability for ethotic reasoning), virtues (that are a type of these), the wisdom of a virtue, as well as actions, character, and how they all affect one another are important and all related and intertwined. For example, taking the relationships of a few of these notions, Aristotle believes that for an act to be just, it must come from a just moral state, which is one way he tries to deal with the *semeia* problem, and this state affects all such acts, so a person cannot go willy-nilly committing just and unjust acts voluntarily—virtuous acts cannot be thrown out as “mere *semeia*.” To have the virtue of justice, one must know much more than what the laws are: one must know how to achieve justice in any situation, just as it is not enough for the physician to know what medicine will do to a person, but has to know when, where, how much, the method of application, and the type of person to produce health. Thus we will see the likeness of virtue and arts for Aristotle.

But what exactly is this important notion of state and how can virtues be properly called “states”? To answer, we must return to the property-accident distinction and focus on property, for though Aristotle does talk of virtues in terms of accidents:

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<sup>244</sup> Leadership by the good to the good, and their obligation and pleasure to do so, will be discussed in the final section.

e.g., Coriscus and what is musical (or ‘musical Coriscus’) are accidentally one (as opposed to naturally one), *musical* belonging as “a state or affection of the substance” (*Meta.* V.6, 1015b.34), Aristotle does seem to believe that virtues are capable of adhering with some sort of permanence and reliability for reasoning, whether it be by a quality of human being, virtue, or both. For one, virtues can belong with permanence because they themselves are not accidental in nature. Aristotle begins the second section of his first book on accidents by making sure to point this out: white does not just happen to be a color and justice does not just happen to be a virtue (*Top.* II.2, 109a.34–b.2). They are things with essences, belonging to genera, but how they show up in things affect how we talk about them.<sup>245</sup>

It is the notion of property that allows us to discuss the adhering of virtues, as well as how virtues are states, and how these afford reliability for reasoning. Thus we will need to focus on describing virtues as properties, for though genus and species do provide the qualities of permanence and reliability needed for reasoning in other matters, they do not seem to do so directly here. For Aristotle, human beings do not become virtuous people as an acorn becomes an oak; full-fledged virtues do not exist or will not exist of necessity or nature in humans; there is rational choice needed. The only concept that Aristotle leaves us with to describe the permanence necessary for ethical reasoning is *property*, and thus, again, we will have to see how virtues are states in terms of properties and where properties get this permanence from. After all, Aristotle makes it clear in the *Metaphysics* that transience cannot be a starting point for

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<sup>245</sup> The issue of essence is again of special concern in this chapter. Much of *Top.* II.2 just cited is concerned with how accidentals and properties, which are concerned with the essence, can under the same name be abused. Yet, using his example of health given at the end of the section analogously, justness for him seems to be a real thing; we will see that part of how we are able to reason about character is because the virtues do not alter; they have essences.

reasoning, and one can apply the same principle to ethotic reasoning (XI.6, 1063a.10-12; IV.5, 1010a.29-31). To this end he says that those who deny the principle of non-contradiction would have all attributes belong to all subjects (1010a.35-39). This would make the good man the bad man and puts us back in the realm of sophistry.

Now, to understand how property and virtue are related and the importance of this relationship for reasoning for Aristotle, we will need to (A) see what properties are and how they are related to the most permanent of things for Aristotle—essence and knowledge. We will also need to (B) see what virtues are, see how they are like knowledge, since we will see that understanding the properties of humans deals with understanding the capacities found in the rational soul. We also need to see how virtues relate to people (how people possess virtue, participate in virtue, or both simultaneously).

Finally, in light of these relations, we will need to (C) see how states are developed from the capacities of the rational soul and allow for reliability in reasoning (which the last section of Chapter 4 may help us understand). (A) and (B), as well as (B) and (C), will overlap quite a bit, for what we are treating does not lend itself easily to linear arguments. Hopefully, we will see the interrelation of several concepts that will help us understand Aristotle's idea of virtue. We will see how, e.g., both having the capacity for grammar and actually having the knowledge are properties of humans, though in different senses; we will also see how *hexis* falls in the realm of property in different ways—as an accident in relationship to the species but something permanent for the person.<sup>246</sup> Also, there is something universal about states and virtues as

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<sup>246</sup> We can try to explain this accident-property view of virtue in another way. A property seems to be something that is developed in a person, like the ability to play music, but once a person has developed

properties, which is important to ethotic reasoning (we saw the problems with Russell who denied predicating universals of people). In going through all these issues, we will find support for a general theme here: the permanence of “properties proper” (see below) is at once a logical permanence and a permanence from its part in being, and Aristotle is consistent in using a full logic, even in ethical matters. Again, we will also see through this discussion of properties that Aristotle uses the predicables as a way to show how people can have stability, that they are neither defined by their situation, nor do they totally define it.<sup>247</sup>

### From Properties to Essence/Nature

(A) Again, distinguishing accident from property is not easy to do since Aristotle uses *idion* for *property*. *Idion* is a simple word for distinction, so in normal language it can be applied to anything or to anything in comparison with something else, including predication of accidents: bears can be distinguished from dogs by larger

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this capacity, i.e. goes through a process of becoming, she is said to be a musical person, and this, Aristotle tells us, is an accidental predication. If virtues work in the same way, we have virtues as properties of the human species, but accidental in any given case, as well as accidental when used to refer to a natural disposition to virtue (see below).

We can also refer to Aristotle's idea of *infima species*, the lowest level of species in a genera, in *Meta. XI.3* for clarification of how Aristotle believes virtues can exist in a person in terms of accident and property.

since every pair of contraries falls to be examined by one and the same science, and in each pair one term is the privative of the other though one might regard some contraries raise the question, how they can be privately related, viz. those which have an intermediate, e.g. unjust and just—in all such cases one must maintain that the privation is not of the whole definition, but of the *infima species*. If the just man is 'by virtue of some permanent disposition obedient to the laws', the unjust man will not in every case have the whole definition denied of him, but may be merely 'in some respect deficient in obedience to the laws', and in this respect the privation will attach to him; and similarly in all other cases. (1061a, 18-28)

This passage can be clarified by looking to the one that precedes it. There Aristotle is talking about how some concepts, such as health, can be talked of in various ways (e.g., indicative of health or productive of it), but all the talk refers to the same concept. But such terms, like *just* here, are something akin to accidents, such as white, which cannot be broken down into species because there are no differentiae that will hold. Thus *infima species* in the passage above is referring to the *infima species man*. Justice is a quality that can alter in a person in process, but then, he believes, can also become a permanent property or disposition.

<sup>247</sup> The issue of how durability develops will be a specific focus of the next section.

mass; humans are separated from other creatures by having spirits; the courageous person is marked by some special quality. One can also apply the terms to distinctions regarding individuals: e.g., insofar as a person has quality *x*, she will have specific ability *y*; I am distinct from my twin brother because of my shorter hair; so-and-so is separated from the concept of humanity because he lacks *z*. That is, the term *idion* can be applied to comparisons of one concept to everything else, of one species to another of the same or different genus in terms of non-essential qualities, of one particular to another, of a person in relationship to her species, even to talk of possession of abilities and states, etc. Thus the term can apply to permanent qualities (e.g. man being set apart from other animals with the capacity to build skyscrapers), as well as things in development (such as my knowledge of rhetoric), but also accidental qualities (e.g. my being set apart from my brother with short hair). And we may ultimately see that property is a bridging concept between essence and accident important for reasoning.

First, to better explain how *idion* might generally be used to cover properties and accidents, as well as why it is significant that it should, and to better understand the technical usage Aristotle later intends for *idion*, it may help to look at another connotation of the term: possession.<sup>248</sup> *Idion* has meanings of “one’s own” and “private,” one could even say “private possession,” which applies to different types of possession: For example, I *have* acquired possessions peculiar to the human species (such as arts), I *have* those possessions peculiar to the human species as compared to another animal species (such as opposable thumbs when compared to lions), and I *have* possessions peculiar to myself in relation to other individuals (such as my thesis beard compared to the other students in my cohort). The first two examples are properties, the

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<sup>248</sup> For the issue of why the broad use of the term is important, see Footnote 251.

last an accident. I have emphasized *have* because we will see that understanding proper *having* is important for distinguishing properties from accidents, which points to a connection between *idion* in its technical sense and *to hexein* regarding humans.

First, to develop the connection of property and virtue, we must point out that virtues are often talked about in much the same way as the examples just given, and, that here too, there are lines of qualification to be drawn if reasoning regarding them is to prove reliable. The way many non-cynical people talk of virtues and how people possess them place virtues as things more or less logically permanent. Aristotle seems to see this happening from a couple different explanations of virtue: e.g., how I could have, say, courage or at least the capacity for it through being human, or how I could have courage or a little courage as someone who has worked at being courageous or has been born with a tendency to courage, perhaps inherited from my father, or some of these at the same time. Yet such varied usage often results in people thinking of virtues in terms of accidents and properties inconsistently (as we will see when we compare *hexis* and *diathesis*). Others, who are perhaps cynical generically or specifically, might believe that each courageous act in no way reflects or affects who I am (and cannot do so).

Of course, Aristotle rejects the cynical approach, but, more importantly, he thinks of both the capacity for courage in an individual and the courage acquired by an individual in the form of a state as properties in the *proper* sense.<sup>249</sup> Both, perhaps more

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<sup>249</sup> One sees related criticisms regarding states in people in the *Topics*. At the end of V.4, Aristotle tells us how sophistical questioners try to subvert properties by misusing *same* and *different*, and one way to do this is by messing with how properties are predicated of states and how this reflects on what is called after this state and vice versa. He goes into this sarcastic jag:

One might, then, discredit the majority of properties, by representing the subject as being one thing in itself, and another thing when combined with its accident, saying, for example, that man is one thing, and white man another. Again, one might do so by



than having a fundamental relation to the essence of the human being, the rational soul (see below), have both a sense of *belonging with propriety*, as something befitting a thing (whether the thing itself or to the thing by virtue of something else it possesses), and a sense of *permanence*, which, as we will see shortly, is an important quality for Aristotle's notion of property proper.<sup>250</sup> We will also see the proper actualization of a capacity gives it stability or status in this regard, which is important for reasoning and will require us to draw on knowledge and actualization issues discussed in Chapter 4. This connection of actualization and stability is especially the case with the virtues, as the nature of knowledge and virtue are bound together overtly here: the good is permanent itself, and acquired through the proper virtue-knowledge means we will discuss below, it can be permanent in people, for it is the happy end of people to have knowledge and virtue. Thus, for Aristotle, one might say that the best description of a property proper brings together *idion*, with its connotation of possession, and *having* in the sense of *hexeis*, an important concept for Aristotle's ethics.<sup>251</sup> That is, properties proper may find their best elucidation in terms of human properties.

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representing as different a certain state and what is called after that state; for an attribute that belongs to what is called after a state will belong also to the state; e.g., inasmuch as the condition of the scientist is called after his science, it will not be a property of science that it is incontrovertible by argument; for then the scientist will also be incontrovertible by argument. (V.4, 133b.21-31)

What this quote points us toward is the importance of seeing how states really do belong in people, which will be discussed below.

<sup>250</sup> Of course, the other options here can be had in a sense too, but there is no essentialness to them for Aristotle. Having a little courage or a tendency to courage, or even just having courage (being a courageous person) in light of the human species, are what Aristotle refers to as accidents, though having some courage through practice may be a gray area for Aristotle in terms of whether to talk of it as a property or accident.

<sup>251</sup> We use *states* or *habits* to translate *hexeis*, terms that connote some degree of permanence, whereas accidents often have an ephemeral connotation. (This is not of necessity or even essentially in the abstract: a white man will be white his whole life or just part of it, either totally white or just partially, but white will always be white as man always man.) I think Aristotle keeps *hexeis* and accidents grouped together under *idion* out of his sense of the relatedness of things, their knowability, and the knowability of the whole. But he also understands that when we distinguish things non-accidentally, we are not just talking about potentialities but actualities in things, not just species but differences in particulars in light

## Properties Proper

This may become clearer if we finish describing the technical use of *idion* by clearly distinguishing properties proper from accidents or accidental uses of *property*, which include temporary properties (e.g. my sitting down) and properties relative to individuals (e.g. being the only person sitting down in a room with other people).<sup>252</sup> Unfortunately, it is difficult to distill in the *Topics* the important connection or relationship of properties proper to essence that distinguishes them from accidental properties. The first clues Aristotle gives for property leaves it somewhat in a no-man's land between the accidental and essential (genus and species), though this placement actually turns out to be important for a sort of self-determination and for judgments regarding things in development, such as the becoming of the virtuous man. The properties proper that I will come to speak of here can be seen as a sort of middle ground or catch all concept between the essential and non-essential, as sort of with the popular usage of *idion*. They can, for example, be seen as the middle way of essence,

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of the potentialities of the species and what a member of the species can acquire. Accordingly, we will see Aristotle try to give a technical usage to *idion* that does not apply to the possession in any way of any thing by anything, which would otherwise stall reasoning.

Now, *To hexein* means 'to have' or 'to hold'. We'll see that the proper meaning of property applies to all the uses of *to hexein* in the *Metaphysics*. (1) As a natural capacity, here a natural permanent relative [to other forms of matter] property: "That in which a thing is present in as something receptive [*dektikoi*] of it is said to have the thing; e.g. the bronze has the form of the statue, and the body has the disease" (V.23, 1023a.11-13). (2) *Property* also applies to his first definition, e.g. in terms of states: "to treat a thing according to one's own nature or according to one's own impulse; so that fever is said to have a man, and tyrants to have their cities, and people to have the clothes they wear" (1023a.8-11). (3) *Property* can even apply to how a container holds the contained or the whole the parts, as when speak of properties in virtue of which, and (4) to how something hinders a thing's natural impulse, as when capacities for virtue become actualized for vice. (5) But what is most illuminating here for the connection of property and *to hexein* is the statement, "'Being in something' has similar and corresponding meanings to 'holding' or 'having'" (1023a.24-25). *Being* and *being in something* are very important notions to Aristotle's idea of properties proper.

<sup>252</sup> Aristotle does not give us any history or context for the term *idion*, but in the *Topics* he seems to making an important meta-move for argument and knowing in accordance with his advice at II.2, 110a.14-21, regarding when to use the popular meaning of the term and when to use knowledge-bound meaning. This point directs us beyond a merely practical reading of the *Topics* mentioned in Chapter 4 for he is assuming a scientific meaning in the discussion here.

the jungle of qualities between a genus and species; or they can be the potential flowers (or thorns!) growing out of the root of an essence, an essentially derived quality important for a thing to be in its best form but a non-necessary quality for the thing to be what it is (a view which has ramifications for how Aristotle understands the two uses of the dialectical problem). In the latter case, the virtues and vices, 'the flowers and thorns,' turn out to be something special here as compared to, say, arts: the rational soul is the foundation for both, both being properties of human beings, but an art can either be developed or not developed: there is no such option regarding the moral life.

Now, Aristotle does set apart property proper from accident by grouping it with genus and species along the lines of convertibility: "For none of these [properties] can possibly belong or not belong in part; they must either belong or not belong absolutely" (II.1, 109a.18-19). But then property is set apart from genus and species in not predicating the essence (*Top.* I.5, 102a.18-19). However, grouping it with these terms along the lines of convertibility is important for reasoning, which, as I have been saying, needs the formal, the material, and for these to be connected. Convertibility is an important notion of logical relationships for reasoning (about real things): a thing must have something permanent about it and be distinguishable from other things to reason about it. When the permanent and distinctive thing are the same thing and belong in at least an essentialsque way, we are either talking about a species or property (unless we are distinguishing genera by talking about their species). That is, convertibility may seem to be on the formal side of logic but requires the essence of things to work; the permanence of and between such concepts is substantial. Thus we will see again that logic has its formal and material components regarding properties.

One could even say Aristotle's focus on convertibility, permanence, and essence leads him to think about properties proper in two basic ways: the essential or absolute property and the relative, permanent property.<sup>253</sup> Both of these are ways of talking about properties that exist always or for the most part, which is important for probable reasoning. Absolute properties are properties in the ultimate sense, those that do not predicate the essence but separate the thing from everything else, usually because of its relationship to the essence (see Property and Nature below). This property can either be always true or true for the most part, depending on the essence of the thing, for sometimes essence can be known in the necessary sense or simply the for the most part sense. The second type is much like the first but within a limited context of a relationship, like the soul being fitted to command and the body being fitted to receive command. (This particular relative permanent property, as Aristotle notes, is only for the most part, but there are ones that are for always.) Apparently, these relative permanent properties are based on something in both things that is necessary or for the most part, whether the essences themselves (perhaps just the genera), the essential properties, or perhaps even a mixture: the permanence based on essentialness is what is important. The absolute property simply allows faster access to the essence (though what supports the relative, permanent property will ultimately be there to find). Thus Aristotle tells us that definition and property are closely related in that they are both supposed to distinguish (V.2, 130b.12-14).

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<sup>253</sup> I actually count six types of property, including four types of property proper, but the basic distinction of two types of property proper suits the discussion here. See Appendix A.

## Property, Essence, and Knowledge

(B) From the connection to essence and the emphasis on distinction, one can gather that definition and property are related in knowing too. In Book V of the *Topics*, the one devoted to property, the first *topoi* Aristotle gives regarding properties, after the preliminary remarks and definitions in V.1, have to deal with the essential connection: e.g., “we form a property for the sake of knowledge,” and properties are intended to help us get knowledge of the essence:

For not only should the property be more familiar than its object, but also it should be something whose attribution to it is more familiar. For he who does not know whether it belongs to the object, will not know whether it belongs to it alone. (V.2, 129b.6-7, 14-16)

Here is, again, a way in which property seems to be in between accidents and essences or why Aristotle uses the same term for types of accidents as well as for convertible qualities. When coming to know or acquire the essence of something, we do not necessarily jump to forming a definition from the particulars we encounter. We often start with forming properties to help us to acquire the essence, and in doing the former we have to distinguish what belongs to a concept accidentally and what belongs essentially or permanently, i.e., in light of the essence but not essentially.<sup>254</sup> Having established the belonging of properties, we are often able to start arguing with probability over a thing, which helps us get the essence. Conversely, we often verify things as properties through the essence: “for example, inasmuch as being an animal capable of receiving knowledge is true of every man, and true of him *qua* man, it will

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<sup>254</sup> This is often a source of bitter disputes, especially among audiences that deny essences, though these still have to admit of a *nature* being capable of receiving accidents.

be a property of man to be an animal capable of receiving knowledge,” and this is true for Aristotle because he believes man’s essence is rationality (V.4, 132a.37-b.2; see also Aristotle’s use of *propter se* in *Meta.* VII.5, 1030b.14-28, which also fits with the *dektikos* usage discussed below).

We can take a paragraph to interject that this relationship between property and essence comes into play in rhetorical situations too, especially when we are trying to understand how a person is a constant in a situation and how or if she is being defined or consubstantiated by the situation or an element of it, or being lost as a person into the material of the rhetorical situation. The answer to such questions often corresponds to how and where we believe states can exist in a person, as well as which states and their corresponding faculties and substratum have more power in a universal (see *How Virtues Develop and Become Durable in People*). Do the rational and moral states of people count for anything? Do even the states of the body and the body itself, along with the connection of these to the moral states, count for anything? Or is all dispersed or assimilated by the rhetorical situation (or by its interpreter who ultimately does not escape the desolation of the person by matter alone, as instigated by modern philosophies?) Again, some people do not give much regard to states at all. For example, a response to hearing about a male accountant embezzling funds from his company may be, “He’s a good man, but he’s still a man,” and Aristotle might allude to such disregard of properties at *Top.* V.4, 133b.21-31. But we will see that virtues as properties help us know a person and that a person is *as a person* there in a situation to talk about. Also, that virtues can become properties in people helps us come to know virtue, e.g. seeing how people are or stay virtuous in a situation, which seems to be

some of the reasoning behind Aristotle's often misunderstood notion of the good man being judge of the good.

Now, properties, as we can infer from the discussion of how they relate to essence and come to know it, provide us with universal statements, but we err when we mistake a property for a thing's essence.<sup>255</sup> And there are a variety of properties, as properties can belong to things in more ways than just capacities (Aristotle's typical illustration for *property*), which opens the door for other errors in predication. As with essences, Aristotle finds the how and what very important to specify regarding how these other types of properties belong (*Top.* V.5, 134a.27-29).<sup>256</sup> We find a list of ways

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<sup>255</sup> Thus properties seem to be in-between again. We seem to know them first or more easily, analogous to knowledge presented to the senses kind of way, but we can also know them better and come to know things in their own right through them. They can even give us an idea of things that are ultimately unknowable in the absolute sense: one thinks of how one can "know" God through his attributes for Aquinas. Also at issue here is where properties primarily exist, in the primary *ousia* or in connection to secondary *ousia* (or in both), a difficulty that goes back to how we know and how knowledge of essence can give us knowledge of potentiality and final form. But at V.3, 131b.19-36, Aristotle makes sure to point out that properties cannot be rendered in a way that relies on perception, for to be a property we have to be able to know that it will be where we say when the subject is not in front of us. Finally, properties can also help us know other things connected essentially, such as things in the same genus (V.4, 133a.24-b.14).

<sup>256</sup> Again, the property is not the substance or essence: "both the essence and the universal and the genus are thought to be the substance of each thing, and fourthly the substratum" (*Meta.* VII.2, 1028b.34-5). Now, Aristotle argues against universal terms, which would cover some property predications, and genera being substance at VII.13, 14, & 16, especially 1040b.16-1041a.5 (see also X.2, 1053b.17-23). But a lot of this argument has to do with the commonness of these things, and substance needs to be set apart, and it seems that they could work as substance anyway, especially genera, in a sense of "matter," as something underlying, matter having problems with divisibility itself but being defended as substance in VIII.1-4, and genera is still substance in a secondary sense (see also X.3, 1054b.23-31 and X.8, 1058a.21-24). Substance is what can primarily be defined: "definition and essence in the primary and simple sense belong to substances. Still they belong to other things as well, only not in the primary sense" (VII.4, 1030b.5-7; see also VII.5, 1031a.1). He comes to the conclusion that there can be a definition of such a thing as *white man*, but not in the sense that *white* can be defined and especially not in the way *man* can be defined (1030b.13-15): "definition is the formula of the essence, and essence belongs primarily to substances either alone or chiefly and primarily and in the unqualified sense (VII.5, 1031a.12-14). In the truest sense, we do not have a definition "when we have a word and formula identical in meaning ( [...] so that even the *Illiad* will be a definition), but where there is a formula of something primary; and primary things are those which do not imply the predication of one element in them of another element" (1030a.7-11). It seems only species in the primary sense has essence (11-16).

Later, Aristotle makes the distinction between the prior in definition and the prior in substantiality, which has more power of independent existence (XIII.3, 1077b.1-6). For example, *pale* is prior in definition to *pale man*, but man is prior in substantiality. One wonders if virtue works in the same way, that it exists prior in definition as a part of universal order, but needs the substance, and whether the

properties can be predicated in the middle of Book V, most of the terminology being conducive to discussion of how different types of knowledge and virtue adhere (see below), as well as how properties are connected to essence:

For every one tries to render as the property of a thing something that belongs to it naturally, as being two footed belongs to man, or actually, as having four fingers belongs to a particular man, or specifically, as consisting of most rarified particles belongs to fire, or without qualification, as living to living being, or in virtue of something else, as being prudent to the soul, or as the primary subject, as being prudent to the rational faculty, or because the thing is in a certain state, as being incontrovertible by argument belongs to a scientist (for simply and solely by reason of his being in a certain state will he be incontrovertible by argument), or because it is the state possessed by something, as being incontrovertible by argument belongs to science, or because it is partaken of, as perceiving belongs to animal (for other things as well perceive, e.g. man, but they perceive because they partake of animal), or because it partakes of something else, as living belongs to a particular kind of living being. (V.5, 134a.29-b.4)

Aristotle not only gives us important qualifiers for predicating properties here, he also prepares us to see how properties can help us understand a thing in relation to other concepts, such as a genus, even a person in relation to other concepts, such as humanity itself. He also provides ways to understand a person in relation to states, an important

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essence of virtue can belong secondarily to men, giving a fuller sense to second-nature which *hexeis* are, *hexeis* being what virtues are and work through. In the case of virtues, the acquisition of them is the taking on of another nature, a second essence.



concept for his ethics and for the actualization matters discussed in Chapter 4; given the similarities of knowledge and virtue especially (see below), one could look at the science example given to start talk of the virtuous man as related to virtue.<sup>257</sup> States will be what we are most concerned with here besides capacities when talking about the possession of virtue as a property.

### Property and Nature

First, we will speak more of capacities, Aristotle's prime example for property, such as the capacity to receive grammar or virtue, for they help us see a little better how a property relates to a thing's nature or essence, which is an important basis for understanding how virtues as properties develop into states and are *possessed* by people or *belong* in them, the subject of the next section. Capacities fit under the natural qualification above and perhaps under the "in virtue of" qualification of property. And one can speak of such predication of capacities in several ways, as the text from V.5 helps us see: for example, the capacity for courage is "natural" to a man by virtue of a rational soul; courage may "naturally" come to be developed in a man by virtue of having a rational soul; and courage, as a state, may "naturally" exist in a man by virtue

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<sup>257</sup> In light of the list of property types, one can use virtue to talk about how properties are conducive to learning. For example, one can judge of properties and gain knowledge of the thing to which they belong (perhaps by simply learning how a property is able to adhere in it, which might be done by gaining knowledge of the property itself) by seeing how properties adhere in like types: for example, it is a permanent relative property "which virtue possesses, relative to knowledge, viz. that the former is naturally produced in more than one faculty, whereas the latter is produced in that of reason alone, and in those who have a reasoning faculty" (V.1, 128b.37-40). These co-ordinate members of a division allow for proofs: "Thus (e.g.) inasmuch as it is a property of prudence to be essentially the natural virtue of the rational faculty, and so too taking each of the other virtues in this way, it will be a property of temperance to be essentially the natural virtue of the faculty of desire" (V.6, 136b.11-14). If this example is reflective of Aristotle's view, then apparently we do not have to worry about these virtues being properties of these faculties in virtue of something else, which can give some stability to our reasoning about them (e.g., by knowing the proximity to the essence). These faculties are so constituted by nature and are parts of the soul by nature (cf. V.8, 138b.12-15). (However, the predication issue of possession may need to be clarified here, for later on he gives the following example: "inasmuch as it is as much a property of the faculty of reason to be the primary seat [*proton*] of prudence as it is of the faculty of desire to be the primary seat of temperance [...]" (V.8, 138b.1-5).) See Below.

of his rational soul (the rational soul having the property of retaining knowledge and states).<sup>258</sup>

The concept of capacity here helps us see the tying up of property and nature and essence in Aristotle from the beginning. In his first example of property at I.5 the terms *dektikon* and *dektikos* stand out: “it is a property of man to be capable of learning [*dektikon*] grammar: for if he is a man, then he is capable of learning [*dektikos*] grammar, and if he is capable of learning [*dektikos*] grammar, he is a man” (102a.19-21). Now, *dektikon*, which is here rendered “capable of learning,” often has a fuller meaning than this phrase suggests. For Aristotle it often means fit to receive by nature.<sup>259</sup>

Of course, one can receive both properties and accidents “by nature,” but in different senses. Although accidents may eventually indicate some level of genera and therefore a thing’s nature at some level, an accident does not point us to a thing’s specific nature. For example, white can be predicated of both animal and man, and even more generally than this, we can know that human beings have matter since they can be colored white, but that fact does not tell us anything about human nature specifically. A property does do this, however, most apparently in the absolute property: being capable of learning the grammarian’s art [*grammatikes*] separates humans from every other animal because it derives from their nature alone.<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> And this example could be made more specific by saying in virtue of what faculty of the soul.

