For, by the argument of the last paragraph, it is indeed *individual* perceptions that Socrates means. *Pace* Burnyeat, αἰσθήσεις here still means Heracleitean perceptions just as it did in 151–184. And what Socrates is saying would be 'strange' or 'frightful' is that, *through our sight and hearing and other sensory modalities*, we should just be horse-like containers for a variety of such perceptions, which in no way 'tend together towards some single Form, a soul or whatever we should call it, in respect of which we perceive whatever there is to perceive, by means of these perceptions, which are as it were instruments.'

The key here is the fine distinction that *Tht* 184c was so careful to set up: that between ᾗ, 'in respect of which', and διὰ τούτων, 'through which'. The point Plato makes by deploying this distinction is, as we might put it, that the various individual perceptions are all of them thoroughly διά, and none of them, in and of itself, in the least ᾗ. That is to say, the perceptions do not have the immediacy and unity of consciousness itself. They are not themselves consciousness, but reports *to* consciousness. And what διὰ τούτων shows us is Plato saying that consciousness uses them (still the individual perceptions, not, *pace* Rowe's translation as quoted above, 'eyes and ears' or the other individual senses) as its instruments.

Thus from this remarkable little passage, the lesson that emerges is that only mind itself can unite awareness in the way that makes perceptions *someone's* perceptions; so that there must be more to the nature and activity of mind than perception alone; hence (already, and in advance of the further argument that 185e–186e is about to give), perception cannot be equated with knowledge. Nothing in this argument commits Plato to rejecting Heracleiteanism as an account of perception and its objects, 'taken on their own'; though it certainly does commit Plato to thinking that taking them on their own is actually a rather difficult thing to do. But the passage also includes unmistakeable evidence that, even after the discussion of Heracleiteanism has been officially completed, Plato is still making use of Heracleitean materials in exactly the way that Burnyeat's Reading B predicts will *not* happen. For drawing our attention to this by his scrupulously scholarly and sparklingly live translation of this passage, as of the whole of both these two dialogues, Christopher Rowe deserves our unqualified gratitude.

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Carlo Natali: *Il Metodo et il Trattato*. Saggi sull'*Etica Nicomachea*. Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura 2017. XIII, 211 S. (Studi di Storia della Filosofia Antica. 4.) 22 €.

In recent years, the topic of the method of the Aristotelian ethical treatises has become an important issue in scholarly discussions. Since Burnet's motto of the *Nicomachean Ethics* as being dialectical throughout, dialectical method gained attention and was eventually expanded to other disciplines, coming even to be seen as the general method for philosophical inquiry by means of which to obtain the first principles. This expansion responded to a perceived gap between the syllogistic way of presenting scientific discoveries, as advocated by the *Posterior Analytics*, and the actual practice of doing science, as illustrated notably by the biological treatises, which seemed to grope around the data rather than following

a syllogistic pattern. After what may be called the *biological turn* in Aristotelian studies, the biological treatises, despite appearances to the contrary, are now thought to respond quite significantly to a way of doing science and searching for scientific explanations in direct accordance with what the second book of the *Posterior Analytics* prescribes for disclosing the causal connections science strives to discover. The gap has thus dwindled considerably, being almost on the brink of disappearing. The urge for that expansion of the dialectical method withered in a way parallel to the narrowing of this gap.

The *Eudemian Ethics* has a quite different fate in the scholarship, for it has been seen as exempt from dialectics. Donald Allan presented a paper in the 'Symposium Aristotelicum' held at Louvain in 1960 arguing that the *EE* adopts what he called a quasi-mathematical method, as it presents its proofs by means of premises and conclusions in a syllogistic fashion. Many scholars agreed, and the *EE* was thus sharply contrasted with the *NE* in what concerns methodological issues. The scholarly history of how to conceive the relations between the two ethical treatises, the *NE* and the *EE*, underwent considerable changes in the years following that meeting, due fundamentally to a thorough revision of the status of the common books Anthony Kenny proposed in a series of studies devoted to the Aristotelian ethics. These changes notwithstanding, the *NE* remained untouched as committed throughout to the dialectical method. *NE* persisted to be read as if it was written by the book of dialectics, in close connection with the rules the *Topics* disclosed for dialectical arguing. Now, Natali's book aims to radically change this perception and show that the *NE* is not structured at all by the dialectical way of proving. He makes no claims concerning the *EE* to this effect, but he is very assertive in what concerns the *NE*: dialectics plays no role in the scaffolding of the *Nicomachean* proofs. But if so, which method does the *NE* pursue? Natali's answer is unflinchingly direct: the *NE* is structured in strict connection with the rules the *Analytics* propose as the method for scientific inquiry.

