

EE II 2 1220A39–B6

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Abstract: Aristotle's *Eudemian Ethics* has always proved to be fertile ground for at times needless textual emendation. I provide a translation and running commentary on *Eudemian Ethics* II 2 1220a39–b6 in accordance with the MSS text.

Keywords: Aristotle; *Eudemian Ethics*; textual issues.

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Aristotle's *Eudemian Ethics* has been subjected to severe emendation, no less in points where no scribe ever showed the slightest trace of hesitation. What I offer below, in the form of a translation followed by a textual commentary, is an attempt to elucidate a difficult passage (*EE* II 2 1220a39–b6) following the MSS text. For ease of reference, other editions and translations of the same passage are printed as T1–T10 in the Appendix.¹

ἐπεὶ δ' ἐστὶ τὸ ἦθος ὡσπερ καὶ τὸ ὄνομα σημαίνει, ὅτι ἀπὸ ἔθους ἔχει τὴν ἐπίδοσιν, ἐθίζεται δὲ τὸ ὑπ' ἀγωγῆς μὴ ἐμφύτου τῷ πολλάκις κινεῖσθαι πως, οὕτως ἤδη τὸ ἐνεργητικόν, καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀψύχοις οὐχ ὀρώμεν· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν μυριάκις ῥίψης ἄνω τὸν λίθον, οὐδέποτε ποιήσει τοῦτο μὴ βία· διὸ ἔστω ἦθος τοῦτο, ψυχῆς κατὰ ἐπιτακτικὸν λόγον δυναμένου δ' ἀκολουθεῖν τῷ λόγῳ ποιότης.

And since character (*êthos*) is as its name indicates because it may develop on the basis of habit (*ethos*), and that is habituated <which is habituated> by a non-innate direction through being moved several times in a given way, eventually <becoming> that which is capable of activating, and we do not see <it> in inanimate beings, for not even if you throw a stone upwards ten thousand times will it ever do that, except by force—given that, be character this, a quality of the soul in accordance with command-giving reason, but of that which is capable of following reason.

ἐστὶ ... ὡσπερ: With two seeming exceptions, editors and translators have avoided taking ὡσπερ with ἐστὶ in the passage. One should here be reminded of Estienne (1572) s.v. εἰμί: “Caeterum observandum est hoc loquendi genus, οὕτω πη τάδε γ' ἐστὶ φίλον τέκος

ὡς ἀγορεύεις (Ω 373): ad verbum, Haec ita sunt, pro Haec ita se habent. Est autem in soluta etiam oratione frequentissimum hoc verbum, et variis modis.” Instances of εἶναι (instead of ἔχειν) with ὥσπερ in the sense of “being like/as” may be adduced from Aristotle’s works: *GA* II 5 741a27–28, IV 5 773b31–32, V 1 779b21–22; *Met.* Z 8 1033b24.

Punctuation and the lack of emendations in Manuzio (T1) and Bekker (T2) may suggest a reading along the same lines as that advanced here (or a mere refusal to intervene). Other editors and translators insist on seeing ὥσπερ at the opening of an embedded clause, in most cases emending the text in different ways in order to allow for such reading: Vettori (T1) puts a comma before ὥσπερ, thus taking ὥσπερ καί ... σημαίνει as embedded; Fritzsche (T3) deletes ὅτι and emends ἔχει into ἔχον so as to have ἐστὶ ... ἔχον = ἔχει, thus taking ὥσπερ καί ... σημαίνει as embedded; Susemihl (T4a) is followed by Solomon (T4b) and Simpson (T10) in taking τὸ ἐνεργητικόν as being equated with τὸ ἦθος in the passage, with ὥσπερ καί ... κινεῖσθαι πῶς as embedded; Jackson (T5) is followed by Dirlmeier (T7a) and Bloch-Leandri (T9) in reading ὅτι and in taking ὥσπερ καί ... σημαίνει as embedded (Solomon’s “something that” in T4b also follows Jackson’s emendation); Rackham (T6) takes ἐστὶ as absolute and ὥσπερ καί ... μὴ βίᾳ as embedded; Allan (probably a personal communication, not to be found in Allan (1961, p. 312) as noted in Walzer-Mingay’s critical apparatus, nor elsewhere in print) emends ἐπεὶ into ἔθει, thus taking ὥσπερ καί ... σημαίνει as embedded; Russell (personal communication *apud* Walzer-Mingay’s critical apparatus) deletes ἐστὶ and ὅτι, thus taking τὸ ἦθος as subject of ἔχει and

