

ΑΡΙΣΤΟΤΕΛΗΣ ΗΘΙΚΑ ΕΥΔΗΜΕΙΑ

1247 b [20] because if the impulse caused by desire for what is pleasant exists by nature, appetite also would merely by nature proceed towards what is good in every case. If, therefore, some men have good natures—just as musical people though they have not learnt to sing² have a natural aptitude for it—and without the aid of reason have an impulse in the direction of the natural order of things and desire the right thing in the right way at the right time, these men will succeed even although they are in fact foolish and irrational, just as the others will sing well although unable to teach singing. And men of this sort obviously are fortunate—men who without the aid of reason are usually successful. Hence it will follow that the fortunate are so by nature.

Or has the term 'good fortune' more than one meaning? For some things are done from impulse and as a result of the agents' purposive choice, other things not so but on the contrary; and if in the former cases when the agents succeed they seem to have reasoned badly, we say that in fact they have had good fortune; and again in the latter cases, if they wished for a different good or less good than they have got. The former persons then may possibly owe their good fortune to nature, for their impulse and appetite, being for the right object, succeeded, but their reasoning was foolish; and in their case, when it happens that their reasoning seems to be incorrect but that impulse is the cause of it, this impulse being right has saved them; although sometimes on the contrary owing to appetite they have reasoned in this way and come to misfortune. But in the case of the others,³ then, how will good fortune be due to natural goodness of appetite and desire

ΜΕΤΑΦΡΑΣΗ:

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1248a[1248a] [1] The fact is that the good fortune here and that in the other case are the same. Or is good fortune of more than one kind, and is fortune twofold? But since we see some people being fortunate contrary to all the teachings of science and correct calculation, it is clear that the cause of good fortune must be something different. But is it or is it not good fortune whereby a man formed a desire for the right thing and at the right time when in his case human reasoning could not make this calculation? For a thing the desire for which is natural is not altogether uncalculated, but the reasoning is perverted by something. So no doubt he seems fortunate, because fortune is the cause of things contrary to reason, and this is contrary to reason, for it is contrary to knowledge and to general principle. But probably it does not really come from fortune, but seems to do so from the above cause. So that this argument does not prove that good fortune comes by nature, but that not all those who seem fortunate succeed because of fortune, but because of nature; nor does it prove that there is no such thing as fortune, nor that fortune is not the cause of anything, but that it is not the cause of all the things of which it seems to be the cause.

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