Natali's 'Il Metodo e il Trattato' is devoted to scrutinizing the *NE* along the lines of two main ideas: that it is a treatise addressed to a cultivated audience not necessarily adept at philosophical discussions, and that it follows rather attentively the method of scientific discovery adumbrated in the first chapters of the second book of *Posterior Analytics* (II 1–8). Farewell thus to *NE* VII 1 and its dialectical allure. The latter has been taken as *the* method of ethics, but, as Natali suggests, its dialectical ring is basically confined to resolving the *aporiae* about *akrasia*, and the dialectical tone it contains is restricted to the bounds of book VII, and some other scattered parts. In sharp contrast to it, the other books – mainly the central ones – are exempt from this dialectical spell. This is not, according to Natali, a matter of preference. Book VII and its dialectical method devoted to deciphering the phenomenon of *akrasia* give us important clues about its proper topic, and illuminates many of its aspects as well. But it does not provide us with a fully developed definition of *akrasia*, nor makes us have a view on its essence. And this comes as no surprise, for this is intrinsic to what dialectics is up to: it does help us to better see and understand what is at stake, but it does not purport to give us any grasp of the essences or the unfolding of definitions. The other *Nicomachean* books instead are strongly committed to producing defini-

tions and exhibiting the essence of the notions at issue. Dialectics no longer has a role to play in them, and Aristotle ushers in the *Analytics*-method, as one is now striving for definitions, and searching for the essence of the matter examined.

After providing an overview of the structure of the text as a whole, in which he already points to a well-structured treatise, Natali tackles in chapter 2 the notion of happiness, key to the whole treatise, for it governs most of the ensuing books. The *NE* is articulated as an analysis of the notion of happiness, a *zêtêsis* on the notion of *eudaimonia*, the principle of which is to be found in I 7 (Natali adopts Bekker's chaptering, changed here into the other chaptering English readers are more used to). To begin with, Aristotle shows us first that there is something that is the ultimate good; or more precisely, Aristotle brings in two pieces of evidence that there is such a good. The first piece of evidence is the much-discussed passage right at the beginning, I 2 1094a18–24, stating that, given that there must be an end for our actions, *this end* is the ultimate good. As is well known, Geach rightly remarked that so conceived it is a fallacious argument. For Natali, this is to require too much from a brief and introductory signal that there is such a thing as the ultimate good; Aristotle is not yet proving that there is an ultimate good; he is instead beginning his inquiry by addressing the initial question *whether there is* such a thing, that is, he is raising the *ei estin* question, and providing positive clues to this effect. In fact, answering this question is tantamount to bringing in pieces of evidence; and the alleged Geach-fallacy is one of them. The other one is that there is a science dedicated to it, to wit political science, a piece of evidence taken from the *argumentum ex scientiarum*, which we know also from the *De ideis*. This is exactly what one would expect if one is to follow the method the *Analytics* advocates, and has already as its initial upshot the merit of deflating the burden of the proof: we set out to define *eudaimonia* merely by establishing that there is the object searched for, and this is done by ushering in acceptable pieces of evidence on its behalf, without requiring a formal proof of its existence (*pace* Geach). The next step is to come up with a nominal definition of the ultimate good, which gives us some clues where to look. This is done at I 5 and again is in line with the *Analytics*-method: we all call it *eudaimonia*, even though we deeply disagree on how to conceive it.

Then comes the third and crucial step: to exhibit the essence of that which we all call by the name of *eudaimonia*. The third step is the answer corresponding to the *ti estin* question, the 'what-it-is question', or to state it otherwise, one is about to provide the real definition of *eudaimonia*. The real definition is given at I 7 1097b22–98a20, and is grounded on the function of man, the *ergon anthrôpou*, and on the idea that one can do something, and one can also do it well, the latter being a case of acting in conformity with virtue, whereas the former is a case of simply doing something. But before producing the real definition, Aristotle states two features *eudaimonia* is supposed to satisfy, namely *teleiotês* and *autarcheia*. It is worth noting that *teleion* has no straightforward meaning, but can mean either being complete, or being perfect; these two notions may coincide, but may also diverge. We will find them again inside the real definition. Resorting then to the notion of the function a thing discharges, and which defines it in so far as it shows what it is to be that thing, Aristotle asks what is the function of man. Let's take for granted that there is such a function, and that it