<sup>259</sup> He sticks with the term later on when singling out and giving examples of essential property: first he tells that it is “a property in its own right of a man to be by nature a civilized animal” (V.1, 128b.16-17); then he gives us the example of “being a mortal living being capable of receiving knowledge” (128b.34-35).

<sup>260</sup> See my use of *Top.* V.2 above and see V.3, 130b.38-131a.11 and 131b.37-132a.23.

And one can see virtues in this light of properties. Aristotle sees arts, such as grammar, and virtues very similarly in how they come to be in humans, and they both can belong to human beings alone—as essential or absolute properties. The ‘fit to receive by nature’ use of *dektikos* even seems to be the meaning behind a related word *dexasthai* at *Nic. Eth.* II.1, 1103a.24-26, and Thomson translates it so: “The moral virtues, then, are engendered in us neither *by* nor *contrary* to nature; we are constituted by nature to receive them, but their full development in us is due to habit.”<sup>261</sup> Such capacities for virtue or knowledge are rooted in the essence of human beings; human beings cannot be the grammar-learning animal without being the rational animal, and we will see that, for Aristotle, a thing cannot be virtuous without the rational soul.<sup>262</sup> (We will also see below how the *Physics* supports virtues as a property of humans).

We can see this in a brief discussion of *dynameis* or capacities. Aristotle is fond of making analogies regarding these, such as flute playing to learning grammar, and he compares developing virtues in oneself to playing the harp. I.e., just as one only becomes a skilled or bad harp player by having access to a harp and playing it, one

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<sup>261</sup> Aristotle is often consistent with this use of *dektikos* for the strong form of property, especially when talking about the properties of human beings. When comparing property to accident at 102a.22-24, he uses a different (though possibly related) terminology to denote possibly belonging as an accident does. At *G&C* 320a.3-6, he uses it in trying to find the proper distinction and relationship of the concepts of substratum and matter. In *De Anima*, he uses it to talk about how the soul receives objects of sensation and thought (see for example 414a.10, 425b.22, and 429a.15). See *Physics* VII.4, especially 248b.23-249a.3, for the importance of the distinction of accidents and properties for the concept of accidents and how we can even compare things. The use of *dektiko/a* in *Meta.* V.10 seems consistent with the distinction I am making here too, though it could be taken to encompass talk of accidental attributes in subjects, but even in this case we cannot talk of accidents in terms of properties (cf. *Meta.* XI.3).

<sup>262</sup> That a capacity can be a property is a foundation for reasoning in the possible mode, such as the capacities of arts and virtues which are absolute properties: e.g., if Sally is a human, and it is a property of humans to be able to play music, Sally can possibly play music. We may be even able to make a probable deduction if we could show that, say, most humans can play music so Sally can likely play music. But in support of such claims, especially those revolving around the much trickier subject of virtues and vices, we are often forced to give the *why*. That is, how is it that we can trust that such a thing is existent in the individual and, regarding virtues and knowledge, how do we know a person will act consistently? This is why the essential connection of properties is so important; as we will see, the notion of essential property allows us to reason in the *probable* mode, and perhaps in the *necessary* mode, depending on our view of character.

becomes a virtuous or vicious person by how one responds to the situations life presents over time. As we will discuss below one is lead into a virtuous or vicious state by one's acts (*Nic. Eth.* II.1, 1103b.7-25). And, like arts, having these states is not just a matter of grasping the essence, but of practice.<sup>263</sup>

Accordingly, Tredennick rightly places a natural connection between *dynamis* and *hexis* for Aristotle in terms of “education and character training”: a *dynamis*, through practice, becomes a settled state or ‘habit’, a *hexis*. E.g., “an aptitude for music can be developed into musicianship” (Appendix 6, 283). He rightly sees this dynamic relationship as similar to the dynamic relationship of matter and form, whether in terms of art or nature, such as the bricks being potentially a house or the seed potentially being a tree (*ibid.*). And perhaps *aptitude* is an appropriate word to describe *hexis*, for it implies that there is more development to be done, and the final perfection of the moral state will be the virtue. But we still have to determine how virtues, in whatever state of development in a person, are reliable, and to do this it will be helpful to compare Aristotle's notions of *hexis* and *diathesis* as well as see how virtue and knowledge are related. The discussion of these issues will set us up for the second section's discussion of how virtues develop in a person.

### ***Hexis and Diathesis as Gradations of Virtue and Virtue's Relationship to Knowledge***

(C) From *Physics* VII.2 we learn that *hexeis* themselves are essential properties of humans, that they can only exist in the human soul (which by default sets virtues apart from what Aristotle calls “natural virtues” that even animals can have; see below).

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<sup>263</sup> It should be noted that arts and virtues are not identical. See *Nic. Eth.* II.4 & VI.4 for some dissimilarities. I will also add more information relevant to this comparison in the next major section.

We will see that *hexis*, this essential property, is an order or an arrangement (whether as it is, as set by the arranger, or as something of both), and virtue will turn out to be good order—the arrangement of the proper things for proper functioning, the “final” state: as Aristotle tells us, the excellence or *arete* of each capacity, such as the calculative, is a state, and this virtue of a thing is related to its proper function (VI.2, 1139a.17). And true human virtue for Aristotle seems to be the good ordering of everything, inside the soul (the full actualization of all the things called virtues) and out (including the body and whatever else the good person can have an effect on).

Now, Aristotle tells us there are three types of modifications found in the soul: feelings, capacities, and states, and these capacities can be for moral states, intellectual states, states of knowledge, or states of arts (*Nic. Eth.* II.5, 20-27). As will see more of in the next section, virtue takes something of all of these, which requires us to investigate how such states are related and develop. In *Top.* IV.2, Aristotle briefly brings up how something like justice seems to fall into both genera of knowledge and virtue, but neither of these genera are subordinate to one another. In most cases this double predicating of genera would cause a problem in reasoning, something akin to saying that humans are both animals and plants, but Aristotle tells us that this is not the case here since both genera of virtue and knowledge fall under the same genus, “for each of them is a state [*hexis*] and a disposition [*diathesis*]” (121b.37). We see Aristotle thinks of them similarly in the *Categories*, where he groups *hexis* and *diathesis* as one sort of quality, which he terms *diathesis* generally, still using the types of knowledge and virtue as examples. He tells us here that states are dispositions, but dispositions are not necessarily states. Thus we are able to refer to two different types of things with the

terms *knowledge* and *virtue*: habits have a mark of permanence, but dispositions in the narrow sense are ephemeral, usually marking some sort of passive tendency that can quickly change, such as being warm. One can in this sense even have a disposition toward knowledge, being volatile, not retentive, and this disposition could become something of a habit (8, 8b.27-9a.13). One could argue the parallel with the virtues—one can become in habitual toward virtue or vice, though this inconstancy may be called something vicious itself.

These uses of *virtue* and *knowledge* are important because they point to some grounds for reliability in ethotic reasoning, even when the virtuous state is not present. Aristotle seems to see dispositions and states set up on a gradation, as seen, for example, in how he speaks of knowledge throughout the *Categories* (though, of course, he may not have the later distinctions he places on knowledge worked out here): “The various kinds of knowledge and of virtue are habits, for knowledge, even when acquired only in a moderate degree, is, it is agreed, abiding in its character and difficult to displace [...]” (8b.28-31). Moreover, we see later that “[s]uch a science” as boxing, wrestling, or even grammar learning is to be placed among dispositions in its generic use (10b.3-4), and “it is an incontrovertible fact that the things which in virtue of these qualities are said to be what they are vary in the degree in which they possess them; for one man is said to be better versed in grammar, or more healthy or just, than another, and so on” (11a.2-4).<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> Such things as grammar and music are spoken of in terms of knowledge in the *Topics* too (as opposed to *art* perhaps: see, for example, II.4, 111a.33-b.4), but the analogy of virtue with either is supportive of the potential for virtues to belong in human beings with permanence. In *Meta.* VI.2, Aristotle tells us that what is neither “always nor for the most part” is called accidental, and accidentally existing things do not “come into being and pass out of being by a process” (1026b, 32; 23-4). Virtues and arts are obviously something that do come into being through a process for Aristotle, as we shall see, and that they can come to influence actions at least for the most part gives us more grounds for arguing with probability

So the questions might be how like a state a disposition may be before it becomes a state and how much one needs to know before one acquires a state of knowledge (and whether this type of state only belongs in a master or someone who is conversant in the subject). The answer to the latter questions seems to be “when one has knowledge of the thing itself and all of its causes,” making a state something complete, ordered, and ultimately unalterable (compare his view of knowledge shown in Chapter 4). Yet, again, Aristotle is implying here that what knowledge of a subject one has counts for something, and so seems the case with virtues.<sup>265</sup> That knowledge and virtue can be acquired in moderate degrees is a very important concept for reasoning about people for Aristotle, because they give us a mark of permanence and reliability. Talking of states in light of their intended virtues or virtues as states in general, as something that can be more or less developed, allows for a sort of “insofar convertibility.”

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concerning them. Just as we can expect the skilled guitar player not to make many mistakes when he performs, so likewise with the virtuous person in what she does

<sup>265</sup> Again, one can know properties (first) without knowing the ultimate reason that is attached to essence. As an individual, I can know that only humans are capable of learning grammar and nothing else about them, but I may not need to know the essence of human beings to know this. Something similar can be said of coming to learn arts or virtues. I may know that I want to build a house, but I need to know all of its essential properties before I can have the art, so I can know what capacities I should choose to actualize and which ones I may leave out as an artistic choice. But, again, as we learn from Book VI of *Nic. Eth.*, we have no such choice of which capacities of virtue we are going to actualize in a situation or even acquire. A purposeful mistake is vicious and destroys the origination cause to do well (as defined by the situation and the expectations of virtue) (VI.5, 1140b.5-7; VI.2). However, the knowledge and the virtues as states are both acquired in similar fashion—through practice (*Nic. Eth.* II.1, 1103a.26-1103b.3, 20). The virtuous person is in a state by having acquired other states—the virtues and *phronesis*—and *phronesis* is concerned with action, not production, and it is outside the realm of art and does not tolerate purposeful mistakes like art does.

A comparison with the senses can be instructive here too. At *Top.* V.6, 135b.27-136a.4, where Aristotle is speaking of property being predicated in terms of the privation of something or the possession (*hexis*) of something, he asserts that insofar as seeing is a property of having sight, failure to see will be a property of blindness. These are possessions or privations that the person has: sight, kind of like a capacity for a virtue, is a sense that most have the potentiality/capacity for and, in a sense, the immediate actualization. The virtues are faculties in the same way but must be “acquired” or actualized through use, through practicing them: “like activities produce like dispositions” (*Nic. Eth.* II.1, 1103a.26-1103b.3, 20).

As one might glean from seeing grammar learning in the *hexis/diathesis* discussion, the talk of virtues and knowledge becoming fixed (in nature, as mentioned in Chapter 4) is reflected in the language of properties. We often use *greater* and *lesser* when discussing insofar convertibility, especially when comparing a trait in two things, and the predicating and use of these terms, a key topical function, is through the properties when we are talking about the greater and lesser in essential relation to a thing. Before we get to discussing how this understanding of properties shows up in the *Topics*, we should note this greater/lesser application of properties is a later development in Book V, one that we might not necessarily expect from the way Aristotle has spoken of properties previously, that they are of one thing only and that they are convertible, apparently placing hard limits on what a property can be. Another stumbling block is how he presents accidents:

[...] in the case of accidents and in no other it is possible for something to be true in a certain respect and not universally. [As for properties,] none of these attributes can possibly belong or not belong in part; they must either belong or not belong absolutely. (*Topics* II.1, 10-20)

Belonging “in part” usually means belonging to only part of a thing, as the above examples of accident show, but it can also mean partially belonging, which could either be to the part or the whole. (See the problem with universal accidentals in Chapter 4). Now, a state in development seems to belong to the whole but is incomplete, but this “belonging partially” to the whole is not accidental for the individual, as the citations from the *Categories* allude to. Again, the properties are for knowing, and they allow us to compare things and allow us to talk about states and abilities, even those in a process



of becoming in an individual, for the maxim just quoted does not apply to individuals. Properties, as opposed to genus and species, can belong in semi-actualized permanence, in degree, an important factor for real world reasoning.

Around V.5 is when Aristotle starts to talk about how properties allow for such essentialist comparisons. Remember, first, genus and species cannot be predicated to a greater or lesser degree; a species cannot be more indicative of a genus than another, and a particular cannot be more indicative of a genus or species than another. This is an important logical and epistemic rule that turns out to be significant for ethical and ethical reasoning, especially in how we discuss ideals of human beings and some people being “better” or simply more skilled than others, which the notion of property actually allows us to discuss (see below). That is, properties can, say, belong of greater or lesser degree when we are talking about the property of a genus (or perhaps the species before the *infima species*). For such predicating to be done correctly, the name must be “predicated in a greater degree of that of which the account is true to a greater degree [...]” (134b.34-36). That is, if we predicate a property of fire, which has different types, we should be able to know what it is fierier by seeing what has more of the property. This type of predicating may become clearer with another example, one that we will see below is useful for understanding how Aristotle thinks of virtue: “Thus (e.g.) inasmuch as a higher degree of perception is a property of a higher degree of life [zontos], a lower degree of perception will be a property of a lower degree of life, and the highest of the highest and the lowest of the lowest degree, and perception without qualification of life without qualification” (V.8, 137b.23-28).

Now, some things seem to suffer this talk of degree and some do not, and it should be noted that the property is still either there or not there. But one can see in this example how Aristotle thinks of properties belonging more or less, which is by proximity to the essence, and one must be very particular in expressing this proximity.<sup>266</sup> One could also speak in the same way of virtues, as capacities always present in a person but well or ill-developed in light of some end or some analogous end. That is, the door is still open to speak of the development of properties in people, and we will see that the development of the capacity for virtue is another way of speaking of how properties lead us to knowledge of the essence, this time of our own essences and the general nature of things.<sup>267</sup> Also, by understanding the properties of knowledge, virtue, and the rational soul, we can predict and judge according to probability regarding people (giving the benefit of a doubt and mercy is another matter).

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<sup>266</sup> His examples in V.8 show this notion of proximity: (1) “naturally civilized [being] less a property of a man than to live of an animal,” an example dealing with a rule given in V.5 concerning how a property can belong primarily or in virtue of something, and (2) perception being less a property of animal than life (138a.4-29). Aristotle talks about properties along the line of the second example at V.5: arguers can predicate a property “in virtue of something else, as being prudent to the soul, or as the primary subject [*hos to proton*], as being prudent to the rational faculty [...]” (134a.33-34). An arguer errs “if he has not shown that he states [the property] as the primary subject [*hos proton*], or in virtue of something else (because then its name will not also be true of that of which the account is true, as is the case with being coloured, whether rendered as a property of surface or body) [...]” (134b.10-13).

<sup>267</sup> Additionally, the relationship of a thing’s being, becoming, and being destroyed allows for talk of properties and degree in another sense: “Thus, for example, inasmuch as it is a property of man to be a mortal, it will be a property of becoming a man to become a mortal, and the destruction of a mortal, will be a property of the destruction of a man” (V.7, 137a.35-37).

Such co-ordinate connection of an essence and property reaching their actualization concurrently can also be applied to the virtues: regarding virtues the capacity is permanently there, and the potentiality of the virtue and the end state that defines it point to what this becoming is, another aspect of the property-essence relationship. Of course, as most read Aristotle, being morally virtuous is not an essential end for man, but something of a means for being intellectually virtuous, but we will see that both types of virtue are closely aligned. Or, again, one could argue, drawing on a broad interpretation of *De Anima* II.4, 415b.15-20, that nature provides the capacities for virtue so humans can actualize their essences, but that these capacities for Aristotle can just as easily lead to vice. Really, for Aristotle, one cannot help but to be morally good or evil; these capacities cannot help but be developed because we cannot help but be in situations that will develop them in one way or another. Yet nature seems to intend them for good ends, as we shall see.

In the next major section, we will turn to discussing how states belong with endurance along the lines of properties. First, Aristotle prepares us for such talk in the *Topics*. At V.5, 134b.13-18, Aristotle warns against being negligent of how property is related to a state: the arguer will err if

he has not said beforehand that he has rendered a property to a thing either because that thing possesses a state, or because it is a state possessed by something (because then it will not be a property—for, supposing, he renders the property to something as being a state possessed, it will belong to what possesses the state; while supposing he renders it to what possesses the state, it will belong to the state possessed, as did being incontrovertible by argument when stated as a property of science or of the scientist) [...].

What may be lying in the background and allowing the possibility for confusion here is the possibility of an inter-possession, one that makes *hexeis* so durable and is brought to fulfillment in the possession of virtue.

### **Virtue, Property, and Nature: The Ought and Order**

Before describing this interpossession in the next section and what it should look like, we must note, again, what we are getting at with all this property and virtue talk—Aristotle’s belief that the world has the potential to be ordered and there is a good order, an excellence or state, which is related to the proper function of things. For Aristotle, it is almost as if the world “wants” or expects this order. Most pertinently, Aristotle seems to see this expectancy to be well-ordered in the person as well. We can begin to see this expectancy in Aristotle’s definition of virtue, which is

a perfection (for when anything acquires its proper excellence we call it perfect, since it is then if ever that we have a thing in its *natural state*: e.g. we have a perfect circle when we have one as good as possible), while defect is a perishing from this condition. (*Physics* VII.3, 246a.13-18, my emphasis)

*Nic. Eth.* I.VIII confirms this: *arête* is doing well at something a thing is supposed to do. Aristotle has a *should* wrapped up with his understanding of virtues as properties. Again, recall that properties are derived from the essence of a thing; man has many properties in the form of capacities by virtue of having his rational soul. Included among these is the capacity for virtue. Now, actualizing the capacity for an art is not often treated as serious consideration in discussing what a man should be, but the virtues are. With the virtues, one sees a *should* that is connected to the essence, the natural state of a thing.

In other words, the properties allow talk of being more human, and not just simply as an abstraction. Being more human turns out to be more in line with the good. The *good*, *life*, and *activity* ultimately seem to be the same for Aristotle in their ultimate forms, as expressed in his notion of God, activity through unchanginess, sort of how virtue is a state.<sup>268</sup> Now, it should be clarified that we are not talking about superhumans versus subhumans (though it could be argued that Aristotle believes the inclination of man is to be a god). As we said earlier, it is impossible for any member of

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<sup>268</sup> The more or less issue points to the important function of properties in the two types of dialectical problems (which, if not carefully distinguished at certain points in thought, lead to controversy): we have already seen a bit of how they help us find what something is, but they also help us find what is the better of two things. Now where these two uses of dialectic work together, though not perhaps simultaneously, is when we are trying to decide which is the better of two members of a given species, and for humans this is ultimately decided in light of the good. Whoever has the best actualization of the appropriate properties/capacities and the right ordering of them is best, as we shall see.

a species to be more a member of a species than another. Even for Aristotle, the basic sameness of essence seems to carry along a responsibility, an ought, as we see in his justification of slavery in the *Politics*, that it is for the good of the people enslaved and that the master should almost be fatherly toward his slaves (1260b.3-8). Aristotle, via the properties of human properties and looking at them in light of the good, orders human beings into classes for the ordering of them in a society. Of course, thanks to a better notion of divinity that came along, which was still connected to the fundamental is and ought of the human being, a better dealing with a worse type of slavery that denied *human being* of slaves and a better notion of responsibility was won here in the United States.<sup>269</sup>

Again, it is not to say that a person who is not virtuous is not a human being, but as a human one can *be* more. The virtuous person is the excellent form of the human being, and thus properties play into the ought-essence discussion brought up earlier. Aristotle believes human *psuche* has two meanings, but Aristotle wants to talk about life as activity as compared to state, for the former is higher (*Nic. Eth.* I.8, 1098a.6). The good man is the good liver and the good human liver uses well the highest part of human living (the rational soul).<sup>270</sup> Having the aptitude (*hexis*) is not enough for being

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<sup>269</sup> The notion of Aristotle's divinity can still be instructive for ideas of reasoning and ordering, as we shall see.

<sup>270</sup> As Everson claims, essence is denoted by an essential capacity: "when sight is removed the eye is no longer an eye except homonymously—no more than the eye of a statue or painted figure" (qtd. in 172). The same principle stands regarding living beings: "As form, the *psuchê* stands to the matter as 'actuality' to 'potentiality.'" There are, however, two levels of actuality in respect of the capacities of a living thing. The first actuality is achieved by a creature once it possesses the capacity in question, and the second when the capacity is exercised" (173). The first actuality "requires that the body has the relevant organs." Every capacity needs an organ except for *nous*: "for something to be an organ is just to possess some capacity" (173-4). Thus for "a body to be alive, then, it must have bodily parts which are such as to support the capacities which are constitutive of its kind, and every such body has a *psuchê*" (174). (See elsewhere for the importance of the material grounding of faculties in the soul for understanding of moral virtues as states, the properties of human beings, and this to the importance of

virtuous, but being active, being what one can be to the utmost. Likewise, Tredennick reminds us that “the hexis when acquired may remain dormant; only when in full use does it become *energeia*, actuality or activity” (Appendix 6, 283). Activity is an actuality, and the activity is better than the state (*hexis*).<sup>271</sup>

an activity in accordance with virtue implies virtue. [...] it is possible for the *state* to be present in a person without effecting any good result [...] but not for the *activity*: he will necessarily act, and act well. Just as at the Olympic Games it is not the best-looking or the strongest men present that are crowned with wreaths, but the competitors (because it is from them the winners come), so it is those who *act* that rightly win the honours and rewards in life. (*Nic. Eth.* I.VIII, 1098b.31-1099a.7)

Corresponding to our previous discussion of properties and degrees, especially the *zontos* example above, one could assert that virtue is an essential property of life (or its excellence). Virtue is the highest of all activities, and activity is a property of life: i.e., what is more active is more alive, and humans have the potential to be most active, the most alive, in the sub-lunar sphere. Human beings have the capacity for thought, the highest form being contemplation, which Aristotle believes is the highest activity, and this is what he believes is ultimately pleasurable in the right way for humans. *What contemplation seems to be is the beholding, the reveling in, of order.* One reason Aristotle might get mad, then, at people who reject the virtues as things that essentially

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whole person arguing.) It may be going too far to say that virtue is the third actuality, but it is a special perfection.

<sup>271</sup> One might say that these two forms of life are loosely correspondent to the predicables: genus and species giving the stability of substance and properties giving the potential for activity.

belong is that they preclude both the impulse to good, the doing of good, and the end of being good.

But, again, it takes a lot of ordering before one can get to this point, and we will see that this order and the nature of virtue itself is an important part of permanence. The virtues are states and virtuous activity comes through these states (really one could say the virtues are an acting), but the state comes about from doing things for the end of virtue. One could say we work at developing virtuous states within us so that we have the best means to virtue. It seems the more ordered something is, the easier it is to become more ordered and to keep being ordered (and the harder it is to break it down, to make it disordered). We will see below how the intellectual virtues and moral virtues rely on each other (and much of the following discussion lumps them together in claims about the virtues), and how Aristotle believes humans should be ordered from the base up. Ordered in such a *reasonable* way, the virtuous man's "being" is predictable.

#### *HOW VIRTUES DEVELOP AND BECOME DURABLE IN PEOPLE*

The subject matter of this section is quite layered, so I believe a brief synopsis is in order to prime the reader; it will also help us see how our understanding of properties can help us understand the relationship of virtues and people. *Hexeis*, properties proper of people, become permanent by virtue of something in the soul, the soul being something that is capable of receiving permanence, as we saw with knowledge earlier,<sup>272</sup> as well the soul having permanence itself in being a nature. *Hexeis* also have permanence as a property of virtue, which does not suffer alteration, and perhaps as they participate here in proper, eternal ordering of the universe (even if just for the most

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<sup>272</sup> One could say the states also share in this permanence through the permanence of the capacities in the permanent soul, as well as the capacities having capacity to turn into states via the soul.

part).<sup>273</sup> This permanence taking could happen all at once or perhaps progressively: i.e., permanence used from the capacity and its lying in nature along the way to virtue and then from the virtue once the excellence is achieved (or both of these could occur simultaneously). At any rate, there is a special jump when the state becomes a virtue: “it is not merely the state in accordance with the right rule, but the state that implies the *presence* of the right rule, that is virtue; and practical wisdom is a right rule about such matters” (*Nic. Eth.* VI.13, 1144b.26-28). Virtuous actualization of a capacity is a possession of something “new,” a “new” state. For example, as we will see below, Aristotle believes states of the intellectual part of the soul are not alterations and do not have a becoming, and this seems to be in keeping with how he believes the soul settles down to knowledge, truth (*Phys.* VII.3, 247b.1-2; see Chapter 4).

That the state ‘becomes a virtue’ is not an overstatement for Aristotle. And this phrasing allows us to speak more of permanence and reliability from a participation in virtue. For example, if we are speaking of a partially acquired virtue, as opposed to doing a virtuous deed or being courageous in one line of activity, we are speaking of the beginning of being well-ordered or perhaps the beginning of a general order or limit

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<sup>273</sup> Though one should be cautious in trying to distill Aristotle’s opinions from the *Topics*, in Book V, Aristotle is consistent with how he talks of the virtues. For example, it is a permanent relative property “which virtue possesses, relative to knowledge, viz. that the former is naturally produced in more than one faculty, whereas the latter is produced in that of reason alone, and in those who have a reasoning faculty” (V.1, 128b.37-40). This could be seen as support for what I am saying, but we could go further. Later he tell us that “inasmuch as it is a property of prudence to be essentially the natural virtue of the rational faculty, and so too taking each of the other virtues in this way, it will be a property of temperance to be essentially the natural virtue of the faculty of desire” (V.6, 136b.11-14). Virtues are properties of the soul in virtue of these faculties, for arguers can predicate a property “in virtue of something else, as being prudent to the soul, or as the primary subject [*hos to proton*], as being prudent to the rational faculty [...]” (134a.33-34). *Proton* gets translated as primary subject or seat, and it seems that what is the *proton* of the virtues is its subject matter: “inasmuch as it is as much a property of the faculty of reason to be the primary seat [*proton*] of prudence as it is of the faculty of desire to be the primary seat of temperance [...]” (V.8, 138b.1-5). These faculties are so constituted by nature and are parts of the soul by nature (cf. V.8, 138b.12-15). Here again, then, is support for the virtues existing in the soul and giving permanence and reliability for ethotic reasoning. Here seems a “material” grounding of capacities for virtues in the soul (see below also).



with the specific order coming later. And it may be that becoming virtuous is a way of being connected to the essence of virtue, of perhaps becoming a property of virtue, which is one reason why Aristotle tells us to look to the virtuous man: he is convertible with virtue. We could, for example, render this relationship thusly, “if it is virtuous, the virtuous man does it, and if the virtuous man does it, it is virtuous.” From Aristotle’s thoughts on how the prudent man must have all the virtues, being in the virtuous state of having all the virtues, we can get a more direct statement: “If it is a virtue, the virtuous man will have it, and if the virtuous man has a moral state, it will be a virtue (virtue being the excellence of a moral state).” Of course, again, virtue and the virtuous man are only one accidentally in one sense, but this does not preclude a real and habitual-permanent connection between them. What we may have here is a relative permanent property or perhaps two relative properties in relation. And one might even say it is a property of virtue to exist in a state in a person, and the higher the degree that it is possessed, the more virtuous the person until the virtue itself is acquired. That is, full virtue is the stopping point: for Aristotle, one virtuous person cannot be more virtuous than another, which would be tantamount to a perfectly ordered person being more perfectly ordered than another. Finally, the permanence in the person of a state allows for reasoning about that person and for the person to reason about herself as well as understand herself in a given situation.<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>274</sup> As we will see, in the case of the fully actualized virtuous person, a reasoning threshold is crossed into contemplation; the virtuous person not only contemplates but becomes an object of contemplation—a cog in the ordered, reasoned working of the universe—a reliable piece in this working. One might even suggest that with (the universals of) the virtuous person and virtues (as both states in people and real things) we sort of get an “analytic standard” for ethotic reasoning (while the vicious person, with his vicissitudes, turns out to be the sophistic standard).