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ὥσπερ καί ... σημαίνει as embedded; Walzer-Mingay (T8a) follow Russell and are in turn followed by Woods (T8b), Donini (T8c), Kenny (T8d); Inwood-Woolf (T8e) take ὅτι = “because” with ἐστί absolute, and ὥσπερ καί ... σημαίνει as embedded.

On purely grammatical grounds it is not necessary to take ὥσπερ as opening an embedded clause. The objection may nevertheless be raised that in my proposal the assertion of a mere phonological coincidence is used as a premise in an argument, but the clause introduced by ὅτι = “because” provides adequate grounds for the reasoning.

ἔχει τὴν ἐπίδοσιν: The potential value of the phrase, highlighted in LSJ s.v. ἐπίδοσις and evidently present in Plato, *Tht.* 146b, may here imply only that habituation might in some cases not develop into a stable trait of character, not that character might be developed from anything else. The lesson ἀπόδοσιν from Marc. (probably suggested by ἀπὸ ἔθους) has no place in our passage, since it would turn the whole first premiss of the argument into an assertion of a mere linguistic fact (on which, see above). The parallel passage in the *EN* (II 1 1103a17–18)—which, as Woods (1992, p.99) rightly points out, is concerned rather with the acquisition of virtue than with the development of character—employs a verb (παρεκκλῖνον, or παρεγκλῖνον in Kb) that, unlike the phrase used in our passage, describes exclusively the process of deriving a term from another.

τὸ ὑπ’ ἀγωγῆς μὴ ἐμφύτου: Some have tried to take ὑπ’ ἀγωγῆς or ὑπ’ ἀγωγῆς μὴ ἐμφύτου as agent of a passive verb in the passage. Thus Fritzsche (T3)

displaces the definite article and emends ἐμφύτου into ἔμφυτον so as to have ὑπ’ ἀγωγῆς as agent of passive ἐθίζεται, with subject τὸ μὴ ἔμφυτον (which he translates as “id, quod natura quodammodo insitum est”); Dirlmeier (T7a) is followed by Bloch-Leandri (T9) in deleting the definite article so as to have ὑπ’ ἀγωγῆς μὴ ἐμφύτου as agent of passive ἐθίζεται; Kenny (T8d) and Inwood-Woolf (T8e) take ὑπ’ ἀγωγῆς μὴ ἐμφύτου as agent of passive κινεῖσθαι. In a different vein, on the basis of two emendations—one suggested by Ross, the other printed by Fritzsche (T3)—Solomon (T4b) takes τὸ ὑπ’ ἀγωγήν μὴ ἔμφυτον as the subject of ἐθίζεται. Taking the substantivated prepositional phrase as subject of the main verb in the clause is, as Donini (1999: 203) rightly remarks, advisable, but no emendation seems to be necessary for such purpose: ἐθιζόμενον may be mentally supplied after μὴ ἐμφύτου.

οὕτως ἤδη: Estienne (1572) s.v. ἤδη gives τότε ἤδη and οὕτως ἤδη as equivalent to lat. tum demum = “then indeed,” “eventually,” “only then” (cf. also LSJ s.v. ἤδη 4.d). Instances of the phrase may be found in e.g. Thucydides I 64.3 (immediately following a καί); V 38.1 (immediately following a καί; opposed to πρώτον), 76.2 (in a sequence from πρώτον to αὖθις to καί οὕτως ἤδη); VI 48 (opposed to πρώτον; after two aorist participles introduced by δέ), 49.4 (in a clause introduced by τε; opposed to ἀντικρυς = “straightway” 49.1). The temporal meaning suits our context: that which is habituated (understood as that part of our soul undergoing habituation, not as the end result of a process of habituation) is initially subjected to guidance by another, but eventually comes to be able to activate movement by itself. If my reading is

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correct, τὸ ἐνεργητικόν picks up on τὸ ὑπ' ἀγωγῆς μὴ ἐμφύτου <ἐθιζόμενον>.