consists in doing whatever one does with reason or not without reason. Let's focus our attention on issues of method: whatever it is to act with reason or not without reason, this again follows the method marshalled by the *Analytics*. For, according to Aristotle, the real definition we finally reach is obtained by means of a general syllogism, whose premises are taken from the notion of the function men have, and the notion of doing something well as tantamount to doing it virtuously; and the ultimate good, or happiness, is obtained as the conclusion of this syllogism, to wit: human good turns out to be activity of soul in conformity with virtue, and if there is more than one excellence, in conformity with the best and most complete (I 7 1098a16–18).

I will say a bit more on the *Analytics*-method later on; for the moment, let's pay close attention to the connective particle one finds smack in the middle of the real definition of happiness: activity in conformity with virtue, *and* in conformity with the best and most complete. As the activity in conformity with virtue is quite plausibly the activity in conformity with *any political virtue*, the connective is in fact not even an alternation, but an exclusive disjunction. Is not this a signal that something went wrong? As a matter of fact, it resumes the wavering of meaning *teleion* has between being complete and being perfect; the former pleads for a whole gamut of virtues, the one that makes our life complete in all its aspects, whereas the latter goes for one and just one virtue, the best one.

Here is the origin of the *inclusivist – dominant* controversy that has stormed all scholarly work on the topic since Hardie's seminal work on it. But we need not get distracted by it; Natali's concern is the method, and all elements apparently point to the fact that Aristotle is deducing the ultimate good from the *ergon-* and the virtue-premises, much in the fashion he advocates for defining thunder in the *Analytics*: namely, by constructing a syllogism in which the essence as the cause of the event appears as the middle term of the syllogism that demonstrates its definition. In the case of thunder, it is the noise originated in clouds caused by the quenching of fire. (As a matter of fact, this is not the Aristotelian definition of thunder, but the one he brings forward in order to make clear his logical point about there being a cause figuring as the middle term whenever one demonstrates a definition.) The *Nicomachean* search for the real definition of *eudaimonia* is thus thoroughly backed up by the *Analytics*-method, or so Natali is keen to suggest. The presence of a conjunction within the real definition (to be read as an exclusive disjunction) is to be explained away when Aristotle resumes the issue and, at the very end of the *NE,* in Book X 6–9, establishes a hierarchy between contemplation and political life. The fact that there is such a wavering in the first book, when one is supposed to reach the real definition of *eudaimonia*, may be explained by the fact that the *NE* is not addressed to a philosophical audience, but to a cultivated public; Aristotle entertains the double possibility until the end of the lessons, when he finally champions contemplation as leading to first happiness.

Chapter 3 is devoted to examining *NE* I 13 – IV, in which Aristotle searches for the definition of virtue, and then goes on to apply this definition to each case of virtue separately. (Books I 1–12 + X 6–9 and I 13 to IV constitute the bulk of the *NE*.) Aristotle is in fact unpacking what he has already put into the definition of *eudaimonia*, for he defined it as acting in accordance with virtue; he has thus to explain now what is the nature of virtue, and, in so doing, he has to come to grips with the notions of voluntariness, moral responsibility, and deliberation. In how far he succeeds is a major question which it is not the goal of this work to address. Natali aims solely at issues of method, eager to show that the *NE* follows the *Analytics*-approach. Chapter 3 is a very good case for him. The defini-

tion of moral virtue allows him to deploy his arms, showing, for instance, the connections with *Metaphysics* Z 12, which is also connected with the problem of division *Posterior Analytics* re-discussed in II 13. Problems seem to arise when one arrives at the common books.