## States of the Body and Mind

Now, let us turn to some aspects of how virtues develop in people, aspects that again show virtues being *really*, *naturally*, and *essentially* grounded in people and show how the whole person is to be directed to pleasure for Aristotle through the ordering of and by the mind in light of virtue. We will see that this ordering is a matter of right relation, and we will start here by elaborating on Aristotle's notion of states by seeing how they show up in ways that incorporate the whole person for Aristotle, body and mind, which will be illuminating for the discussion of states of the soul below.

In IV.1 of the *Nic. Eth.*, it becomes fairly clear that all the virtues have to deal with relation, of the person or some capacity in the person to everything else. And for a person to be virtuous for Aristotle, there must be an ordering of body and mind; indeed, for men to even become virtuous, they must have a "certain character, both of body and soul" (*Politics* VII.13, 1332a.42).<sup>275</sup> For example, temperance is the right relationship of the body, as directed by rational soul, to everything else: "the temperate man craves for the things he ought, as he ought, and when he ought, and this is what the rational principle directs" (*Nic. Eth.* III.12, 1119b. 17-18).<sup>276</sup> Aristotle suggests here that temperance is something that the body and/or the rest of the soul remembers and

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<sup>275</sup> In IV.11, Aristotle speaks of the importance of moderation in goods of the body (even beauty) for following the rational principle, and Aristotle reminds us in VII.1 "that mankind do not acquire or preserve virtue by the help of external goods, but external goods by the help of virtue, and that happiness [...] is more often found with those who are most highly cultivated in their mind and in their character, and have only a moderate share of external goods [...]" (1323a40-b.8). For with external goods there comes a point that the more there are of them to a person, the more harmful they become, but "every good of the soul, the greater it is, is also of greater use, if the epithet useful as well as noble is appropriate to such subjects" (1323b.8-12): "it is for the sake of the soul that goods external and goods of the body are eligible at all [to be goods for a person in light of happiness], and all wise men ought to choose them for the sake of the soul, and not the soul for the sake of them" (1323b.19-21). Aristotle earlier chides the Spartans for thinking that the goods which are acquired by virtue are better than the virtues themselves (II.9, 1271b.7-9).

<sup>276</sup> As he tells us later, "endurance consists in resisting one's desires, but continence in conquering them," and the latter is better as winning is better than avoiding defeat (VII.7, 1150a.34-1150b.1).

practices. This connection of rational soul and body is not only seen in temperance but in prudence too. As we will see, the latter is the proper use of the faculty of cleverness (finding the proper means towards the virtuous end) and carries with it the possession of temperance; it is not merely a rational state (VI.13, 1145a.2-3; VI.5, 1140b.29-30.).

Here again are correlations to the acquisition and use of knowledge as discussed above and in Chapter Four. Concerning virtues, one might say the whole body “knows.” Also, as we will see below, memory and practice are not only an important aspect of acquisition, but are very important for the pleasure one gets from virtue. And before we return to the issues of right relation and order below, we can see how temperance is one way of speaking about how the temperate person is resistant to the rhetorical situation. The temperate person does not desire everything in the situation, nor the things she ought to desire more than she should—i.e. to the point of damaging or even destroying the self. Even at this level, we can talk of how such a one does not, in Burke’s language, lose one’s identity, that one does not become consubstantialized away, because the temperance and what it is seated in and orders remain.

Now, Aristotle’s way of seeing the states of the body and the states of the soul in very similar ways helps us understand this resistance, especially in light of his belief that virtues and states do not suffer alteration. To understand the importance of the issue of alteration to the subject of resistance, let us start by seeing where Aristotle is coming from on the level of logical-material concepts. As capacities are properties, the development of capacities into states is an alteration and not a change of substance: thus the acquiring of virtuous states alter the man but do not change the substance of the man, and the states themselves do not alter (which says something about the non-

virtuous person still being a human being, as discussed below). Yet essence is still key here in understanding how resistance works. In *Physics* VII.3, Aristotle seems to think of these states and the soul in terms of essences, which, as forms, suffer alteration no more than figure or shape: e.g., making bronze into a statue is not alteration, and it is absurd to speak of a man or house coming to existence as being altered.

Aristotle also asserts that, analogous to figures and shapes, there is no alteration of the “acquired states [*hexeis*],” nor is there alteration “in the process of acquiring and losing these [states]” (245b.7-8). With *hexeis* here he has in mind full-fledged excellences [*aretai*] or defects [*xaxiai*]. Excellences or defects are based on a thing’s nature and they do not alter, even in the persons or things “that possess or acquire them: for excellences are perfections of a thing’s nature and defects are departures from it: consequently they are not alterations” (246b.1-3). This seems consistent with *Meta* XI.3 where excellences “depend upon particular relations,” and these relatives are “neither themselves alterations nor the subjects of alteration or of becoming or in fact of any change whatever” (246b.4-5, 10-12).

For example, to have healthy skin one must have the proper relationship, the proper order—of wet and dry elements for the amount of surface the skin covers, as well as the right relationship of attributes that keeps the skin from becoming too wet or too dry. Different treatments will affect the different elements differently, even varying from person to person, but the end of right order is the same. Such ends are one way of understanding the medical arts. The doctor uses his knowledge of health to produce an ordered state of the body—health—for the particular person (V.8, 1137a.9-15). This right relationship does not undergo alteration, though the elements themselves could, as

could the elements on which *hexeis* (acquired states) primarily depend (*Physics* VII.3, 245b.17):

For each several bodily defect or excellence involves a relation with those things from which the possessor of the defect or excellence is naturally subject to alteration: thus excellences disposes its possessor to be unaffected by these influences or to be affected by those of them that ought to be admitted, while defect disposes its possessor to be affected by them or to be unaffected by those of them that ought to be admitted.

And the case is similar in regard to the states of the soul, all of which (like those of body) exist in virtue of particular relations, the excellences being perfections of nature and the defects departures from it: moreover, excellence puts its possessor in good condition, while defect puts its possessor in a bad condition, to meet his proper affections. (246b.17-247a.5)

One can note here the support of this for the notion of how virtue as order allows for permanence in the soul for reasoning, how a person's ordering well disposes one to stand and meet a situation.

But to add to the immediate point of the body-soul connection, excellences and defects of the soul, like virtues of the body, cannot suffer alteration in their being or becoming either. Their becoming is a result of alteration in the sensitive part of the soul by sensible objects: "for all moral excellence is concerned with bodily pleasures and pains, which again depend either upon acting or upon remembering or upon anticipating," all of which are related to sense-perception (247a.5-13). However, one

could argue whether moral excellence and bodily pleasures/pains are connected to sense perception in the same way or not.

For Aristotle, the presence of moral defects and excellences “involves the presence of pleasure or pain,” since these affect how we think about acting upon sensible objects, as well as how we remember and anticipate things in relation to them, these pleasures and pains being alterations of the sensitive part of the soul (247a.9-16). Thus, Aristotle argues, the loss and acquisition of these states are alterations of something else, and that “though their becoming is accompanied by alteration, they are not themselves alterations” (247a.18-19). Again, these forms exist in the higher parts of the soul, but may have their altering matter in the lower parts. For example, temperance is a virtue that, of course, needs prudence to be in a state, but it also needs the faculty of desire. As we have seen, the act of seeing and the organ of sight are different, and just like prudence and its faculty/potentiality, the actuality is not the capacity, but they are different properties of a person regarding the same virtue. That is, we can learn something about such relationships by seeing how prudence (see VI.13) is related to the faculty of cleverness [ability to carry out actions and achieve a proposed end], as natural virtue is related to virtue in the true sense. Cleverness seems a natural faculty of people. Prudence is not the faculty of cleverness, but prudence cannot exist without it: “this eye of the soul acquires its *formed state* not without the aid of virtue” (VI.12, 1144a.30-31 Ross).<sup>277</sup>

### **Emotions and the Moral Perceiving of Order and the Means**

Now, on one level being in a virtuous state is about the emotions. Peters tells us *hexis* “is defined (ibid.) as our condition *vis-à-vis* the *pathe*” and reminds us that *arete*

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<sup>277</sup> For more on the body-soul connection for Aristotle, see Appendix C

“is a *hexis* (ibid. 1106a)” (83). As Aristotle argues in *Nic. Eth.* II.3, every action and feeling are concerned with pleasure and pain, so moral excellence is a matter of feeling properly toward things. Thus I should not let pleasures persuade me to do something bad or let pain cause me to shrink from doing something good. Aristotle uses Plato to say that we should be taught to take pleasure in the right things, in virtuous acts, and pain in doing wrong things, vicious acts. For example, children should be praised for doing an act of courage and be made to feel guilty at stealing a cookie. And we have a strong moral association of action and pleasure because it has been taught us since childhood

Virtue, in this light of pleasure and emotion, is doing right in regard to the right pleasures and in the right way, because doing it in the wrong way destroys virtue, corrupts the originaive cause to do good in the right way and for the right reason. We will talk more on what is rightly pleasant below, but first, regarding the building up of a virtuous state and in acting virtuous, intent is of the utmost importance, and in evaluating the intent of a person’s, act the permanence of the character has to be considered. Again, to do truly virtuous acts, one must have knowledge, one must choose the virtuous act for its own sake, and this choice must proceed from “a firm and unchangeable character,” yet “intention [or purpose] is the decisive factor [or the essential element] in virtue and character” (II.4, 1105a.28-b.4 Ross; VIII.13, 1163a.23). Knowledge seems the least relevant in this evaluation because one may have knowledge easily enough without the others.

### Knowledge and the Mean in Evaluating Character

Of course, there is wiggle room in such evaluations, especially in evaluating whether the act was in the parameters of the so-called “Golden Mean.” Aristotle tells us that how to judge what the acceptable degree a person can vary from a mean depends on the particular circumstances “and the decision lies with our perception,” that reasoning can be of little service in this perception (II.9, 1109b.23). Yet Aristotle is not denying the use of reasoning and knowledge to the arena of morality, nor is he advocating relativism, but he places such caveats here to help avoid rash judgments and to make room for equity, because Justice is what he is really concerned with, the proper order of things. To show this desire to avoid relativism and allow for equity and Justice, it will help to look briefly at his views on (1) moral perceiving and its reliability, (2) knowledge in ethics, and (3) the mean as a standard.

Aristotle has his arguments for the reliability of physical perception, as he does for moral perceiving. What is in a situation to be perceived is best determined by a person of good character in the light of virtue: “what makes the man of good character stand out furthest is the fact that he sees the truth in every kind of situation: he is a sort of standard and yardstick of what is fine and pleasant” (*Nic. Eth.* III.4, 33-34). People misguided by pleasure allow themselves to be deceived to what a situation really is, its moral import and what is required, and the more they allow themselves to be deceived by pleasure, the worse they will get at perceiving morally, which includes feeling the wrong thing and/or feeling in the wrong way (and this is another way of speaking about the importance of virtue for not being changed in the wrong way by situations).



Now, moral perceiving is only a part of ethical reasoning, and Aristotle seems to distinguish it from prudence at VI.8, the former apparently grasping the *infima species* of the things involved in a situation, while it may be “understanding” (as seen at VI.10, 1143a.14-17) that grasps their moral value and weight toward determining the proper end (or the grasping of the moral import may be a shared function of perceiving and understanding), while prudence works out the values and weights to find the proper means towards the virtuous end, as well as affects moral perceiving.<sup>278</sup>

I will talk more of prudence later, but one should note here that this perceiving of truth, the moral significance of things in a situation, is very important as it is necessary for the right ordering of things with the general guideline of the mean. Aristotle makes it clear that the mean is not a mathematical one, but is a proper response. Thus in II.2, we see that the rules of ethics must be stated generally because of varying circumstances that must be considered in situations: “the agents are compelled at every step to think out for themselves what the circumstances demand, just as happens in the arts of medicine and navigation” (1104a.7-10). It seems that the circumstances help to reveal what the end should be, what virtue(s) are needed, (if we have the moral virtues to help us in our perceiving), while at the same time the virtue says what the end is; (it helps define the activity or allows us to see whether the agent’s action is virtuous or not); prudence helps us to discern the proper means to the end (VI.13, 1144b.30-1145a.6). The prudent man will see what *should be* in the situation; he might know how to make the situation a good one or bring a good result out of it, as confirmed by other

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<sup>278</sup> At VI.11, 1143b.3-6, Aristotle reveals how moral perceiving is a task of intuitive reasoning, of which he earlier said was only for definitions. Here, intuition grasps both the ultimates of definitions and particulars in ultimate reasoning (universals and particulars beings what knowledge is of, according to *Meta. XIII.10*); these are alike in that both the perception of the particular and the definition are not properly demonstrable.

virtuous people (in light of the understanding of people ‘types’ involved):<sup>279</sup> “the end of every activity is conformity to the corresponding state of character” (III.7, 1115b.20-21 Ross). One might say that the good person knows how to get virtue out of a situation or help order a situation to be in accord with virtue. As we will see, the virtuous man seems to be the person who can get the best out of people.<sup>280</sup>

Now, the example of the athlete in II.6 and Aristotle’s statement that “virtue is more exact and better than any art, as nature also is” are important because they show how exact the consideration of everything, the person in particular, must be to hit the mean and alludes to how much the activity of ordering belongs to the virtuous man (1106b.14-16).<sup>281</sup> The trainer considers the end and not only how much food is too much or too little regarding athletes in general, but also the specific athlete he is ordering. Likewise, a commander must not only consider soldiers in general when trying to get a good outcome (likely qua soldiering or qua battle/war) out of a group of soldiers, he must consider the group and perhaps the soldiers individually more carefully.<sup>282</sup> Regarding exactness of perception and understanding, Aristotle tell us later

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<sup>279</sup> And other virtuous people are important here for virtuous acts, for sometimes the virtuous act results in the death of the virtuous person. For the Tex-Americans, for example, the Alamo could have been, say, either a *demoralizing* defeat or a virtuous example that inspires more virtue. Virtue may need defending sometimes, for “it is not the case [...] with all the virtues that the exercise of them is pleasant, except in so far as it reaches its end” (III.9, 1117b.15-16 Ross).

<sup>280</sup> Similarly, we will see how he is for creating more good people. This is not to say that the good man is the only measure of virtue. Aristotle states several times in the *Ethics* that it is both the virtuous man and virtue that is the measure (e.g., X.5, 1176a.16-17 as he sees pleasure and virtue ultimately bound together). This makes sense in light of how virtues can exist in a person in terms of properties, that virtues have a property for becoming a property of people?, as we saw above.

<sup>281</sup> It also alludes again to a connection between virtue and nature.

<sup>282</sup> This consideration of the people involved is also a reason why parents have the best chance of turning their kids into good people, even if they fall short of the excellence of the states of virtue themselves, because they know them best, though Aristotle believes education is best left up to the polis, perhaps because of the good men who could be in power to direct people towards being virtuous (see below). But it should be remembered that how he controversially (to say the least) precludes many people from becoming virtuous seems to lead him to say the polis should be chief in developing the young toward virtue.

that art (and virtue) require more deliberation than science, if science requires any deliberation at all, because we are less certain of the former, and virtue being of nature requires more exactness still (III.3, 1112b.8-11). And this exactness may apply more to the means, since this is what choice and deliberation are concerned with, and it is choice that determines our moral state: “our characters are determined by our choice of what is good or evil, not by our opinion about it,” opinion being concerned with true and false, not good and evil or better and worse (1112a.2-4). For Aristotle, we are determined by the moral principles we act on, not the ones we think right or best.

Hitting within the mean is very important to acquiring a virtuous state. Actions that overdo it or underdo it destroy moral qualities. The way he talks about this principle supports the idea that Aristotle believes we start out with natural capacities for virtue (or its contrary vice), and these seem to be capacities that we cannot help but actualize or grow if we are active at all. All voluntary actions, insofar as they are voluntary, grow our capacities in one direction or another, especially in our interactions with other people.<sup>283</sup> (But even if, it would seem, after we have become capable enough to survive on our own, we decide to become hermits, we still have to act in the right way regarding ourselves, actions which also alters the capacity.) Each voluntary action in line with virtue makes it easier to do other actions in line with virtue and do them better. One might even think we could even go in both directions at different times during the same day. But Aristotle seems to think that we make an initial choice/act in

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<sup>283</sup> One might think that actions in way of virtue or vice will develop us into habits of virtue or vice. I develop habits of thought that do or do not consider the virtuous or vicious path; i.e., every virtuous act I make I become more adept at reading situations in the moral context, and every vicious act I make makes it easier to see how to, say, get a bad pleasure easier out of a situation, which can lead me to getting new bad pleasures out of new types of situations. This seems the tendency of the discussion in III.1, especially 1111a.3-20; knowledge of the different types of circumstances involved in a situation will help one judge the situation correctly, and either help one make the right choice or help one judge of the choices of others in a situation.

regards to one of the state extremes; our considered acts afterwards bring us incrementally closer to that extreme (III.5, 1114b.30-1115a.2).<sup>284</sup>

### Relativism versus Equity

However, by the end of II.6, some readers are miffed or overjoyed at the vagueness of what the mean actually is, at Aristotle's apparent acceptance of relativism into talk of the virtues. After all, what can virtue be if it is something relative to me, as he seems to be saying? But relativism is not really what he means. Actually, what he is doing even here is allowing a way for equity to enter his system, and equity must be in light of a higher, set value. From 1106a.27-b.35 we get the idea that there is only one right way for a person to act in a given situation and such a judgment requires consideration of the person (with perhaps some wiggle room in the mean before censure becomes just). The good person not only considers himself rightly here but is also considered rightly by other good people.<sup>285</sup> Indeed, equity may be the link that allows Aristotle to talk of Justice and Prudence in similar ways, saying "the possession of the single virtue of prudence will carry with it the possession of them all" and that the whole of virtue is "summed up" in Justice (VI.13, 1145a.2-3; V.1). Prudence works through, with, or even as equity to fulfill Justice, for ideally laws are generally stated,

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<sup>284</sup> This is how Peters reads this passage: "only the beginnings of our habits are under voluntary control (ibid. 1114b)" (83). For Aristotle, the many unfortunately become poorly habituated, being improperly motivated, e.g. doing good things for the wrong reasons. I will return to the issues regarding natural capacities and the responsibility of the good person to make these worse people better below.

<sup>285</sup> Thus, for example, assuming that the boss and employee are good people, there is likely little problem in either one of them saving face or honor in relation to the other, say, if the employee does not fulfill the assigned task because of extenuating circumstances that have been rightly considered. The employee justifies himself rightly and the employer adjudicates rightly.

This preparation for equity is likely why Aristotle goes directly into to qualities of virtue along different lines: "from the point of view of its essence and the definition of its real nature, virtue is a mean, but in respect of what is right and best, it is an extreme," as I was talking of a higher value above (1107a.6-8). From here he goes on to the types of acts that cannot be considered in terms of equity because there is nothing good about them and "connote depravity" (1107a.10). And he eventually arrives at the importance of responsibility for bad actions and thus bad states, for there would not be equity if we were not responsible for these (see below). Cf. III.5, 1114a.9-11

and it would be oppressive to virtue if they were particularly decreed; equity would be absent in such a democracy (See *Politics* IV.4). Equity allows for the fine-tuning of proportion and order, which Justice is really concerned with, as we shall see.<sup>286</sup>

### Virtue and Order

We will see below that ordering, especially the ordering of people, is the responsibility of the good man, and order his pleasure. Order seems the intended end of just about everything for Aristotle, which makes the world very reasonable for him. Much of this ordering comes through education, which Aristotle believes should be in accordance with nature, including moral education—the training of the irrational part of the person preceding the training of the rational part, for both are connected and ordered to the same end: “in men rational principle and mind are the end towards which nature strives” (*Politics* VII.15, 1334b.14). The body, followed by the training of the appetitive part (as we have seen with the talk of pleasures and emotions), is to be trained before the soul; habit is here inculcated towards the end of reason and care of the body for the soul.

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<sup>286</sup> One can also see that Aristotle is not really a relativist later on when he emphasizes the importance of true arguments to help people who are misled by others due to the close connection of pleasure and the good:

[pleasure] is thought to be most intimately connected with our human nature [...]; it is thought, too, that to enjoy the things we ought and to hate the things we ought has the greatest bearing on the virtue of character. For these things extend right through life, with a weight and power of their own in respect both to virtue and to the happy life [...] (X.1, 1172a.16-25 Ross)

Now, “[true] arguments seem, then, most useful, not only with a view to knowledge, but with a view to life also; for since they harmonize with the facts they are believed, and so they stimulate those who understand them to live according to them” (X.1, 1172b.3-7). At X.5, 1176a.15-19, we see that virtue and the virtuous man are the measure of what are good pleasures, and it may be that he can lead people to the true good and true pleasure through arguments

Aristotle seems to push back against the effectiveness of such true arguments at X.9, arguing the limited power of argument to make people good, beyond stimulating the well-disposed youths to good and those born with a good disposition. The many, for him, have an intractable bad nature, only doing good for the wrong reasons, and their built up bad habits cannot likely be removed by argument. Yet it is interesting that he neglects to talk about redefining/clarifying the common person’s object of desire here.

Now, with virtues, the activity is better than the state (I.8, 1098b.31-1099a.3), and the activity needs and uses the state, just as seeing well requires a well-ordered eye (and, one might add, objects that can be “well seen”) (II.6, 1106a.14-24). For moral virtues this requires an ordering of the irrational parts of the soul by the rational parts: to have given “feelings at the right times on the right grounds towards the right people for the right motives and in the right way” (1106b.21-23). Getting to this point or acquiring the ability requires an understanding of oneself and one’s “natural tendencies,” so that one knows which way one needs to bend to find the proper proportion, toward this and away from one’s failings (II.9, 1109b.2-8).

Here we are brought again to the notion of the permanence of the virtues. This “natural tendency” talk brings up the old know thyself business, and also highlights the distinction of knowing what knowledge one possesses and what dispositions one possesses, which could be called the moral perception of oneself (see below). A condensed message one gets from II.3-6 is that our emotional responses should be filtered through our virtuous states, but a mere disposition is unreliable in this way, as we saw above.<sup>287</sup> That is, people seem born with one or more moral tendencies or character types, such as being just or temperate, but “at the same time we expect to find that what is good in the strict sense is something different, and that moral qualities are acquired in another way” (VI.13, 1144b.7-8). These “natural dispositions are found in brutes and children, but without intelligence [*aneu nou*] they are obviously apt to be harmful” (9-10). He compares the strong man without sight falling hard to how the person with a natural disposition is led astray without reason [*nous*], and reason and

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<sup>287</sup> Aristotle seems consistent with the notion of the intellectual ordering of emotions, that the emotions are ultimately reasonable in a sense, in the *Rhetoric*, speaking of the emotional appeals in terms of the logical use of *pisteis*, but these are arguments for another project.

practical wisdom is necessary to make a natural disposition into a virtue in a strict sense (as possessed by humans)—a state in accordance with the right principle.<sup>288</sup>

To be virtuous in general is to be in a state in accordance with the right principle and to have the right principle—one needs to know the right thing to aim at. Again, referring to the permanence or participation in virtue, “it is not merely the state in accordance with the right rule, but the state that implies the *presence* of the right rule, that is virtue; and practical wisdom is a right rule about such matters” (VI.13, 1144b.26-28). One cannot be good in general without practical wisdom (whereby the right means are provided to get to the right end) and one cannot have practical wisdom without being good: “the possession of the single virtue of prudence will carry with it the possession of them all” (1145a.2-3). This is why one can have a natural virtue, such as courage, without having the other virtues, but this cannot be the case with completed virtues.

One might conclude, then, “to have these feelings at the right times on the right grounds towards the right people for the right motive” is simply a sign of virtue, not the virtue itself. But these signs can be *perceived* as indicators of a response coming through the virtuous state: “it is thought the mark of a braver man to be fearless and undisturbed in sudden alarms than to be so in those that are foreseen; for it must have proceeded more from a state of character, because less from preparation” (III.8, 1117a.18-20 Ross). As we learn from II.3, pleasures or pains that ensue with acts are

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<sup>288</sup> In the analogy, as in much of his discussions concerning phronesis, Aristotle is thinking in terms of the individual. But the dangers he speaks of can be extended to the more universal species of prudence. If I am just clever without developing prudence, I may not only hurt myself by being misled; I may hurt others. Likewise, the natural virtues seem themselves to be capacities to hurt others without prudence. I might have a moral tendency to courage or compassion that hinders some other virtue because I do not see the end of virtue. There may even be something of the easy changeability in these natural virtues that Aristotle attaches to dispositions in general, so that I may quickly turn from using my power for good or ill or have someone else take advantage of my power.

signs (*semeia*) of the state oneself or another is in—a way of evaluating a person or specific state in a person or in ourselves, a way of seeing that “beauty of the soul” not seen (*Politics* I.5, 1255a.1).<sup>289</sup> These signs can at least be a good indicator to oneself of one’s state regarding the virtues.<sup>290</sup>

We see here Aristotle countering the cynical and even sophistic reasoning discussed earlier, when at *Nic. Eth.* V.6, 1134a.16-24 and V.8, 1135a.15-b.11 he argues non-voluntary acts do not make one just or unjust, apparently because these do not involve choice or premeditation.<sup>291</sup> And such non-voluntary acts certainly do not mean that there is no stability to character; these acts come through some other avenue than the state. The example that he gives of adultery committed under the influence of a passion is not a good one for this point, but rather reflects how a person is culpable for lack of deliberation. This points to them lacking prudence, “a true, reasoned state” that sometimes *sophrosune* gets the name of because the latter “preserves wisdom” and non-voluntary acts do not damage the capacity to judge; prudence seems even more permanent than merely rational states, being unforgettable (VI.5, 1140b.5-15). Of course, that non-voluntary acts come through the person does cause problems for ethical evaluation, for the person is responsible for her state or we might even say the state of her state. If she is supposed to be in a virtuous state, in a state where bad things

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<sup>289</sup> One also gleans here more support for this concept of virtue as state as a means to virtue as an end at *Nic. Eth.* III.7: The courageous man will face “what is natural for man to fear, but he will face it in the right way and as principle directs, for the sake of what is right and honorable; for this is the end of virtue” (1115b.11-13). We also see here, with virtue as a means to virtue, that the response comes through the state.