Twice in the Aristotelian corpus is ἤδη immediately preceded by οὕτως: In *MM* II 12 1212a23–24 ἤδη may either be inferential or mean “in that case” (note ἤδη 1212a22), while οὕτως is clearly an adverb of manner. In *Top.* V 3 132a11–13 ἔπειθ' οὕτως ἤδη (“thence eventually”) may well seem excessive to mark a contrast with τὸ πρῶτον, but the temporal meaning is straightforward; on ἔπειθ' οὕτως ἤδη as possibly redundant, cf. ἔπειτα ὕστερον in Plato, *Symp.* 187b and *Euthd.* 278a.

τὸ ἐνεργητικόν: The term ἐνεργητικόν was apparently introduced by Aristotle. (Aëtius V 20.3 [DK 59 A 101] reports the use of ἐνεργητικός as an adjective qualifying λόγος in Anaxagoras; the text, however, is corrupt, and the phrasing may be due to a later source.) The pair ἐνεργητικός–παθητικός for “active”–“passive” is apparently of later coinage (Aristotle uses ποιητικός for “active”). The term ἐνεργητικόν is used only once more in the works of Aristotle (*Phys.* III 3 202a17 = *Met.* K 9 1066a31); there, it denotes that which is capable of activating movement in another. But what could that mean in our context? Reason is not itself habituated, and it is not clear what the non-rational part of the soul that is able to follow reason could activate. Three hypotheses: (i) The non-rational but not altogether irrational part of the soul of someone who has undergone habituation is now capable of activating movement in the non-rational but not altogether irrational part of the soul of someone who is to undergo habituation. I take this option to be the least likely. (ii) Aspasius claims that both the

οικοδομική τέχνη (105.12) and the ἠθικὴ ἕξις (105.21) are ἐνεργητικάι, the former τῶν περὶ οἰκοδομῶν ἐνεργειῶν, but such usage seems hardly Aristotelian, and is in any case difficult to align with the passage from *Phys.* III 3 = *Met.* K 9. (iii) If τὸ ἐνεργητικόν is the same as τὸ κινητικόν (cf. *Phys.* III 3 202a13–21 = *Met.* K 9 1066a26–34), and τὸ κινητικόν is the same as τὸ ποιητικόν (cf. *De An.* III 2 426a4–6), then one may turn to *MA* 7 702a10–21 and see each item in the chain in 702a17–19 as capable of activating the item placed right below it—according to which proposal, desire (and therefore character, since character is a quality of the desiring part of the soul) turns out to be capable of activating passion, which aligns well with what Aristotle says in the remainder of our chapter (*EE* II 2 1220b7–20). Aristotle would thus have in mind the distinction between character (or rather dispositions of character) and passions, not the division of the soul into rational and non-rational parts, when speaking of that which, after a process of habituation, is made capable of activating movement in another.

καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀψύχοις: Here we finally find a textual variant: L has ὃ ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς, PC have καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀψύχοις. L's ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς seems to me irreconcilable with the following γάρ clause, while ὃ is not strictly necessary since transitive verbs may well have their objects omitted. PC's καί, however, deserves scrutiny. In Aristotle's works one finds passages where καί introduces a third premiss after a first premiss introduced by ἐπεὶ δέ and a second premiss introduced by δέ: *EE* III 5 1232b27–31 [δέ l. 29, καί *ibid.*], *Phys.* IV 12 220b32–221a9 [δέ l. 1, καί l. 4], *Met.* Θ 2 1046a15–20 [δέ l. 16, καί l. 17]. Seen from that perspective, PC's καί results not only acceptable, but even preferable to

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Λ's ὄ, contrary to what all editors except Manuzio (who knew only the lesson ὁ ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς) seem to think. (The anacoluthon in the period, with διό opening the conclusion, will not result unfamiliar to any reader of Aristotle.) If the argument runs as I claim, its premisses guarantee only the first element of the *definiens*: “if character results from habituation, habituation in turn via repetition of movements imposed from without eventually renders something capable of itself activating movement, and repetition of movements imposed from without on inanimate beings never issues in such result, then character must belong to a soul.” The other elements of the *definiens* may be implied in the reasoning in the way Woods (1992, p.99) claims, but are made explicit only in II 1 1219b26–1220a12.

