

Dynamics of Aristotelian *Eudaimonia*

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Contemporary moral philosophy owes much to Aristotle for redeeming its method from an obsolete fixation to legality and pseudo utility. It gave a new direction and a renewed emphasis towards a person-centered morality. The basis of this revolutionary shift in contemporary moral philosophy is the understanding, pioneered by Aristotle that the conception of life's ultimate end as happiness or wellbeing. The Greek term that suggests the destination of human action renders innumerable connotations, often over-simplified in English. This paper explores the diversity of nuances implied by the Aristotelian *eudaimonia*.

Aristotle's works in general and his notion of *eudaimonia* in particular, as with most of Aristotle's works generate complex questions than illuminating answers. Predominantly, two questions are central to the understanding of Aristotle's program: what is the criterion of human action? Or to put it differently in what virtue consists; What is the best way to live? History of moral philosophy, especially with the dawn of virtue theory of ethics has taken great pains to bring the classical view as the 'third way' of normative ethics, the other two being deontology and consequentialism. However, such efforts have failed to bear fruit mainly due to the problems of clarity of the concepts of Greek antiquity, to which it turn for justification.

A general glance at Aristotle's *ethica nicomachea* suggests that *eudaimonia* 'exhibits indecision between a comprehensive and an intellectualist account': the latter being the activity of the divine

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part of man – act of theoretical contemplation and the former the full range of human life. The comprehensive view, which includes the intellectualist account, connects *eudaimonia* with the conception of human nature as composite and continuous interaction of reason, emotion and perception. It is a domain of action in an ‘ensouled body’. In a world that runs the risk of reducing the earth to a desert, the person to automation and the unity of man to planned collectivization, Aristotle’s *eudaimonia* offers a paradigm for authentic living.

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