<sup>290</sup> For example, laughing at the wrong type of joke could be an indicator that we are in a bad state or at least need improvement (cf. *Politics* VII.17, 1336b.34-35 for Aristotle’s talk of exposure of youth to bad comedy as a way of damaging them).

<sup>291</sup> This thinking is evidenced again in the passage discussed earlier: “to be a coward, or to act unjustly, is not merely to do these acts (except incidentally), but to do them from a certain <moral> state; just as being a doctor or curing a patient is a matter not merely of using or not using surgery or medication, but of using them in a particular way” (1137a.23-5).



do not influence her, than she could be in trouble for not having that state completely formed. But what Aristotle might be defending here instead is the permanence of the non-virtued state, as well as its reliability for reasoning, as we saw above; people do not have to be in a completely virtuous or depraved state to reason with probability concerning them and make probable predictions. Even people with not fully virtuous states can give reliable signs.

Finally, it is hard to see how Aristotle sees the natural virtues/capacities from birth and thus without any type of knowledge in the person, such as perhaps a heightened sensitivity to issues and applications of in/justice. He might see them as arising from the body or the sensitive part of the soul, which is why he brings up animals and brutes, and why he puts so much stress on reason for the right ordering of these, the final states being something of forms existing in the highest part of the soul with matter from elsewhere, as we have seen.<sup>292</sup>

### **Prudence, Justice, and the Purpose of Moral Virtue**

Now, the way one finishes ordering the body and soul is by acquiring the virtue of prudence, which allows one to be in full possession of the virtue of Justice, the sum of the moral virtues (and one might even say the intellectual virtues as well): “the possession of the single virtue of prudence will carry with it the possession of them all” (VI.13, 1145a.2-3).<sup>293</sup> Prudence, in the way in which we have been talking, helps the body and soul know how to act in the light of virtue: “It is virtue that makes the choice correct; but the carrying out of all the natural stages of action with a view to that chosen end is a matter not for virtue but for a different faculty” (VI.12, 1144a.21-23). This

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<sup>292</sup> For more on the relationship of body and soul, the material and formal, in regards to dispositions see Appendix C.

<sup>293</sup> Prudence allows for the excellence of the intellectual virtues (see below).

faculty is cleverness, the faculty by which people devise how they can get what they want, and its excellence is prudence, which looks beyond the self to the good in general.

In other words, virtue and prudence, goodness and the proper means to it, are really inseparable. This is why the presence of the whole of virtue is important to prudence. With the natural virtues, one may possess one virtue, such as courage, by itself. However, without prudence, we run the risk of acting viciously when we think we are acting courageous; we would perhaps be in a state of knowing and not knowing (VII.3, 1145a.1-9). Ideally, the moral virtues in isolation can imply the possession of justice or perhaps be something of signs of this whole of virtue which prudence is the means to (VI.13, 1144b.30): “[Justice] is complete virtue in the fullest sense, because it is the active exercise of complete virtue; and it is complete because its possessor can exercise it in relation to another person, and not only by himself” (V.1, 1129b.30-33). It is different from virtue in essence because “that which, considered in relation to somebody else, is justice, when considered simply as a certain kind of moral state is virtue” (1130a.12-13). Justice is to oneself and others (as well as the latter in light of a third party), and has to do with proper proportion and order, that which is most illustrative of use of the mean (V.5, 1134a.1-7; 1133b.34-5).<sup>294</sup>

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<sup>294</sup> Something of this ideal of order and proportion is seen in the magnanimous person (who also has the bonus of having station). Aristotle tells us that the magnanimous man, the person of great soul, will have all the virtues (IV.3, 1123a35; 1124a.2-4). He is in right relation to things regarding all the moral virtues, including the social ones, even what Aristotle resigns to call friendliness, and he may have temperance too or an ‘exalted temperance.’ He is self-sufficient, has the right ordering and possession of body, even voice, and has the right attitude toward things, others, and himself (1125a.12-17). Coming at virtue here from the perspective of honors makes the magnanimous man sometimes look like he is doing his actions for the sake of other’s point of view or being self-seeking (see also IX.8, but see 1124b.28 where Aristotle says the magnanimous man will care more about the truth than what people will think about him).

As the doctor uses his knowledge of health to produce health in a person—an ordered state of the body—and not just knowledge of the cause and effect relationships of his tools on human bodies, Justice does likewise in the social sphere (V.8, 1137a). Indeed, one of the key metaphors in the *Politics* is the state as a person capable of being developed towards virtue. And as for a person, all the proper faculties, not just the body, must be actualized for the state to be actually good, and one way this comes about is through ordering “between persons who have a share of things generally good, and for whom that share may be too large or too small” (1137a.26-7).<sup>295</sup> Getting the proper order of things among people as well as putting people in proper order is at the heart of politics for Aristotle.

But before we get to the *Politics*, we need to see the purpose of moral virtue. Some give the impression that Aristotle throws it away once one has achieved a state in life in which one can contemplate freely. Now, they are clearly not the highest end for him. In X.8 of *Nic. Eth.*, one sees that the use of the practical virtues are not ends in themselves as the use of contemplation is; life in accordance with the other virtues will be happy in a secondary degree since these excellences are of something human specifically; being bound up with the feelings, they belong to our composite nature. Beyond this the activity of the intellect seems to be a separate happiness, being (closer to the) divine and with little need of external accessories or less than the moral virtues need. The practice of moral virtue could even be seen as a disruption to contemplation. After all, the life of contemplation is too high a life for man: “for it is not in so far as he is man that he will live so, but in so far as something divine is present in him; and by so

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<sup>295</sup> The state as a person usage might make it reasonable for Aristotle why all the citizens of a country are called by the same name (See Chapter 1).

much as this is superior to our composite nature is its activity superior to that which is the exercise of the other kind of virtue” (1177b.26-30 Ross). (There seems to be some dialectical leap here akin to that jump from a capacity to the perfection of its state.)

I will return to the divine nature of contemplation and its importance below, but it should be pointed out that the moral and intellectual virtues are actually quite intertwined and one might even say reliant on each other. For example, Aristotle ends VI.8 by making some quick distinctions of prudence from science and intuition, but at VI.11 he posits that “all the states we have considered converge, as might be expected, to the same point [...]” (1143a.25-26 Ross). Prudence, say, does not rule over the highest part of the soul, as medicine does not rule over health; “it does not use it but provides for its coming into being; it issues orders, then, for its sake, but not to it” (1145a.7-12 Ross). And the virtues do not disperse, but are an important part of maintaining and re-achieving contemplation. As Tredennick notes, “moral and intellectual goodness are complementary and in their highest form inseparable” (165).<sup>296</sup>

We need prudence to put the soul in its proper state (VI.13, 1145a.4), and one might say that one achieves the order of life so that one may enjoy order, and the more ordered we are the easier our enjoyment and perpetuation of contemplation. One might say the end of the good person is to order himself and those things around him and enjoy this order: “for pleasures are not processes nor do they all involve process—they are activities and ends; nor do they arise when we are becoming something, but when

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<sup>296</sup> And one might see the inseparability of the virtues in that the different parts or layers of the soul are not that separate for Aristotle; sometimes it seems the scale from nutritive soul to rational soul is a matter of a degree of more life. (See, for example, *Topics* V.8, 137b.23-28, where a higher degree of perception corresponds with a higher degree of life, which seems to correspond to his thoughts on intellectual perception and intuition in the *Nic. Eth.*, e.g., VI.8, 1142a.30.)

we are exercising some faculty; and not all pleasures have an end different from themselves, but only the pleasures of persons who are being led to the perfecting of their nature. [...] it should [...] be called activity of the natural state, and [...] ‘unimpeded’” (VII.12, 1153a.10-16 Ross). There is pleasure in working toward putting oneself in the natural human state and actively being in the natural human state. Life is an activity and pleasure can only be got through activity, and “each man is active about those things and with those faculties he loves most” (X.4, 1175a.11-12); indeed life and activity/pleasure seem all bound up together and not capable of separation, “since without activity pleasure does not arise, and every activity is completed by the attendant pleasure” (1175a.20-22). As we saw above, the most active activity for Aristotle is thought, and it is rightly pleasurable.<sup>297</sup>

#### Contemplation, Order/Activity, Pleasure, and What Human Beings Ought to Be/Do

Contemplation is the only activity appreciated for its own sake, which makes it eudaimonious for Aristotle, eudaimonia not being simply a state but an activity chosen for its own sake in light of the good (1177b.1-3; X.6). Contemplation is the activity of the faculty that must be “loved most”; we must strive with all that we have to live in accordance with this best thing in us, the man himself, the authoritative part, the intellect (X.8, 1178a.2-8). If one exercises this faculty, “in accordance with the virtue proper to it, that will be perfect happiness,” for “what is best and most pleasant for any given creature is that which is proper to it” (X.7, 1177a.17; 1178a.6).

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<sup>297</sup> As we see in X.5, good and bad pleasures are marked by the morality of the activity they perfect, for “pleasure perfects the activity not as the formed state that issues in that activity perfects it, by being immanent in it, but as a sort of supervening perfection [or end], like the bloom that graces the flower of youth” (X.4, 1174b.32-34). We will see that even contemplation seems to be a morally good act.

As we see in X.7, contemplation is of the truth, the unchanging and for the most part, and one does it better the wiser one becomes, and wisdom makes a person happy, not as an efficient cause, but by possession and exercise of it (VI.12, 1144a.3-6): “philosophic wisdom is the pleasantest of virtuous activities; at all events the pursuit of it is thought to offer pleasures marvelous for their purity and enduringness [...]” (X.7, 1177a.25-27 Ross). The attainment of this activity is a good. Here virtue and knowledge come together in the sense of rest I have been talking about: “those who possess knowledge pass their time more pleasantly than those who are in pursuit of it” (1177a.27). Here one revels in truth and order.

Unfortunately, the pleasure of contemplation, though more enduring than other pleasures, does not last. Pleasure in general is not continuous in humans because of fatigue of the faculty in use or a sort of boredom/fatigue with the object (X.4, 1175a.4-10). For the pleasure to be constant the activity must be constant; contemplation has the best chance of remaining constant because it is immaterial.<sup>298</sup> The seeking to always do this activity is the seeking of something divine:

in proportion as this divine element [the intellect] is superior to the composite being [or nature],<sup>299</sup> so will its activity be superior to that of the other kind of virtue. So if the intellect is divine compared with man, the life of the intellect must be divine compared with the life of the human being. [...] we ought, so far as in us lies, to put on immortality

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<sup>298</sup> Ideally, contemplation would be among those pleasures that “are quite independent of pain or desire (e.g. the activity of contemplation), because in their case the natural state has no deficiency” (VII.12, 1152b.37-1153a.2).

<sup>299</sup> Ross’s translation. Tredennick believes Aristotle to most likely be referring to the “composite soul” here, but also offers that *suntheton* may apply to the composite of body and soul.

and do all that we can to live in conformity with the highest that is in us  
[...]. (X.7, 1177b.28-35)

Pleasure attendant on this activity is something divine, and Aristotle may even suspect that divinity has something to do with all pleasure. At VII.13, he speculates that perhaps all people do seek the same pleasure but do not know it (and animals seems to be lumped in here in the context): “they probably do all pursue the same pleasure, and not that which they think, and would assert, that they pursue; because everything contains by nature something divine” (1153b.33-34).

What is this “divine element” in everything? Tredennick’s answer refers to two places (196, Footnote 2). The second is 1173a.4, where Aristotle talks about the “instinct superior to their own natures” that exists even in lower animals and “tries to obtain their proper good.” This proper good is to be in a thing’s natural and best state, which is most pleasant to a thing (1178a.5). But people seem to be easily misled from the highest divine thing they can really attain by everything containing some divine element in it. Bodily pleasures play so heavily in the public mindset because they are so familiar to all, which results in people thinking there are no others (1153b.30-35). Some humans may focus on desires that are more appropriately the proper end of beasts. The reasoning here seems similar to that in VIII.2 where Aristotle points out that a person simply loves what *appears* to be good for him, but there are things that are absolutely lovable, and it is virtue and the virtuous man qua virtue that determine these (X.6 1176a.18).

Now, this divine element might be divine in its participation in eternity or its prompting of a thing to order itself for participation, eternity being that which living

species and the cycles of the planets try to imitate in the divine. Such a reading may be supported by Tredennick's first reference: the quote from Hesiod that occurs before the passage in VII.13, which actually seems to be a repurposing of Hesiod by Aristotle to the point that there is something true in a thing all men say, where the original passage seems more focused on the obscuring of truth by the talk of many people, an obscuration that is difficult to get rid of because of its immortal qualities: "Talk never wholly dies away when many people voice her: even Talk is in some ways divine" (*Works and Days* 760-4). Indeed, with Aristotle's stress on states not altering and his belief that life takes the individuals of a species one after another in imitation of the eternal or God, one wonders if he is not so much concerned with the actualization of a moral or even an intellectual life as he is of something else—people using lives to contribute to an overall order (cf. *G&C* II.10-11, especially 336b.25-35).

The highest example is found in the constant activity of contemplation being the actualization of man, which is in turn the actualization of life as far as it can be actualized on this planet, since the highest part of man's soul is the highest capacity for life. Humans can participate in the divine pleasure in more ways than just propagating the species. This constant activity exists in and thrives on the right relationship of things of which the rest of the mind is already a part. Thus we cannot have the full performance of man without the moral virtues and prudence (and, as this takes some time to complete, a good order of body). We talk about the latter things as states, but it may be just as well to talk about the person who possesses them as participating, or even as integrated into, states—the right relation of things—or active states—the ongoing, full performing right relation of things.



These are not states in some Platonic sense but the right relationship things try to get into to imitate or even be a part of the eternal. The mind must work to put itself here and then uses its most eternal activity in its most eternal part to contemplate the most eternal order of things (e.g. I.7, 1098a.6-23), which, one would think, requires the excellence of full logic.<sup>300</sup>

What I have been saying can hopefully summed up in a passage from the *Metaphysics*:

We must consider also in which of two ways the nature of the universe contains the good, and the highest good, whether as something separate and by itself, or as the order of the parts. Probably in both ways, as an army does; for its good is found both in its order and in its leader, and more in the latter; for he does not depend on the order but it depends on him. And all things are ordered together somehow, but not all alike,-both fishes and fowls and plants; and the world is not such that one thing has nothing to do with another, but they are connected. For all are ordered together to one end, but it is as in a house, where the freemen are least at liberty to act at random, but all things or most things are already ordained for them, while the slaves and the animals do little for the common good, and for the most part live at random; for this is the sort of principle that constitutes the nature of each. I mean, for instance, that all must at least

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<sup>300</sup> One might view this as a somewhat pre-Socratic ethic of participation in the Divine Logos, but what is perhaps more interesting is that it is an attempt to participate in, or actualize as far as possible, life, which seems mysterious and divine for Aristotle. Life is activity, Life is actualizing, and the more alive something is, the more active it is. It may turn out that the actualization of man turns out to be to think of death as little as possible for Aristotle. One would think that this requires thinking about oneself, or at least the material and mortal parts (which is easier to do if one is wealthy), as little as possible, which might be an ethic that eventually nullifies the person.

come to be dissolved into their elements, and there are other functions similarly in which all share for the good of the whole. (XII.10, 1075a12-24)

The leader in the analogy for the universe is God, and humans have the largest responsibility to order and be a part of order, a responsibility grounded in their natures, and other animals have a lesser share in this according to their natures: “in all things the good is in the highest degree a principle,” which might be the divine element that leads (1075a.37). Finally, having the good present through order and in the good itself in the universe makes it fitting that moral virtue and intellectual virtue are in their highest forms inseparable in the person.

The life as actuality is in keeping with the divine impulse in man. We often get so caught up with God simply being a motivator for Aristotle that we diminish the fact that God for him is the utmost of activity that goes on eternally. The mind imitates God in contemplation, the active state equaling active ordering; one might even say the mind engages in active or living order. As Weaver says, “God forever dialecticizes” (“Cultural Role of Rhetoric” 351). That is, the divine virtue of contemplation is the active ordering of knowledge in the mind (or maybe just viewing of the pulsating order). God is the active ordering active ordering, as only one can do with knowledge separated from everything else.<sup>301</sup>

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<sup>301</sup> As was said earlier, Perception takes in the visible form of things, storing them in the memory, but Knowledge (and art) moves beyond perception to understand in an abstract way through the use of (language) categories. This process is not only important for distinguishing the parts of a particular, but also in learning the qualities of a species and a genus. To get to this level of abstraction, though, memory is still required, as well as recollection, which is not only the actualizing of memory, but the retracing of the steps on the path to knowledge to gain even further knowledge, starting at a more objective place (the visible things and processes of nature) and proceeding to an understanding beyond them: “For as regular sequence of events is in accordance with nature, so, too, regular sequence is observed in the actualization of movements [in consciousness], and here frequency tends to produce [the regularity of] nature” (*De*

The perfection of the person corresponds to pleasure, which Aristotle seems to think mimics the divine pleasure. It is enjoyment of the good by the good in the right way, which is comparable to how a person enjoys beauty, the chief forms of which are order, symmetry, and definiteness, in things (*Meta.* XIII.3, 1078b.1-3): “[...] lovers of beauty find pleasure in things that are pleasant by nature, and virtuous actions are of this kind, so that they are pleasant not only to this type of person but also in themselves. So their life does not need to have pleasure attached to it as a sort of accessory, but contains its own pleasure in itself” (*Nic. Eth.* I.8, 1099a.13-16). It is fair to say that virtuous actions are both pleasurable and beautiful in themselves, that beauty and virtue are well-ordered alike and really quite similar. (Thus it is no surprise that, for Aristotle, the beautiful person has a leg-up on others in the acquisition of virtue because s/he has a well-ordered physical beginning point, and order allows for the easier acquisition of more order.) And life, the contemplation of life at its fullest, it is what is most pleasant and beautiful in itself for Aristotle, and this activity is made better in several ways by sharing it with like-minded friends, as we will see below.

Now, “in the case of each sense the best activity is that of the best-conditioned organ in relation to the finest of its objects. And this activity will be the most complete and pleasant.” (X.4, 1174b.18-21 Ross). The same applies to the moral and intellectual virtues: “So long, then, as the object of thought or sensation, and that which judges or contemplates, are in the right condition, the activity will have its pleasure; for when both subject and object are unchanged and in the same relation to one another, the same

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*Memoria et Reminiscentia* 2.452a.27-30). One might say that contemplation entails perfect recollection, seeing how things go together, a process that has been bettered and inspired by learning: “Neither practical wisdom nor any state of being is impeded by the pleasure arising from it; it is foreign pleasures that impede, for the pleasures arising from thinking and learning will make us think and learn all the more” (*Nic. Eth.* VII.12, 1153a.22-24 Ross).

result naturally follows” (X.4, 1174b34-1175a.2). What seems to keep contemplation from continuing and even being active at all, however, is not only the deficiencies of the person but also the deficiencies of the things around the person.

### *GOOD MAN IN POLITICS*

#### **Good Man and His Relationship to Others**

Thus we come to the notion of the good man ordering himself and everything around him for the purpose of contemplation. Again, the active virtuous life is not just being in a certain state of virtue, but is the constant ordering of one’s self (ideally one’s full self) with everything else in light of the good (accounting, of course, for his ability to stay the same in changing situations), which eventually must lead him into politics. The good man orders himself (often after a foundation being laid by his parents or someone else in ordering him by habit in the beginning). Then he is ready to order the polis in similar fashion, starting at the level of habit with laws. He orders it to the end of good friendship. Just like the good man is most active in having a few good friends, the state will be most active in so far as it promotes such friendship, or perhaps at least the social virtue of amiability described in IV.6, the virtue of treating people the right way.<sup>302</sup> The constitution must help make a polis that promotes virtuous acts: again, “virtue consists more in doing good than in receiving it, and more in doing fine actions than in refraining from disgraceful ones.” This is because essence is concerned with activity: we become virtuous by “actively being active” (IV.1, 1120a.12-14), which seems the spirit of Hintikka’s active virtue discussed in Chapter 4 (The prevention of

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<sup>302</sup> Amiability “differs from friendship in that it implies no passion or affection for one’s associates; since it is not by reason of loving or hating that such a man takes everything in the right way, but by being a man of a certain kind” (IV.6, 1126b.22-25 Ross). Intimacy with a person should affect how one treats that person.

the development of virtue through the constitution is one of Aristotle's main critiques against communism.)

Now, again, we must change the impression that Aristotle thinks good people should isolate themselves. Aristotle is high on self-sufficiency, which contemplation as an activity has in the highest degree compared to any other human activity (X.7, 1177a.28-30). There is self-love in loving the authoritative part of oneself and gratifying it, that which is most truly the man: "intelligence always chooses what is best for itself, and the good man obeys the guidance of intelligence" (IX.8, 1169a.17). But self-sufficiency is not the only value in his *Ethics*; the good man is also good in the broader sphere of actions, doing highly noble deeds over pettier ones, working for his friends and state; he will even allow friends the opportunity to do something fine, if he gets a finer honor from it. This person loves existence and exists more through his acts, such as beneficence; one exists more and is happier through fine activity, as we see in IX.7.

As I mentioned earlier, this person may seem self-centered; this self-love, though concerned with doing fine things, still seems self-seeking at points. But perhaps, as with letting the friend do the fine things, this is a process of reasoning about trade-offs in light of what makes one more associated with the highest good, though this may still be isolationist. Thus for Barnes it seems that in the *Ethics* Aristotle is not much concerned with the effects of actions on others (or how their morality might be affected); Barnes' Aristotle is concerned with the character of the virtuous man and how that man can primarily enlarge his own portion of happiness (Xxix-xxx). But for Aristotle the whole point of studying ethics is for politics, which should have as its end

the bettering of people. One can first see the good man's valuing of others in Aristotle's promoting of the value of community, of being with others, a value best realized in the company of good people. We will see that the end of the good man is to be a good statesman with the value of friendship—to make more people good, to perpetuate a line of good people. There is an imperative on the good man to make good men, to get involved in politics and ordering, which is why *Politics* is so ethical (and the outcome may be the opportunity to contemplate more and have more to contemplate about).

Now, in one way, Aristotle struggles in the *Ethics* and *Politics* to deal with the isolation of the good person, who is separate from everyone else almost like the virtue is separated from the faculty, and functions with self-sufficiency but still needs others to function best, which is true for even contemplators, just as the just person needs others to be just towards (1177a.35). Similarly, in VIII.1 Aristotle starts out by saying how necessary friends are for living the good life, for opportunities to be beneficent and the extra help in preserving one's stuff, and in VIII.5 he talks of how the supremely happy are the least suited for a solitary life; these sentiments are brought together in IX.9 where we see that good friends (i.e., friends that are good) are needed to keep up constant activity, apparently of even doing and of contemplating the good/order).

The goodness of the friends and thus the goodness of the friendship allow for enduring contemplation, and thus we see the importance of ethics for reasoning again: perfect friendship is among good people and last as long as the goodness of the partners last, and goodness is an enduring quality (VIII.3, 1156b). Those who are good have the easiest go of reasoning regarding their good friends, whether it be in a joint activity or in how one might treat the other; their goodness makes them constant: "being steadfast

in themselves, they are steadfast also towards each other [...]" (VIII.8, 1159b.4-5). As we see later "the love of characters" or "friendship based on character" endures "because it is self-dependent" or "disinterested" (IX.1, 1164a.14 Ross former, Thomson latter). Good people get on easier in reasoning, especially in reasoning about what should be done in matters between themselves or in advising the other or in understanding the situation/action of the other that has been reported to one. They have the constancy, coming in part from the constancy of virtue itself, which is so important for any kind of reasoning, which is, after all, an ethically judgeable activity. Bad people do not have the constancy for reasoning because they are not constant and ordered themselves (and one might say they don't want it). In IX.4, Aristotle speaks about the full integration of the good man towards the good and the person's unity; the bad person is inconsistent in such matters, being vicissitudinal in his desires, even seeming to hate himself and being the type of person that tries to meet this pain with superficial pleasures; the bad person is faction (see also IX.6, 1167b.5-15 where this type of person wants to put pressure on others while not wishing to do what is right themselves).

Again, one needs friends to be active which is what happiness is, not simply a state; and he will be made happy by contemplating these actions and the actions of his good friends which are the same as his own. For example, he will receive pleasure from these good actions being his own, and he will delight in his good neighbors having good actions because, for one reason, these belong properly to the good, and there is pleasure in the proper fitting of things here—justice (IX.9, 1169b.26-1170a.3). Moreover, the sense that one gets from reading IX.4, 1166a.23-29 and XI.9 is the importance of contemplation of good things and actions for the happy person, whenever

they occurred, so he can use his memory to take pleasure in good acts performed by himself and other good people in the past; he can take pleasure in his present good companions and all of their acts together; and he may even get pleasure from the contemplation of acts that have been yet to be performed but he know will happen because of the constancy of himself and his good friends. He may get pleasure from knowing he can contemplate the just order of things tomorrow. One also has pleasure in being aware that one possesses good things, such as life, which is especially pleasant and good for good people. The good man's existence is desirable for it is by nature good: "in [the good man's] own case the consciousness of his being is desirable, and so therefore is the consciousness of his friend's being, and the activity [or actualization] of this consciousness is produced when they live together, so it is natural that they aim at this" (X.12, 1171b.34-35 Ross). Finally, in IX.12, Aristotle seems to imply that good men can participate in activities together around a number of activities, and that evil friends make each other more evil and good men make each other better by their shared activity and sharing in their idea of good/pleasurable. In X.7 we see the best activity for them to share in is contemplation, though it is an activity that the perfection of which marks self-sufficiency. And for Aristotle this might actually mean that friends coming together once they have mastered this activity is even more honorable than in other cases, like a king who is complete and turns his attention to making his subjects happier.

To get to such places, the good man must be in a situation that allows such friendship, and to have such a situation requires a just ordering of the state. Contemplation, in several ways, then, presumes justice. We see in the *Ethics* that the



good man is the right man for this job: “The person who makes the best use of any given thing is the person who possesses the relevant virtue [...]” (IV.1, 1120.6), and so it would seem that the virtuous person is able to make the best use of everything, objects, others, and himself in terms of virtuous ends.<sup>303</sup> One can see glimpses of this idea of getting the best out of others (and oneself) in his description of amiability.

### **His Natural Obligation**

One might say there is a moral imperative on the good man to participate in politics. For example, when speaking of the election of elders in Sparta, Aristotle asserts that “the worthiest should be appointed, whether he chooses or not” (II.9, 1271a.10-12). This seems to say something about how Aristotle believes the good man should ultimately play out in society. He may choose to be and actually be self-sufficient, but he does ultimately need to be in the society and make it better. And how could he not do his duty well, being a man of good state? We will see it is natural for him to do so.