ἔστω ἦθος τοῦτο κτλ.: Fritzsche (T3), Susemihl (T4a), Rackham (T6), Dirlmeier (T7a), Walzer-Mingay (T8a), Bloch-Leandri (T9) put a definite article before ἦθος. As for τοῦτο κτλ., Allan (personal communication *apud* Walzer-Mingay's critical apparatus) postulates a lacuna between τοῦτο and what follows; Dirlmeier (T7a) emends τοῦτο into τοῦ and inserts ἀλόγου; Walzer-Mingay (T8a) take τοῦτο to be corrupt and put it between obeli. No such interventions are necessary: cf. *De Int.* 17a33–34 καὶ ἔστω ἀντίφασις τοῦτο, κατάφασις καὶ ἀπόφασις αἱ ἀντικείμενα.

δυναμένου δ': Fritzsche (T3) is followed by Susemihl (T4a), Ross (1918), Walzer-Mingay (T8a) in inserting <τοῦ ἀλόγου μὲν> before δυναμένου δ'; Dirlmeier (T7a) deletes δ' and takes δυναμένου κτλ. with τοῦ ἀλόγου ψυχῆς (see above for his correction of τοῦτο into τοῦ and his insertion of ἀλόγου); Allan (see above) postulates a lacuna before δυναμένου

δ'. No such interventions are necessary if one takes δυναμένου δ' as further specifying ψυχῆς: the quality belongs indeed to the soul, but more specifically to that of the soul which is capable of following reason. The marginal note δυναμένη by the second hand of P, probably influenced by Stobaeus II vii 1 38.12–13 Wachsmuth-Hense ψυχῆς τοῦ ἀλόγου μέρους ποιότης κατ' ἐπιτακτικὸν λόγον δυναμένη τῷ λογικῷ ἐπακολουθεῖν, in turn adopted by Rackham (T6), is incorrect: it is a part of the soul, not a quality of a part of the soul, that is capable of following reason.

APPENDIX

In the Greek text, underlining indicates interventions by editors. In the translation, underlining indicates deviations from the Greek text being followed.

T1. Manuzio (1498, p.254) c. adn. Vettori

ἐπεὶ δ' ἐστὶ τὸ ἦθος[, V] ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ ὄνομα σημαίνει, ὅτι ἀπὸ ἔθους ἔχει τὴν ἐπίδοσιν· ἐθίζεται δὲ τὸ ὑπ' ἀγωγῆς μὴ ἐμφύτου[, V] τῷ πολλάκις κινεῖσθαι πως, οὕτως ἤδη τὸ ἐνεργητικόν, ὃ ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς [καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀψύχοις V] οὐχ ὀρώμεν· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν μυριάκις ρίψης ἄνω τὸν λίθον, οὐδέποτε ποιήσει τοῦτο μὴ βία· διὸ ἔστω ἦθος τοῦτο ψυχῆς κατὰ ἐπιτακτικὸν λόγον δυναμίει δ' ἀκολουθεῖν [δυναμένου δ' ἀκολουθεῖν τῷ λόγῳ V] ποιότης.

T2. Bekker (1831)

ἐπεὶ δ' ἐστὶ τὸ ἦθος ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ ὄνομα σημαίνει ὅτι ἀπὸ ἔθους ἔχει τὴν ἐπίδοσιν, ἐθίζεται δὲ τὸ ὑπ' ἀγωγῆς μὴ ἐμφύτου τῷ πολλάκις κινεῖσθαι πως, οὕτως

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ἤδη τὸ ἐνεργητικόν. ὃ ἐν τοῖς ἀψύχοις οὐχ ὀρώμεν· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν μυριάκις ρίψης ἄνω τὸν λίθον, οὐδέποτε ποιήσει τοῦτο μὴ βία. διὸ ἔστω ἦθος τοῦτο ψυχῆς κατὰ ἐπιτακτικὸν λόγον, δυναμένου δ' ἀκολουθεῖν τῷ λόγῳ ποιότης.