The first of these, Book V, deals with justice, and the neat structure Natali has so far managed to reveal begins to break down as one enters this messy book. But Natali argues that one has to distinguish two parts in it. In the first part, which goes from V 1 to V 5, the quest for the definition of justice follows the pattern described in the *Analytics*, thus conforming itself to the style taken from the beginning of the *NE,* and making references to *NE* I–IV. But the second part (V 6–10) is presented in a disordered way; as a matter of fact, it solves problems mentioned in the first part, but as such it proceeds in a different way, much more akin to the dialectical method, pretty apt to resolve dilemmas and illuminate aspects of a difficult question, but crucially unapt to produce definitions or display the nature of the items examined. This second part reminds us also of the second part of Book I, in which Aristotle manages to resolve difficulties and shed light on what other people meant by what they said; this structure shows us that Book V may rather be a separate monograph, attached to the whole treatise with relative success. This same 'monographic' aspect is to be found in Book VI on practical wisdom, in Book VII on *akrasia*, in the two treatises on pleasure, and in Books VIII and IX on friendship. One important element of Natali's thesis is that, in what regards Book VII on *akrasia*, the celebrated passage on the dialectical method (VII 1 1145a2–7) is limited to the analysis of the phenomenon of *akrasia*, so that one is not supposed to make it apply to Books I–IV, clearly designed in conformity with the *Analytics*-method. Moreover, the dialectical method, as it is applied to the notion of *akrasia*, manages to resolve some *aporiae*, and gives us a good idea of the problems at issue as well, but is clearly weaker than the *Analytics*-method in searching for definitions. This element helps us explain the unsatisfactory state of the analysis of *akrasia*, at least from the point of view of a definition-seeker. One has to work with two different methods within the *NE*, each designed for a specific task. Something similar occurs with the two treatises on pleasure. The first one comes at the end of Book VII, and has a more dialectical ring, as it examines different opinions on pleasure, whereas the second treatise, which is located at X 1–5, manages to draw a definition, as it is clearly concerned with disclosing the nature of pleasure (e.g. X 4 1174a13–14). As Natali says, the treatises differ from one another both in the conclusions they reach, and, more importantly, in the method they apply, which may explain why Aristotle felt the need to write a second version. Finally, the treatise on friendship, which is quite long and comprises two Books (VIII and IX), is seen as an independent monograph, similar to Book Λ in the *Metaphysics*, adapted to be part of the whole treatise, but displaying vestiges of its independent redaction.

Natali's argument is very well and clearly argued: *NE*'s backbone is structured on the basis of what Aristotle indicates in *APo* II 1–8 (to which one may add also 9–13) as the scientific causal explanation and the consequent disclosure of the essence of the item in question. It is not inimical to dialectical reasoning, and some parts of it do follow the dialectical method, but the latter has to be understood as a secondary method Aristotle resorts to, either because he is engaged only in explaining some difficulties away, and interested merely in illuminating some aspects of the issue, getting by without being involved in the search for definitions, or because dialectics fills in some gaps the former method inevitably leaves open, as the *Analytics*-method proceeds at a very general and abstract level. But *Posterior Analytics* II is not an uncontroversial book, and II 1–8 is particularly difficult, for it is full of traps, so that more than one commentator has complained that often it seems to go awry. How is it then to be read as a blueprint for scientific explanation? Natali does not shrink from providing us with some basic

cues, even though it is not his ambition to comment in detail on these sometimes quite obscure chapters. Natali is in agreement with David Charles' proposal of a three-stage scaffold: the scientific inquiry begins with a nominal definition, which gives us some direction as to where to look, then one grasps some features of the item in question (some of which may be accidents of that item), to finally rearrange some of these features as non-accidental in order to obtain the real definition of it. This three-stage strategy is closely connected with the four questions Aristotle states right at the beginning of *APo* II 1: the fact, the reason why, if something is, what something is. Read in this way, in direct accordance with this blueprint, much of the *NE* becomes not only intelligible, but also well structured: this is Natali's main claim in this book.

However, problems lurk, as one might expect. I will mention three of them. To begin with, one is invited to give nominal definitions a major role in seeking for the nature of things, as they give the regular kick off for scientific investigation. However, we seem to have recourse to nominal definitions especially when the existence of the item is problematic. A good example is the discussion of the nature of void: some philosophers take it as necessary that there be void if there is to be movement at all, whereas Aristotle sustains that void is an empty notion. As nothing corresponds to it in reality, one cannot but proceed by examining its nominal definition, prone to finish the inquiry in a clearly negative way. But this is not the case with happiness; no doubt ever emerges about its reality. Besides, what does affect the notion of happiness is the controversy that always surrounds it, as people say rather different things about what it consists in: pleasure, honour, knowledge. A great number of scientific notions can be controversial, but ethics differs from them in an important way: scientific controversies end as soon as one shows that only one candidate satisfies the formal requirements for the definition, whereas in ethical matters the problem is that different contenders can do so – in the case of happiness, there are at least two good contenders, political life and contemplation, that pass the definitional test. (Maybe also a third one, pleasure, but only nominally, or so argues Aristotle, whereas the other two stay well in place even regarding real definition.) So the method, whatever it be, has to cope with the requisite of complying with opposing views on its nature, and assessing them. The *Analytics*-method has many merits for the search of definitions in the realm of being, but it does not seem apt to deal with opposing views, or, at least, does not seem the best way to critically assess opposing ethical notions, for they do not describe things that are or happen, but aim at proposing how they should be or happen.