Firstly, a polis is the natural end of man: “he who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god: he is no part of a state” (*Politics* I.2, 1253a.28-29). Yet we have already seen how it is better for the good man to be with others, and it is also presumably “impossible to secure one’s own good independently of domestic and political science” (*Nic. Eth.* VI.8, 1142a.9-10). We also saw the freeman’s responsibility of ordering in the *Meta.* XII.10 passage above, and what separates the citizen from everyone else is his sharing “in the administration of justice, and in offices” (*Politics* III.1, 1275a.22-24): further, “a

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<sup>303</sup> Of course, the brave man, say, may lose in battle to the more experienced who may not be brave themselves, just experience or used to winning, but the higher share of honor, a mark of virtue, will belong to the brave man (III.8; 1116b.15-19 in particular).

citizen is one who shares in governing and being governed. [...] in the best state he is one who is able and willing to be governed and governed with a view to the life of virtue" (III.13, 1283b.44-1284a.2). Finally, in III.4 we see that the salvation of the community/constitution is business of all the citizens like the different sailors to their boat:<sup>304</sup>

Every man should be responsible to others, nor should any one be allowed to do just as he pleases; for where absolute freedom is allowed there is nothing to restrain the evil which is inherent in every man. But the principle of responsibility secures that which is the greatest good in states; the right persons rule and are prevented from doing wrong, and the people have their due. (VI.4, 1318b.39-1319a.4)

The good man has the utmost responsibility for getting good out of other people and making the state self-sufficient. As alluded to above, it seems the good man is fitted for this perpetuation of good people: "in the same manner, and by the same means through which a man becomes truly good, he will frame a state that is to be ruled by an aristocracy or by a king [the possible forms of a perfect state], and the same education and the same habits will be found to make a good man and a man fit to be a statesman or king" (*Politics* III.18, 1288a.39-b.2).

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<sup>304</sup> At III.5, 1278a.9-13 and elsewhere, Aristotle excludes certain classes, such as artisans and husbandmen, from citizenry because they do nothing to make people just, which is the whole of virtue for him (cf. *Ethics* IV.1, and *Politics* III.13, 1283a.38-40). Of course, they do; they just don't enact laws; they can, say, be magnanimous in their own way and by the means they have, and even for Aristotle such a conclusion may be reachable (see below). In VII.9 he returns to this issue: since artisans and slaves cannot be made happy because they cannot be virtuous, he says, they should not be considered part of the state in talk of a happy state. Such types are necessary to the existence of a state, but not a part of it. The good man can only come about with political responsibilities—the ability and opportunity to administer justice. As for classes, the good man will at one time be suited to be a warrior and later to be a councilor (1328b.35-1329a.39).

In addition to the experience he gained from ordering himself in relation to everything else, the participation in order and virtue is why the good person is the logical choice for the making of a good people and a good state, which turns out to be the same thing. Now, it is apparent that, even with natural virtues, one does not become naturally or of necessity virtuous in the true sense for Aristotle. One needs aid; one needs instruction; one needs a good person or people who have come before. One might say the good person is created as other people named according to their property are created: “For from the potentially existing the actually existing is always produced by an actually existing thing, e.g. man from man, musician by musician; there is always a first mover, and the mover already exists actually” (*Meta.* IX.8, 1049b.24-26). The perpetuation of a class of virtuous people may be much like the perpetuation of carpenters, one carpenter “bringing up” another; this would best be done on a one-on-one basis, but as the many are not easily teachable and are habituated toward the bad, the force of laws seems to Aristotle to be the best way the good person has for bringing moral order in general to the city: “since we say that the virtue of the citizen and ruler are the same as that of the good man, and that the same person must first be a subject and then a ruler, the legislator has to see that they become good men, and by what means this may be accomplished, and what is the end of the perfect life” (*Politics* VII.14, 1333a.11-16).<sup>305</sup>

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<sup>305</sup> The ruler has some things at his disposal that the legislator may not have if they are separate, such as the use of imitation and the good example. Studying good men qua goodness helps us see the proper activities (and their pleasures) of human beings (*Nic.Eth.* X.5, 1176a.18-20), and if the good man is in position of power, his values can be persuasive. At least in Carthage, Aristotle sees a strong power in the leaders who are supposed “good” or happy to influence their subject to a notion of virtue or happiness: “For, whenever the chiefs of the state deem anything honourable, the other citizens are sure to follow their example; and, where virtue has not the first place, their aristocracy cannot be firmly established” (*Pol.* II.11, 1273a.39-b.2). See V.4 for examples of how vicious leaders can ruin a city or spark revolution, for they evince lack of stability and self-sufficiency.

Of course, the end of the perfect life is virtue, and this idea of the best life holds for the person as well as the state, “when virtue has external goods enough for the performance of good actions” (VII.1, 1323b.40-1324a.1). Aristotle ties the state to the person analogously and really, and it is often difficult to tell which meaning he is using. For example, he gets quite a bit of mileage out of treating the state as a person. He talks about the different classes as different parts of the soul or body of the state; in V.8 he talks about how the state, like a person, slowly builds or loses virtue; and in V.9 that “there may be a want of self-discipline in states as well as in individuals” (1310a.18).

But Aristotle goes beyond analogy to saying that the person and the state have the same end, and as we see in VII, there happiness is the same:

the happy state may be shown to be that which is best and which acts rightly; and rightly it cannot act without doing right actions, and neither individual nor state can do right actions without virtue and wisdom. Thus the courage, justice, and wisdom of a state have the same form and nature as the qualities which give the individual that possesses them the name of just, wise, or temperate.<sup>306</sup> (VII.1, 1323b.31-36)

This is an important common sense point to make, for many want to separate the moralities of the two. And as with a person it is better to have true virtue, which is complete, rather than natural virtue, so with states it would be better to have a virtuous state by virtue of all the citizens being virtuous: “for in the virtue of each the virtue of all is involved” (VII.13, 1331a.38). The state is like a whole person and there exists a moral obligation to help others share in the good: “Neither must we suppose that any one of the citizens belongs to himself, for they all belong to the state, and are each of

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<sup>306</sup> Another sense in which the state and the person have the same end is in terms of natural development, the family having the end of a state through the middle process of being part of a village.

them a part of the state, and the care of each part is inseparable from the care of the whole" (VIII.1, 1337a.27-30).<sup>307</sup>

For Aristotle, it is hard not to look at the virtue of each as connected with all, that the actions we do affect others and the virtue of all of us together. Indeed, in VII.2 he argues demanding justice for oneself but not caring about it for other or being unjust to others is irrational.<sup>308</sup> Yes, he does value self-sufficiency, but this seems to be because he believes that self-sufficiency is only acquired by being good and it is the best way of treating the other. For example, in *Nic. Eth.* IX.11 Aristotle tells us that the good person will try not to share his trouble with his good friends (though they would probably be best able to take it), but on the other hand, the good person will intervene in his friends trouble readily and without being asked, and this seems the best way to restore happiness to both. Thus Aristotle does not believe in self-sufficiency by itself but the self-sufficiency of good men that leads to the care of good men (see below).

Accordingly, he stresses the importance of moral education in democracy, not just self-sufficiency, because freedom is not to do as one fancies, and living according to the rule of the constitution is not enslavement, but salvation (*Politics* V.9, 1310a.25-36).<sup>309</sup>

### **How the Good Man Orders to the End of Friendship/Justice**

The reason of the good man is very important in this planning of education, for "virtue and goodness in the state are not a matter of chance but the result of knowledge and purpose" (1332a.30-32). Again, a virtuous act, to be virtuous, must be the

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<sup>307</sup> This quotation comes after a remark concerning the importance of public education for common interests, especially the practice of virtue, which expresses the communal value of the good man who, as a statesman, should strive to get the most out of education for perpetuating good people, as we shall see.

<sup>308</sup> One could extend Aristotle's person-state analogy to the effect that disregarding others is tantamount to apathetically watching one's limbs or faculties decay. One can see again the value of community in Aristotle's talk of the state as person.

<sup>309</sup> He also marks the misunderstanding of equality here too—thinking the just is equal, and what is equal is the supremacy of the popular will.

actualization of a virtue existing in the soul, trained into the soul by being taught what things to delight in and what not to. The good statesman has to consider the different parts of the soul and how things should be ordered in terms of superior ends, including how the activities of life for different people, who make up different parts of the soul of a state, should be ordered (1333a.33-b.5). Thus one finds here the consideration of ordering of the individual in coming to plan how to order the state as a person.<sup>310</sup>

In VIII.1, Aristotle tells us the good statesman, who is the same as the good man, should aim above all at education of youth for preservation of the constitution. Young people need to learn how to obey so that they may better know how to command obedience later, how to be ordered so that they know how to order later. As we have already seen, this ordering starts at the level of the body and proceeds by building up of habits. The “spirit of obedience to law” is to be “jealously maintained,” especially in small matters since virtue can be corrupted most easily by beginning in small transgressions (V.8, 1307b.30-34),<sup>311</sup> and this spirit of obedience may be the desire to do the right thing for the right reason (for the person of the state).<sup>312</sup> After all,

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<sup>310</sup> Aristotle believes that the legislator “should direct all his military and other measures to the provision of leisure and the establishment of peace,” but he is to blame if the people cannot handle this leisure and the state deteriorates (*Politics* VII.14, 1334a.4-11): “For men must be able to engage in business and go to war, but leisure and peace are better; they must do what is necessary and indeed do what is useful, but what is honourable is better. On such principles children and persons of every age which requires education should be trained” (1333a.41-b.5). Aristotle tells us that “leisure and cultivation may be promoted, not only by those virtues which are practiced in leisure, but also by some of those useful to business,” which Jowett marks as virtues of the speculative and practical classes respectively (VII.15, 1334a.18; Footnote 67, 1299). Thus states have to have certain virtues to enjoy times of peace: “Courage and endurance are required for business and philosophy for leisure, temperance and justice for both,” especially when people live in abundance (1334a.23-34). We again see here the importance of moral virtues for the exercising and sustaining of the exercising of the intellectual ones.

<sup>311</sup> The principle to keep virtue in mind even in the little things shows up in Aristotle’s education recommendations: “there is nothing which the legislator should be more careful to drive away than indecency of speech; for the light utterance of shameful words leads soon to shameful actions” (VII.17, 1336b.4-6).

<sup>312</sup> In II.7, Aristotle gives three causes of crime: want, cessation of desire, and desire for superfluities so one may enjoy pleasures unaccompanied by pains (the cause of the greatest crimes); interestingly, Aristotle says philosophy only will cure the last, since its pleasure alone does not depend on anything

“good laws, if they are not obeyed, do not constitute good government” (IV.8, 1294a.4). And one way the person of the state is developed is through education of the young: that which contributes most to the “permanence of constitutions is the adaptation of education to the form of government,” training the young in habit and education to the spirit of the constitution to the end of performing the actions that make the form of government possible, for “there may be a want of self-discipline in states as well as in individuals” (V.9, 1310a.13-22). This is the perpetuating of good people for the perpetuation of good government (or at least the people as good as they can be).

Now, “the good *ruler* is a good and wise man, and he who would be a statesman must be a wise man” (III.4, 1277a.15-16), and there needs to be a good and wise statesman to get the best out of the people, even if it means settling for an imperfect form of government (cf. IV.1):

those who care for good government take into consideration virtue and vice in states. Whence it may be further inferred that virtue must be the care of the state that is truly so called, and not merely enjoys the name: for without this end the community becomes a mere alliance [...]; and law is only a convention [...], and has no real power to make the citizens good and just. (III.9, 1280b.5-11)

Ideally, the good man here creates more good men: “In the perfect state the good man is absolutely the same as the good citizen; whereas in other states the good citizen is only

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else (1267a.8-13). Now, the beginning of reform [of people] in the city “is not so much the equalization of property as to train the nobler sorts of nature not to desire more, and to prevent the low from getting more [without being ill-treated]” (1267b.5-10). That is, the beginning of reform is to get people to start valuing thing in accordance with the mean, thinking of themselves rightly, things rightly, and their relationships to things rightly. And one sees later that it is important to do these actions for the right reasons; punishments are made in accord with the right principle, but actions done for the good are more productive of virtue in general (VII.13, 1332a.12-15).

good relatively to his own form of government” (IV.7, 1293b.5-7). This perfect state is the highest form of aristocracy, and a message one gets from V.8 is that stability in oligarchies and aristocracies comes from good men ordering things well, treating people justly; stability comes not from the government itself but rulers on good terms with the classes (1308a.2-14). Thus the way to preserve the community is to focus on making people good and the state good at once.<sup>313</sup> In III.4, Aristotle tells us prudence “only is the characteristic of the ruler: it would seem that all other virtues must equally belong to ruler and subject,” but he later adds that the good man and good citizen can coincide in ruler and others who administer public affairs, which is consistent with his ideas of the good ruling by natural right and equally ruling, and this number may increase to fit the appropriate size of the state ideally (1277b.25-27; III.5.1278a.40-b.5).

Later Aristotle makes the point that since “the end of individuals and of states is the same, the end of the best man and the best constitution must also be the same [...],” (VII.15, 1334a.13-14). And earlier, in hierarchizing rulers in terms of safely preserving justice (customary law, a man, written law), Aristotle is giving hints of how the good man may best order the state—by making it accord with nature—custom being a type of habit, which is itself second-nature (III.16, 1287b.3-8).<sup>314</sup> After all, “the law has no power to command obedience except that of habit, which can only be given by time [...]” (II.8, 1269a.20-21).

One can say politics is all about bringing a natural order to things, and pervasive through the *Politics* is the ideal of nature, the ideal that the universe runs smoothly

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<sup>313</sup> The idea is to make more good people than bad. In V.9, Aristotle tells us that the greatest preserving principle of states other than the mean is that loyal citizens be stronger than the disloyal, and it seems the best loyalty will be seen from the best men in the best state (cf. 1309a.33-39).

<sup>314</sup> As we saw above, properties become permanent through nature becoming properly called second nature.



when everything is what it should be. We see that nature makes nothing incomplete or in vain—mammals produce milk for their young; plants are for animals; plants and animals are for man. Aristotle even uses this ideal to support his notion of just war, which is waged “against men who, though intended by nature to be governed, will not submit”; these are men not coming into order with the good (I.8, 1256b.20-30).<sup>315</sup> Now, Nature “makes each thing for a single use, and every instrument is best made when intended for one and not many uses” (I.2, 1252b.3-4), and the good man seems fit to bring about this actualization for things: “the good man is he for whom because he is virtuous, the things that are absolutely good are good; it is also plain that his use of these goods must be virtuous and in the absolute sense good” (VII.13, 1332a.23-26). He knows how to use things for their best end and how to put things in their natural or excellent state.

The state seems to have the potential to be the utmost of human ordering. That is there is nothing higher that can be ordered by humans qua the actualization of human virtues. Ideally this ordering would allow for the greatest participation of humans with the order and virtue of the universe. The ordered state not only allows the good man more opportunity to contemplate, but it makes the contemplation smoother and more pleasant, since there are more things in harmony with the ordered universe and God.<sup>316</sup>

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<sup>315</sup> This is actually the last priority when speaking of a just war for Aristotle; see VII.14, 1333b.38-1334a.4.

<sup>316</sup> Aristotle alludes in *Politics* VII.3 to certain ethical principles we have been discussing. Yes, the actions of a ruler cannot be honorable unless he is really superior, and those superior in virtue and capacity for best action are most worthy to be followed. But the life of action does not necessarily have to be done in relation to others, but can be done in deliberation and contemplation which are “independent and complete and themselves” (1325b.20); again, one might say that contemplation is the end of political activity for the good man. And, again, what matters most here and in the life of states, even those in isolation, is activity (in light of the good)—the moving of the parts on one another and one might say for one another in light of the end, Aristotle even bringing up the notions of God and the universe as things that need such an idea of self-contained activity to be perfect (1325b.23-32).

Again, for Aristotle, a state is the *natural* end of a thing that starts with families, develops into a village, and several villages then become the state. A state is the final cause of families, “continuing in existence for the sake of a good life” and becoming self-sufficient (I.2, 1252b.27-35-1253a.1), and as we have seen, it seems to be the final end of man—to live in (a) community; “a state exists for the sake of a good life, and not for the sake of life only [...]” (III.9, 1280a.31). Self-sufficiency is greatest in the state, as compared to family and the individual (where it is lesser and least respectively) (II.2, 1261b.10-14).

To be self-sufficient, there must be fertile grounds for friendship in the state, and we saw above the importance of self-sufficiency for friendship. Contrastingly, Aristotle tells us that the job of the tyrant is to undermine the possibility of friendship, to make men suspicious of one another: “a tyrant is not overthrown until men begin to have confidence in one another; and this is the reason why tyrants are at war with the good [people ...]” (V.11, 1314a.17-19). Confidence can only be among people insofar as they are good, and being good they are loyal to one another and do not inform against one another, because the person is good and the other good and out of respect for the good, as we saw above.

Friendship is actually the right way to preserve a state: “friendship we believe to be the greatest good of states and the preservative of them against revolutions” (II.4, 1262b.7-8). Moreover, friendship is important to establishing a true community, for bringing families together to pursue well-being, a self-sufficing and honorable life in the state (III.9, 1280b.33-a.2). One can get a glimpse of what Aristotle is talking about regarding friendship in the state and for the state when he talks about concord or

unanimity (*omonoia*) in *Nic. Eth.* IX.6: “a city is unanimous when men have the same opinion about what is to their interest, and choose the same action, and do what they have resolved in common” (1167a.26-28 Ross). Concord, with its connotation of harmony, may be the more appropriate translation, for this oneness of mind or reason, for this political friendship that exists really only among good men, who are constant and “wish for what is just and advantageous, and these are the objects of their common endeavour as well,” but can only exist to a limited extent among bad men (1167b.5-9 Ross). It is a type of friendship that would allow the common class and the better class to agree to let the best men rule. It seem a state where there is “proper” order and everyone knows one’s place and understands one’s duty in how to make the state self-sufficient, to get what they all want.

Thus for friendship to be (as well as self-sufficiency) there must be good people as well as justice: “Each of the constitutions may be seen to involve friendship just in so far as it involves justice” (*Nic. Eth.* VIII.11, 1161a.10 Ross). Justice is the principle of order in society (*Politics* I.2, 1253a.39). Again, true justice is the whole of virtue, and political science seeks this highest good—the good for all (III.12, 1282b.15-18): “governments which have a regard to the common interest are constituted in accordance with strict principles of justice, and are therefore true forms” (III.6, 1279a.18-19). Of major concern to the common interest is equality, which is considered in two ways—by number and proportion—which, in accordance with Aristotle’s stress on proportion, should be used proportionately in a typical state, for “men agree that justice in the abstract is proportion” (V.1, 1301b.36). In V.1-2, one sees that while inferiors revolt that they may be equal and equals that they may be superior, the

virtuous, being unequal, have the best right to rebel but they are least inclined to do so. And virtue is important when considering justice and proportionate equality. In V.3, one sees that Aristotle is not just talking in terms of property equality but also just treatment in terms of the people's virtue and vice; justice in a state must also be of moral proportion. Thus, for example, one sees the importance of the proportionate doling out of honor, for "men are easily spoilt; not everyone can bear prosperity" (V.8, 1308b.14). From this one sees why Aristotle argues that property should be private, but the good legislator should be focused on getting people to share it; the possession of private property means that one has an opportunity to acquire proper self-love and act virtuously by giving to friends and others, as well as set a good example for others (II.5, 1263a.38-1263b.3). Again, for Aristotle, the beginning of reform [of people] in the city "is not so much the equalization of property as to train the nobler sorts of nature not to desire more, and to prevent the low from getting more [without being ill-treated]" (II.7, 1267b.5-10)

We also see again the good man is necessary for finding the true idea of justice, which is why Aristotle turns to putting ethics into practice through politics in *Ethics* X.9.<sup>317</sup> And the good man is also needed for this process of actualizing people through the good state, which seems to mean at the end of the day that the many in the state are meant to be "instrument[s] of action" for the state (I.4, 1254a.17).<sup>318</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> In III.9 and elsewhere one sees that it is imperfect ideas of justice that destroy a state; for example, people thinking that equality in one thing means equality in all or inequality in one thing means inequality in all. We see in II.9 the importance of consistency of the law with the "idea and *character* the lawgiver has set before his citizens" (1269a.29-33 my emphasis). This character can be bad one or lopsided in virtue, as we see in the discussion of the Lacedaemonian constitution, e.g. II.9, 1271b.2-4 and 1271a.1-2, 12-27.

<sup>318</sup> At least part of this conveying of the true idea of justice is conveyed through speech, though this does not necessarily mean argument, which Aristotle belittles in terms of bringing people to the good in *Ethics* X.9.

## Natural Political Order

The order the good man seeks is through the nature of natures and nature itself. The idea of ruling and being ruled, the naturalness and necessity of order, “originates in the constitution of the universe; even in things which have no life there is a rule principle, as in a musical mode” (I.5, 1254a.32). For Aristotle, he who understands or reasons this order best (since the universe is reflective of reason), the person who has actualized his best part, is more fit to rule than the person who merely “apprehends” the rational principle that actualizes a person.<sup>319</sup> The slave by nature does well to have such a master, such as in the form of a political leader, so he may participate in the highest good (as befitting his own nature). Of course, one can see a contradiction to this in terms of forced labor in that nature often does not provide corresponding body types, which implies that nature does not intend for men to rule over others in this way. But in terms of making people better or making people act better Aristotle may be consistent. In I.13, Aristotle lets the reader know that, like the different parts of the person have different parts to play in becoming virtuous, so do freemen, women, and slaves, rulers and subjects, all have their part to play in making a good society. The special virtue of all must be actualized, and the ruler “ought to have moral virtue in perfection, for his function, taken absolutely, demands a master artificer, and rational principle is such an artificer [...]” (1260a.16-19). Again, we see the importance of moral and intellectual

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<sup>319</sup> In III.16, we see the good man has a right to rule (and two good men are better than one in such a capacity, and it wouldn’t be right for equal to simply rule equal). Some reasoning for this rightness of rule is given earlier, such as in III.13 when he is discussing what to do with the person who is pre-eminent in virtue in a democracy. Ostracism sounds wrong and so does making them subject, leaving the only alternative of letting them rule as in proper accord with nature: “The whole is naturally superior to the part, and he who has this pre-eminence is in the relation of a whole to a part” (III.17, 1288a.27-28). This makes sense in what he says at III.8, 1281b.3-15 about a democracy being like a good person in having the parts of virtue in the individuals that make it up. As we saw in the passage from Meta. XII.10, the good person has the whole of order or participates in it, as well as participates in virtue.

virtues together for at the least the rulers, the ideal of the good man who orders or artifices that we have seen, while most people only need the moral virtue for their part to play in achieving the virtue of the whole: e.g. “the courage of man is shown in commanding, of a woman in obeying” (1260a.23-24).

The good master should really be good, and not just know how to teach a slave to sew, because he is the source of the slave becoming good, and he should have contact with the slave with the intent of making the slave better, almost like a father to his child, “for slaves stand even more in need of admonition,” since their unsuitability for rule was a cause of them becoming slaves in the first place (1260b.3-8).<sup>320</sup> And Aristotle seems to be aware of such notions of objectifications and treating people as animals in places with perverted constitutions, which result in little friendship and justice, though he does not seem aware of the full moral import of this (VIII.11, 1161a.31-b.11)

Further, the end of the analogy at I.10, 1258a.24-25 is that a good politician (as manager of household does at his level) orders things that nature provides (to the good end that the universe “intends”—the final cause of order). One could go deeper in this analogy: “it is clear that household management attends more to men than to the acquisition of inanimate things, and to human excellence more than to the excellence of property which we call wealth, and to the virtue of freemen more than to the virtue of slaves” (I.13, 1259b.18-21). One could say the same are the concern of the good statesman.

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<sup>320</sup> We see earlier that a father’s rule over his children is something royal, “by virtue both of love and of respect due to age” (I.11, 1259b. 10-12).

The good man's object is natural order, to bring the state and its parts to their natural states. This order is the proper form of government, as we see in VI.6 that the preservation of an oligarchy depends upon good order, and contrastingly that the worst form of democracy is supported by the desire of the many to live disorderly rather than in a sober manner, which is why demagogues gain power, giving citizenship and other things to those who are unworthy of it (VI.4, 1319b.1-25).

Disorder is vicious, and well-administered states need the offices that preserve harmony and good order—justice, such as an inspector of contracts. Moreover, there are also offices characteristic of peaceful and prosperous states, “and at the same time have a regard to good order: such as the offices of guardians of women, guardians of the laws, guardians of children, and directors of gymnastic” (VI.8, 1322b.37-40). And as with the virtues of the person, there needs to be fitness of the organ and the activity: “that city which is adapted to the fulfillment of its work is to be deemed greatest” (VII.4, 1326a.14). This is the formal cause, and the good statesman, with secondary help from the citizenry, is the efficient cause of this. Also in the vein of fitness of organs, Aristotle tells us that the proper combination of magnitude and good order is beauty; states, having a nature, have a limit in size. The more people, the harder it is for people to excel in every virtue (III.7 1279a.40-b.2). That is, “law is order, and good law is good order, but a very great multitude cannot be orderly: to introduce order into the unlimited is the work of a divine power—of such a power as holds together the universe” (1326a.29). But the good man can use his divine bit in him to order the limited. One even sees in VII.11-12 that the good statesman should even have an eye to

geography and layout of the city, with a focus on security and beauty, an apparent arranging of the physical for the end of virtue.<sup>321</sup>

Finally, one reading of Aristotle has the good man really trying to become like Aristotle's notion of God, to which the world is ordered, at least mechanically, though it seems that the moral virtues are an important part of coming to the contemplative state, contemplating being the act most imitative of the divine, and staying there.

Contemplation seems to be a moral act itself—one bound up with pleasure, and order and good seem to be inseparable at the heart of the universe:

Let us acknowledge then that each one has just so much of happiness as he has of virtue and wisdom, and of virtuous and wise action. God is a witness to us of this truth, for he is happy and blessed, not by reason of any external good, but in himself and by reason of his own nature.

(1323b.21-25)

For Aristotle, ideally the good man tries to order everything around so that he can be self-sufficient for the purpose of contemplation. It seems that Justice is involved throughout the life of the virtuous person, as we have been talking about thought, activity, and life: Justice is an “active exercise,” and the “object of the judge is to be a sort of personified Justice,” or, as Ross has it, the “nature of the judge is to be a sort of

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<sup>321</sup> Of course, the good statesman can only do so much with what he has to work with. To craft a good state, he needs some goods ready at hand and to produce/provide others, for “virtue and goodness in the state are not a matter of chance but the result of knowledge and purpose” (1332a.30-32). The good man knows how to work with what he has to bring it about (or bring it about depending on the quality of what he has), but, as fitting with the organ-activity analogy, he needs some goods: “A good man may make the best even of poverty and disease, and the other ills of life; but he can only attain happiness under the opposite conditions [...]” (VII.13, 1332a.19-21). A certain supply of goods applies even to the making of people virtuous: “clearly those whom the legislator will most easily lead to virtue may be expected to be both intelligent and courageous” (VII.7, 1327b.36-37). In some countries the people have only one or the other or neither.



animate Justice” (V.4, 1132a.21). Likewise, the good person is to be a living justice, a living ordering.

### **Conclusion**

Before concluding these thoughts on the good person in the world, let us review what we have seen. As was mentioned in Chapter 4, John of Salisbury ties *property* to the probable mode without much explanation (I.15). I hope that I have shown that there is something to his claim, as properties are grounded in essence, which can be necessary or for the most part. I think Aristotle’s view of character development, in light of the concept of properties, allows us to see how character can be used as probable argument; *hexeis* not only allow us to talk of tendency but to also talk about how truth itself is persuasive, that the person of good character can have ethotic probability by participating in the good, as Aristotle famously says in the *Rhetoric* that truth has a natural persuasiveness to it (I.1, 1355a.21-24). One might even say that this is natural: to become more natural is to become better and more probable, while one might say the person becoming worse sees the world as bad or without good, which seems a vicious thing for Aristotle.