T3. Fritzsche (1851, p.31, 278)

ἐπεὶ δ' ἐστὶ τὸ ἦθος, ὡσπερ καὶ τὸ ὄνομα σημαίνει [ὅτι], ἀπὸ ἔθους ἔχον τὴν ἐπίδοσιν, ἐθίζεται δὲ ὑπ' ἀγωγῆς τὸ μὴ ἔμφυτον τῷ πολλάκις κινεῖσθαι πῶς οὕτως ἤδη τὸ ἐνεργητικόν, ὃ ἐν τοῖς ἀψύχοις οὐχ ὀρώμεν (οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν μυριάκις ρίψης ἄνω τὸν λίθον, οὐδέποτε ποιήσει τοῦτο μὴ βία). διὸ ἔστω <τὸ> ἦθος τοῦτο ψυχῆς κατὰ ἐπιτακτικὸν λόγον, <τοῦ ἀλόγου μὲν> δυναμένου δ' ἀκολουθεῖν τῷ λόγῳ ποιότης.

Quoniam vero τὸ ἦθος, ut nomen etiam declarat, ἀπὸ ἔθους, hoc est a consuetudine, incrementa capit: in consuetudinem autem id, quod natura quodammodo insitum est, tum venit, quum vis operatrix saepe certo quodam modo movetur, quod quidem in rebus inanimatis non observatur (neque enim lapis, tametsi millies sursum iactatus fuerit, unquam nulla admota vi sursum volitabit): idcirco dicatur ἦθος illud animi, qualitas eius facultatis, quae rationis quidem expers est, at obsequi tamen et obtemperare potest rationi.

T4a. Susemihl (1884)

ἐπεὶ δ' ἐστὶ τὸ ἦθος, ὡσπερ καὶ τὸ ὄνομα σημαίνει ὅτι ἀπὸ ἔθους ἔχει τὴν ἐπίδοσιν, ἐθίζεται δὲ τὸ ὑπ' ἀγωγῆς μὴ ἐμφύτου τῷ πολλάκις κινεῖσθαι πῶς, οὕτως ἤδη τὸ ἐνεργητικόν, ὃ ἐν τοῖς ἀψύχοις οὐχ

ὀρώμεν (οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν μυριάκις ρίψης ἄνω τὸν λίθον, οὐδέποτε ποιήσει τοῦτο μὴ βία), διὸ ἔστω <τὸ> ἦθος τοῦτο ψυχῆς κατὰ ἐπιτακτικὸν λόγον <τοῦ ἀλόγου μὲν> δυναμένου δ' ἀκολουθεῖν τῷ λόγῳ ποιότης.

T4b. Solomon (1925), Solomon-Barnes (1984)

But since the character, being as its name indicates something that grows by habit—and that which is under guidance other than innate [ἀγωγήν (W.D.R.) μὴ ἔμφυτον (Fr.)] is trained to a habit by frequent movement of a particular kind—is the active principle present after this process, but in things inanimate we do not see this (for even if you throw a stone upwards ten thousand times, it will never go upward except by compulsion),—consider, then, character to be this, viz. a quality in accordance with governing reason belonging to the irrational part of the soul which is yet able to obey the reason.

T5. Jackson *apud* Ross (1918, p.156)

ἐπεὶ δ' ἐστὶ τὸ ἦθος, ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ ὄνομα σημαίνει, ὅτι ἀπὸ ἔθους ἔχει τὴν ἐπίδοσιν, ...

T6. Rackham (1935)

ἐπεὶ δ' ἐστὶ τὸ ἦθος—ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ ὄνομα σημαίνει ὅτι ἀπὸ ἔθους ἔχει τὴν ἐπίδοσιν, ἐθίζεται δὲ τὸ ὑπ' ἀγωγῆς μὴ ἔμφυτον τῷ πολλάκις κινεῖσθαι πως οὕτως ἤδη [τὸ] ἐνεργητικόν (ὃ ἐν τοῖς ἀψύχοις οὐχ ὀρώμεν, οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν μυριάκις ρίψης ἄνω τὸν λίθον οὐδέποτε ποιήσει τοῦτο μὴ βία)—διὸ ἔστω τὸ ἦθος τοῦτο, ψυχῆς κατὰ ἐπιτακτικὸν λόγον δυναμένη ἀκολουθεῖν τῷ λόγῳ ποιότης.

