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Making Sense of Aristotle on Akrasia

Abstract

J. L. Austin's recently retrieved pre-war lecture notes on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics point to a solution that (i) stresses the intimacy of the link between choice and practical judgement while respecting how they differ, (ii) finds a tendency towards regression from one stratum to another within his conception of the human soul, and (iii) identifies a fragility in ethical reasoning that arises precisely from its application to particular situations that excite conflicting motivations.