One can see this character probability being drawn on in a number of ways. One can talk of its reliability and the person’s awareness of its reliability, i.e., one’s own use of one’s character in knowing and arguing, though there is the problem of knowing one’s true essence (see below). In Chapter 2, we saw something of this in the example of the young boy trying not to upset his friend. We could have talked there of how the boy was trying to actualize character in his statement (if he follows through on it), and

the actualization of character is one way of talking about how character works in argument and how the good person tries to order the world.

It seems ultimately that the good person strives to re/make situations to engage habitual ways of responding. That is, where the angry-stated person might look for a way to make or interpret the situation where he can respond in anger, the good person will see the good that can be done in a situation and do it.<sup>322</sup> The good person tries to create a world where he can do good. This is not so much a revisioning of the world but a proper visioning of it as it ought to be, the arranging of the world for freedom in its true sense—the doing of what one ought to do.

The permanence of properties/virtues/states for reasoning also comes into play here. There seem two extremes when talking about ethical situations: one is that the situation completely determines a person and the other is that the person completely determines the situation. The Aristotelian position respects the reality of both, and insofar as the person is stated (virtuously at least), the more he or she will be resistant to the scene. The existence of properties proper, especially essential properties, means that we cannot make the situation completely relative (or obfuscate the interpretation by just focusing on *semeia*). To make an ethical judgment one needs the person as a part and apart from the situation.

Now, many occasions to order and build virtue come through argument, especially oral discussion. That is, argument helps us to become good persons if we strive for it and practice using it correctly; to ultimately be a good arguer one must be a good person, or as Francis De Sales (not Aristotle) might put it, “To speak well we

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<sup>322</sup> It seems one cannot avoid aiming at some good in every situation, though only good people are aiming at the real good, in the right way, with true understanding of both.

need only love well.” And in argument we need exemplified the virtue of reasoning that we have been discussing, reasoning that is in a state of always striving for the good. Again, for Aristotle, the virtue of reasoning is not just an excellence but an activity, an activity to gain and act in accord with other excellences, as to borrow a metaphor from Boethius, dialectic “attempts to wrest what it wants” to gain universal knowledge (IV.1206d.15-16).

The virtues, both moral and intellectual, seem related to logic or its use. One could extend to any investigation the idea that “it is virtue whether nature or acquired by habituation, that enables us to think rightly about the first principle” (*Ethics* VII.8, 1151a.20).<sup>323</sup> One can also see such notions reflected in dialectic, as well as dialectic in argumentation: it is the trained dialectician who is usually the only one that can bring a clear portrayal of definitions and first principles to the table. She will have to have moral training so as not to be susceptible to being moved by baser pleasures. This is not to say she cannot be rhetorical, for one might argue that for Aristotle rhetoric can still be pleasant for the soul in the perfection of the rhetorical act, i.e., when it actualizes the highest object in the soul, contemplation, insofar as it draws on definition, a “certain type of contemplation” (*Ethics* X.4, 1174b.32-33).

Finally, as we mentioned above, knowing how to act well in a situation is dependent somewhat on knowledge of oneself, the moral perception of oneself. As we have seen elsewhere, at a basic level, one knows oneself because of the outside world and one can know character or something of it through this relationship to the world

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<sup>323</sup> Aristotle seems to express the connection of virtue, thinking rightly, and first principles in the *Metaphysics*: “For that which is *capable* of receiving the object of thought, i.e. the essence, is thought. But it is *active* when it *possesses* this object. Therefore, the possession rather than the receptivity is the divine element which thought seems to contain, and the act of contemplation is what is most pleasant and best” (XII.7, 1072b.22-24).

and others. But beyond this, one may wonder how one could possibly do this, how a supposedly “free-floating” or undefined self could find the proper relationship of itself to everything else to express the harmony of virtue. One aspect of the answer is the rest of the mind in knowledge; the mind is to rest in what it is meant for—virtue and knowledge—which gives it stability. Thus Aristotle speaks of the moral virtues as something that can be known, as knowledge; it is common for him to speak of knowledge being of the contraries as he speaks of the person finding his relationship to the extremes of a virtue here.

Another aspect is seen in *Nic. Eth.* II.2, where the golden mean is described as a way to acquire a moral virtue—not the mathematical mean but the mean ‘relative to us,’ “whatever is neither too much for us nor too little for us” (Barnes xxiii).

Acquisition of the mean relative to us means to feel things “at the right times on the right grounds towards the right people for the right motive and in the right way is to feel them to an intermediate, that is to the best, degree.” (1106b.21-22). It seems a type of knowledge to know how to do this (1109a.24-30), which bespeaks the importance of judging/knowing qualities of things and knowing ourselves. And as we saw, the active virtuous life is not just being in a certain state of virtue, but is the constant ordering of one’s self (ideally one’s full self) to everything else in light of the good. We also saw how properties help in coming to know something. And in terms of virtues they can help us know others and ourselves morally (especially how one might affect a given situation and how it might affect one).

This connection of virtue and knowledge is important, especially in light of the discussion above about virtuous people being the most active, and active for the good at

that. The person who knows herself the best, and one must be fully virtuous to be in such a state, knows the most accurately how she can affect the world and others, how to best actualize the good.<sup>324</sup> Another reason Aristotle could reject materialism, as he does in Book I of the *Metaphysics*, is that it prevents people from seeing how pervasive the effects of their actions are on other people and themselves, as well as how much thought must go into acting in the right way.

Yet, as mentioned earlier, Aristotle's very powerful conception of the good and how the good person can participate in it leaves something very important out: the person. Now, one could push back against my claims about how Aristotle sees or does not see personality, especially by drawing on the discussion of social amiability in *Nic. Eth.* IV.6. One could ask, does the friends' love for each other have anything to do with personality and not just their abstract character (see also IX.3, 10)? We see in IX.5 that friendly feeling implies 'intimacy,' as contrasted to good will, which may spring up all of a sudden, like at a sporting event. Yet in VIII.5 friendship is an activity and state; in the ideal form, friends choose each other and choose to wish them well out of a moral state, and in the friend restoration talk, there may be no value for the person, just the good character because it is good. It is thus hard to pin Aristotle down, but his general tendency is not to speak much about personhood; for example, we have seen elsewhere Bonaventure's claim that Aristotle does not have respect for the individual in his theory of the continuation of species (see Footnote 236; Chapter 4; and Appendix B). And in

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<sup>324</sup> This kind of reasoning could give us insight into not only Aristotle's notion of God as Good but others notions of God as God. That is, if I may make a metaphysical interlude, what I am talking about here eventually leads to how God is the God of logic in a different way than normally emphasized. God is the God of logic not only because God is the first principle, is the God of Order, and because he has complete being as we often tend to think about it (as I have been tending to talk about the real in terms of nature and values), but also because he has true personhood, having a fully developed, unbreakable character and completely understanding himself (and everything else).

light of Peters telling us that “only the beginnings of our habits are under voluntary control (ibid. 1114b)” (83), one could ask, if this is true, does it mean that personality (in the sense of will, free will) is erased from the ethical situation for a person in light of her states? If so, does the fully-stated good person, whether good or evil, lose all personhood? In relation to the ethical constancy of the other elements in the situations (and they will always be in a situation) these people, the good at least, may seem to become elements in a Burkean “pure persuasion” (*Rhetoric* 230). Again, Aristotle at least falls short in trying to describe the specialness of the individual person, even the good person, failing to address something that bespeaks another way human beings are connected to the good, the very human need to be loved for oneself.

## CONCLUSION

Compositionists, especially the ones interested in interdisciplinarity, may by this point believe that I have forgotten them, but I have had them in mind all along. This will become clearer after we summarize our findings regarding the distinction of Aristotle and Toulmin's logical systems.

Recall that Toulmin causes a breakdown in the relationship of logic and substance in a different way than Russell. The latter has some very problematic views regarding predication and universals; e.g., he tries to drive a wedge between linguistically based premises and perception based ones, by means of which he tries to throw out universals and thus syllogisms. We also saw how Russell tries to destroy the logical equality of particular and universal premises by avoiding a notion of essence; he also fails to realize the importance of essence to both logical validity and verity, as well as ethotic reasoning, and fails to set proper limits to formal logic. For him, logic does not seem to have a form at all, almost as if it is the total of philosophy or reality, whereas we saw that formal logic is more appropriately in the service of truth (and must be grounded to be so).

Toulmin, for his part, realized a great many problems stemming from the rationalist approach Russell represents, and his humanistic focus on the ethics of reasoning was an important counter to such thinking. For example, his focus on everyday argument in *Uses* was an important attempt at trying to get logic back to the real world and real people; i.e., his is an attempt to "humanize" logic again, to make logic serviceable for the complex ways human beings are in the world—thinking, feeling, other-concerned beings, as we saw with his use of *force*. Yet by hastily

rejecting some applications of formal logic and sharing some of the same biases as Russell, Toulmin does not ultimately leave reasoning much better off.

Toulmin, like Russell, has some of his own issues with predication and what the relationship is between perception and the formation of universals; we also saw how he works to reject universals, which are so important to reasoning, through his problematic distinction of statement types and rejection of simple assertions themselves.

Significantly, Toulmin and Russell also share cabin space on the boat of anti-essence and anti-dialectic, as both separate the syllogism from substance (and both have it in for universals). Toulmin comes at these issues from a different place, of course: where Russell was trying to formalize everything and throw out what he could not, Toulmin was trying to materialize everything. We saw how both methods are destructive of form, including the elements of form in material logic. We saw the separation of logical form from substance and the deformalizing of material logic more explicitly with Toulmin, though we saw—while discussing both Russell and Toulmin—that logic quickly becomes dangerous if it is limited to just subject matters or to just form.

Again, from two perspectives, the formal and the material, we examined Toulmin's failure to substantially ground his system. We saw that he believed the syllogism was mainly an empty shell, derived from a somewhat useless analytic standard that was mentally abstracted and unethically thrust on argument by people with questionable philosophies. Toulmin's critique of formal logics in general, though more appropriately directed at modern formal logic, mistakes the rationalist abuse of the analytical standard for its only use, not realizing logicians such as Aristotle derived their logical principles in part from observing everyday use. As we saw, deriving



principles of argument from everyday use was a goal of Toulmin's in *Uses*. However, Toulmin assumed from the beginning that analytic standards cannot be connected to such arguments. And this rejection is just one of several ways his system prevents evaluation of arguments in everyday situations and in other areas as well.

In particular, by throwing out the analytic standard (and thus any use for logical form), Toulmin effectively removes necessity from argumentation. And he (further) undermines probability by detaching it from a designatum, from substance and thus detaching logic from being, the good basis of interdisciplinarity, and leaves us only with field-dependency for evaluating arguments. Evaluating arguments in light of field dependency is made more difficult by the rejection of universals, simple assertions, and the logical aspect of modes, by the simplistic logical form Toulmin advocates, and by his vague use of terms (*field*, *backing*, etc.). That is, his terms work to obscure notions of authority and their use in arguments. Rejecting form and the connection of form and material logic results in a devolution of logic into mainly material logics, an infinite field of fields, perhaps even a field per individual. Moreover, with the limits on reasoning and evaluating gone, there is room for any given field, say the construction of a "scientific" or materialistic field, to take over logic. Toulmin basically gives us specific topics for specific data, which are really of no use at a more foundational or exterior level of critique.

Issues of authority are also linked with the problems of giving evaluation over to field dependency. That is, beyond the problem of rejecting the "logical authority" of form, there is here the problem of having no clear way of establishing authority, especially in everyday argument: there seems no field to tell us what field any given

conversation has to be judged by. Moreover, in Toulmin's system, there seems to be no clear field for saying how a field such as a scientific discipline is set up with authority.

In contrast, we saw the importance of essence and the grounded predicables/*topoi* for developing sciences. We saw that logic, even at the general level, has a form and a matter. We saw, for example, how the logical modes illustrate the close connections between formal logic and dialectic, of logic with substance; i.e., we saw how the field-invariant aspects of the modes are a way logic is grounded in the real. An important part of understanding how logic works is in understanding the relationship of formal logic and material logic (and how material logic relates to substance). The relationship of formal logic and material logic is crucial in the application of logic, including how logic is used in any given field or discipline.

We also saw that substantial dialectic, being over all deduction and demonstration, is a foundation for the evaluation of arguments in and across disciplines. Aristotle's principles of dialectic are the best way we found to describe and explain these relationships: the *topoi*, the predicables on which they are based, and the principal of non-contradiction which is foundational to both and their use. We saw how all of these principles of dialectic are outside the realm of field-dependency but important for the evaluation of arguments in all fields inasmuch as they help us find probabilities and necessities based in essence. We saw how properties in particular help us come to knowledge of the essence which may be one way of understanding Aristotle's notion of special topics. Again, examining Toulmin through an Aristotelian lens, it appears that the special topics are all that Toulmin leaves us with, albeit detached from dialectic.<sup>325</sup>

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<sup>325</sup> That is, how Aristotle sees property related to essence can help us glean why he uses *idion* to refer to a special *topos* in the *Rhetoric*, a *topos* that has come so close to the subject matter that it is now linked to

We also saw the importance of essence for reasoning about people on a foundational level, though we also saw that more than the basic essence of human beings, or perhaps a better understanding of it (which would include personhood), is ultimately needed for good reasoning for and about them.

Finally, to make one more comparison, Toulmin's system does not seem very interdisciplinary. Next to Aristotle's, Toulmin's actually sounds more conducive to the disciplines keeping to themselves and to the members of the disciplines becoming more arrogant in their fields by not understanding the grounds upon which their discipline can be challenged. Yet Toulmin does have his supporters under the banner of interdisciplinarity: e.g., those who advocate that Toulmin's system provides a way for students to evaluate or understand arguments across disciplines. As we saw, Toulmin's system is a way of seeing how arguments are arranged, but his terms need to be clearer and more substantial before we can talk about them, let alone use them for evaluation.

### **Significance**

There are a few reasons why some people might find this book a worthwhile read. (1) I present one of the most extensive comparisons of Aristotle and Toulmin that I have seen. (2) I also have not seen such an Aristotelian discussion of characteristics in terms of the *Topics*, showing the reaches of Aristotle's view of reason/order. (3) I have

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only it and is no longer general. These are not principles of a field, but neither are they something for general logic. Also, the way Aristotle thinks about the greater and lesser in regard to properties and how he thinks about properties in general is a way to think of the close connection he puts between general topics and special (*eide*) topics (a natural gradation as some see it). One could argue that special topics are literally the properties of a science, the premises that derive from the essence of the sciences or the aspect of essence it has taken to study. As all sciences study being in some way, arguments can ensue over where these properties more properly belong, and one can create tests to see if they belong less or are properties at all by comparing how other properties belong in other sciences. In connection with the matter of fields and special *topoi* discussed in Chapter 3, I will add here another way one can look at the problem of Toulmin's vague terms in the context of fields: properties can make up much of a field's warrants and backing, but Toulmin gives us no proper way for fields to enter into argument over these, no way to tell the difference between the essential and non-essential or what is derived from the essence.

also worked at describing the relationship of dialectical and rhetorical *topoi*, which is important for understanding the commonality of human beings. This work is not finished, but I hope have shown enough to hint at its application to Burke and postmodern theorists of dialectic. (4) I also hope I have shown the significance of general reasoning to a more developed idea of interdisciplinarity. A lot of interdisciplinary studies, centers, and movements simply center around a certain issue, need, or subject matter, but not as much thought is given to what the foundation for interdisciplinarity should be. Here we have grounds for an interdisciplinary discourse the Arts and Letters can participate in, directing, say, limited interdisciplinary views to consider the good and the purpose of human beings.

Indeed, all this logic talk has implications for the composition teacher, which is why I say I have had the compositionists in mind all along, for I believe that English Studies is the core, the hub, of the Humanities and even academic studies in general, or it at least still has the potential to be. While through distraction and neglect, composition's grip has loosened, it still holds the keys of rhetoric, poetics, and dialectic so foundationally important for understanding humans and the world.

However, I cannot offer conclusions for composition pedagogy, how to incorporate training in proper reasoning into the composition classroom, in the way such assistance is usually given. Proper reasoning cannot be taught through a complement of patches; it requires a reorientation of the entire curriculum, not simply of the composition component but of the entire university general education curriculum.

That is, many academics need to be reminded that proper academic training has at least two foundation principles.

(A) Students need to be reminded that all the disciplines in the general curriculum are basically in contention over what the world is and, most importantly, what human beings are. As argued earlier, the chunk theory of knowledge does a disservice to students, perhaps even preventing them from thinking critically. Of course, it is also a disservice to make them aware of the struggle and then give them unsuitable means by which to negotiate that struggle. This is where the humanistic, Common Sense dialectic we have been trying to describe and point to is so important, a view of dialectic that fully accepts the human being's desire to know and be rhetorical, to be active.

(B) Perhaps foundational to the first is the principle that academic training is a training of the whole person, as I hope can be gleaned from my treatment of Aristotle (the more illuminating justification for this claim could require, say, another long book on Plato, focusing on the *Laches*, *Gorgias*, and *Phaedrus* in particular). It is only in sifting through the great philosophical debate in light of the importance of the definition and understanding of human beings that critical thinking is even of much worth. Even upper-level, discipline-specific courses need to maintain this focus on the person and the discipline's relation to other disciplines. In other words, upper-level courses need to be taught with wisdom.

It cannot be said enough that liberal arts education is about the person and the person's inherent value, as well as ultimately making better people; of course, my view that has become clear here is that neither the proper perspective nor end can be gained by teaching that the person is obliterated by material, that the material world is more meaningful than the person. We saw something of this in Russell's denial of essence, that the separation of substance from logic has something to do with the denial of the person. We also saw how this denial of essence was a precluding of a binding order, which would be the preclusion of the good for Aristotle, in people and in the world, as well as the preclusion of meaning. As we saw with Toulmin, the misunderstanding of formal logic, especially the analytic standard, and its connection to material logics (through dialectic) has consequences. This misunderstanding results in a field of isolated fields that eventually must collapse on themselves or tyrannically dominate the others.

(5) What I hope I have outlined in this project is the usefulness of a well-grounded understanding of reason for understanding the Liberal Arts and its end, though, of course, there is much more to say in discussion of what the clear picture of the end should be. And, of course, much can be done to clarify the Good in light of which the whole person can be good and can have good relationships with others and the rest of the world. Hopefully, we have seen (following Hintikka's reading) the importance of Aristotle's excellence-view of reasoning for coming to such an understanding of the whole person and her relations with the world and others. This insight prompted us to articulate a concept of "ethos" as an activity pitched toward a good that is more than the preservation of a self from error.

Reasoning is not for the end of preservation of ethos but for being active in good, as the Good is the goal and purpose of reason, and is complemented in such activity by several other things (see below). Much of this activity has to do with how to teach other people to be good in light of the Good. Yet, we also need something higher, including higher in the moral sense, than what Aristotle provides to pull up our use of reason. Namely, though Aristotle has an admirable love of beauty and order, he falls short on Love and Person.

These turn out to be very important for dealing with the political. Yet Aristotle does prompt us to do something very important here, to look at how achieving an ideal community requires more than the notion of an ideal community. It requires something that the community and the individual person can both be seen as good in light of, in essence and in the potential they try to achieve. This higher thing is not simply an ideal vision of the polis, an ideal which usually results in such thinking as, “if only we can win this issue or pull this cord, or, often, silence this group of people, things will be great,” which are, of course, dangerous ways of thinking (for one, they often forget the continual obligation of the other that is needed throughout life). This higher thing is the good which gives people their worth and the light by which we are to understand others and how we should interact. We are reminded, then, that such issues as abortion or providing for the poor do not simply exist in some flat political plane, but are to be thought about in terms of something higher which casts a clear light on everyone and everything involved, including the ends of these. Does Aristotle give us a complete, perfect picture of this Good? No, but he does give us a place to start.<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>326</sup> If I may speak to one of my fields, Aristotle’s thinking on character, activity, politics and the Good as the end for all of these can help us also reinvestigate how to teach literature better. Much literature today

(6) Finally, I have tried in a small way to reopen the grounds for argument to and for the Good by reweaving the threads of being from the perspective of reasoning.<sup>327</sup> Rhetoric, my field, needs to regard balanced reasoning. While newcomers are trying to sort through ‘Big Rhetoric,’ they must be made aware of Aristotle’s thought on reasoning while learning the *Rhetoric*, that rhetoric is bound up with being. Though I have not presented such an argument in its best form, I hope some may find it useful for such an end. Again, I have not made an explicit argument of what I think the Good is beyond the general foundation for being I am trying to articulate here, though I have left a few hints and have perhaps pointed the issue in a general direction.<sup>328</sup> Also,

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is taught through looking for a political cause in a story. That is, much literature is taught through a hermeneutic of specific *topoi*. The Aristotelian approach, which focuses on activity, character, their interrelation, and the way we see life primarily in terms of good and bad, can help readers focus on the commonality of human experience. This is an important concept for understanding and peace, and it is why we could once have a thing called the Humanities, though now many seemed focus on trying to find the infinite divisibility of humanity and everything related to it. They seek to nullify it, genus, species, and personhood.

Of course, Aristotle’s thought on character has a lot to say to other modern literary concerns and ways of doing criticism, especially how a significant aspect of the rhetorical situation, the author, has been put under erasure. Authors are real people bound up with some idea of the good that they are intent on crafting their work in light of in some way, and I think many people realize this when they do such smear criticism as to attribute something through the analysis of the work to the author that the author would find abhorrent. They use something like the unreasonable Freudian sectioning of the self to claim whatever motive they want to of a person, and Aristotle, especially in how he understands what one acts on and what one is are inseparable, shows how such reasonings are bad reasoning or even bad person reasoning. The importance of the commonality of human experience and restoring respect to the author is one way of seeing not only why I have dealt so much with character, but have focused little on giving an explanations of Aristotle’s thought as coming out of his “ancient Greekness”; many have put too much focus on this, believing that he is more ancient Greek construct than man.

<sup>327</sup> One could see the significance of the essence-property discussion in such a light. As Weaver argues, we need to have a notion of essence in order to speak of a true or truer potentiality. He compares the persuasive deception Hitler’s rhetoric wrought by adhering somewhat to the essence of humans and the natural order of things to Churchill’s rhetoric, which was able to overcome the former because it had a truer conception of reality, one that rang truer with the universal ethical person/perceiver (*Ethics of Rhetoric* 20-21 Footnote). The point I am trying to make with Aristotle here is that the way to avoid abusive rhetoric is not to throw out essence or a way things are altogether, which can only be done up to a point anyways and will be substituted with an artificial ontology (and pairs well with other devastating, politically aligned rhetorics). To avoid such rhetoric and make a rhetoric for the good, to avoid the total or partial erasure of the human being and also to get humans to be good, to understand their potential and how to get there, we need an understanding of human essence (including its causes) and thus its potential, the essence of the Good, the relationship of these, and their potential relationship.

<sup>328</sup> Of course, it could be argued that I preclude the pure relativist or the pure subjectivist from the discussion, but I think they, if they stick to their principles, have to eventually admit that they have



other related perspectives exist through which to view being and understanding, such as the emotions. For example, the sublime could be argued to be a type of universal response, one that even allows for the understanding of essence. Yet, I hope I have shown the dangers of not giving reasoning its proper place in such investigations, though I could have spoken more on keeping reasoning from growing too large in the proper regarding and understanding of human beings.

### **Limitations**

Now, I suppose the biggest “limitation” of the project is my acceptance of the principles of common sense and my belief in the existence of universals that can be known, either absolutely or, more often, for the most part. But, of course, I regard these principles as the type of limits that allow for true freedom. I would not say that I *assume* these, because universals or essences, for example, are first principles, and these cannot be demonstrated. We can only know them with probability, often through induction of them, their effects, and *aetia* (which can be later clarified with the help of dialectic).

Also, again, I was unable to cover much of what rhetoric in itself is, nor the Good that ties dialectic and rhetoric together, nor arguments from analogy. I focus on abstracting and describing dialectic, but I hope it has been clear that I am concerned with showing the connection of dialectic to rhetoric, especially Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*. I do make Aristotle’s belief clear that dialectic is over all good deduction or syllogizing and thus a great deal of reasoning, including the enthymeme; further, much of my talk of probability and fields points to a bond of dialectic to the common topics and special

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nothing to give to the discussion nor a reason to join. Indeed, they seem to voluntarily surrender grounds for an ethos appeal to join, though they still have that essence or personhood which requires that they be dealt with charitably.

topics of the rhetoric. Yet much more work needs to be done to show Aristotle's consistent dialectical mindset throughout the *Rhetoric*, including his thinking on the *pisteis* and how the *idia* (specific *topoi*) are based on *eikota* and not *tekmeria*.<sup>329</sup>

As for philological concerns, I admit I did not do a manuscript study of the Greek texts, but I was able to chart the decisions individual translators made with their expert knowledge of the texts and Greek. As for philosophical concerns, objections certainly wait from all over the philosophical community, such as over my use of *hexis* or my uses of *being*, but it should be pointed out that this project is geared more to the rhetorical community (and rhetoric is known for taking some premise as given). Also, I do not bother much about Aristotle's connection of the pursuit of virtue and the life of leisure. I think this is not only because I am, again, more interested in the good in Aristotle, but because of something I see John of Salisbury express well. John places virtue and wisdom, which he uses Victorinus to suggest are simply different in name but one in substance, as the highest things to be desired, and he sees that the Liberal Arts are so called because they can free a man to pursue wisdom, but he also points to a more significant meaning of Liberal Arts that can aid in rendering the leisure point moot (especially if one subscribes to his notion of Christian grace): "More often than not, [the Liberal Arts] liberate us from cares incompatible with wisdom. They often even free us from worry about [material] necessities, so that the mind may have still greater liberty to apply itself to philosophy" (I.7, I.12). Also, though I mention and

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<sup>329</sup> Again, the relationship of the arts to argumentation, especially in the public sphere, is hard to describe, but we short-change the complexity of *topoi* if we try to make a hard divide between dialectic and rhetorical *topoi*, which is usually the case when the rhetorical *topoi* are simply viewed as repositories of the acceptable premises of fields to be used in general argumentation or when they are described as the sole source, evaluator of, and explanation for a culture's set of arguments, which ends up setting an unnatural divide between cultures. Modern rhetorical *topoi* may turn out to rob us of *artistic* proof.

allude to some thoughts originating from scholars other than Aristotle concerning being and its relationship to reasoning and other important matters, I have not yet focused my research in such, ultimately, theological directions. No doubt, inconsistencies await to reveal themselves, obstructing the path to the notions I am trying to get at.

Finally, there are a number of limitations regarding the field of rhetoric and composition. I do not much cite scholars in rhetoric and composition, for many in this field do not write on the *topoi*, and many separate rhetoric and dialectic, if only because they do not know how they can be connected.