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And since moral character is, as even its name implies that it has its growth from habit, and by our often moving in a certain way a habit not innate in us is finally trained to be operative in that way (which we do not observe in inanimate objects, for not even if you throw a stone upwards ten thousand times will it ever rise upward unless under the operation of force)—let moral character then be defined as a quality of the spirit in accordance with governing reason that is capable of following the reason.

T7a. Dirlmeier (1962, p.240, 22–3)

ἐπεὶ δ' ἐστὶ τὸ ἦθος, ὡσπερ καὶ τὸ ὄνομα σημαίνει, ὅ τι ἀπὸ ἔθους ἔχει τὴν ἐπίδοσιν, ἐθίζεται δὲ [τὸ] ὑπ'

ἀγωγῆς μὴ ἐμφύτου τῷ πολλάκις κινεῖσθαι πῶς, οὕτως ἤδη τὸ ἐνεργητικόν – ὃ ἐν τοῖς ἀψύχοις οὐχ ὀρώμεν· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν μυριάκις ῥίψης ἄνω τὸν λίθον, οὐδέποτε ποιήσει τοῦτο μὴ βία. διὸ ἔστω τὸ ἦθος τοῦ[το] <ἀλόγου> ψυχῆς, κατὰ ἐπιτακτικὸν λόγον, δυναμένου [δ'] ἀκολουθεῖν τῷ λόγῳ ποιότης.

Indem aber der Charakter (*ēthos*), wie auch der Name anzeigt, etwas ist was sich von der Gewöhnung (*ethos*) her ausbildet, der Gewöhnungsprozess aber vor sich geht durch eine Führung, die keine angeborene ist, vermittels häufigen, in bestimmter Art erfolgenden Bewegtwerdens, ist er auf diese Weise letzten Endes das aktivierende Element. Das ist etwas was wir beim Unbelebten nicht beobachten können, denn auch dann wenn du den Stein unzähligemale in die Höhe wirfst, wird er dies (das Steigen) niemals tun ohne Zwang. Daher soll gelten: der Charakter ist eine Beschaffenheit des irrationalen Seelenelements, das in

der Lage ist, nach Maßgabe des befehlenden Rationalen dem Rationalen zu folgen.

T7b. Transl. of Dirlmeier's text in Donini (1999, p.203)

Ora, poiché il carattere è (come anche significa il suo nome) ciò che deriva il suo sviluppo dall'abitudine e si abitua, sotto la guida di un principio che non è innato, in quanto molte volte sia mosso in un determinato modo, così esso è allora capace di attività – il che non vediamo avvenire negli oggetti inanimati; neppure se getti migliaia di volte in aria una pietra essa farà mai questo movimento se non per forza. Resti perciò stabilito che il carattere è una qualità della parte dell'anima irrazionale capace di seguire la ragione conformandosi a una direttiva razionale.

T8a. Walzer-Mingay (1991)

ἐπεὶ δ' ἔστι τὸ ἦθος, ὡσπερ καὶ τὸ ὄνομα σημαίνει, ἴδιον ἀπὸ ἔθους ἔχει τὴν ἐπίδοσιν, ἐθίζεται δὲ τὸ ὑπ' ἀγωγῆς μὴ ἐμφύτου τῷ πολλάκις κινεῖσθαι πως, οὕτως ἤδη τὸ ἐνεργητικὸν (ὃ ἐν τοῖς ἀψύχοις οὐχ ὀρώμεν· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν μυριάκις ρίψης ἄνω τὸν λίθον, οὐδέποτε ποιήσει τοῦτο μὴ βία)—διὸ ἔστω <τὸ> ἦθος ἴδιον, ψυχῆς κατὰ ἐπιτακτικὸν λόγον <τοῦ ἀλόγου μὲν> δυναμένου δ' ἀκολουθεῖν τῷ λόγῳ ποιότης.