A second point concerns the analogy between the exhibiting of the nature of ethical notions by means of the conclusion of a syllogism. Thunder may be taken as a paradigm for them. But thunder has an external cause – the quenching of fire, as the *Analytics* say – which is precisely what allows a sort of demonstration of its definition. What may correspond to this external cause in the realm of moral duties? Aristotle repeatedly nails down that action cannot but have an internal *telos* by means of which it is sharply contrasted with other ways of coming to be, like productions. Any analogy contains some disanalogy, but the dissimilarity here seems to be so important that it threatens to jeopardize any attempt to apply the thunder-case to actions and moral behaviour. A third point is more internal

to the *Analytics*-model. At II 8 93a15 Aristotle employs the phrase *logikos sullogismos*, whose meaning is controversial. When read as backward-looking, as referring back to the aporetic section of II 4, it means that the attempt to demonstrate a definition ends up generating a useless outcome, for the conclusion of the syllogism is inevitably flawed by circularity. This meaning accords with other passages in which Aristotle employs *logikos* or its cognates, implying by them something negative or flawed. But one can read its meaning as distinct from these other uses and take it rather as forward-looking, to what comes next in II 8, outside the previous aporetic section, so as to take it as referring to a general proof that may occasionally require to be filled in by other methods. This forward-looking reading gives this notion a quite positive account. This is the reading Natali adopts, for he is keen to find a general, positive syllogism whose conclusion may still be in need of further elaboration. The forward-looking reading is possible, but it is surely not plain given the other negative contexts of *logikos*; and although this is not a work on the *Analytics*, this point does deserve further discussion.

Touching on controversial issues is pretty natural to any reading of disputed passages, and more so when a controversial topic – the Aristotelian method for ethics – gets elucidated by a somewhat obscure passage about which we easily go amiss, as the first chapters of *APo* II are. Despite this risk, Natali's reading of *APo* II 1–8 and his application of its strategies for revealing the structure and the definitions obtained at the central parts of *NE* is cogent and convincing, and it pays for all its cost, as it makes us see how well organized and conceptually structured the *NE* is. Moreover, Natali displays an impressive familiarity not only with the Aristotelian texts (notably with his ethical treatises), but also with Greek and Modern commentators (Magyrus' *Corona virtutum moralium* is more than once summoned to illuminate interesting, but often disregarded aspects of the text). To sum up, Natali's 'Il Metodo e il Trattato' is deeply rewarding not only as an inquiry into the method of the ethical treatises, but also as a study of Aristotle's scientific method, and as such it will surely become a benchmark for scholarly discussions on these topics.

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Karin Schlapbach: *The Anatomy of Dance Discourse*. Literary and Philosophical Approaches to Dance in the Later Graeco-Roman World. Oxford: Oxford UP 2018. XI, 339 S. 4 Abb. 70 £.

Karin Schlapbach's brilliant new monograph 'The Anatomy of Dance Discourse' is dedicated to a subject that has received increasing attention over the past years: ancient dance and performance.[1] Yet this book is much more than another con-

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[1] Cf. e.g. L. Gianvittorio (ed.), 'Choreutika. Performing and Theorizing Dance in Ancient Greece', Pisa/Roma 2017; L. Prauscello, 'Performing Citizenship in Plato's *Laws*', Cambridge 2014; A.-E. Peponi (ed.), 'Performance and Culture in Plato's *Laws*', Cambridge 2013; F. Macintosh (ed.), 'The Ancient Dancer in the Modern World. Responses to Greek and Roman Dance', Oxford 2010; E. Hall & R. Wyles (eds.), 'New Directions in Ancient Pantomime', Oxford 2008.