Also, this project was more directed at developing theory; one does not find here much exploration of how the things discussed would fit in a textbook or in a general curriculum. For one, the current structure of many general curriculums was too big of an obstacle to surmount. There does not seem to be enough time to develop the habits of good reasoning in the appropriate courses of the general curriculum, such as composition, introduction to philosophy, and perhaps math.<sup>330</sup> Moreover, many teachers, whether they teach general curriculum courses or upper level courses, are simply trained to think in terms of their respective disciplines, and thus do not teach and evaluate by criteria of general reasoning. It seems a great deal of the Liberal Arts education seeps out through the crevices among the disciplines.<sup>331</sup>

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<sup>330</sup> Yet I do believe that one can get far in teaching critical thinking through focusing on, say, Weaverian stasis theory (see Appendix F), the predicables, the *aetia*, and the basic forms of induction and deduction, which allow students to start intuiting issues regarding good reasoning. For example, when the student realizes that she is analyzing an argument from definition, she can start applying her understanding of the predicables (and the other *aetia*) for evaluation, and she can apply aetiological reasoning, say, when the issue is one of cause in particular or even an issue of authority. Of course, the basic forms of induction and deduction are often useful so that students can be aware of anything that deviates from these and be ready to test the reasoning.

<sup>331</sup> Of course, I am not saying that students or instructors should give up on being experts in their fields, but an understanding of general reasoning can help lead them to a wiser perspective on things. For example, the understanding of general reasoning will help students understand their own field of study

Finally, I do not touch on the all-important issue of the student's moral standing and focus before being taught dialectic (as well as the teacher's). As the issue now stands, many teachers have disassociated critical thinking from important moral impeti, perhaps out of the haste of trying to protect themselves and others from moralism. Yet many of the ancients rightly saw that the student has to have certain amount of moral development and maturity before being taught the art of dialectic and its exercises. For example, one needs students that at least realize the existence and importance of a Good to argue for and clarify, and who can be motivated to seek the truth in charity. Even students with these qualities, by perhaps being overwhelmed by the amount of things to consider that dialectical thinking reveals to them, can become lost and ultimately come to neglect or abuse reason and the good. And the student who does not know the importance of a transcendent good for reasoning and being, will likely view the good as a matter of human or even simply circumstantial caprice and will not be motivated to pursue or share the Good that she can.<sup>332</sup> Indeed, she will likely, with her misunderstanding of things (especially reason itself), fall in that unreasonable train of people that seeks to keep other well-intentioned and well-acting people from sharing or

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better and its proper place among the other disciplines and knowing existence. *Sophistic Refutation* 9 seems a partial commentary on the ideal relationship of the expert and dialectic. Aristotle tells the student of the art of dialectic that to exhaust all possible refutations one would have to have scientific knowledge of everything, for refutations sometimes depend on the principles of the sciences and the conclusions of these, and the sciences, and thus demonstrations and their contraries, may be infinite (170a.20-33): "Clearly, then, it is not of all refutations, but only of those that depend on dialectic that we need to grasp the commonplace rules; for these are common to every art and faculty" (170a.33-5). Further, it is the job of the scientist of a particular science to examine refutations regarding her science, while the "dialectician's business is to be able to grasp on how many considerations depend the formation, through common principles, of a refutation that is either real or apparent, i.e. either dialectical or apparently dialectical, or suitable for examination" (170b.8-11). One could say the complete scientist will have the dialectician's skill to see where common principles are being misused and being able to distinguish these types of refutations from refutations specific to his field. After all, "dialectic is a process of criticism wherein lies the path to the principles of all inquiries" (*Topics* I.2, 101b.3-4).

<sup>332</sup> Cf. John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio* 5

arguing for the Good or even understanding it better. She will thus preclude an important part of understanding and becoming good.<sup>333</sup>

### **Further Research**

I have been trying to use Aristotle to describe a view of dialectic that fully accepts the human being's desire to know and be rhetorical, to be active, and does not squash it under a misguided or too strongly imposed formalism. I hope a better view of interdisciplinary study can be developed that applies such an approach, a view that realizes academic training is a training of the whole person.

Reason has the capacity to be reliable in pursuit of the understanding and actualizing of being, and dialectic can be a great boon in making reason effective in this. Yet I do not believe reason alone, from simply being in the world, can absolutely grasp the Truth. Thus I am interested in discussing the different ways people come to Truth, such as conscience, emotions, "gut feelings," an inner teacher, etc., as well as the relationship of these to reason or even boundness with reason. Of course, knowing all things would make a person God, but the human being can know a great deal about the truth of things, and what truth one knows paves the way for understanding it better and seeing its connection to other truths. What is most needed for existence with others is the impetus to continue to seek the truth in charity, an activity that is a virtue. This impetus is ultimately grounded in a "transcendent," as is the case with the other virtues,

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<sup>333</sup> Such matters explicitly come to the forefront when the composition teacher assigns definition and argument papers. We try to stress the nature of opinion and its varying levels of authority, ideally so we do not "lose them" or to show them that arguing and defining is not simply a matter of finding an authority. And we may also try to get them to understand the nature of authority and its relationship to philosophy, philosophy being what one is most obviously doing in a definition paper. They must understand that, as I believe Aquinas says somewhere, philosophy to itself does not rest on authority. It is concerned with what is commonly discernible to reason, though it ultimately must work in terms of an authority, and this is where it pairs up with theology and faith in the Good.

and that this is so emphasizes the importance of a study of Faith and its relationship to reason.

A related issue that was not fully developed has to do with the connection of the right thinking on reason to the right thinking on people. Now, Aristotle has a lot to offer to such an investigation, much of it commonsensical and pointed generally in a good direction, such as how essence is made for essence and how, similarly, to possess virtue is to be possessed by virtue and that this makes for happiness—the connection of good and being. To be virtuous, for Aristotle, is to *be* to the utmost. The goal of human life is to be more alive, to be more being; that is, one is to be both noun and verb, to be both more real and more active, the one heightening the other, and it seems right to unify the good and activity. With all this, it seems as if Aristotle is trying to get others to understand that life is best lived out as an art, where one is trying to get the most good out of everything one does and everything. Yet he leaves quite a bit out (which may allow him to come to some of what we find as his more repugnant views, such as those on slavery). For example, the way he connects virtues and people almost presses one to look for a notion of person in the Good, and he leaves undeveloped the importance of what might be called a loving ordering.

I also want to continue to investigate more the exact relationship of essence and personhood in the person, if they are even separable, for it is clear to me that to just leave what makes a human unique to the human essence as many understand Aristotle to define it is problematic: that is, if what gives the human being its worth is simply rationality, we are on very dangerous ground. Though we do not see it much in Aristotle (for there is more to his idea of essence), many, with very limited views of

reason and its purpose and thus a limited view of the essence of humans, seem predisposed to hate the “less rational” by having such a definition. As we have seen, the disregard of general reasoning can result in the application of *rational* to a very limited sphere of reasoning indeed. Of course, Aristotle sees reasonability as an inherent part of existence and the Good itself, but the divine element he predicates in people needs to be elaborated so that people have cause to be loved and dealt with in charity, no matter how uneducated they are. A more complete notion of the whole person needs to be developed. For example, in the context of essence, properties, and personhood, one can argue that the human being is essentially a certain way, which necessitates a way which we should be treated, but we are also meant to be a certain way. In light of an individual person, when we talk of what she should be qua this uniqueness, what part of the Good she should seek to be the rhetor for while upholding the rest of the good is between her and God. And often this rhetor/activity is tied to one’s “occupation.” That is, we seem to come across here a notion of ‘sanctifying of the temporal order,’ which includes making the arts good, which is an idea that all members of the disciplines and arts can at least analogously grab hold of.

One purpose of reiterating the ties of being and general reasoning here is to open discussions again among the disciplines and arts concerning what the Good is more clearly (for it is bound up with being) and then to find the proper purposes of the disciplines in service of the Good. What is authoritative on a given matter or in a given field is ultimately bound up with the Good. I think much of this is latent in Aristotle’s ideas of ethos being the most persuasive in argument (and there is importance to reasoning and being with others in trusting good people for knowledge of what is true;

trust itself is an important part of human reasoning) and the intended end of the essence of man in the Good and (i.e., one is to take on the Good, to understand oneself in light of the Good, and to make over the world in light of it). The Good is ultimately all we have to go on for evaluating arguments via authority and evaluating authorities themselves.<sup>334</sup> The answer to the question of authority, what modern culture is so concerned with, comes in answer to a search for the Good.

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<sup>334</sup> One might even see, from the impulse of authority and reason to understand and the end of understanding being the Good, as well as with something of Aristotle's notion of how the human essence or the person ties with the Good, that the "who says?" is ultimately looking for the Good as a person.



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## APPENDIX A

Let us begin with finding what a property is exactly. One is tempted to think that it is some sort of catch all for Aristotle, one that is meant to bridge the crevasse between the essential (genus and species) and non-essential (accident), which might be why he cannot bring up the notion of an absolute property in the work without saying something about relative properties and temporary properties, though he is hesitant to call the latter properties. Another reason for believing these properties are in the middle somewhere is found in his definition of what is a property absolutely: an absolute property is “something which does not indicate the essence of a thing, but yet belongs to that thing alone, and is predicated convertibly of it” (*Top.* I.5, 102a.18-19), this convertibility perhaps making property an indicator of essence and thus perhaps a participator in probability.

In contrast, temporary and relative properties seem to act like properties in helping distinguish particulars (e.g. this man from that man) or things (e.g. *man* is separate from *dog* and *horse* by having two feet) respectively, though the latter is more properly definitory. Both ‘quasi-properties’ relate to his notion of accident in some way, “something which may either belong or not belong to some self-same thing,” which applies to particulars and sometimes universals in comparison: e.g., “Is the life of virtue or the life of self-indulgence the pleasanter?”: [...] “in all such cases the question is ‘of which of the two is the predicate more properly an accident?’” (102b.6, 18-20). That is, pleasure can belong or not belong to the life of self-indulgence, but seems typical of the life of virtue. Regarding particulars, an accident can become a temporary or relative property accidentally: “being seated is an accident, but will be a temporary property, whenever a man is the only person sitting, while if he is not the only one sitting, it is still a property relatively to those who are not sitting” (102b.22-24). This example shows us that accidents can be relative properties in a sense, but it does not show that all relative properties are impermanent. For example, water will always be set apart from rocks with liquidity, though liquidity does not distinguish water from everything else. But referring to these as properties may be helpful in understanding how Aristotle believes virtues to “stick.”

Thus one might ask in this light to which term, *temporary property* or *relative property*, does the predicate *accident* belong more accidentally. Aristotle seems to give us the answer in V.1, though he is rather unclear here in his use of terms. Here he gives us the idea that a given property may be called a property in one or two senses. (We also see that the temporariness that seems to attach to his first use of relative property appears accidental.) Being of particulars seems to be essential to his notion of temporal property, but *relative property* can be predicated of particulars in relation to other particulars, as well as concepts in relation to other concepts. When of the former, the relative properties are temporary and accidental, when of the latter they are permanent, but not necessarily absolute. For example of a relative, permanent property, Aristotle gives a way of relating the concepts of body and soul: “the one is fitted to command [*prostaktikon*], the other to obey [*huperetikon*]” (128b.18-19). These predicates could be said of many other things in relation to one another, so they are not *absolute properties*, but they are permanent: assuming one accepts the predicates as true, even if just for the most part or perhaps even just ideally (in the sense of what something ought

to be), these predicates and this relation will always hold in such manner.<sup>335</sup> When trying to understand a man of the past, present, or future, I can always draw on this relative, permanent property. When Aristotle comes to use *relative property* later on, he usually means in this permanent sense, and thus there is nothing accidental about his notion of property.<sup>336</sup>

The permanence characteristic is shared with absolute properties, “a property of a thing in its own right,” which is also called an “essential” property (129a.35). *Property* for Aristotle is a relative concept in all its applications, but what he is particularly interested in are these relative, permanent properties and absolute properties, for they are both stable and allow for reasoning, both pointing to or at least relying on the essence of the thing. As with relative, permanent properties, Aristotle makes no attempt to always connect the “for always” quality with the essential property, which is consistent with his thought on essence, which is sometimes for the most part (See V.5, 134a.5-11). So, though Aristotle does not name them, we actually have several types of properties proper: relative-permanent-for-the-most-part or in-most-cases, relative-permanent-for-always, essential-for-the-most-part, and essential-for-always.

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<sup>335</sup> See V.1, 129a.6-15.

<sup>336</sup> Book V of the *Topics*, which is concerned with considering properties proper, takes on these four types of properties, while the temporary, “so-called relative property” is finally dismissed to the accident realm (129a.32; see also V.3, 131a.33-38 for an example of Aristotle being intolerant of calling such things properties proper; he sees them throughout as something like anti-properties).

## APPENDIX B

As mentioned in Chapter 1, people are important for reasoning in a number of ways, but the undermining of *ethos*, even personhood, has been a theme of the last century and this one.<sup>337</sup> Scott and Brummett take a common path from rationalism, one that shortsightedly tries to deal with the moral issues surrounding the inability to achieve the (erroneously understood) analytic standard (See Chapter 2 and Chapter 3). Recall what Scott and Brummett do with their view of knowing and arguing, one that is limited to epistemological considerations and denies the possibility of essences. Recall, also, how Weaver (see also Appendix F), with his Common Sense notions, argues preemptively against the skepticism of such rhetorical scholars, a skepticism which straddles epistemology and ethics, denying stable ontological referents and producing ethical problems in dialectical argumentation.

Scott (12, 16-17) and Brummett see Weaver's type of view of rhetoric and authority as unethical, assuming the person who believes in an absolute truth is not responsible to that truth,<sup>338</sup> though they don't explain why this truth would have no authority over the person, such as a person who has submitted him/herself in dialectic to it, or after going through all the trouble to find this truth and believe in its existence and even form oneself according to it, why such a person would abandon it easily, would easily cease identification with it. Such a view seems to assume that there is no stability in character, a view that, if shared by everyone, must result in rejection of *ethos* as a rhetorical appeal.<sup>339</sup> They argue that subjectivity or intersubjectivity in ethics is liberating (though limiting choices of the good to circumstantial factors) and more evoking of responsibility (though the person must be totally determined by context, even in attempting to self-determine). Moreover, language use must be considered ethically, they argue, because it creates reality, and the person can choose which reality s/he wants to create. Though this seems like it would be an act and thus open to moral evaluation, it is still not clear how there is *ethos*, without which it would seem that any acts by a person are simply determined motions. This contextual-determinist view prevents free will in self-development, without which the notion of *ethos*, even if it can be argued that it still functions in the rhetorical situation, is never ethical since there can be no autonomous intent to do good.

Another way to see the undermining of *ethos* here is to argue that the person acting on uncertainty and circumstance cannot be held accountable, not only because the ever-shiftingness of everything would impair evaluation (those circumstances and uncertainties differ from the ones s/he is in now), but also because of the undermining of authority and *ethos* by the turn to relativism.<sup>340</sup> One might ask, "is there responsibility to a world that must always change?" Moreover, is there a good reason to accept that a creator has responsibility over what it has created and for sustaining what

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<sup>337</sup> Recall the importance of people for reasoning, that it is even important to reasoning, especially right reasoning, that we have people and their thoughts on things.

<sup>338</sup> The respect due to absolute truth and others from the impossibility of completely knowing absolute truth, an idea Weaver refers to on a couple of occasions, is not considered.

<sup>339</sup> Of course, most people recognize the idea that people can act contrary to what they value or turn on it, but this seems to be the old notion of *sin*, a problematic notions for most modernists.

<sup>340</sup> A similar undermining of authority is seen in Aune's discussion of critical discourse in "Cultures of Discourse: Marxism and Rhetorical Theory."

it has created (as opposed to letting it cease to exist, letting it be changed, or changing it) once ethos is nullified?

We can see this importance for knowing the world to the knowing of ethos in a different way. Lewis reminds us that relationships among humans, whether the individual is presenting him/herself to another individual or a group, require a “relatively independent and ‘inexorable’ Nature” (*Problem of Pain* 19). Lewis first takes on skepticism by arguing freedom of choice, which is necessary for the existence of ethics, “implies the existence of things to choose between. A creature with no environment would have no choices to make: so that freedom, like self-consciousness (if they are not, indeed, the same thing), again demands the presence to the self of something other than the self”:

People often talk as if nothing were easier than for two naked minds to ‘meet’ or become aware of each other. But I see no possibility of their doing so except in a common medium which forms their ‘external world’ or environment. [...] If your thoughts and passions were directly present to me, like my own, without any mark of externality or otherness, how should I distinguish them from mine? And what thoughts or passions could we begin to have without objects to think and feel about? Nay, could I even begin to have the conception of ‘external’ and ‘other’ unless I had experience of an ‘external world’? (20-1)

It is hard, if not impossible, to even imagine such a meeting without including Kant’s a priori concepts of time and space, but for Lewis these are not applied by the mind and to a certain extent they, and other elements of the physical world, have to work independently of the mind. We need a “neutral” matter through which to communicate, and if it is to be used to communicate it must have a fixed nature of its own, such as the dynamics of air and sound-waves. (In other words, we are again seeing the importance of the real expressed in Chapter 4, the tendency of the world.) We cannot have an idea of the other, much less his or her character, without the external world, and the external world is important for how we can express, act out, and develop our characters and understand the characters of others. Even the expression of bad character is important in this light; the essential nature of things, like steel and beam of wood being hard, may allow for the bad man to hurt someone, but, everything else remaining the same, we would not want to live in a world where these things were changed into a blade of grass just before they were used to hurt a person or a world where the air refused to carry our insults; we would not have freewill in such a world (24). Lewis’s argument is important to apply to the ultimate conclusions of the subjectivists, intersubjectivists, and skeptics:

If a ‘world’ or material system had only a single inhabitant it might conform at every moment to his wishes—‘trees for his sake would crowd into a shade’. But if you were introduced into a world which thus varied at my every whim, you would be quite unable to act in it and would thus lose the exercise of your free will. Nor is it clear that you could make your presence known to me—all the matter by which you attempted to make signs to me being already in my control and therefore not capable of being manipulated by you. (22).

In this light, one might argue the subjectivist and intersubjectivists must become skeptics, and these are in horrible isolation, never knowing whether one has acted, the

ability to actualize anything really having been ultimately precluded. Thankfully, the world is somewhat knowable which turns out to mean that we are somewhat knowable (though we may take from Chapter 4 that this latter premise is not one that necessarily has to be deduced in this way), and we can affect the world and the world can affect us. Which is not, of course, the same thing as saying I can obliterate the essence of the world or it can obliterate mine; that both are knowable means that we are somewhat stable. The relationship between human wills and the world allow for both virtuous and vicious action (24): i.e., “In order to submit the will to God, we must have a will and that will must have objects” (113). (One could also compare here *Gorgias* 481c-d for the importance of stable notions of the emotions for human reasoning and communication).

Speaking of morals, the idealist, or at least the person who believes in a somewhat knowable True and Good, can be held responsible through *identification*, being able to evaluate one’s actions in terms of the ideal or how they reflect on the ideal, and this identification allows for some standing or status of the individual, which is one of Weaver’s primary concerns. That is, one can say, there can be a right standing toward the Good that one should actualize as part of one’s essence, essence on the level of the person.

However, and here we see the importance of real predicables to ethical reasoning, what one could call the ethical nominalism of Brummett and Scott, the belief that there are no forms or essences of things or what goes for form or essence changes with context, is the old move of making an individual into a species, i.e., establishing a form for the individual, which Aristotle says is logically impossible.<sup>341</sup> This would mean asserting that one particular is genus of itself and species of itself, as in the Hegelianesque logic of Butler and Laclau. It would mean that accidentals become essential, become part of the thing’s essence instead of using them to distinguish this particular from other particulars of the same species. The laws of predicables, which validate syllogisms, could not apply in such a case. (I am not speaking of personality here but speaking to the tension caused by trying to eliminate a universal human ethical form; most people seem to hold the belief that all should be shaped in the same way toward the Good, e.g. all should be honest, and some philosophies and religions allow also for a unique relationship to the good that can be developed and gives the foundation for personal rhetorical actualization, a specific aspect of the Good to take note of.)

Such ways of arguing, however, show up in many places, often for the defense in ethical disputes where the individual is appealed to as the highest standard instead of some ideal standard (as part and parcel of the definition) for the species of humanity. E.g., a caught thief under prosecution might exclaim, “This is who I am and I gotta be me. Birds [species] gotta fly, and I [particular] gotta steal.” The thief simultaneously denies the standard of the species or even awareness of a species (that human beings do not or should not steal, that stealing is an accident or property in humans, i.e., one does not need to steal to be human) and asserts his own form. Actually, in so far as this example is concerned, he does not do even this, because he does not put himself into a class of thieves necessarily (unless stealing and thief are always convertible, but this

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<sup>341</sup> De Vogel, in *Topics* VI.6, 143b23-32, finds an argument against Platonic ideas being a genus because it, being an absolute unity, would contain opposite qualities (92).

question is put off here); he is not I: thief (or form of thievery). He “defines” himself through an act, which is always problematic for humans. Note that there is no genus in the thief’s definition here, such as “creature,” “animal,” or even “human” in this case,<sup>342</sup> not yet anyway. It will come when an authority, in this case the police or a judge, challenges him in argument by bringing up the concept of other things like him in species/genus.<sup>343</sup> The thief can either accept this “generation” of thief or of human or both (which he will be affected by on some level of consciousness or mundane existence because of the power of the authority) or, if he really believes in his Formal Individualism, that his reason is creditable without any external guarantee or standard (e.g., that he is capable of absolutely knowing that there is no truth) he can persist in a “Tigger Complex.” If he accepts the “de-generation” or “speciation,” even if it is of *thief* and it can be assumed that stealing is a property of humans, he will have to accept some form of humanity as valid (though it still may not be the law’s) and work at conforming what parts of him that are not like it (or, of course, some might argue, he can have a couple of forms [or even more, one being his personal form] in his mind and rationalize a position between the two.<sup>344</sup>

Now, one could try to categorize the thief’s argument as one from circumstance, but the thief’s value of himself or of the value that lets him argue in such a way makes it difficult to talk about him using an argument from circumstance, for the “I gotta steal” appears infinite to him, not even capable of being measured against other concerns. Perhaps, once the infinite value is limited, we can imagine him arguing from circumstance, or even arguing from some definition of humanity such as Nietzsche’s or Callicles’ or something like “Humans are endowed with the right to be themselves unto

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<sup>342</sup> A definition such as, I: thieving being, would still be without a genus for Aristotle, who saw being as too broad to really function as a genus.

<sup>343</sup> Lewis might see the importance of pain for such a coming to know the self:

Until the evil man finds evil unmistakably present in his existence in the form of pain, he is enclosed in illusion. Once pain has roused him, he knows in some way that he is ‘up against’ the real universe: he either rebels (with the possibility of a clearer issue and deeper repentance at some larger stage) or else makes some attempt at an adjustment, which, if pursued, will lead him to religion. It is true that neither effect is so certain now as it was in ages when the existence of God (or even of the gods) was more widely known, but even in our own days we see it operating. (*Problem of Pain* 93)

<sup>344</sup> The police or judge in this example seems also illustrative of how God works in the Levinasian system, making the “naturally atheistic” soul of the I:thief gain knowledge of it by positioning the I in terms of the Other[s], taking the focus off oneself and putting it on the other as an infinite responsibility (58, 78). Metzger sees such an infinite responsibility being limited by a [autonomous] sub-classification, such as a profession. Yet, in the *Gorgias*, Plato sets up the role of the politician or rhetor (compared to the doctor) in such a way that a third term for limiting his responsibility is lacking, unless it be something like *proximity* or *geography*. The way Socrates sets up the rhetor’s situation, the rhetor seems to have almost infinite responsibility to the community, above and beyond any of his wishes, after he has acquired justice and just living. There is no “third term” here to limit, interfere, or make the notions of responsibility ambiguous; the title of rhetor at the end of the dialogue, is a title that should be taken up with much fear and trembling, much like the biblical warning for teachers (James 3:1). In the *Phaedrus*, however, as Weaver reads it, Plato does seem to revamp this role with a new limitation to students, though I doubt either one would see this as a reason to be off the hook in the public sphere. The *Phaedrus*, moreover, is very interested in the public ethos of the lovers and how the beloved will act once released into the public sphere. And Plato and Weaver could be seen to have in mind something similar to this ethic-enforcing encounter with the Good: “For once the noble lover has mastered the conflict within his own soul by conquering appetite and fixing his attention upon the intelligible and the divine, he conceives an exalted attitude toward the beloved” (*Ethics of Rhetoric* 13).



limits they cannot cross [regardless of conscience].” Of course, the whole example is abstracted, but perhaps an important point can be made by using the example of the thief to distinguish the “undialecticized (including the notion of another person for a necessary back-and-forth) argument from definition,” the I-thief, from the argument from definition based on the rule that things must be what they are. The former throws out becoming because form is here tied to the individual—there is no ideal for the individual to strive for. It also precludes dialectic in asserting the relationship of two things thus, working as an argument from circumstance.

However, it is also easy for one with roots in Aristotle to fall into the ethotic problem in Brummett and Scott. That is, one of the main difficulties in using Aristotle’s system is trying to preserve Personality as a personal form coming to exist through the ethical life (while not creating an individual ethical form, that each person can do as s/he sees fit). As Bonaventure points out, Aristotle does not have respect for the personality of an individual in his view of the perpetuation of species (which is actually an obstacle to moral inquiry); thus it’s easy for Aristotle to throw either kind of form out (Jordan 66). This denial of form (as final cause) is what Brummett and Scott effectively do, throwing out becoming (in an ethical sense). But Weaver, with his ethical emphasis, ever makes the case for the importance of the individual; for him “ethics respects the reality of human personality” (Johannesen 8). One can even see this belief in his use of the *Phaedrus* in his *Ethics*—one good individual helping another individual to become good, one in whom the first has already seen the potential and latent character to be good, which, Plato says in the *Republic*, is how one is to determine whom one is to teach dialectic (VII).

Other aspects and groundings of individualism Weaver defends include provincialism and recognizing oneself in the past<sup>345</sup>—understanding of people and lost causes. He also goes on the offensive against threats to the value of the individual. Like Bonaventure, he, in works such as “Humanism,” “Relativism in the Use of Language” “Education and the Individual,” sees the denial of exemplarity (of the Good and thus the good person) as devastating for the person, limiting one’s potential by removing *telos*, which drastically reduces the definition of humanity—excising one’s yearning to be in relation with something infinite, and not allowing one to express one’s relationship toward this source of ethical impulse and one’s special capacity for that relation. In other words, with the light go the colors.

Such denials of exemplarity are made by using the argument from circumstance, as those who, putatively relying on science, turn the authority of fact into “an idolatry of circumstance”; although they could use it as the theological philosophers use ‘substance,’ they seek to deny it, as seen in the “constant warfare which [they wage] against anything that has status in the world, or against all the individual, particular, unique existences of the world which do not fit into a rationalistic pattern [...]” (“Up

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<sup>345</sup> “To be of a place, to reflect it in your speech and action and general bearing, to offer it as a kind of warranty that you will remain true to yourself—this is what it means to have character and personality” (“Address” 10). I should point out that Weaver’s stress on the person and his or her importance could be more strongly grounded and have a fuller elaboration, but his attempt is still instructive.

from Liberalism” 41). Weaver here battles against the reduction of what might be called a person’s spirit or soul, one’s personality, to the material and circumstantial.<sup>346</sup>

Finally, Weaver realizes that teaching the *topoi*, teaching dialectic and rhetoric, is worthless without regard for the individual student being taught. Without this inherent worth, the object of the teacher easily becomes not getting the students to think properly but “work” properly; in Aristotle’s terms, the natural form of the student is substituted with an artificial one suited for an established use,<sup>347</sup> for the teacher will not be willing to put up with student griping in efforts to use tough love and discipline when teaching these things. Here is one way of thinking about a comment made about the wrong type of education in the *Phaedrus*, where the surface of the mind is shaped with information, but the inner-workings are left virtually untouched, these students becoming more of a burden to their fellows than a helpmeet by such education (*Phaedrus* 274c).