T8b. Woods (1992)

Now character (*ēthos*), as the word itself indicates, is developed from habit (*ethos*); and anything is habituated which, as a result of guidance which is not innate, through being changed a certain way repeatedly, is eventually capable of acting in that way—something

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we do not see in inanimate things. (A stone, even if you throw it upwards ten thousand times, will never do so except under compulsion.) So let character be thus defined: a quality of the part of the soul that is non-rational, but capable of following reason, in accordance with a prescriptive principle.

T8c. Donini (1999)

Ora, poiché il carattere (come anche significa il suo nome) ha il suo sviluppo dall'abitudine e si abitua ciò che è sottoposto a una guida che non è innata in quanto molte volte è mosso in un dato modo, così esso è allora capace di attività (il che non vediamo accadere negli oggetti inanimati; neppure se getti migliaia di volte in aria una pietra essa farà mai questo movimento se non per forza) – perciò resti stabilito che il carattere è, conformemente a una direttiva razionale, una qualità della parte dell'anima irrazionale, ma capace di seguire la ragione.

T8d. Kenny (2011)

Now, character (*ēthos*), as the word itself indicates, is developed from habit (*ethos*), and an agent acquires a habit when *it* eventually becomes operative in a particular fashion as the result of the repetition of a certain motion under some non-innate impulse. (This is something we do not see inanimate agents: a stone, even if you throw it upwards ten thousand times, will never do that except by force.) So let character be defined as a quality governed by the prescriptions of reason, which inheres in that part of the soul which, although non-rational, is capable of obedience to reason.

T8e. Inwood-Woolf (2013)

Character exists, as the name signifies, because it develops from habit, and a thing gets habituated as a result of a pattern of conduct that is not innate, by repeated movement of one sort or another, so that it is eventually capable of being active in that way. We do not see that in lifeless entities: however many times you hurl a stone upwards, it will never do this without being forced to. Let character, then, be a quality of the part of the soul that is irrational, but capable of following reason, in line with reason's ability to command.

T9. Bloch-Leandri (2011)

ἐπεὶ δ' ἐστὶ τὸ ἦθος, ὡσπερ καὶ τὸ ὄνομα σημαίνει, ὃ τι ἀπὸ ἔθους ἔχει τὴν ἐπίδοσιν, ἐθίζεται δὲ [τὸ] ὑπ' ἀγωγῆς μὴ ἐμφύτου τῷ πολλάκις κινεῖσθαι πῶς, οὕτως ἤδη [τὸ] ἐνεργητικόν (ὃ ἐν [τοῖς] ἀψύχοις οὐχ ὀρώμεν· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν μυριάκις ρίψης ἄνω τὸν λίθον, οὐδέποτε ποιήσει τοῦτο μὴ βία)· διὸ ἔστω <τὸ> ἦθος τοῦ <ἀλόγου> ψυχῆς κατὰ ἐπιτακτικὸν λόγον δυναμένη ἀκολουθεῖν τῷ λόγῳ ποιότης.

Puisque, comme le nom même l'indique, le caractère est quelque chose qui se forme par l'habitude, et que l'habitude naît de ce qu'on est soumis à l'action d'un mouvement non naturel, par la répétition de ce mouvement dans un sens déterminé, le caractère devient dès lors principe d'activité (ce phénomène n'apparaît pas chez les êtres inanimés, car on aura beau jeter une pierre em l'air mille fois, elle ne fera jamais ce mouvement que par violence); définissons donc le caractère comme la qualité de la partie irrationnelle de l'âme qui, au contact de la raison impérative, est capable d'obéir à la raison.

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T10. Simpson (2013)

But since one's moral character – as its name also signifies, because it gets its increase from custom and because what is under a guidance not innate gets to have a custom by being changed repeatedly in a certain way – is now in this way the activating part (which we do not see in lifeless things, for even if you threw a stone upward ten thousand times it will never not do this by force), therefore let a moral character be this, a quality of soul in accord with a reason in command of a being-able to follow reason. We must say, then, what qualities in accord with what in the soul moral characters are.

NOTES

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