Weaver sees the work emphasis as treating the person as an instrument, not valuing the reflection of the ideas of the true and the good through this person.<sup>348</sup> The double move of the denial of exemplarity and instrumentalizing persons, along with the dismissal of true teaching of dialectic and rhetoric that helps the student order the world, completely undermines personality, “a morally oriented unit which has a duty to maintain itself against many forms of social coercion and also against the sometimes greater danger of complacency” (“Individuality” 75), or, as Rushing and Frentz draw on Jung to say, individuation facilitates the development of a non-repressive collectivity. And, even according to Aristotle, individuals are what one’s soul needs to practice on to develop ethically, which is part of his critique of communistic governments. Weaver’s response is to try to create a worldview and rhetoric that values the Good, the Real, and the Individual in perpetuity, good rhetorician/dialecticians passing on their knowledge and ethic.

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<sup>346</sup> Rushing and Frentz have the same goal in mind, trying to balance out current field focus on economics with the psychological, moral value as emanating from inner and outer ideals, realizing that the “liberation of the material person becomes the oppression of the soul” (529).

<sup>347</sup> Though, as Ong would have it, just knowing how to write “intensifies the sense of self and fosters more conscious interaction between persons,” though I think he is confusing the potential use of writing with the essence of it—for some writing seems for some just another symbol set to use in decoding (175). It does not have to be used to think through problems.

<sup>348</sup> He sees this as partially caused by an unworkable view of democracy, as mode of living or pattern for all existence (a critique traceable to Aristotle’s *Politics*), forcing the culture to integrate individuals as quantitative units instead of qualitatively integrating in relation to the value of the structure of the ideal (*Visions of Order* 14).

## APPENDIX C

There are several things to consider when trying to figure out how something like justice can be a natural disposition in the person, whether in the body or the sensitive part of the soul. As Hutchinson reminds us, the “moral virtues are settled habits of character which express themselves in the correct emotional response” (213). They tell us how to order irrational parts of the soul, the emotions, “for example, anger, fear, lust, love, thirst [...], and in general the mental events and conditions that are accompanied by pleasure and pain.” He goes on to note that emotions are not easily controlled by reasoning, that it is hard to reason one’s way out of anger, so we need such habits. So it may be that a natural virtue is capacity for feeling along the lines of the objects of a certain virtue.

Another way to discuss this issue is to talk about how the soul and body affect each other in being essentially related, as Everson does. For example, Aristotle claims in *De Anima* II.4 that “change of quality [alteration] and change of quantity [growth] are also due to the soul. Sensation [or perception] is held to be a qualitative alteration, and nothing except what has soul in it is capable of sensation” (415b.22-24). Looking at II.4 and II.5, Everson brings out the importance of this statement for Aristotle: “The force of Aristotle’s claim is that how a substance can be affected by other objects depends on the nature of that substance” (176). As we saw earlier, one may have certain hard spots, soft spots, or more properly receptive spots concerning objects of different moral associations in the soul that virtue helps to get in good condition and naturally maintain that condition.

In *De Anima* I.1, Aristotle tells us that all experiences of the soul are “enmattered formulable essences,” and judging from the analogy between the excellences of the body and the soul, it seems that the moral virtues, accompanied by prudence, have us respond and relate to other things in the right way (403a.24). These responses, influenced by the different faculties, should have knowledge of the essences involved and their ends: “e.g. anger should be defined as a certain mode of movement of such and such a body (or part or faculty of a body) by this or that cause and for this or that end” (403a.25-27). (Where Metzger, in “The Call For Rhetoric,” distinguishes between feelings and emotions by the latter carrying with them a course of action, Aristotle might add that in this sense the only good anger is a virtuous anger.) The response seems also somewhat dependent on the appropriate organ: “when there is a particular affection of the *psuchê*, there is a material state which is sufficient for its occurrence” (Everson 186).

As Everson discusses (189), the inverse relationship of matter and states is brought up in *Nic. Eth.* VII.2-3: “when in NE VII, Aristotle explains *akrasia* by saying that the agent is ignorant of the conclusion of the relevant practical syllogism, he says that the *akratic* is in the same state as people who are angry or mad—states which ‘alter the body’ (NE VII.3, 1147a16).” He further argues that, nous possibly excluded, all “such affections as perception and desire are ‘common’ to the *psuchê* and the body (436a7-8).”

## APPENDIX D

Much of what I said in Chapter 5 can be gleaned analogously from the *Metaphysics*. Again, Aristotle believes people are wrong to think that virtue is a willy-nilly thing, for development and possession of virtues work much like potencies. Potencies are either innate like senses or come through practice (flute playing) or learning (like artistic power); rational potencies can produce contrary effects and it is desire or will that decides: “For whichever of two things the animal desires decisively it will do, when it is present, and meets the passive object, in the way appropriate to the potency in question,” and the animal must do this (IX.5, 1048a.11-15). Otherwise, it would be like the builder of the house having the desire and means to build the house but somehow not being able to make a house. One does not have potency on the terms of wanting to do two things at once, but on the terms of the passive object being present and being in a certain state; “nor is it a potency of doing both at the same time, since one will do the things which it is a potency of doing, on the terms of which it has the potency” (1048a.15-25). That is, one acts in accordance with one’s states.

And moral potencies in development point towards an end: “everything that comes to be moves toward a principle, and the beginning is for the sake of the end [...], and the actuality is the end, and it is for the sake of this that the potency is acquired” (IX.2, 1050a.8-10). In IX.8 one sees that this actuality is prior to potentiality, even for nature, the moving force in a thing *qua* itself, and in VII.8 one sees that form is not produced. One could say that one has virtuous capacities for the sake of becoming a virtuous person, which seems to be the acquiring of a paradox, an active state, but for Aristotle there is no contradiction: “substance or form is actuality,” and “the actuality is the action,” the end aimed at (IX.2, 1050b.2; 1050a.23). Virtue is this end action, a sort of participation in the form of virtue or ultimately the formal order of the universe. As I mentioned in Chapter 5, virtue is the taking on of another or second nature, and from the way Aristotle ties up form and essence, this means that becoming virtuous means become more substantial, and this is doubly significant for humans. Other creatures can only acquire their natural states, but for humans this means the acquisition of the ability to revel in the pleasure of natural states. Form/essence is what life is all about, which makes thought so important because thought divine in that it can possess the essence. Thought is the most life/activity and God is the utmost of this for Aristotle (XII.7, 1072b.20-30).

Aristotle describes God as “that which moves without being moved, being eternal, substance, and actuality” (XII.7, 1072a.25). And since God is actuality, that he does not move does not mean he is not active; he contemplates and as the ultimate final cause he moves by being “loved” (cf. XII.6, 1072b.4). Now, the objects of desire and thought move in the same way, and the primary instances of these are the same: “For the apparent good is the object of appetite, and the real good is the primary object of rational wish” (XII.7, 1072a.28). This primary object of desire and thought, if there is one object that is the same and first in both classes, as he seems to imply, seems to be beautiful form/substance/actuality, beauty being first among things that are desirable in themselves (1072a.30-36). That is, the ideal end for a person may be to understand this, things in themselves and their relationships, to revel in essence and the order of essence—possessing what one can of being, which perhaps God can do completely.

Aristotle may have such a notion in mind when he says “the nature of a thing is a beginning, and so is the element of a thing, and thought and will, and essence, and the final cause—for the good and the beautiful are the beginning of the knowledge and of the movement of many things” (V.1, 1013a.20-23).

The proper actualization of human capacities is to this end, and thus one might speak of properties as that which, though they do not predicate the essence, allow us to become more substantial, more form, more actuality. As we saw, the person becoming good here, is more conducive to reason, harmony, and beauty (while relativism makes man a non-thinking object of thought if it even allows for thought at all) (V.4, 1011b.9-12). However, human properties can be the means to what we want to become in other ways, i.e., if one focuses on the wrong objects of desire and thought.

## APPENDIX E

For all the problems that spring from talking of disciplines as fields, as discussed in Chapter 3, appeal to a discipline is not the only way people verify their arguments; they sometimes appeal to or assume the popular or cultural understanding of something, natural law, or a universal of human nature, or they appeal to personal experience (which has universal aspects of its own, as attested to earlier by Aristotle). Whether to call these things fields, place them in a certain field, or say what field is the highest is a difficult matter. For example, one could draw a lot of flak for saying that Mathematics is the field by which cultural claims should be judged, which would belittle claims from personal experience and cause quite a few problems in saying what a culture is or what a given culture actually is. Culture is often used to legitimate rhetorical *topoi* as foundational to philosophy, to human thought.

One can say, regarding the syllogism example, that culture has nothing to do with formal logical validity. To say that epistemology is completely subjective or cultural, one would have to argue that things like induction and deduction, even the argument from authority, are culturally specific, not universal (Harpine 355). But these would be empirical claims (even reliant on the very laws of induction and deduction themselves). Yet culture does have some say in determining whether some syllogisms are true or not. For example, if we made the following syllogism:

It is a reprehensible thing for old men to act foolishly.

The old man professor is acting foolishly.

Therefore the professor has done a reprehensible thing.

The first premise would be what Aristotle calls a maxim (*gnome*), a commonly accepted (or cultural) moral rule, and would work better in disputes in an enthymematic form.<sup>349</sup> Culture has the same relationship to the first premise as it did above and, in a pinch, it could help us in determining if the professor is “old” and acting “foolishly”. Thus it is still here that the relativist can make his foundational claim about epistemology. Yet it is at this point in argumentation where Aristotle shows us that even a culture is subject to universal rules of validity in defining—*topoi*.

In the *Topics*, after giving the means by which an argument can be cleared up (i.e., nullified or won) or led off track, such as different uses of the same word in a single argument, Aristotle concludes Book I with a difficult sentence: “The means, then, whereby reasonings are *effected*, are these: the commonplace rules, for the observance of which the aforesaid means are useful, are as follows” (I.18, 108b.32, my emphasis). The Boethian interpretation of this line would be something akin to, “The arguments of philosophy and disputations are carried out by these means and the goal is to attach an argument or sub-argument to one of these *topoi*, one of these commonplace rules, to validate the argument, such a rule as, ‘What is predicable of a species is predicable of a genus’”. Of course, these rules do not normally need stating and seem logically prior to what is traditionally considered formal logic. The *Topics* does not simply temporally precede the *Analytics*, as Allen argues, but induction or deduction cannot be validated without its *topoi* (93).

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<sup>349</sup> The maxim could be turned into an enthymeme itself if the reason for its soundness were attached to it (which would also, ideally, get us closer to a first principle).

The point to be made here, and it is a point best illustrated in Plato's works, is that the commonly held opinions of any culture are both acceptable and criticizable by these rules, though Aristotle is careful to leave out propositions and problems that no one would hold or that are obvious to everyone (I.1, 104a.5-6). And, as one might gather from *Topics* I.2 and Books I and II of the *Rhetoric*, this critique of cultural knowledge is viable on a few levels: dialectic (as well as what might be called dialectical or philosophical rhetoric) deals with using but also criticizing commonly held beliefs (whereas a pragmatic rhetoric would just simply use ones that helped achieve a given end). These beliefs are often given to a culture by its "sciences," insofar as propositions and principles from these "sciences" show up in the argumentation of a culture. These "sciences" or "propositions of specific bodies of knowledge" not only cover such things as mathematics and physical sciences, but also ethics and politics in the *Rhetoric* (Kennedy 15).

Now, the question, "Which came first, the sciences or the culture?" does not concern Aristotle in the *Topics* or the *Rhetoric*. Indeed, it is a moot point as far as the *Organon* goes, for the same universal logical rules would apply no matter where knowledge began to coalesce, and Aristotle believes in a set order of certain things. Moreover, his statement at the end of I.2 can be taken both as saying that dialectic is in a position to judge sciences and find the first principles of all knowledge, which would make dialectic very important to competing philosophies in the rhetorical realm of the public sphere.

Yet this is the point where modern rhetoric's cultural relativist view of the topics conflicts with Aristotle and thus places them in a bind in terms of effective critique in dialectic and rhetoric, for their goal is to show that the valid forms of argument are culturally determined. That is, they come to focus almost exclusively on rhetorical *topoi* to their detriment. As Wallace says of one of the most notable modern writers on *loci*, Perelman: "In keeping with other logicians and philosophers, such as Max Black, Stephen Toulmin, and Gidon Gottlieb, [Perelman] doubts whether formal logic has little, if any, use in ordinary discourse. Rhetoricians are directed again to field-dependent argument as that which constitutes the center of rhetorical discourse" (387). This focus on field dependent argument, in the Ciceronian sense or in the sense of what we might refer to as specific dialectic with special *topoi*, causes problems when criticizing the public sphere (though the emphasis on topics in everyday language might be key to an Aristotelian validation of *topoi* as effective), as do the emphases of Leff and others.

Leff ("The Topics"), Warnick, Miller and Jost, want to stress the importance of audience and social knowledge in defining what the topics in any given culture are. Now, if they were simply referring to what the issues of contention or motivation are in a culture and the set of standard talking points that develop around them, they would be right to stress the cultural cause of *topoi* (though not to the exclusion of complementary and primary causes, for even culture itself is a consequence of something more fundamental in and beyond humans). But their implication is that the valid arguments of a culture, which would include form, are always socially determinable, beyond being organizable into fields for discourse. For them, this is something to be valued and to be

used to criticize the effectiveness of such systems of dialectical/rhetorical topics such as Boethius' ("Topics of Argumentative Invention" 40).<sup>350</sup>

Other would-be "topists," whom I will lump together here under the term *postmodernists*, wield a hegelianesque view of dialectic that melds bits of logic, rhetoric, and sophistic, viewing logic, what it validates, and a group's values under the scheme of the remainder. (Conversely, the Aristotle of the *Rhetoric* asserts that logic is devoid of emotion, but seems to make the case that emotion works logically, even dialectically.) But, finally, it is more probable that, regarding the acceptable forms of argumentation in a culture, that a universal logic still underlies them in some way, but some start at different points. To use Burke's terms, they have followed an upward way and a downward way to a different absurd, but that does not mean their manner of stepping is completely different (*Rhetoric* 243-265). Further, we likely would not be able to understand them if the foundation were different.

This is not to say that the modern topists are totally wrong. I focus mainly on the *Topics* and *Analytics* to discuss how logic works, but there is some soundness in looking to the *Rhetoric* as many of these topists do.<sup>351</sup> After all, there seems to be derivable from there another view of the relationship of syllogisms and *topoi*, as well as what passes for valid argument.<sup>352</sup> This is partly due to the vague use of the related terms of *topoi*, *idia*, *pisteis*, *semeia*, and *koinon*, while Leff seems to suggest that different conceptions of rhetoric, as illustrated in the *Gorgias*, are the reasons for different understandings of topical systems ("The Topics" 41-2; cf. "Up From Theory").

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<sup>350</sup> Cf. "Up From Theory," where Leff argues Boethius' system is anti-rhetorical, and "Habitation of Rhetoric," where he advocates the jettisoning of universals and abstracting from the study of rhetoric; that is, Leff seems at first to want to look at rhetoric as Aristotle did primary *ousia*, but then dismisses the possibility of abstracting universals.

<sup>351</sup> There are just better ways to make topical schemes, especially in terms of hierarchy. For example, one could hierarchize the positions of the authors and their corresponding systems by an idea of Absolute Truth or probable Truth (an Absolute that is not absolutely knowable), but the problem comes in dealing with the old debate versus relativism and how far one should engage it. (It is a discussion that is usually carried on through commonplaces itself, which perhaps explains the corresponding apathy or antipathy the debate is usually met with, but too often when universals with moral connotations are at stake, universal truths are denied by appeals to universal rights.) Another way to approach the problem of how to hierarchize topics and topical systems is to equate what Kienpointner talks about as Aristotle's argument from preference, a thing that is good in itself as better than a thing that is just means to the good (which is actually sort of a foundation or one of the major guiding rules for the topics) with the argument from definition, for to be able to complete an argument from preference, one must define, find the thing's essence (226-7). Kienpointner's approach to *topoi* could be used as another way to show the connection of finding the essence of a thing to morality, as can Hughes argument that Aristotle's *topoi* are for discovering judgments in the realm of probability

<sup>352</sup> Braet, for one, seemingly under the influence of Slomkowski's discussion of dialectical *topoi* and his own prior work on the *Rhetoric to Alexander*, argues that the *topoi* of the *Rhetoric* are if-then statements and investigates their guarantee functions in terms of this. But, by assuming conditionality, he may run into the same problem Consigny does, who holds that the topics (in terms of invention) consist of a rhetor placing terms in binary relationships of different types. At issue here is the principle of the knowledge of relatives, whether these sets of contraries (or the "contrariness" of them) are 'created' by the rhetor or they follow from the definition of one/both terms. Further, a definition relies on the processes of dialectic (induction and reasoning), though it is an old debate whether Aristotle meant the sphere of rhetoric to allow one to play fast and loose with definitions. Grimaldi, for one, is not of this persuasion: "For what Aristotle [says] quite pointedly is that rhetoric is mimesis and is supposed to re-present the real (i.e., truth and justice) in any situation for an auditor" ("Rhetoric and Truth" 176).



Unfortunately, the most significant parts of the *Rhetoric* Books I and II (and even parts of Book III are completely concerned with these, either in theory or illustration).

When sorting through these terms and Aristotle's thoughts on rhetorical reasoning, one feels compelled to ask questions such as, are *topoi* elements of enthymemes or categories of like arguments or both, or are topics enthymemes as Peter of Spain thought?<sup>353</sup> What about *idia* (specific *topoi*)? Do they work in the same way on a more specific level (such as the arguments or principles of a science or a category of these) or are they just facts to be used in *topoi* (a matter-form distinction, typical of Aristotle, that Conley, in "Logical Hylomorphism," tries to prevent from being applied to Aristotle's topics)? Or could they function sort of like primary *ousia* (Ochs 60)? If *idia* are anything like *topoi* or *koinon*, what does that tell us about the nature of the enthymeme as Aristotle understands it? Finally, how do these *topoi* relate to the *topoi* of the *Topics*? Can clearing these matters up tell us anything about why Aristotle arranges the rhetoric the way he does and why he gives hardly any applications of what seem to be *topoi* of emotion and *ethos*?<sup>354</sup> Kennedy himself, though his commentary is chiefly concerned with the *topoi* and is helped out a great deal by the work of Grimaldi, is at great pains to keep his conceptions of these terms clear, and his preconceptions about the *topoi* seems to lead him to misrepresent the *topoi* and would be answers to these questions.

Admittedly, this work of clarification is made more difficult by millennia of misuse, abuse, and snubbing of the *Rhetoric*. As Kennedy argues, Cicero seems to have read the *Rhetoric* at some point or is at least somewhat familiar with its contents,<sup>355</sup> but in the Latin tradition the *Rhetoric* seems to be largely ignored except for its contribution to stasis theory (which is itself topical). Another problem is the assumption that Aristotle means to separate the sphere of rhetoric from other types of reasoning or disputes. And this assumption is easy to understand: the three species of rhetoric Aristotle gives all deal with the public sphere only, and, as for reasoning here, Aristotle seems content to let probabilities remain probabilities (i.e., the rhetor need not be concerned, like the philosopher, to find necessary premises).

The latter point has been used to question Aristotle's ethics, which Kennedy tries to defend, but questions that can be brought against both understandings of the relationship of dialectic and rhetoric are, "Why does Book II, which is chiefly concerned with *topoi* and proofs, care so little about applications to rhetorical genres? Why does Aristotle let these *topoi* and proofs stand alone? Does this tell us how he thinks *topoi* and specific *topoi* work here? Are the *topoi* of a science such as psychology approved for use as a dialectical principle in the public sphere (remembering that dialectic is supposed to be in a position to judge other sciences)?"

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<sup>353</sup> Many modern scholars have weighed in on this question, including Kennedy, Grimaldi (1980), McAdon, Ochs, Warnick, and Miller.

<sup>354</sup> That is he does not give application in a formal sense, in a pragmatic, orator-self-control sense, or as simply informal topics of persons, as the Latin rhetoricians understand them, as Conley ("Πάθη and πίστεις"), Manolescu, and Leff ("Topics of Argumentative Invention") discuss respectively.

<sup>355</sup> In *On the Ideal Orator*, the later Cicero seems to have a Gorgianic view of commonplaces, i.e., that commonplaces are a collection of things that can be discussed concerning a science (though such a view of commonplaces is certainly derivable from Aristotle, as well as the referring to different texts of arguments as commonplaces).

Such questions prompt a reexamination of the connection between rhetoric and dialectic, and there seems to be no better matter to investigate than that which both are chiefly concerned for Aristotle—the *topoi*—and how they are used. Such an examination of rhetoric and dialectic is pertinent to two areas of modern rhetoric: Rhetoric's Role in the Public Sphere (which for many in the field is the role Aristotle and Plato actually give to dialectic—criticizing the discourses of the public sphere) and Big Rhetoric, which, similar to the first area, has rhetoric subsuming dialectics (of specific bodies of knowledge, on the cultural and individual level) and dialectic as whole, though the assimilation is (ideally) thorough and resolute here.

## APPENDIX F

Weaver uses a belief in the existence of a somewhat knowable absolute Good that ontologically/metaphysically guarantees the way one knows the world, a grounding in philosophical Common Sense (which is connected to the first in some ways), and an emphasis on essence and the individuality of the individual, to create a system for judging the ethicalness of argumentation and making ethical arguers, the system being grounded in an ethical view of probability.<sup>356</sup>

The works of Weaver stress the importance of definition and essence itself to ethical argumentation. As in this project, one of the general principles behind Weaver's works is that all people argue and think from essence, that there is a certain way things are or should be according to some universal value. Even if they are not aware of it or making these definitions explicit, even if they are consciously trying to get as far away from anything to do with essences, people are still relying on essences and a surety in the existence of essence if they are doing anything rhetorical. Thus they believe in a value and a structure in some respect, though many take an expedient route in argument and thought, assuming what the essence of a thing is and how it should be valued and thus bypassing an actualized dialectic (as well as much hope of consistency).<sup>357</sup>

In a number of works ("Looking for an Argument," *Ethics of Rhetoric, Composition*), Weaver arranges the traditional division of argument types from the ethical, the more principal or essential approach, to the more expedient: (1) *definition* or *genus*, which is part of a definition and is also important for enthymemic arguments, but it can also be separated to emphasize an essential order of things, preventing arguers from constantly shifting their ground in a debate, an educational concern of his ("Up From Liberalism" 34); (2) *analogy*, which he sees as an important part of investigation and defining for Plato, a relational topic including similitude, comparison/contrast, and induction; (3) *consequence*, which includes talk of causes; and (4) *circumstance*, the most unethical because it precludes the use of dialectic.<sup>358</sup> More ethical arguers for Weaver rely more on arguments from genus and definition, and things tending that way, such as arguments from analogy or, I suppose, even causal

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<sup>356</sup> However, his emphasis on individuality could be supplemented with a strong notion of personhood. I should also note that I morally reject some of Weaver's views, such as that libertarianism that had him defending segregationist views, but regarding his notion of arguing from essence he has some valuable things to still contribute, including a way that arguments from definition can deflate political controversy, as Patrick Shaw recently presented on.

<sup>357</sup> That humans, who are rhetorical, argue from essence in some way, is an important principle for ethical argumentation, which can be simply justified by saying that it respects what human beings are and, in a sense, what they want to be, or at least that they are driving to ends. And the final cause is an important aspect of essence. Toulmin respects the way human beings argue, but does not broach the subjects of why they argue that way, as in terms of a prior formal cause or in terms of a final form.

<sup>358</sup> Weaver, almost as if following the Ciceronian/Boethian distinction, adds (5) the external argument from testimony/authority, but leaves it out of his *Ethics*. However, one could make the case that the [re]establishing of this type of argument, or its right use, is the goal of most of his work, from his concern with 'piety,' a sort of anti-Faustian, metaphysical humility, to his fundamental pedagogical beliefs that one person may know more than another and that knowledge is teachable, and as he says, "arguments from authority are ethically good when they are deferential toward real hierarchy" ("Language is Sermonic" 364). One could even see represented here the Augustinian pedagogical/ethical influence of *On Christian Doctrine*: that for learning to take place, one must know what needs to be discovered and how to present it.

arguments that are grounded in definition or genus, and these arguers stay away from arguments grounded in the circumstantial or accidental.

One could explain this by saying definitions give an arguer something concrete to stick to and her opponent something to keep her accountable to. After all, character is a matter of consistency, and consistency can only be maintained by using consistent things (essences) and judged according to a consistent standard (the Good).<sup>359</sup> In arguing what things should be, one is constrained in some degree to the real (including the metaphysical components), what things are. And argument should be guided or, for the person not as far along in ethical development, constrained by knowing.

Now, Weaver, though he is constantly emphasizing the importance of such a Good, does not say what the Good is.<sup>360</sup> However, he does realize that to have a good notion of the Good, one has to realize that the world and mind work and exist in terms of essences, even if these show up in terms of tendencies, and thus both have a somewhat knowable structure. Dialectic, which is concerned with definitions and thus essences, is a way of separating and ordering reality, helping to reveal the structure and essences, and is an assurance itself that the world has order ("To Write" 235), and, again, dialectic's existence and validity depends on these.<sup>361</sup>

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<sup>359</sup> Chapter 5 tries to describe how Aristotle's understands these claims concerning character.

<sup>360</sup> His notion seems in-line with Platonic and Judeo-Christian traditions, but the ambiguity results in a debate on where to place Weaver: Cherwitz and Hikins call Weaver an objectivist and Havard sees him, in the line of Plato, as a trained dialectician of the Christian/classical outlook that denied the possibility of perfection in this world, asserted the constant tension between good and evil as part of the human condition, and believed prudence and the Aristotelian mean to be guides to virtuous action (172). Johannesen, however, cautions against reading Christianity too far into Weaver and that Weaver is taken with the Platonic great chain of being (275). Beale, with Crowley and Johannesen, cautions against reading too much Plato into him either—Weaver being a person who looked to something higher than positivism and relativism that would maintain "the basic equilibrium of forces in human self-understanding" (Beale 631). One might also add that Weaver separates himself from pre-*Republic* Plato with his concept of 'Original Sin,' that man tends to do wrong when he knows the right thing to do ("Up From Liberalism" 44).

<sup>361</sup> Again, I talk of the more logical ways one comes to essence. But to talk of truth in general we would have to expand these ways of talking about, dissecting, and coming to truth and add to them such notions as soul, spirit, "gut," conscience (which are not necessarily different or separate), and authority, the latter apparently being able to be said of all and yet also being capable of being extrinsic to them and the matter at hand. Moreover, all these notions seem to have something to do with not only how a person receives conviction but is also moved to persuasion, especially where ethos is involved.

## VITA

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